

February 2025

The

# BRAMLEY

FOR BRAMLEY AND LITTLE LONDON

Magazine

- **Wilder Bramley**
- **Bramley Show Returns for 2025**
- **Meet the Bramley Business**

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# The Bramley Magazine

for Bramley and  
Little London

**February 2025**

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for the benefit of the community.*

## Editorial

Welcome to the first Bramley Magazine of 2025. It's definitely too late to wish you a Happy New Year, so I will just say 'welcome back' instead. By the time you are reading this, it will be February. The sun will be setting at 16:54 and the snowdrops will be starting to break through the soil. Clift Surgery and the PPG share some winter self-care tips on p. 12.

Looking back to 2024, Bramley certainly got in the festive spirit over Christmas, with the first tree lighting ceremony and carol concert at Clift Meadow in December, and the Bramley Scouts volunteered with the Loddon Valley Lions to support their Santa Float collections. See p. 19 for how much they raised.

How are you doing with your New Year's resolutions? Have you stuck to them, or have they already fallen by the wayside? If your resolution was to go running more in 2025, it's not too late to enter the Bramley Road Race on 16th February, with an option to run 10 or 20 miles (p. 11, p. 23). Or, if your resolution was to volunteer for something new and/or help out in the community, why not join one of the many organisations in Bramley? Graham White reflects on one year of volunteering with Wilder Bramley on p. 16.

Service is a running theme in this month's issue, as it often is, with Hampshire County Councillor Rhydian Vaughan MBE featuring in our Meet the Neighbours on p. 8. Ranil Jayawardena, former MP for Bramley, was awarded a knighthood in the King's New Year Honours. More can be found on p. 23.

We also have a new feature this month, 'Meet the Bramley Business' where we find out more about a local small business based in Bramley. First up is Lowki Pawtraits, which can be found on p. 15. If you would like to feature, please email Rachel or I at – editor@bramleymagazine.org.uk.

As the first edition of 2025, we are also looking ahead to some of the things going on in Bramley in 2025. First, in May we have the Bramley fête, always a great day out (p. 17), then in June we have Bramley in Bloom, and the Bramley scarecrows are returning in August, ahead of the Bramley Show in September (p. 6). 2025 also marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II so keep an eye out for commemorative events taking place in and around Bramley (p. 10).

2025 looks to be a good year.

## Georgie

Joint Editor

**"No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn."**

**Hal Borland**

Cover Photo: A cold early morning walk around Bramley – Jenny Todd

Material for the March issue to be sent (preferably by email) to the editor no later than 15th February please.

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**Benefice Services**

**Church diary for February...**

<b>2nd</b>	<b>The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)</b>
9.00	Sunday@nine - Cross House
10.30	BCP Matins - St James
<b>9th</b>	<b>4th Sunday before Lent</b>
9.00	Sunday@nine - Cross House
10.30	Holy Communion - St James
<b>16th</b>	<b>3rd Sunday before Lent</b>
9.00	Sunday@nine - Cross House
10.30	Morning Worship - St James
<b>23rd</b>	<b>2nd Sunday before Lent</b>
9.00	Sunday@nine - Cross House
10.30	Holy Communion - St James

**...and into March**

<b>2nd</b>	<b>Sunday before Lent</b>
9.00	Sunday@nine - Cross House
10.30	BCP Matins - St James
<b>5th</b>	<b>Ash Wednesday</b>
20.00	Holy Communion - St James
<b>9th</b>	<b>1st Sunday of Lent</b>
9.00	Sunday@nine - Cross House
10.30	Holy Communion - St James
<b>16th</b>	<b>2nd Sunday of Lent</b>
9.00	Sunday@nine - Cross House
10.30	Morning Worship - St James

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**From the Registers**

**Baptism**

Ruby PUSEY	17th November	St James Church
Iris LAWRENCE-HALLS	21st November	St James Church
Jack GILES	15th December	St James Church
Katherine GILES	15th December	St James Church

**Funeral**

Jennifer TROWER	18th November	Crematorium
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**Church diary for February...**

<b>2nd</b>	<b>The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas)</b>
10.00	Holy Communion - St Leonard's, Sherfield-on-Loddon
10.00	Family Service - St Mary's, Stratfield Saye
10.30	BCP Matins - St Mary's, Hartley Wespall
<b>9th</b>	<b>4th Sunday before Lent</b>
10.00	Café Church - St Leonard's, Sherfield-on-Loddon
<b>16th</b>	<b>3rd Sunday before Lent</b>
10.00	Holy Communion - St Leonard's, Sherfield-on-Loddon
10.30	Family Service - St Mary's, Hartley Wespall
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<b>9th</b>	<b>1st Sunday of Lent</b>
10.00	Café Church - Sherfield Park Community Centre
<b>16th</b>	<b>2nd Sunday of Lent</b>
10.00	Holy Communion - St Leonard's, Sherfield-on-Loddon
10.30	Family Service - St Mary's, Hartley Wespall

## Real Places

I was Googling, for some reason, *New Zealand* recently. Google often gives you, as well as actual website links, a list of questions that have been asked recently by others, in case they are a better match for whatever you want to know. Imagine my surprise when one of the questions was this: *Is New Zealand a real place?* When I had ceased laughing and picked myself up off the floor, I thought about why someone would ask such a question. I reckoned it was probably someone from a country without our historic links to New Zealand, and the question was maybe to settle an argument, as many Google searches are.

And then I started thinking about all the place names that might cause people to check if they were real or imaginary. If Google had existed when I was a boy, I might have used it to check on the existence of Pimlico. Such a funny name. I had seen the film *Passport to Pimlico* but not being from that part of London I didn't know it was a place. I was pleased to see it appear as a station on the new Victoria tube line in 1972.

At Christmas you might have seen the final episode of *Gavin and Stacey* on BBC. My daughter was a big fan of this show from the very beginning, but she did not, or would not, believe that Barry Island was a real place. One day, arriving at Cardiff station on business, I was very pleased to see a bus outside displaying its destination as Barry Island. I took the accompanying photo and sent it to my daughter.

What would you say about the nation called Ruritania? The name was coined in 1894 by Anthony Hope, for his novel *The Prisoner of Zenda*. So, obviously an imaginary place? I looked it up, expecting it to be confirmed as imaginary, and I found that it is a 'micronation'. There is a whole entry in Wikipedia concerning micronations. They exist as entities, but usually without any land, and some have issued stamps and have self-appointed governments. I do not have the space to list all of the micronations that have been established, but search on the web and you will find yourself surprised. One micronation that has a physical existence is Sealand, an old WW2 artillery fort off the East Coast of England.



The Kingdom of Freedonia was first imagined in the Marx Brothers film *Duck Soup*, in 1933. And that was all I thought it was, but there was an attempt to establish the Principality of Freedonia, in what is now Somalia, in 2001.

We have all heard of El Dorado, but was it real? The place was alleged to exist in the Andean range of South America. In fact, there was a man called El Dorado, 'The Golden One', a member of the Muisca tribe, who were skilled goldsmiths. The name was subsequently applied to the place where the Muisca mined their gold, and many of the European explorers searched for it. They were mainly unsuccessful, although some of the Muisca treasures were looted by Europeans.

My favourite real place, thought to be imaginary by many, is Electric Avenue. The song of the same name, by Eddy Grant, is about the Brixton riots of 1981. But Electric Avenue is a real street in Brixton, nowadays a pedestrian precinct. It was one of the first streets to be illuminated by electric streetlamps.

**Michael Luck**

## The Bramley Show Welcomes 2025

We are very excited to be preparing for the next Bramley Show on Sunday 14th September 2025 at the Village Hall.

### Schedule 2025

There are new classes being prepared and the schedule will be published shortly. For those who like creative writing, there will be an opportunity to take part in a writing competition.

**The Scarecrows** will be back from August 23rd to September 14th and this year all the judging will take place at the Bramley Show. It was great to see so many people voting for their favourite. Further details later in the year.

**Bramley in Bloom** is taking place over the weekend 27th – 29th June. Entry forms will be available soon and must be submitted by 14th June. All you need is to enter your address, so the judges know where to go. Anyone wishing to view the front gardens may only do so from the pavement. Any hanging baskets and planters must be placed in the front gardens. There will be 2 winners – one for the front garden and one for the planter and hanging basket, plus runners up.

There is something for everyone, so keep a look out on the Bramley Show Facebook page. There is a new website coming - more details next month.





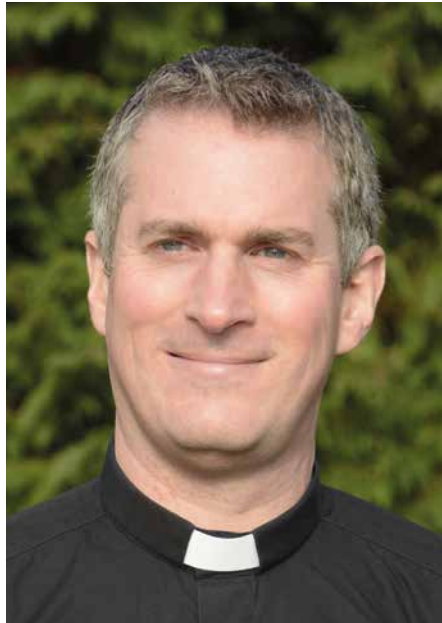
## Is everything right in the world?

I often get a feeling that not everything is right in the world. I know that not everything is right in my heart, and I often go my own way, doing what I think is best for me, not thinking of how what I say or do makes other people feel. The way of the world can seem harsh, isolating, exploitative and oppressive and, it is. The world encourages me to promote myself and what I want, even if that means at the expense of others.

In the Church we remember at this time of year that Jesus was baptised. Many people are still baptised in our day - we sometimes call it being 'Christened'. New years are about new starts, God is about new starts, and baptism is when we choose to follow Jesus, which may mean a new way of doing things, less about me and more about others.

One of the promises we make in the baptism service is to trust that God knows best. We may not always get it right and there have been plenty of times the followers of Jesus (and the Church) have got it wrong, but we seek forgiveness and start again on the better way. Every day we choose a way to think, to talk, to act based on what we think is best. I believe God in Jesus has shown us the best way. When we choose that way, it's like a light shines in the darkness of this world. And light always overcomes darkness.

I often read the Bible because it tells me how Jesus lived and what he taught us. He showed us a different way to live. When the world neglects, ostracises and belittles people, Jesus shows us how to care, build community and raise people up. The world condemns; Jesus shows us how to forgive. The world often gives importance to the rich, the clever, the powerful. Jesus said that the least and the last are to be first. Those who are poor in spirit, who mourn, the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers - these are the ones who are truly blessed because they look to God for what they need. We should listen to them. Read about the life and teaching of Jesus in one of the gospels - you may be surprised how good the way of Jesus is. The gospels are called Matthew, Mark, Luke and John because those are the people who wrote them, people who were with Jesus.



Rev'd Mark Anderson

Whatever we face each day, we have a choice how to respond. We won't always get it right, but we start again, and we carry on. I know that when I pray, when I start (and end) my day asking for God's peace (a peace the world cannot give), when I make a choice to follow a better way, then everything feels a little more right, as if the light is overcoming some of the darkness all around me. For when you choose the way of Jesus, you will help bring peace and better relationships with others and, little by little, the world will feel a little more right, starting with you and me.

**Rev'd Mark Anderson**  
Vicar, St James Bramley

# Shrove Tuesday

# Pancake Party

Tuesday 4th March 2025  
Cross House, St James' Church, Bramley  
4.30 - 5.30pm

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**This month's Meet the Neighbours features Hampshire County Councillor Rhyddian Vaughan MBE**

**So, Rhyddian, we have to ask – when and how did you become an MBE - or more properly a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire?**

I was awarded this honour in 2019 for services to the public and to politics. I fell into local politics in the late 80s and early 90s as a Parish Councillor. I then stood for and was elected a Borough Councillor for Bramley, a position which I held from 2008 to 2012. After a spell as Deputy Chairman of the North East Hampshire Conservative Association (2012-2016), I was once again elected to my current role as County Councillor in 2017. I represent the Calleva Division which covers a number of north Hampshire villages, including Bramley and Little London.

**What are the responsibilities of a County Councillor?**

The role is to represent residents' interests in the areas that are devolved from central government to the County. These are primarily those of Highways, Schools, Household Waste & Recycling, Adult & Social Care and the Fire & Rescue Service. While some of the budget comes from local Council Tax, the County is reliant on budgets allocated from Whitehall. Consequently, the biggest challenge for Councillors is getting everything that needs to be done delivered within those external

budget constraints. For example, Adult and Social Care takes up about 85% of the county's budget, meaning a lot of effort has to go into ensuring the best allocation of funds to the other areas. But it is not without its rewards – a satisfying success for me last year was ensuring a portion of the Highways budget was directed at repairing the C32 road through Bramley, especially in the face of competition for funding from the larger population centres in Hampshire.

**You're also Chairman of the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Authority – tell us about this please.**

Frankly, I view this as one of the finest jobs in the whole of the Hampshire County Council. While much of a Councillor's role involves politics, discussions over tight budgets and making trade-offs, this role is about overseeing the policy and service delivery and getting out to meet firefighters. It is one of the busiest fire and rescue services in the UK and serves a population of nearly two million people, providing crucial lifesaving services to our communities. It has over 60 fire stations, and employs 2,000 people, 85% of which are firefighters, with the remaining 15% made up by support staff.

**What did you do before you "fell into local politics"?**

I spent nine years in the Welsh Guards, one highlight of which was carrying the colours for the investiture of Charles as Prince of Wales in Caernarfon Castle, North Wales, on 1 July 1969. I found my final year particularly fascinating,

spending it in Berlin whilst it was still a city divided between democratic West Germany and communist East Germany by the Berlin Wall. After leaving the army, I worked at insurers Lloyds of London and for a management development company, which is how I ended up in Bramley 38 years ago, as my office was just up the M4 in Maidenhead. It's the army that is the reason for my involvement in local politics: as a former soldier, service comes naturally.



Rhyddian and Wren

**You seem to already be quite busy; do you have time for a private life?**

I am married to Wren, and we have three adult children

and seven grandchildren. I also enjoy taking groups to some of the most fascinating and emotional battlefields across Europe.

**What would you recommend to other people about this area of Hampshire?**

As chairman of the Silchester Roman Town Panel that looks after the remains of the Roman town of Calleva Atrebatum, I have to recommend a walk around the walls. It is probably the most soothing and relaxing place in Hampshire!



Enjoying the local countryside around Bramley and Little London



Rhyddian with the Chief Fire Officer



Horseguards 1976

Rhyddian (right) with a young Prince, now King, Charles

*Rhyddian is a member of the Western Front Association, Chairman of Bramley Royal British Legion Branch & a member of the Guild of Battlefield Guides. Details of his battlefield tours can be found at <https://www.battlefieldtours.co/>*



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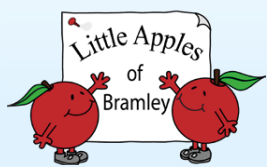
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### Royal British Legion Update

2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War 2. Following the D Day landings in June of the previous year, British and Allied troops slowly forced the German army into a retreat and many tough battles took place and lives were lost. The German forces and people were wearied by continuous heavy bombing raids on their cities. On the night of 13/14 February 1945, the city of Dresden was razed to the ground by two enormous waves of British and American heavy bombers. It was a hard attack to justify, as 'Bomber' Harris, AOC Bomber Command later discovered but it brought fear and demoralisation among the population.

On 7 March 1945, our forces crossed the Rhine and continued to fight their way to Berlin where the total surrender of the Nazi regime was received on 7 May and Victory in Europe (VE) declared the following day. It is not clear, as these notes are compiled, how this momentous event will be commemorated nationally or locally, but be assured the RBL will play its part.

The darker side of the end of the war was the dawning of the full realisation of the dehumanising horror of the Nazi concentration and death camps as they were liberated. Ten years ago, on the 70th anniversary of the end of WW2, as Leicestershire & Rutland RBL County Chaplain, I was tasked to lead a service of remembrance in the De Montfort Hall. Amongst the hymns and prayers, I invited the leader of the Leicester Synagogue to read Psalm 13 in Hebrew, the language of Jewish worship. It was one of the most poignant moments I have ever experienced.

Our Branch will be supporting our parishes' summer fêtes again this year. Also, on Saturday 7 June, we have a few tickets for the final rehearsal, the Colonels' Review, of this year's King's Birthday Parade, Trooping the Colour, on Horse Guards Parade. If you would like to go, please contact our Chairman Rhydian Vaughan - rhydian@battlefieldtours.co.

Please also contact Rhydian if you would be interested in a short 3-4 day tour of some of the WW2 Battlefields, probably in the Somme area. This is planned for the autumn, possibly mid-September.



**John Morley**  
 Vice Chairman  
 Bramley & District RBL  
 07900 892566

### The First Annual Bramley Lights Switch On 2024

#### Competition Winners



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**Bramley Parish Council Update**

**Happy New Year to you all!**

I hope that you all enjoyed a good Christmas break. On the run up to Christmas, members of Bramley PC attended the inaugural Clift Meadow carol concert, which we had supported, with the Tadley Brass Band and the Bramley school choirs. Despite the wet weather, the evening remained dry (ish) and the winners of the children’s painting competition all pushed the plunger and lit the Christmas Tree whilst we all enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies! Well done to the Clift Meadow team.

Later in December, I attended a lovely carol service at St James Church led by our Reverend Mark Anderson: a great traditional build-up to Christmas.

**Borough and County Council**

As we move into 2025, there is a lot going on within local government. We are facing a radical change in the set-up of councils, with devolution seeking to provide single tier unitary authorities with elected mayors, which will mean the abolition of County and Borough councils. It is early days and so it is unclear as to how this will affect us all.

**Planning**

The Government has also made significant changes to the national planning policy which will see the whole of Basingstoke having to take nearly 300 extra new homes per year which has meant the emerging local plan has to start again. To that end, there has been a new call for extra sites with the potential for housing. In Bramley a site opposite St James Park (to the west of Minchens lane) and land to the north east, behind the school to Campbell Road, owned by Stratfield Saye, have been offered for consideration. Bramley PC, along with local residents and your ward councillors, opposed the Redrow reserved matters application recently with a sensible argument to ask Redrow to move the housing away from existing homes to give a better natural buffer and to help with the site’s water and flooding issues. Sadly, this fell on deaf ears as Redrow would not see reason and the Borough reluctantly had to grant permission.

With all the development activity going on, particularly along Minchens Lane, if you are concerned with mud on the road, this is a police matter so don’t be afraid to report directly to them.

**Traffic**

There are almost daily reports of drivers committing road traffic offenses by overtaking queues to the level crossing and turning right into Bramley Lane against oncoming traffic. There have been videos of cars mounting the pavement and driving across the grass triangle which beggars belief in how people can be so inconsiderate for pedestrian safety. The police are aware and are monitoring this activity and hopefully prosecutions will follow. Additionally, the PC has secured funds and a plan from HCC Highways to provide posts and vehicle deterrents to protect the green triangle and the pedestrian footpaths. HCC Highways have issued the following statement:

“Hampshire County Council, working together closely with Bramley Parish Council, are promoting a scheme in Bramley Village. The primary aim of the scheme is to prevent the inappropriate usage of pavements by vehicle drivers on the Sherfield Road / Bramley Lane junction, which was raised by Bramley Parish Council as part of the discussions with Hampshire County Council. Bollard installation on the footpath is being promoted to alleviate the issues at this location.

“This scheme will also aim to address the current poor condition of informal passing places on Minchens Lane allowing drivers and cyclists to pass safely and reduce any conflicts. The proposed solution is to formalise/reconstruct the existing passing places along Minchens Lane, north of the village gateway signs, up to the junction with Olivers Lane.

“Further scheme information, including contact details, will be updated on the scheme webpage: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportchemes/bramley-village-improvements>. If you have any comments on these, please direct them to the email address on the webpage.”

The Community SpeedWatch team continue with their great volunteer efforts to monitor and inform our police of excessive speeding through the village and hopefully we might see more presence of speed enforcement officer teams.

Following the Redrow planning permission being granted, Bramley PC has contacted Hampshire Highways with a request to sort the Minchens Lane flooding at its southern end which we fear will be exacerbated by the runoff from this new site. Work to the culverts needs to be made to cope with the extra flow.

**Future Road Closures**

Bramley PC updates its website and Facebook page regularly with news of roadworks and road closures. Please keep an eye out for any that may affect you.

The Bramley 20 and 10 miles Races 2025 will be on Sunday 16th February at 10:30 am at Bramley Primary School. There will be a road closure on Sherfield Road between Bramley Lane and Folly Lane for the first 15 minutes of the race due to volume of runners on the road at the beginning of the race.

Race parking this year will be at: Mereok Park & Ride, Mereok Lane, Three Mile Cross, Reading, RG7 1PB. There is strictly no parking at the school or the surrounding roads. A shuttle bus service will be in operation from 7.40am on race day to make the 15 minute journey to Bramley. The buses will run approximately every 20 mins, with the last bus leaving Mereok at 9.40am. The shuttle buses will then start running again from Bramley to Mereok at 12 noon, with the last bus leaving Bramley at 3pm. The charge for the shuttle bus journey will be £2 per passenger, payable in cash on the day.

For more information, please see - <https://readingroadrunners.org/races/bramley/>.

**Upcoming Parish Council meetings**

The next Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 11th February, with Full Council on Tuesday 18th February. Both meetings will be held in the Bramley Room at Bramley Village Hall, and as always, members of the community are welcome to attend. More details will be on the Bramley PC website and Facebook page nearer the time.

Until next time...

**Cllr Chris Tomblin**

**Contacts**

Parish Clerk – Maxta Thomas, email [clerk@bramley-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@bramley-pc.gov.uk), phone 07810 692486

Bramley PC website – [www.bramley-pc.gov.uk](http://www.bramley-pc.gov.uk)

Bramley PC Facebook page – [www.facebook.com/BramleyPC](https://www.facebook.com/BramleyPC)

**Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council** – website [www.basingstoke.gov.uk](http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk), phone 01256 844844

Good for planning issues, reporting fly tipping issues, issues with local playgrounds.

**Hampshire County Council**

– website [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk)

Good for reporting highways and footpaths issues (including potholes), broken street lights, parking issues, and flooding issues.



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**A SEA SYMPHONY**  
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**Sunday March 30th 2025 at 7.30pm**  
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[www.basingstoke-choral.org.uk](http://www.basingstoke-choral.org.uk)     

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## News from Clift Surgery and the Patient Participation Group (PPG)

We have seen in the news that there are a lot of respiratory illnesses at the moment, so please take care. January is not always people's favourite month but at least the days are starting to lengthen.

### Winter self-care tips.

1. **Stay Warm:** Layer up with warm clothing to protect against the cold. Don't forget hats, gloves and scarves.
2. **Moisturise:** Cold weather can dry out your skin. Use a good moisturizer to keep your skin hydrated.
3. **Vitamin D:** With shorter days, consider a Vitamin D supplement to compensate for reduced sunlight exposure.
4. **Stay Active:** Engage in indoor exercises like yoga or home workouts to keep your body moving.
5. **Light Therapy:** Consider using a light therapy box to combat Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).
6. **Stay Connected:** Keep in touch with friends and family through calls or virtual meetings to avoid feelings of isolation.
7. **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Practice mindfulness or meditation to manage stress and maintain mental clarity.
8. **Routine:** Maintain a regular routine to provide structure and stability.

Remember the **Friendship Walking Group** meets at 10.30 at The Pavillion at Clift Meadow every Thursday, if you want some company and an incentive to get out for some fresh air and exercise. Please email [ppgclift@gmail.com](mailto:ppgclift@gmail.com) for information or questions.

Extra information, when needed, will be posted on the PPG Facebook page. A new website is being developed, and more information will be shared shortly.

Collection from the dispensary is now much quicker, although do allow 2 weeks from request to collection.

In December there were 83 instances of non-attendance for booked appointments. Sadly, this number seems consistent month on month. Please make sure you only book an appointment that you need and that you cancel if you no longer require an appointment. Thank you.



## Bramley Volunteer Drivers need you!

Are you looking for a volunteering opportunity?  
Are you wanting to do a little more for your local community?

Get in touch on 07787 166 924 and let's chat.

Volunteering is a lovely experience, getting to know our seniors, and not-so-seniors too, with their fascinating stories. Helping those who need a hand, and a friendly face is good for our mental health as well as for theirs.

This, from Cat, one of our lovely drivers:

*"Driving for BVD has been such a wonderful experience as I have met so many people that I wouldn't otherwise have met in my normal day to day life. They are always really interesting people who have all lived full lives and have many stories to tell. I'm so pleased I joined this fabulous group. It feels very rewarding to be giving back to the community in this small way."*

And this is from Judy, one of our lovely clients:

*"On the occasions I've had to attend hospital appointments and diabetic eye screenings, all the drivers have been very helpful and very friendly."*

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## Bramley and Romans Floral Society

Our Christmas meetings are ticketed events open to all and are usually a fabulous afternoon of festive fun and flowers. This year was no exception.

Many club members especially look forward to the Christmas demonstrations, because for the demonstrator, it is a great opportunity to make the most of a boosted Christmas flower budget to produce bigger, more flamboyant arrangements, which, staged together at the end of the afternoon, produce a wonderful spectacle of flowers and sparkle which rarely fails to delight. Not only are the arrangements larger, containing more diverse flowers and foliage than usual, but they are often joined by 'one I made earlier', which is usually a slightly smaller but similar design. This, of course, means that there are more lucky raffle prize winners at the end of the afternoon.

Jackie Page's demonstration, 'Jingle all the Way', did not disappoint. Her first arrangement, a parallel red, gold and green design, using very traditional Christmas colours, including several beautiful dark red amaryllis, carnations and red roses was brought to life by variegated holly and dark green fatsia leaves. A foam free table decoration used several different shaped small vases filled to the brim with chrysanthemum, lilies, skimmia, pussy willow, lisianthus and pale pink hypericum berries. An easy one for us all to replicate at any time of the year.

Her beautiful white and silver arrangement included silver sprayed eucalyptus leaves, white lilies and ornamental cabbage, white baubles and roses. Another red and gold, but quite different, arrangement had a more tropical theme.

Jane finished her demonstration with an imposing arrangement of cascading pink and purple lisianthus, white lilies, pale blue delphiniums and pink roses. The afternoon was rounded off by a delicious afternoon tea including scones and clotted cream. What a great start to our festive season.

Looking back to 16th November, over thirty ladies joined Liz Pelly for what has become an annual Christmas workshop. On this occasion, Liz provided the containers for two arrangements, one of which was foam free. She showed us how to make an easy but ingenious support for the short pieces of evergreen foliage to be used in the design, by crisscrossing floral tape across a low rectangular container. Her second design was a larger arrangement using birch twigs, a few spray carnations, gypsophila and berries. Not much material was needed, and it was very effective. When finished a delicious lunch of soup, sandwiches and homemade cakes was provided by members of our catering committee. It was a lovely relaxing way to spend an afternoon. The club meets on the first Thursday of the month at Sherfield on Loddon Village Hall at 1:30 pm. For more information you can visit our Facebook page, or contact Dusty on 01256 881420 or via email: TayMab1@aol.com or visit the club section of [bbandoflowers.org.uk](http://bbandoflowers.org.uk).



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This month we have a new feature called ‘Meet the Bramley Business’ where we showcase a local business in Bramley. This month’s feature is **LokiPawtraits**.

My name is Cristian, and I live in Bramley, with my wife and two of our three grown up kids. We own an amazing labrador called Loki, and Taylor the Siberian tabby cat. Our pets are very much part of our family and daily life.

Having been made redundant from my IT job, I took this as an opportunity to focus on my passions – our adorable labrador Loki and my obsession with taking photos. These passions have inspired me to create LokiPawtraits to offer other pet owners the opportunity of fabulous photos of their pets.

I join the owners as they walk their dogs at a location they are comfortable with, but I can also take indoor photos provided the pet is comfortable with this. I will take a number of varied photos, fully edit them and showcase between 8-15 in a private web gallery. I can then provide advice for wall art, using the competitively priced UK based supplier that I partner with.

Take a look at my website ([www.LokiPawtraits.co.uk](http://www.LokiPawtraits.co.uk)) and dedicated LokiPawtraits Facebook page and drop me a chat/email if you are interested in letting me take some photos of your pets.

If you would like to feature in ‘Meet the Bramley Business’ or to advertise in the Bramley Magazine, please email – [editor@bramleymagazine.org.uk](mailto:editor@bramleymagazine.org.uk).



**Safe & Well**

I recently attended a Versus Arthritis support meeting at which a Community Safety Officer, Suraj, spoke about a scheme the Fire Service offer in this area. I found the talk very interesting and it was certainly thought-provoking.

It is not widely known that within the Fire Service there is a division, the Community Safety Prevention department, whose job it is to advise on fire safety in the home. Safe and Well is a free home fire safety visit, tailored to an individual’s needs that can support members of our community to help protect them and their home from fire.

A visit would cover such things as thinking about escape routes and electrical appliance safety. All advice is tailored to the occupants. If any occupant is vulnerable, has mobility problems, or is bed-bound, the service will fit smoke and carbon monoxide alarms free. Other equipment is also available.

If anyone in the house has the above problems and has had a Safe & Well visit, they can, with their permission, be highlighted on an emergency call list so that if there is a fire at their house, two fire tenders will be sent out – one to fight the fire and one to rescue the vulnerable person.

The whole Safe & Well service is free, there is really no downside to asking for a visit.

For more information, phone 02380 644000, or look up their website: [community.firesafety@hantsfire.gov.uk](mailto:community.firesafety@hantsfire.gov.uk)

**Catrina Stockwell**



**LENNY'S MEMORY CAFE**  
 for people living with memory changes and dementia, their family, friends and carers

**All are welcome, just pop in!**  
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**St Leonard's Church, Sherfield, RG27 OJB**  
 find us on the A33, opposite Wildmoor Lane, Church End  
 more info: [lennysmemorycafe@gmail.com](mailto:lennysmemorycafe@gmail.com) / 01256 880327

Organised by St Leonard's Church and the Sherfield community funded by HCC and donations



## Graham White reflects on 1 year of volunteering for Wilder Bramley

Have you ever seen a request for volunteers and thought, 'Nah, I'll skip this one'? Well, on seeing such a request from Wilder Bramley, instead of stepping backwards, I stepped forward. Having always been passionate about the environment and wildlife, I thought this was a way I could do a bit more.

Joining any group can be strange at first, but I soon got the hang of how things worked. They're all friendly.

At the first meeting, I heard about a scything opportunity at Clift Meadow. Well, I've never scythed before, and training was being offered. Now, a year on, I'm scythe trained (but not quite a pro). It is surprisingly satisfying and a great workout.

What's a bee garden? Well, I know now. I would recommend that next time you're at Clift Meadow, you check it out. Read the information boards. I'm sure that you will learn something new. Looking back at photos from the garden's early days to now, you can really appreciate the hard work of all the volunteers who have made it into the multi-award-winning, bee-friendly garden it is today. Well done all.

Wildflower identification training at St Catherine's Hill was a fun outing. The other folks on the course were super knowledgeable and passionate about wildflowers. They were all keen to share their knowledge, and I learned a lot, especially that if you take the time to stop and look, you'll be surprised at what there is to discover.



I could write a book about my first year with Wilder Bramley, but these are just a few highlights:

- Finished a 6-month EU-funded course on Environmental Sustainability.
- Completed First Aid and Work Party Leader courses.
- Planted a bunch of plants and bushes.
- Attended WB presentations, learning about badgers, dormice, amphibians and the Galápagos Islands.
- Participated in local biodiversity surveys.
- Learned about the benefits of mini ponds to nature and installed four of them.
- On behalf of the Bramley Bee Gardeners, collected an RHS award at Wisley.
- Built and published a WB website - a first for me.

I also met a lot of friendly people who share my passion for the environment. All this for £10 a year! What a bargain.

It's clear that our planet and nature need a little help just now. Even our small actions can make a difference. Next time you see a volunteer opportunity, don't be afraid to step up and help. You'll be amazed at what you can accomplish.

**Graham White**



Receiving the RHS award at Wisley on behalf of the Bee Gardeners



## Hold The Date .... It's the Bramley Fête

### Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2025



If you can volunteer for a few hours to help set up, support during the event or clear away.  
Please contact: [simongillcmt@gmail.com](mailto:simongillcmt@gmail.com)

## Little Apples

Hello from everyone at Little Apples. We hope you had a great Christmas break. Before Christmas, our older children performed their lovely Christmas Nativity and all the children enjoyed our Christmas party with an entertainer, Crazy M, who brought a real rabbit to see us. Father Christmas also visited which was great fun.

This term at Little Apples we are welcoming lots of new families and learning about polar biomes and the animals that live in them. The children have made great paper plate penguins, roleplayed ice fishing and played with polar bears in ice.

In 2025, Chinese New Year begins on 29th January and ends on 12th February with the Lantern Festival. This marks the beginning of the year of the snake. The children will be making

animal masks and Chinese lanterns to celebrate, as well as enjoying Chinese themed dressing-up.

New Year is traditionally a time to make resolutions and improvements, so we thought it would be a good time to share a new initiative from the Local Authority:

Hampshire Healthy Steps Family Steps offers support for families with children aged 2 to 12, providing practical advice on developing healthy habits and supporting wellbeing. More information can be accessed here: <https://www.hampshirehealthysteps.org.uk/>

This half term we will be developing an outdoor classroom, extending the outdoor learning opportunities at Little Apples, and we are really looking forward to spending lots of spring outdoors, learning about the changing seasons and the excitement of new life.



If you have a child who you wish to start Little Apples in the academic year from September 2025, we will start to allocate sessions after the Easter break. It is never too early to register your child, so please don't hesitate to contact Jo on 07598 588460 or [manager@littleapples.org](mailto:manager@littleapples.org) if you would like to have a visit or a chat.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2025.

## Butter Daisy

As I look back at the photographs and events of these past months, I can see our 'boundless and diverse curriculum' in full effect. The puppet shows, Rudolph runs, snowball target practice, icy towers, photography practice, awarding one another peace prizes, decorating jumpers, avoiding meteors, making tasty toast art, and saving 'Humpty Dumpty', are just a handful of the activities that have been on offer to the children, specifically tailored to captivate their interests and build upon their individual learning needs.

We have been celebrating Christmas time and other festivities too, including awareness days, such as Wildlife Conservation Day. On this day, the children learned about creatures great and small; from making bug hotels to shelter and protect tiny insects, to big art projects where they painted a leopard's missing spots.

As we headed into December, our nursery elves (better known as our dedicated practitioners) were busy transforming our setting into a winter wonderland. With some festive decorations and seasonal set ups, our environment magically mirrors and reflects what our children are encountering outside of the setting, at home and within the community. From arctic adventures to traditional trees, the children have been developing their understanding of how different parts of the world experience wintertime.

It was a pleasure to be invited to Bramley's Christmas Light Switch On and included in the competition. Our winner looked amazing in her reindeer onesie as she helped press the all-important button with the other winners. Some of us made it along to the event, adding our voices to the carolling. We were very grateful for the hospitality – the mince pies were delicious!

We wish everyone a Happy New Year!



If you would like to hear more about Butter Daisy Nursery, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01256 882515 or email [butter@mydaisynursery.com](mailto:butter@mydaisynursery.com).

**Clare Canning**

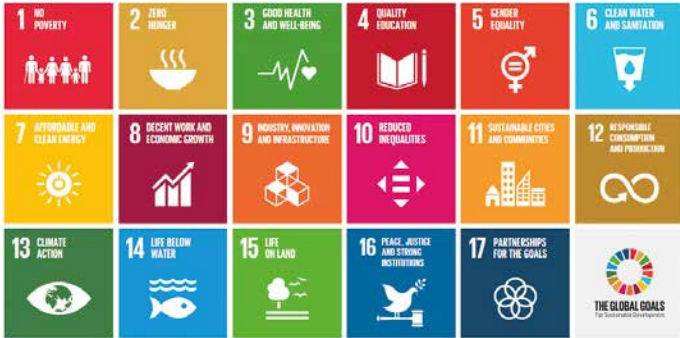




## Bramley School

At Bramley School, we love to enrich our curriculum with a range of additional opportunities to broaden children's knowledge and experiences. Throughout the year, we hold a range of theme weeks to shine a light on particular areas of the curriculum, subjects or topics. During Autumn term, we had our STEM week – focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.

Last year, we introduced the children to the 17 Global Goals



– developing the children's understanding of issues around the world; how we can *Make a Difference* and support others. In classes, the children looked at real life scenarios that are experienced around the world and how we could use a range of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths skills to solve problems. Through discussions, we encouraged our value of *Being Confidently Me* to share ideas and work in teams to recognise that they really could help.

In EYFS, the children investigated Global Goal 6 and 14 – looking at water pollution and how we need to keep our waters clean. They used light sticks to see the effects of oil in water.



The children in Year 1 looked closer to home and investigated habitats in our local area. They were seeing how important it was to protect life on land with Goals 13 and 15. In class, they designed and created bird feeders from natural materials to sustain animals in winter.



Bramley Church of England Primary School

In Year 2 their focus was on Global Goals 9 and 14. They used their growing knowledge of the properties of materials to think about floating and sinking. Working in teams, they designed and build rafts before testing to see if they would float, and if they did, what weight they could carry.

Global Goals 3 and 9 were the focus in Year 3. They combined technology skills with designing sports equipment using sustainable materials - trying to make their products environmentally friendly and modern!



The children in Year 4 focused their work on water pollution, understanding the causes and then effects on wildlife - Global Goals 6, 13 and 14. They investigated a range of techniques to clean water, judging their success rates at improving water quality.

Across Year 5, the children learnt more about Global Goals 2, 3 and 11, developing their understanding of when foods grow across the year and exploring our allotments. They looked at difficulties farmers around the world have in transporting their fruit and vegetables safely in order to make good money from them at markets. They had great fun designing mechanisms for the safe transportation of fruits down mountainsides!

Global Goals 3, 11 and 15 were the focus for children in Year 6. They were looking at developing sustainable communities by designing and creating model playgrounds that they would like for our school – using only natural, sustainable or recycled materials.

Having these theme weeks creates an extra buzz around the school, with all of the children's learning linked in some way which creates a common language. We firmly believe that supporting the children to understand and be passionate about the world around them is crucial to them becoming active citizens of the future.

## Christmas at The Priory

Christmas was a real community event at The Priory. Our musical performances were enjoyed by all parents and involved every single child singing, the school choir and backing music provided by our talented staff!

A magical treat also happened when Santa arrived in a decorated tractor complete with The Grinch!

We have spaces in some of our classes at the moment. If you'd like to have a look around the school to meet our



amazing pupils and staff, please give us a call on 01256 850062 or email [office@priory.hants.sch.uk](mailto:office@priory.hants.sch.uk).





## Santa's Sleigh Spreads Cheer Across Bramley

For the fourth consecutive year, Bramley Scout Group proudly joined forces with the Loddon Valley Lions to support their Santa Float collections in December.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, this year's collection was a resounding success. Over three evenings, Santa and his helpers raised an impressive £2,136 - £200 more than last year! On behalf of the Loddon Valley Lions, we would like to thank everyone who donated. Your kindness proves that the Christmas spirit is alive and thriving in Bramley.

One of the most enjoyable parts of the collection is admiring the festive decorations throughout the village. Of course, Mike's dazzling display on Walsh Road stood out as a true highlight. His ever-growing masterpiece of lights and festive cheer brings so much pleasure to so many.

To make the most of this festive treat, our youngest Group Sections, Beavers and Squirrels, ended their term with a hike that finished at Mike's house. The sight of his incredible display left the children open mouthed, their faces lighting up with delight as they turned the corner. To their surprise (and ours), Mike had gone the extra mile by setting out a selection of chocolates, which brought even more smiles to our young adventurers - and their leaders!

Thank you to everyone in the village for making this Christmas so special, and a particular thank you to Mike for going above and beyond to spread joy. Here's to another year of festive community spirit in Bramley! We've already volunteered to do the same again this year!



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## Save Money and Energy with a Free Home Energy Survey

After a mild end to 2024, the recent cold snap has been a stark reminder of just how expensive heating our homes can be. Rising energy costs make it more important than ever to find ways to save money and stay warm this winter.

That's where Bramley Greener Homes, a project run by Loddon Community Energy, comes in. We are offering **completely free, no-obligation home energy surveys**, conducted by a team of friendly, trained local volunteers who are passionate about helping the community.

### What's the catch?

There isn't one. We know it's hard to believe something could really be free, but it's true - there's no fine print, no sales pitch, and no affiliation with energy companies or contractors. The surveys are funded by grants, and our goal is simple: to help you save money and reduce energy waste in your home.

### What happens during a survey?

The survey is quick, non-invasive, and tailored to your home. Our volunteers will:

- Identify draughts and areas where energy may be wasted.
- Suggest simple, cost-effective measures to improve efficiency.
- Provide a report with clear, practical advice for you to review at your own pace.

Whether you're renting or own your home, the advice you'll receive is designed to help you take small steps that could lead to big savings.

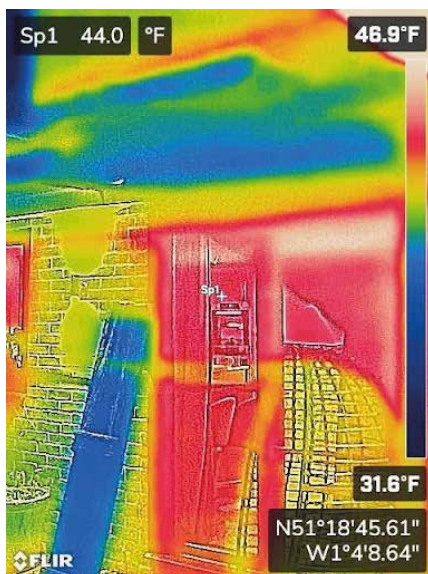
### Want to get involved?

This initiative is entirely community-driven, and we're always looking for more volunteers. Training is free, and you'll be fully supported as you gain confidence in helping others. It's a great way to make a positive impact and learn valuable skills.

### Book your free survey today!

To book your no-obligation home energy survey or find out more about volunteering, please contact us at [surveys@loddoncommunityenergy.org.uk](mailto:surveys@loddoncommunityenergy.org.uk).

Let's work together to make Bramley a greener, warmer, and more affordable place to live!



Original thermal image from a Bramley Survey

## Last chance to see Basingstoke Gang Show. Book your tickets today!

It's your last chance to book tickets for the Basingstoke Gang Show, returning to The Haymarket for its 29th variety show! Performances start on **Thursday 13th** and run until **Saturday 22nd February 2025**, excluding Sunday 16th. Matinee performances are also on Saturday 15th and 22nd February.

The gang have been working hard since early September with each of the 70 cast members attending over 200 hours of rehearsals, a total of 14,000 hours across the cast.

With a production of classic to contemporary performances showcasing the very best in local talent in the Scout & Guide associations, you can expect to be delighted by a show lasting 2.5 hours. Basingstoke Gang Show is recognised as the **best-selling and longest running 'family variety show'** in the South of England.

Tickets are on sale via [www.anvilarts.org.uk](http://www.anvilarts.org.uk). Adults £23, Children £16 and last night (Saturday 22nd) all seats £24. Ticket prices include £3 booking fee via Anvil Arts.

For more information, please see the Basingstoke Gang Show website [www.basingstokegangshow.com](http://www.basingstokegangshow.com)



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**Bramley SpeedWatch**

A gentle reminder that speed limits are set for a reason and exceeding them is illegal. The minimum penalty for speeding is a £100 fine and three points added to your licence. Receiving 12 or more points within three years may disqualify you from driving. If you're a newly qualified driver and receive six points during the first two years after passing your test, your licence will automatically be cancelled (revoked). To get it back you'll need to apply and pay for a new provisional licence and pass both theory and practical tests again. Think before you speed – is it worth it?

**Recent Local SpeedWatch Activity:**

5 manned deployments were undertaken during November /

**Speed Indicator Device (SID) Data (December):**

SID Location	Days deployed	Traffic direction	% of vehicles exceeding 30 mph	No. vehicles exceeding 60 mph	Average speed
The Street by Churchlands	30	East	37%	5	29
Farriers	30	West	43%	0	30

**Keith Bunker**, outgoing Governor on the Council of Governors for **Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (HHFT)**, provides an update from our local hospital

How fortunate we are locally to have a hospital where productivity is continuing to improve. This contrasts with the public sector as a whole, where productivity is still 8.5% below pre-pandemic levels. It is also worth mentioning that not all hospital trusts are achieving improvements.

It is sad that this government's latest re-set for the NHS, with its list of 'new improvements (for example, bringing care into the community, and use of more digital), is portrayed as being a totally new initiative. In fact, this has been the plan for a long time, as those who studied the documents relating to the plans for the new hospital based on these changes will also be aware, so nothing new here!

That we need a new hospital is beyond doubt, especially as maintenance costs for the present Basingstoke facility are rising very rapidly, pushing the Trust's budget well into deficit this year. It is so serious that a lot of equipment well beyond its normal service date is having to be retained until its terminal failure.

**Camera Data (October - December):**

Month/Year	Verified Speeders (=>35mph)	Highest number of offences committed by one vehicle	Fastest Hour	Illegal Vehicles
Oct 2024*	1032	11	9 am	34
Nov 2024*	749	6	11am	20
Dec 2024*	432	3	8 am	11

\*Note: Roadworks on The Street in the vicinity of camera and low light levels.

December. A total of 53 vehicles were reported to the police from the 655 vehicles checked - hit rate 8%. Top speed recorded 45mph.

If you have any questions/concerns regarding SpeedWatch please email: [bramleyspeedwatch@yahoo.com](mailto:bramleyspeedwatch@yahoo.com) [speedwatch@hampshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:speedwatch@hampshire.pnn.police.uk) or visit: [www.hampshire.police.uk](http://www.hampshire.police.uk)

Keep Safe and Watch Your Speed

**Graham White, Bramley SpeedWatch Co-ordinator**

The Hampshire Together New Hospital Programme, together with patients and representatives of the community, has been studying the feedback from the planned new hospital public consultation which ended in March, and adapting the proposals for the business case accordingly, which must be approved by the local Integrated Care Board (ICB). This work is now close to the stage for the final document to be submitted for the ICB to review and approve. Sadly, any new hospital locally will be delayed behind the work being undertaken in those hospitals built with 'aerated concrete' which of course represents a safety hazard. Hospitals affected by RAAC are at the top of the Secretary of State's list of priorities to ensure patients can receive care in buildings that are safe and fit for purpose.

Ambulance queuing remains an issue, with several factors not helping. These include winter viruses, the lack of and delays in the installation of home equipment for patients leaving hospital (it is recognised home is often the best place for recovery), lack of joined up care, the cost of care homes – many now with weekly costs approaching £2,000. Perhaps it is also relevant to mention that we have a significantly lower number of hospital beds per head of the population compared to other European nations!

On a positive note, a new Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) has now

opened at Basingstoke. The UTC is separate to the ongoing work of the New Hospital Programme. Service from these facilities is designed to treat people requiring urgent - but not life-threatening care more efficiently, protecting emergency department services for patients presenting with the most severe conditions. These facilities are being developed to alleviate pressure across our Emergency Departments. People can access the Basingstoke UTC via 111 or will be directed from the Emergency Department.

However, the GP problem, where surgeries are private businesses, has not been helped by the recent changes to their costs in the budget. Similarly, just throwing money at the NHS, "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting to get a different result" is in Einstein's words the definition of madness. As any wise management consultant would advise, find the problems, devise solutions and then one knows where to target investment if it is really required.

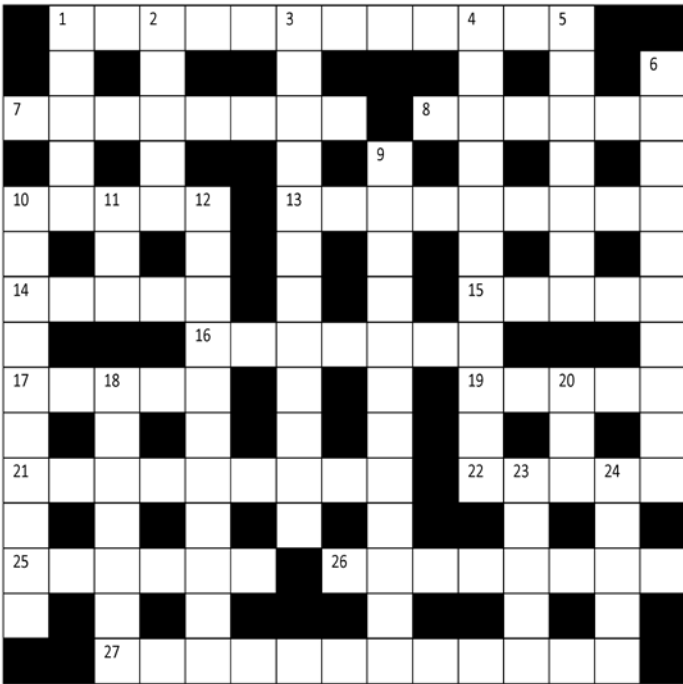
On another positive note, our Trust has done a lot of work recently to improve cyber security, so hopefully we will not incur a situation as experienced by some trusts following the recent hack of a widely used testing lab, which caused so much disruption to patient flow.

**Keith Bunker**  
Former Governor



**Cryptic Crossword No: 85**

See page 31 for the answers.



**Across**

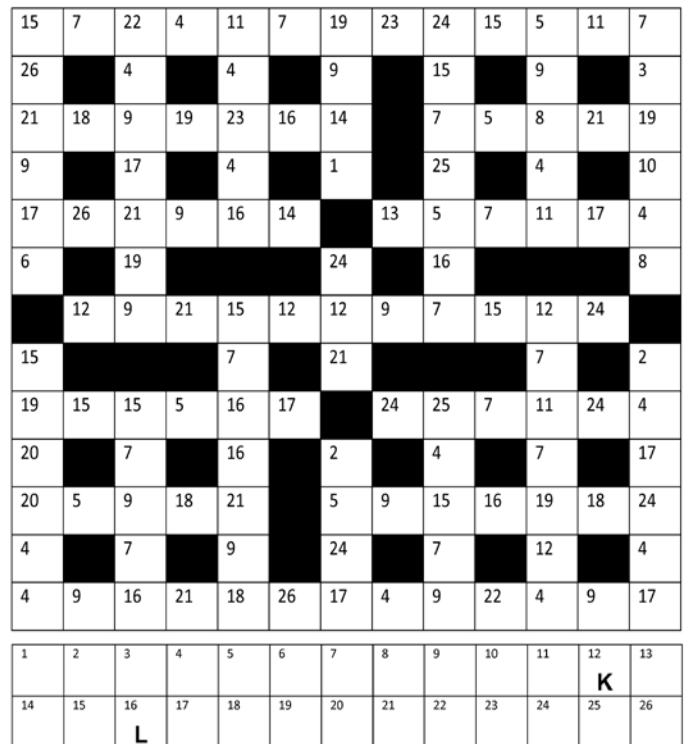
- 1 Express lively mixture without unknown for Rock and Roll legend. (5,7)
- 7 Actor/Director with a certain outlook perhaps ? (8)
- 8 Get in boat around. (6)
- 10 Delay or trader's booth. (5)
- 13 O dice been used for reverence. (9)
- 14 Sounds like you con people for gold rush area. (5)
- 15 Confuse or become rotten. (5)
- 16 Made function inside found to be invalid. (7)
- 17 A meeting I should have initially attended for religion. (5)
- 19 To start with I might be even desperate to fix in firmly. (5)
- 21 Romantic illumination for dinner perhaps. (9)
- 22 Well known, what you would expect a musical composition to be. (5)
- 25 Right or dish. (6)
- 26 Sugary sentimentalism found in kitsch malt zone ? (8)
- 27 Lads toil in it to arrive at purification. (12)

**Down**

- 1 Taken action to conceal play. (5)
- 2 Essential and very important to all lives at the beginning. (5)
- 3 Persistently arranged floury supple letters. (12)
- 4 I rub lion cat around and produce oil perhaps. (11)
- 5 Desired to need ray about. (7)
- 6 Not protected and helpless. (10)
- 9 Type of navigation requiring a head for heights perhaps. (12)
- 10 One looking for things in a big way. (10)
- 11 Old ship or chest. (3)
- 12 Ah, send dollar without an article for owners. (11)
- 18 In a sign it educed flames and touched off. (7)
- 20 Sightless flier or something with which to hit a ball. (3)
- 23 OK a piece looked into for ruminant. (5)
- 24 Heard public school consumed. (5)

**CodeWord No: 71**

See page 31 for the answers.



Each number represents a unique letter from the alphabet and all 26 letters are used. Two letters are given to make a start.

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**READING ROADRUNNERS**

**Bramley 20/10 Road Races: 16th Feb '25**

Reading Roadrunners is organising the Bramley 20 and 10 mile road races to be held on Sunday 16th February 2025. The course consists of a 10 mile loop which is run twice for the 20 mile race. These races are a popular feature of the local and national racing calendar and over the years have raised thousands of pounds for charity. The 2025 races will continue the success of previous years and will be an enjoyable event for all participants.

Bramley Primary School will once again be our race HQ and the races will start and finish at the school. The races will start at 10:30, and the runners will congregate at the start line on Bramley Lane, outside the school prior to this. The course will remain open until 14:30, and we expect to be out of the school by 16:30. In order to provide all the facilities for the runners, the school will open at 08:00 to enable us to get ready for the event and to build the start / finish area in the school entrance.

**Traffic restrictions will be as follows:**

1. Bramley Lane will be closed with a diversion via Moat Close for the duration of the event.
2. Road closures and diversions will be in place for 15-20 minutes at the



start of the race. There will be no access to Moat Close and Bramley Lane between 10:15 and 10:35.

3. At the start of the race (10:30) there will be a short road closure on Sherfield Road between Bramley Lane and Folly Lane until all runners are through, which takes about 10-15 minutes.
4. Parking for the runners will be well away from the school.

**It's not too late to take part...**

To enter either the 10 mile or 20 mile race please go to our website:

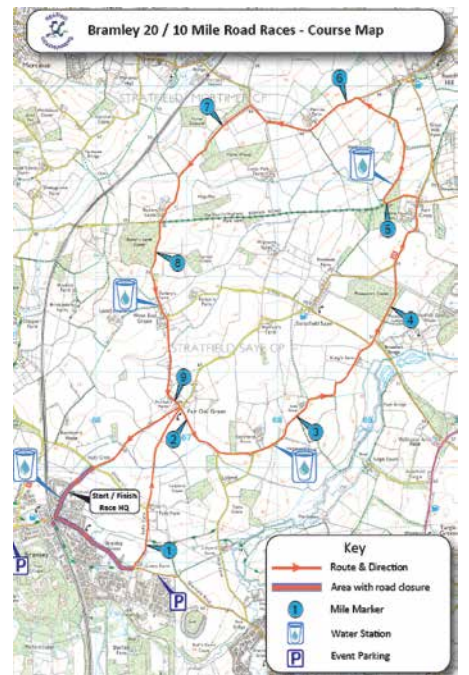
<http://www.readingroadrunners.org/bramley>

If you would like further information, please see the website or email me at:

[bramley@readingroadrunners.org](mailto:bramley@readingroadrunners.org)

Yours faithfully, for and on behalf of Reading Roadrunners,

**Gill Manton**  
Race Director



**Ranil Jayawardena** – former Member of Parliament for NE Hants, including Bramley, was knighted by HM The King in the **2025 New Year Honours list**, for political and public service, following a recommendation from the Prime Minister.

Sir Ranil had the following to say about receiving his knighthood:

“I am deeply honoured to receive this knighthood from HM The King, marking my public service from local Councillor to Cabinet Minister. Public service has always been important to me and my family, it is important in my faith, and it is an opportunity to give back to community and country. To serve as the Member of Parliament for where I grew up, went to local state schools and live today with my family was an enormous privilege – and, being local, it was such a pleasure to work for many people who I have known since childhood.

“During my time as International Trade Minister, I led a team of excellent officials to safeguard global supply chains during Covid-19 and negotiate new trade agreements. As



Environment Secretary, I kicked off new efforts to combat water pollution. And, beyond politics, I have always been committed to supporting community initiatives and helping those who help others, particularly children and families.

“I would like to thank my family, my colleagues, and the people of North East Hampshire for their support over the past sixteen years. I am truly grateful to have had the opportunity to serve.”





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### Question

My name is Dave and I have a small business. I did everything myself until recently when it all got too much for me. I have realised that to help with the work I need to take on my first employees. This will be a great help, but I am worried that I don't really know what I am supposed to be doing other than paying them. I want to be a fair employer and do things correctly, but it all seems very daunting and I need some professional advice please. Where do I start?

### Answer

Well Dave, you have come to the right place as we have a team of experts at Phillips, ready and willing to help you. I am afraid there really is a lot to take on board when you first employ people but with the right help in place it can be quite straightforward. I will broadly outline the main points and then you can let me know which aspects you need more help with.

1. You need to have employer liability insurance in place to protect yourself and your business before taking on any employees. Check your public liability insurance to make sure it extends to employer liability cover.
2. Before employing anyone at all you must check that they have the right to work in the UK, that it is a current right and that they can provide evidence of this. You must keep a record so you can prove that you have done this before they do any work at all for you.
3. On day one of employment, you must provide written terms of employment setting out the terms and conditions upon which they are employed. This will be their contract of employment and needs some thought as to what you wish to include in it.
4. To make sure that the contract is fair and reasonable you will need to have some basic knowledge of employee rights and regulations. A major pitfall will be if you are unaware of the rules relating to minimum wage, holiday pay, working hours/breaks, sick pay and notice periods. You will also need to detail any required probation period.

5. You have an obligation to deduct tax and employee National Insurance from all wages at source. You may also need to set up an employee pension scheme so that you can automatically enrol your employees into it. You will need sufficient understanding of this in order to advise the employees of their rights and obligations. You should also consider whether you wish to offer the employees any other non-statutory benefits.
6. You must ensure that as an employer, you take steps to protect your employees from discrimination, harassment and victimisation and ensure equal pay and treatment in the workplace. You will also need a fair and transparent process for dealing with any grievances or any disciplinary issues. Having clear policies in place is advisable and will assist both you and your employees to understand what your respective rights and obligations are.
7. Think also about family friendly policies which may not impact you initially but which you will need to familiarise yourself with in due course if they do arise. This could include flexible working, pregnancy and maternity, adoption, paternity and parental leave, all of which have rules in place, so do take advice if one of these scenarios arises. You may also have to deal with leave for employees dealing with an emergency relating to a dependent or bereavement.
8. Training must also be something that you consider at the outset of employment, as it is necessary to put a clause into the contract of employment to say whether there will be any compulsory training needed for the role. If so, the contract must state whether the employee may have to pay for any training themselves.

As you take this exciting new step for your business, know that you're not alone—our team at Phillips is here to ensure your success as an employer. Hiring your first employees can feel overwhelming, but with the right legal guidance, you can build a strong foundation that protects both you and your team. From ensuring legal compliance, to drafting bespoke employment contracts and developing effective workplace policies, we're here to simplify the process so you can focus on growing your business.

Contact Phillips today for expert, personalised support, and let us help you create a workplace that's not only compliant, but also welcoming and fair for your employees.

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## A Cross Spider

So, here we have a cross spider. I don't mean a spider that's upset about being papped, though I must admit I hadn't asked if she was ok to be featured. It didn't seem unreasonable, though, as she'd been hanging round our back door for some weeks, and never seemed to mind my peering quite closely as I passed by. She's wearing a very smart outfit too, looks like a tiger print to me. Many of her relatives don't run to anything that bright, sticking to the more conservative colourways, browns or even black. But cross she was, also known as a European garden, diadem, or pumpkin spider; a fairly common native of both Europe and the UK (perhaps they don't recognise the distinction). On her back is a marking of a cross, or I guess you can see it as a sort of crown, hence the various popular names.

This is a largish orb web spider – that is, one that constructs quite a big circular web, with a spiral of sticky threads neatly set all round the main area, but a rather random muddle at or a bit above the centre. The proprietor of the web, the female, will normally be sitting either there or inconspicuously in foliage at the top of the web while waiting for customers. And she'll be head downwards: but why, and how can she do this without getting dreadful headaches? This does, in fact, raise some points about how various animals have evolved to suit their environment, not only in terms of food and shelter, but also how they may have very different constraints and opportunities.

A spider like this has to be able to reach a frantically struggling, possibly aggressive and sting-enabled victim, at the other side of a sticky web before it breaks loose, or miss lunch. There's no time to plan a cautious approach, a quick dash seems to work best. This would be one of the benefits of sitting at the top of the web looking down. We big animals think in terms of walking or running, processes of supporting the body on legs, and pushing it along. That's not going to be much good navigating an intricate web of silk, some of it loaded with a very sticky glue. Hence this sort of spider, having long legs with hooks on the end, uses a very energy-efficient sort of trapeze artist's swinging gait, dropping down onto the prey before they can get their escape act together. A quick bite paralyses the target, which is then wrapped in more silk thread while the venom stills the struggling, and enzymes start the digestion process.



This Tarzan trick is also ideal for getting around. When the need arises to move on, either due to major web-damage or lack of captures, she'll wait for a moderate, steady breeze, then allow a thread of silk to drift away until it latches on to something solid: spiders are very sensitive to how the web feels. When it's secure, she can swing along that single thread with very little effort, well away from the dangers and obstacles on the ground below. The males will use the same technique to visit the females, though they don't bother much with web building: their main skill has to be the avoidance of being eaten by the much larger female.

Another disadvantage of our human scale is that as we tend to keep our heads perhaps 1,800mm above our feet, we generally become uncomfortable the other way up, going red in the face as the blood control valves can't get it back up to the heart so well. The effect can be to roughly double the blood pressure in the head. For a spider there's no problem: the body size is only a few millimetres, so there's no appreciable pressure difference. And neither do they have veins, arteries and our sort of circulation. Inside the body there's a blueish, copper-based fluid to transport oxygen, and this just sort of floods the body organs: no need to breathe in and out, air just permeates the inner surfaces. Hence, they can sit what we would call upside down as long as they want. I guess the view's much better, once you get used to it.

**John Stubbs**

## Basingstoke Deane Rotary Club changing lives with loans

Basingstoke Deane Rotary Club are celebrating a landmark charitable achievement. As one of hundreds of Rotary clubs from across the country who have jointly contributed over £1 million to Lendwithcare, a microfinance charity which enables people in the UK to make small loans to entrepreneurs from poor communities around the world.

Since October 2011, Rotary clubs across the UK have been raising funds to make small loans to entrepreneurs in developing countries, enabling them to start or expand their small businesses and work their way out of poverty, feed their families and send their children to school. Basingstoke Deane Rotary has been part of this since early 2020.

More than £1 million has now been lent by Rotary to farmers, tailors, market stallholders and food producers to name just a few of the types of businesses Rotary have helped in 11 countries across Africa, Asia, and South America.

Basingstoke Deane Rotary Club have raised and lent a total of £11,366, contributing towards the national £1 million landmark, with the club loaning to 9 groups / entrepreneurs in Malawi, Philippines, and Rwanda.

Lendwithcare's own details tell us that Basingstoke Deane Rotary have helped 78 entrepreneurs, and 298 family members, and assisted in the creation of 43 jobs. Club President Mike Lakin said "Basingstoke Deane Rotary Club are proud to be a part of this fantastic initiative. Lendwithcare is a great way to help people out of poverty. You see exactly who the money is going to, and what they will use it for.

"The entrepreneur uses the funds to help them to earn a living, often employing family members and neighbours as well, helping to lift their communities out of poverty. They pay the loans back, which can be re-lent to person after person."

Facebook: @RotaryBasingstokeDeane

Twitter: @RBstokeDeane





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## Probuss Hears About the Man Behind Q

There can't be many people in this country who have not seen at least one Bond film featuring that smooth spy and womaniser, James Bond. In the films, James Bond survives many tricky situations, using different pieces of equipment or gadgets made by the in-house boffin known as Q. Bond author Ian Fleming was deputy head of Naval Intelligence during WW2 and knew they really did have such people in the background whose job as a Supply Officer, or Quartermaster (hence the use of the initial Q) to provide solutions for field operators facing life or death scenarios.



Probuss President Stephen Thair & Speaker Guy Caplin

Probuss' most recent speaker was Guy Caplin, who had a lengthy career as a TV producer and director creating many top-rated programmes for Britain's ITV network. Following retirement, he has investigated long forgotten and unknown war heroes, some of whom were responsible for clever inventions and gadgets, just like Q. One such was Charles Fraser-Smith, who was in MI6 and who invented the self-heating can of soup. He realised that British agents dropped into occupied France needed to blend in with the locals, which included smelling like a native, so he invented garlic flavoured chocolate.

Another was Clayton Hutton (known as 'Clutty') who had been a pilot in WW1 and in 1939 was the manager of a jam making factory. He sent thirteen telegrams to the War Ministry offering his services and was eventually placed in MI9 to act as Q to help the military either avoid capture or aid their escape.

His many successful developments included printing maps on silk which was only made possible by his



Magnetic shirt collar stiffeners



WW2 Razor Blade compass

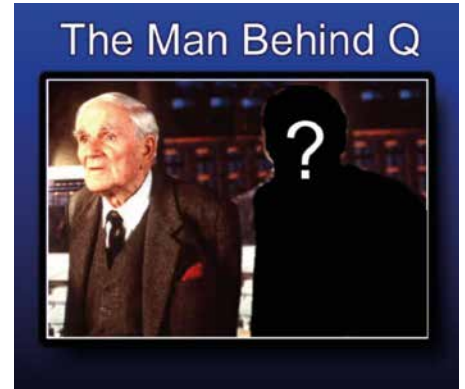
knowledge of jam making where pectin was used to stabilise the printing ink so that it did not run into the fabric. He made compass needles as shirt collar stiffeners and miniature compasses that screwed into the back of uniform buttons with a left-hand thread to thwart German guards. Some razor blades were magnetised so that when placed on the surface of water they would point north.

The chewed wooden end of pencils provided cover for miniature compasses and boxes of fifty Players cigarettes became emergency food and survival kits for the RAF. Bomber command was losing one in five planes and Clutty realised that the large fur lined flying boots would be an obvious giveaway for escaping air crew, so he redesigned them. The foot section was made to look like a real shoe with the heel containing a map and compass, the laces were a Gigli saw that would cut through steel bars and padlocks and the cut off legs when turned inside out became a waistcoat.



Red Cross parcels sent to the PoW camps were full of escape provisions. Civilian clothing was a must, and uniform jackets could have the lining removed and turned inside out to become a jacket that would look domestic. The fabric used for mess uniforms was the same colour as those of their guards and Officers' caps could have the fabric taken off the peak to reveal a shiny black peak as used on civilian head gear.

Vinyl records that had music one side had a map and German currency secreted on the reverse, books had silk maps hidden in their covers and green edged handkerchiefs could have a map displayed after being soaked in water



in which a yellow Rowntree's Smartie had been dissolved.

While miniature radios and transmitters were fitted into twenty cigarette packets, things like 'Little Nellie', the autogyro seen in the 1967 Bond film 'You Only Live Twice', or cars with revolving number plates and machine guns had yet to be invented. But who's to say that there are no other Q sections busily at work today just in case their efforts might be needed in the future.



Little Nellie Autogyro

See [www.probusbasingstoke.club](http://www.probusbasingstoke.club) for more information about this social club for retired professional and business managers.

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTS

To advertise in the classified section and reach 2100 homes in and around Bramley for as little as £2 per line, contact:

Keith Dillaway  
[bram.mag.adverts@gmail.com](mailto:bram.mag.adverts@gmail.com)



<b>Mondays</b>	
<i>Badminton</i>	Village Hall
<i>Petite Dance</i>	Village Hall
<i>Hipp Pilates</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>NHS Heath Visitor</i>	Village Hall
<i>Pregnancy Yoga with Sam 6pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Beavers 5-6pm</i>	Brocas Hall
<i>Yoga with Sam 7.30pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Classical Pilates, 6.45-7.45pm</i>	Village Hall
<i>Cubs 6.30-8pm</i>	Brocas Hall
<i>Trail Runners 7.30pm</i>	Clift Meadow car park

<b>Tuesdays</b>	
<i>Parish Council Meetings 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month</i>	Bramley Room, Village Hall
<i>Badminton</i>	Village Hall
<i>Bell Ringing 8pm</i>	St James's Church
<i>Petite Dance</i>	Village Hall
<i>Short Mat Bowls</i>	Village Hall
<i>Body Control Pilates 9.30-10.30am</i>	Village Hall
<i>Bramley 0-5s 10am - 11.30 am</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Scouts 7-8.30pm</i>	Brocas Hall
<i>Hipp Pilates 7-9pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Table Tennis - 7pm</i>	St Stephen's Hall, Little London

<b>Wednesdays</b>	
<i>1<sup>st</sup> Bramley Brownies</i>	Village Hall
<i>1<sup>st</sup> Bramley Rainbows</i>	Village Hall
<i>Wednesday Club 10am to midday</i>	St Stephen's Hall
<i>1<sup>st</sup> Bramley Guides</i>	Village Hall
<i>WG Pilates 9.15 - 10.15am and 12.30 - 1.30pm</i>	Cross House
<i>Bramley Tea and Coffee morning 10-11.30am</i>	Clift Meadow Community Cafe
<i>Squirrels 5-6pm</i>	Brocas Hall
<i>Sue Cordery Yoga 6-7pm and 7-8pm</i>	Cross House
<i>Trail Runners 7.30pm</i>	Clift Meadow car park

<b>Thursdays</b>	
<i>Bramley &amp; Romans Floral Society 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday</i>	Sherfield on Loddon Village Hall
<i>Dance Club</i>	Primary School Hall
<i>NHS Heath Visitor</i>	Village Hall
<i>Pilates</i>	St Stephen's Hall
<i>WI 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday</i>	Village Hall
<i>Friendship Walks, 10.30</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Perform 5.45pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Hatha Yoga 6.30-7.30pm</i>	Cross House
<i>Classical Pilates - 6.30-7.30pm</i>	Village Hall
<i>Walking 4 Fitness &amp; Friendship 6.40 for 6.45pm (April-Sept)</i>	Clift Meadow car park
<i>Petite Dance</i>	Village Hall
<i>Hipp Pilates 7-8pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion

<b>Fridays</b>	
<i>WG Pilates 12-1pm</i>	Cross House
<i>Hipp Pilates 1.30-2.30pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Perform 3.30pm</i>	Clift Meadow Pavilion
<i>Youth Club 5pm</i>	Brocas Hall

<b>Saturdays</b>	
<i>Petite Dance</i>	Village Hall
<i>Tennis (age 7-13)</i>	Clift Meadow
<i>HIPP Pilates 9.30-10.30m</i>	Village Hall
<i>Karate 11.00-12.00pm</i>	Primary School Hall
<i>Live Country Music with Dance 8pm 1st and 3rd Saturday each month</i>	Village Hall

<b>Sundays</b>	
<i>See page 5 for Church services at St James's Bramley</i>	

**Do you have a listing on this page? If so, please can you check that the details are correct and let me have the timings if they are missing. Any corrections or additions can be emailed to [editor@bramleymagazine.org.uk](mailto:editor@bramleymagazine.org.uk)**  
**THANK YOU**

### Contact Details for Village Clubs and Organisations

Organisation	Name	Tel No	Email	Remarks
Parish Council	Maxta Thomas	07810 692486	www.bramley-pc.gov.uk clerk@bramley-pc.gov.uk	Not for bookings
Clift Meadow	Bookings Team	01256 260270	bookings@cliftmeadow.org.uk	Bookings
Cross House	Anne Smith	01256 880327	admin@stjamesbramley.org.uk	Bookings
Village Hall	Catriona Hayward	07464 749997	Bookings@bvht.org.uk	Bookings
School Hall	Alison Tarrant	881339		
Activ8 Youth Club	Ed Ives	07964 069390		
Badminton	Jane Matthews	881647		
Bell Ringers	Jonathan Barclay Smith	541251	rjbarclaysmith@gmail.com	
Bramley 0-5s	Jo Weineck	07717 340985		
Bramley Tea and Coffee morning	Jane Kettridge		jk.cmcc@btconnect.com	
Bramley United FC	Mick Walsh	07802 912615/ 01256 881241	michael.walsh59@outlook.com	
Bramley Volunteer Drivers		07787 166924	Visit us on Facebook	
Brownies	Katie Slater	07545 319342	bramley.brownies@gmail.com	Now Weds only
Classical Pilates	Naomi Baker		naomi@nbkpilates.co.uk	
Clift Meadow Youth Cricket (Old Basing CC)	Nick Cooper		nickcooper1@sky.com	
Clift Meadow Youth Football (Loddon Sports)			loddonfcsecretary@outlook.com <a href="https://www.loddonsportsfc.com">https://www.loddonsportsfc.com</a>	
Country Music	Maureen Durrant	07512 704707		No children please
Floral Society	Linda Dove	01256 886167 07842 339161		
Friendship Walks			info@bramleyvillagehub.com	
Guides	Viv Salem		firstbramleyguides@yahoo.com	
Hipp Pilates	Jo Kemp Williams	07557 412400	jo.kemp-williams@outlook.com	
Little Apples	Jo Whatley & Sian Davies	07598 588460	manager@littleapples.org	
Naturally Yoga with Sam	Samantha Webber	07713 349227	www.naturallyyoga.co.uk sam@naturalnook.co.uk	
NHS Health Visitor	Kerry Frost		kerry.frost@southernhealth.nhs	
Perform	Gemma Payne	07825 916496	gemmapayne@perform.org.uk	
Petite Dance	Louise Pain	07877 890673	misslouise.petite@outlook.com	
Body Control Pilates	Heather Lewis	07785 254313	hsfitnessuk@mac.com	
Pilates (WG Pilates)	Wendy Gill	07961 102535	wendygill44@yahoo.co.uk	
Rainbows	Lizzie Ayres	07917 773563	bramleyrainbows@gmail.com	
Royal British Legion	Rhydian Vaughan	07774 681516		
Short Mat Bowls	Judy Foyle	881821	stevefoyle@hotmail.co.uk	
Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts	Jodie Saunders	07818 280041	jodie@bramley-scouts.org.uk	
St Stephen's Hall	Doreen Quilter	850394	doreen.quilter@btinternet.com	Bookings
Sue Cordery Yoga	Sue Cordery	07884 138026	suecordery@icloud.com www.suecorderyyoga.com	
Tennis (Clift Meadow)	Simon	07904 340004		
Thula Mama	Rebecca Cooch	07971 798945	rebecca.cooch@gmail.com	
Trail Runners	Richard Perkins		richardperkins@yahoo.com	
Walking 4 Fitness & Friendship	Facebook		See Facebook: Walking 4 Fitness & Friendship	
WI	Pat Cole	881715	gpcole37@gmail.com	
Wilder Bramley		07503 155669	wilder.bramley@gmail.com or visit us on Facebook	
Yoga	Mark Golding	07969 890722	goldingyoga@gmail.com goldingyoga.com	



## Jordan Rollinson continues Smauel's story from last month, set in February 1634

The Church's bowels had been no warmer than its walls, but the biting wind still cut deep into Samuel's ill-protected arms. Catching the gust, his sleeves spread wide, allowing full entry to the pale temperature.

"And here I thought our Pastor's sermons were cold." Samuel muttered to Benjamin, who was similarly struggling with stepping out of their revered shelter.

"Watch yourself, they may be bold, but beyond those walls we should not speak of them," Benjamin grimaced, "not since the Book of Sports has made itself known again under Charles." He practically spat the King's name, turning to face both Samuel and Edward: "that man is wrapped around Laud's finger." Samuel simply nodded. With James as King, there had not been nearly as much religious taboo as there was under Charles. Now, in Laud's grip, that crimson noose tightened around Calvin's flock. Those "Puritans" included Samuel and his friends; they had connected with the resonance of the rhetoric. Laud had practically taken a sword to any who worshiped in ways he did not see fit, strong-arming the recital of his book from all Pastors who wished to continue receiving their livings.

During the sermon Father Malcom's voice had been quieter than usual, as if that sword's edge pressed against his voice box. In truth, perhaps it was, Laud had enjoyed his King-given powers. He passed strict rules against anyone who did not meet his expectations for communicating the Lord's scriptures.

"What barbed chains wrap the crown-" Samuel caught himself muttering, cutting off the thought as he spoke it.

"Are we not so blessed to have Charles now?" Edward sarcastically challenged the sentence, tucking his Bible into his pocket as he too stepped out, feet first into the cold mud. Kicking the dark, gritty sludge from his sole, Benjamin smirked.

"I would say he is volunteering for the abyss," he began, "but that would contest the beauty of predestination in the eyes of the All-Knowing."

"He knows all. What is, was and will be." Samuel muttered, the rigidity of the notion rolling like a water-smoothed pebble in his mind. There were no gaps or crevices in such a ruling, no ability to fracture or splinter. But on the other side of the shilling, it allowed no flexibility to change one's fate. There was little point, in the end. All was known.

They had hobbled through the slumbering woodland, bitterly muttering between themselves. Each had a different opinion on their dilemma. Edward, in his impetuosity, believed they should unapologetically stand firm in their radical beliefs. Benjamin, by contrast, was unsure that the Church was able to sustain itself under the repercussions of such a choice. Samuel was inclined to agree, sequestering the truth of their worship underneath Laud's own shadow. That would continue, until they rallied enough strength to kick the stool that Charles had constructed from beneath his feet. Samuel took a moment to reflect. Was such faith-bound rebellion the answer to oppression? It mattered neither way. The destination was predetermined.

### Citizens Advice Basingstoke

Know your rights: Faulty Goods

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- Not what was advertised or doesn't match the seller's description

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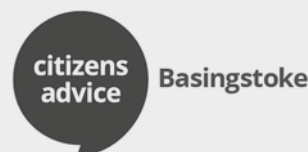
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**PUZZLE SOLUTIONS**

**Cryptic Crossword No: 85 Solution**

1	ENACT	1	ELVISPRESLEY
2	VITAL	7	EASTWARD
3	PURPOSEFULLY	8	OBTAIN
4	LUBRICATION	10	STALL
5	YEARNED	13	OBEDIENCE
6	UNDEFENDED	14	YUKON
9	AERONAUTICAL	15	ADDLE
10	SKYWATCHER	16	DEFUNCT
11	ARK	17	AMISH
12	LANDHOLDERS	19	IMBED
18	IGNITED	21	CANDLELT
20	BAT	22	NOTED
23	OKAPI	25	ENTREE
24	EATEN	26	SCHMALTZ
		27	DISTILLATION

Down: 1-24  
Across: 1-27

**CodeWord No: 71 Solution**

T	N	E	M	N	E	T	H	G	L	I	N	E
E		K		A		S		N		A		E
S	G	O	L	C	N	U		I	G	N	U	F
T		A		E		J		L		A		F
E	S	A	R	S	P	S		T	L	U	C	O
J		A				I		A				C
	S	K	C	A	N	K	K	C	N	I	K	
D			L		S					O		Z
E	T	A	R	U	Q		Y	L	N	I	H	T
W		E		P		X		E		T		N
O	I	D	U	A	V	L	L	B	O	N	G	I
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A	R	A	C	U	S	B	O	A	R	A	M	C

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