

THE Rabbiter



Issue 295 February 2023

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- **BASINGSTOKE SLEEP OUT**
- **HEATING SAINT MARK'S CHURCH**
- **CAMROSE CENTRE GRANT**

and much more

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THE Rabbiter

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EDITORIAL

Happy New Year to all our Readers. I hope 2023 will bring you good fortune and happiness.

Good News – I am pleased to report that The Rabbiter now has a small Committee to ensure that your community News continues to reach every local resident. We will take it in turns to write the editorial and ensure that we keep you up to date with local news and events.

It is going to be a busy year. Are you planning a Coronation Street Lunch on Sunday 7 May to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III and his Queen Consort. The Rabbiter would like to help members promote all events – just send details to newsdesk@therabbiter.biz.

The Rabbiter welcomes news of local activities and groups. Beggarwood Bookworms continues to go from strength to strength. If you enjoy reading this is the group for you. They meet each month to discuss an agreed book. Often the choice of books is not one members would have chosen but then find it a great read. For more information see page 6. The Hatch Warren WI meet regularly at the Community Centre. Their meetings include interesting speakers and often activities for members – see page 17 for more information. They welcome new members to their meetings – or just pop along and give them a try!

The Councillor's Update on page 8 is full of information on local issues. A new nursery is planned for the site next to the Holly Blue – this was the site originally planned as a much needed dentist. Let us hope that the dentist surgery will be built locally very soon. It is important that men get checked re Prostate Cancer regularly. There is an opportunity for testing on 11 March at the United Reformed Church in the Town Centre – see page 13 for details.

More and more of us are now concerned regarding the impact of our life on the environment. It is with great interest that I read the article from St Mark's Church in Kempshott on how they are attempting to reduce their impact by moving towards a net zero carbon solution for their heating system – see page 16. It would be good if more companies can make a move to adopting similar solutions.

What are you doing on 24 March? Julian House (a local homelessness charity) are challenging people to sleep out for one night to help raise money. Would you be prepared to leave your warm, comfortable bed for one night? More details on page 17. If you do accept this challenge, please let us know about the experience.

Don't forget that if you are thinking of having a spring clean, the Rabbiters are able to advertise your unwanted items for FREE – just send details to newsdesk@therabbiter.biz. Our copy date is the 15th of the month preceding publication.

Editor

We need helpers to distribute the Rabbiter. This takes about half an hour a month. Sadly we can't offer any financial reward save the satisfaction of helping our community. The following round need a deliverer:
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CGH & BEGGARWOOD PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

The December PPG Management Team meeting with Operose could not take place due to the increased demand being placed on the surgeries by the number of calls relating to concerns about Strep A and scarlet fever; following reports there had been an increase in cases. This is in addition to the usual high winter workload. In their recent Winter Service Update, CGH&B have apologised for longer than usual waiting times to speak to the Reception Team, and understand how frustrating it can be to suffer delays getting through to the surgeries. They are doing their best to ensure patients who need to be seen on the same day, can be.

After discussion with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board, the difficult decision was made, along with many other local practices, to temporarily delay routine appointments to ensure urgent cases can be seen quickly. In line with NHS guidance, this is being done according to clinical need, and every effort is being made to reduce disruption. CGH&B are asking patients to consider getting back in touch on another day if the reason for contacting them is not urgent. Requests for repeat prescriptions, general queries or fit to work certificates, can all be dealt with online through the website, <https://www.cghpartnership.co.uk>, or you can use the App: DriQ. Another useful site, with helpful information on what symptoms to look out for regarding Strep A, and advice on many common conditions, is the Healthier Together website, <https://www.what0-18.nhs.uk>. If you are unable to attend an appointment, or need to rearrange, please let the surgery know as soon as possible, so that it can be offered to others. Local pharmacies can help with some minor ailments. If symptoms are worsening or changing, you can visit NHS111 online, find your nearest treatment centre or, in an emergency, dial 999 or visit the emergency department at Basingstoke Hospital.

Other News

As part of the NHS England Terms of Reference, one of the aims of a PPG

is to, "build two-way communication and cooperation, between the practice and patients, other individuals and organisations in healthcare, and the wider community, to the benefit of all". PPG members recently attended, and participated in, a local community group (the CPC Group) meeting where the aims of the PPG, its structure, meetings held, etc., were covered, plus talks on diabetes and lung health. This was an example of building relationships with the wider community. In addition to our website, you can contact us at: cghb.surgeryppg@btinternet.com. We can help with a range of queries, but cannot answer medical questions.

Coffee Mornings for Carers are held on the first Friday of the month, from 1100 to 1300, at Westside Community Centre, where they can enjoy tea, coffee and biscuits, and talks on a range of subjects by guest speakers. For more information, contact Sharon at sharon.walsh@andovermind.org.uk, or tel. 07507 968372.

A Cost of Living/Warm Spaces document, plus a Schedule of Roving Clinics offering Covid and Flu vaccinations, blood pressure checks and signposting, aimed at low uptake areas and BAME communities, has been issued by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB. Detailed information can be found on our PPG website: <https://www.cghppg.co.uk>

For those living with chronic pain, there is a Chronic Pain Support Group which holds monthly meetings between 1300 and 1430, at the Proteus Creation Space, Basingstoke Town Centre, RG21 3DL. This is a welcoming group giving support and advice, activities and refreshments. The next meeting is scheduled for 2nd February. For further information, email office@bddf.org.uk, or tel: 01256 423869.

The Royal Voluntary Service, who work closely with the NHS have produced a helpful Stay Safe, Warm and Well guide to support people through the colder months. This guide includes tips on mental health, covid, flu vaccinations, money saving tips, and more, and can be found at: <https://royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/ourservices/advice-support/preparing-for-severe-wintery-conditions/>

cghppg.co.uk

GENEROUS GRANT MEANS ART WELLBEING PROJECT CAN CONTINUE TO HELP LOCAL HOMELESS AND VULNERABLE PEOPLE

Staff and volunteers at The Camrose Centre for homeless and vulnerably housed people recently hosted Lord and Lady Lyminster, who visited to find out more about the creative arts and wellbeing project artWell that they have helped fund at the Centre for another year.

They have supported The Camrose Centre with several generous grants in recent years. During their recent visit they met Corrine Marsh of artWell and heard how she uses creative arts to inspire imagination, promote mental wellbeing and inclusion amongst clients at the day centre at Glebe Hall in Basingstoke. Corrine makes weekly visits to The Camrose Centre to work with clients as a way of building self-confidence and positivity during their homelessness recovery pathway. The grant means that this valued project can definitely continue throughout 2023.

The Camrose Centre is a day centre that supports homeless and vulnerably housed members of the local community, and is funded by individual and corporate donations, trusts and grants, as well as Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

If your organisation is able to help vulnerable members of our local community to get back on their feet, by supporting the work at the Centre with a one off or a regular cash donation, please contact Mike on info@thecamrosecentre.org or via LinkedIn ('The Camrose Centre').



Lord and Lady Lyminster, Corinne Marsh and Mike Browning

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WHAT IS AN OPTION AGREEMENT?



Matthew Morris-Ashton

An option agreement is a contract between a landowner and a developer where the developer has the opportunity (but not an obligation) to purchase land from the landowner with a certain time frame. It is binding agreement entered into between the parties and is often used by developers to secure the property whilst they explore the planning potential of the subject land.

There is usually an option fee paid by the developer to the landowner. This is often as little as £1. The purchase price for the property may be agreed between the parties at the outset of the option. Alternatively, a mechanism for calculating the final price may be inserted into the document.

Developer's security

The option agreement prohibits the landowner from selling the property to a third party during the option period whilst the developer is exploring the viability of the project. Once the developer has satisfied himself as to the feasibility of the proposed development, he can trigger the purchase of the property by 'exercising' the option. Once the option has been exercised, it becomes an agreement to purchase making it obligatory for the landowner to sell and the developer to purchase on the terms set out in the agreement.

On the other hand, if it turns out that the project is

not suitable, then the developer can simply walk away and let the option lapse without any penalties or legal repercussions.

What is in it for the landowner?

An option agreement is an 'option' to purchase the land and not an 'obligation'. The downside for the landowner is that the developer may decide, well into the option period, that the proposed development is not viable and pull out of the deal. However, if drafted and agreed diligently, option agreements can be a practical method by which landowners can offer up their land for development and reap the rewards of doing so, without having to be directly involved in either the planning process, or construction.

Are there other kinds of arrangements that may be more suitable?

Although an option agreement is one of the most common methods used to structure and secure a potential development in the UK, there may be other types of arrangements that could be more suited to give effect to the intentions of the parties, such as conditional contracts, promotion agreements, overage agreements, or pre-emption agreements. Every situation and eventuality require careful thought and professional advice to ensure that the documentation is suitable for the intended purpose.

Phillips Law can advise and guide on the most appropriate mechanisms and agreements to facilitate development whether you are a landowner or developer. For more information please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Commercial Property Team – telephone 01256 460830.

COUNCILLOR DAN PUTTY

Under Government legislation all voters will be required to provide user ID when they attend the Polling Station to vote at future elections. Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council will be writing to all voters soon to explain the changes and let voters know about what ID will be required. There will be an election on the first Thursday in May for one of your Councillors on the Council.

Take care.
Best Regards

Cllr Dan Putty JP



JANUARY REPORT

We were able to wish 25 members who braved a cold and wet evening a very Happy New Year. Everyone is looking forward to another year of interesting reading and book talk!

Our January choice was *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hanna. This is an epic tale of a family trying to survive on America's Great Plains during a savage drought during the depression of the 1930s. They decide to move on to California in search of a better life, but do they find it?

We found this book very informative and packed with powerful, historical information. Who knew that these poor ladies had to make their dresses from the animal feed sacks! We felt many of the issues raised in this book are still relevant today. Many bookworms enjoyed this novel so much that they are planning to read other novels by Kristin Hannah.

Next month's choice is *The Paper Palace* by Miranda Cowley Heller. This book has received very good reviews but is already dividing opinion between us. It should be an interesting February meeting.

Follow us on Facebook and join us for coffee, cake and book chat at the Café in the Park. All money raised helps to support our community centres. We look forward to welcoming you.



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COUNCILLOR'S UPDATE

As this is the first issue of 2023, I wish everyone a Happy New Year.

FLY TIPPING AT BEGGARWOOD: I noticed that someone has dumped refuse outside the recycle bins at the Broadmere Road car park. This is not a household waste recycling centre and leaving objects outside the bins is fly-tipping; a prosecutable offence. The rubbish that has been left is not even items that the bins are there to collect. I have notified the Borough Council and they will, no doubt, take steps both to get the rubbish cleared and also identify where it came from.

QUALITY OF REINSTATEMENTS ON FOOTPATH: I have become increasingly concerned about the intrusive nature of utility contractors who dig up our roads and pavements. I found the disruption caused in the Beggarwood Lane area to be very bad. I inspected the reinstatements near the Community Centre and found that the safety barriers designed to stop children running into the road had been put back incorrectly, leaving a centre gap through which a child could easily run. Not only that, the patching of the trench caused me concern. I reported these matters to Hampshire County Council who have confirmed that they will call the contractors back to position the safety barriers correctly.

WHITE LINES IN MAGNUS DRIVE AREA: The white lines that indicate to motorists which roads have precedence have worn away so that at some junctions they are virtually non-existent. I have written to the County Council asking if the markings can be renewed.

FLUID MOTION WELLBEING INITIATIVE: I was pleased to attend a meeting at the Health Hub in Festival Place (the shop unit used as a vaccination centre). One of the impacts of the pandemic is that people accept that they can receive healthcare outside formal NHS settings. This Health Hub is a new venture where Fluid Motion and the NHS are working together to deliver 'wellness' or social prescribing in a new way, in the heart of our shopping centre. Thinking aloud, I wondered whether they might be able to 'outreach' to the Beggarwood Community Centre on one of the days when the Café in the Park is not open.

NEW NURSERY SCHOOL ON ISLAND SITE: My Borough Council colleagues and I had a useful conversation with Kids Inc about their plans for a new nursery school on the Island site. They plan to build on the land previously earmarked for a dental surgery - the site that was auctioned after the dental plans fell through. Kids Inc is a family run business that specialises in nursery provision and is about to open its 14th location. They told us that their feasibility study indicates a shortage of over 800 places in Basingstoke, and that the existing nursery in the Broadmere Road complex has an active waiting list. Kids Inc. will cater for 93 places. I asked whether they could host a dental surgery in their building, but that would not be practical - they propose a two-storey unit which they will fully occupy.

HOUNSOME FIELDS SCHOOL: The planning application for the new two-form entry school on Hounsome Fields should have been submitted by the time you read this. The school, which is being designed to be energy efficient, is planned to accommodate 420 pupils, with resourced provision for 8 pupils with special educational needs. The intended opening date is September 2025 and the probability is that it will fill up gradually, starting with Year R at opening. It will cater primarily for the children of Hounsome Fields and the Golf Course development across the A30.

WAREHOUSES DECISION: Having spoken at the public inquiry I was delighted to hear before Christmas that the appeal against the refusal of planning permission for warehouses on Oakdown Farm was dismissed by the inspector. Opponents hope that this will be the end of the matter, though it is possible that the developers could submit another application, scaled back perhaps. The main reasons for the refusal were the size of the buildings and the impact on the local environment. I opposed the plans for other reasons too: my fears that local roads will be overloaded and the fact that Basingstoke has many unfilled warehouse jobs already. I was also concerned to learn about the potential for light pollution with lights on throughout the night. My hope now is that the Borough Council will produce detailed plans for the west of Basingstoke and not be at the mercy of developers. If the new hospital goes ahead on the other side of the A30, I would favour a science park on this piece of land, which would be a far more attractive gateway into Basingstoke.

PHONE MASTS: The company that had its previous phone mast applications turned down in Woodbury Road and Buckingham Parade, Kempshott, has submitted slightly revised new plans. The material change is to reduce the height of the proposed masts from 20 metres to 15 metres. However, the locations - in both cases on important footpaths - have not changed. I have objected to both applications on the grounds that they are still an unacceptable intrusion into the street-scene, too close to homes and an obstruction to the footpaths.

BROADMERE ROAD ADOPTIONS: I have noted that the construction work needed to resolve the issue of access to drainage facilities is well under way. Over the coming months, I will be monitoring progress on bringing the roads up to an adoptable standard and then seeing them formally adopted.

BRIGHTON HILL ROUNDABOUT: I took the opportunity to visit the roundabout and review progress on this £20 million improvements project. The work is broadly on schedule at the half-way point of the 95-week contract. I asked if it might be possible to introduce some 'quick wins' where features could be brought into service ahead of the bulk of the project, and this will be investigated.

ST MARK'S SCHOOL has posted a 'thank you' to everyone who supported the Mud House Children's Foundation through donations at their Christmas Performances and by purchasing bracelets made by the children. In total they raised an amazing £1,400 which will go directly to the charity. The Mud House Children's Foundation works to enhance access to education and the quality of life for children and communities in the most rural regions of Northern Tanzania.

ST MARK'S SCHOOL has also announced that it is entering its Year 2 Choir, KS2 Choir and the St Mark's Orchestra in to this year's Basingstoke Music and Arts Festival, held at Queen Mary College. The competition date is Saturday 4th March and I expect rehearsals and practice will be the order of the day from now until then. In my experience, the standard of music-making by our young children is remarkably high. Good luck!

BLOG: A reminder that I put more details of some of the items reported here on my blog at <https://reidaboutbasingstoke.co.uk>.

Stephen Reid

County Councillor. Basingstoke South West 07976 310206



OLD DOWN & BEGGARWOOD WILDLIFE GROUP

2023 started mild and wet – just like 2022. In fact this January was even wetter than last year. There were some really dismal, wet and dark days – not at all conducive to walking around Old Down or Beggarwood. With such wet weather there were fewer work parties and it has been very difficult to judge what winter bird species are visiting us. It is the time of year when one could see *Hawfinch*, *Waxwing*, *Fieldfare* and *Redwing* so do keep looking out for these lovely birds. 2 Hawfinches were seen on Old Down in early January (one of the few nice days we had) and Redwing and Fieldfare have been reported visiting gardens and verges around Kempshott and Beggarwood.

Just a little reminder about the Group's AGM which is to be held on Thursday 27 April – 7 pm at Old Down Hall. Please do come along to join us. There will be up-dates on what is happening or has happened on the two sites, a chance to natter, a presentation of wildlife photos and refreshments (with homemade cakes!).

Work Parties: For Old Down we meet outside Old Down Hall every Thursday 10-12noon (but not in the rain!) and for Beggarwood at the café on the first Tuesday of the month 9-12noon. Please do come and join us. Check the website for further information. And please do look at the Group's Facebook page for interest.

<https://sites.google.com/site/olddownbeggarwoodwildlifegroup>
Email: odandbwd@gmail.com www.facebook.com/odandbwd



Hawfinch

Waxwing

Redwing

HATCH WARREN NATURE GROUP

Looking to become more involved with nature in your neighbourhood? Come and join the Hatch Warren Nature Group, a friendly group looking to improve our local green space for people and nature to thrive in. We meet on the second Sunday of every month (10am – 11am), with most of the Winter months having a chat and a cuppa at Sainsburys planning for the year ahead, but during the rest of the year we can be found planting wildflowers, collecting seed, and cutting back to name a few jobs. We have some great plans for 2023 and looking to expand our membership, so please do come along to our Feb meeting where we will be undertaking a few activities to raise awareness of hedgehogs in the community as they emerge from winter hibernation. All are welcome and please do email hatch.nature@gmail.com if you would like to come along to any of our meetings, or join our Hatch Warren Nature Group Facebook page for more info. Activities planned for 2023 include:

January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Meet Outside American Bar	Meet Outside American Bar	Meet Outside American Bar	Meet Outside American Bar	Meet Outside American Bar	Meet Outside American Bar	Meet Outside American Bar	Meet Outside American Bar	Meet Outside American Bar	Meet Outside American Bar	Meet Outside American Bar	Meet Outside American Bar
Second Sunday of the month 10am - 11am											
Hedgehog awareness activities	Community coffee resource pack	Spring nature identification session	Community coffee resource pack	Summer nature identification session	Planting	No meeting	Soaring seeds	Hedgehog awareness activities	Litter pick	Christmas coffee and treat	
Fieldwork				Tips for seed collection	No meeting				Cutting back	Set plans for the year	
		Butterfly recording	Butterfly recording	Butterfly recording	Butterfly recording	Butterfly recording	No meeting	Butterfly recording	Butterfly recording	Butterfly recording	
				Seed collecting	Seed collecting	No meeting	Seed collecting				
						No meeting	Planting	Planting	Planting		

Café in the Park

PLEASE JOIN US

WEDNESDAY – SUNDAY 10am – 2pm

Beggarwood Bookworms – 8th February & 8th March. To enquire email office@hatchwarren.org

Community lunch 1st Wednesday every month

Free hot drink with 10 stars collected using our loyalty card

Sunday offers from 1.30pm onwards

Midweek deals - coffee and cake only £4

Card & A Cuppa with Pauline @ I Create Craft – 10th February & 10th March
(call 07884 303557 for info)

Health Walk – 1st Wednesday every month

Lots of regular events – please ask at the cafe

For party bookings please visit:
www.hatchwarren.org

WEEKEND BAPS



TOASTED PANINIS AND SANDWICHES



We look forward to seeing you soon!

FRESH HOMEMADE CAKES



HOT & COLD DRINKS



We are a registered charity run by volunteers - working to make Hatch Warren and Beggarwood a great place to live!



Event Volunteers Required

Did you know, you can become a member of the Hatch Warren and Beggarwood Community Association, and receive discounts on hall hire and guaranteed, reduced price fireworks tickets?

Membership costs £10 per year, per household.

Sign up to be an **EVENT VOLUNTEER NOW** for **FREE** membership

You can gain charity experience, learn new skills and become part of an exciting, caring, friendly community that makes a real difference.

To host our fundraising events, we **NEED** event volunteers, otherwise valuable community services, ongoing sustainability of the centre and the following events may be cancelled;

Quiz nights at Cafe in the Park
Lager Festival
Summer Festival
Fireworks Extravaganza
Christmas Market with Father Christmas
Coach Chaperone for our London theatre trips



To sign up **TODAY**, please
email
office@hatchwarren.org
or call 01256 811262

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=WE**



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 Young Minds text service – 85258

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The Warren is open! Booking is essential!

Activities Schedule: Fridays 6pm -7.45 pm, years 6, 7 &

3 rd February	Just Dance, temporary tattoos and Quesadillas
10 th February	Valentines Craft and biscuit decorating.
17 th February	Pool competition, bookmark making and Sausage rolls.
24 th February	Hockey, sand art and milkshakes.
3 rd March	Capture the flag, Spring Craft and chicken nuggets

Happy New Year from all of us at The Warren! We hope you've all had a good start to 2023. It's been wonderful to see all our young people back and we kicked off our year with basketball, human hungry hippos, hotdogs and fruit kebabs. It's been great seeing lots of our young people coming back regularly and some new faces too.

Our sessions are still very popular and booking out quickly. Bookings are every Thursday evening at 6pm via our Warren Facebook page. Don't miss out!

Please remember we are here for young people's mental health too. Our youth workers are always happy to listen and offer friendly advice and support to anyone that may need it.



The members had a very good Christmas with a disco at Westside Community Centre. This was a lovely evening with an attendance of around 60 members. One of the members supplied the Disco and we enjoyed using their bar to purchase drinks.

On Friday 16th December the members went to the Anvil for the pantomime. We were in the front rows which made for a very special experience.

Dates for February

- 6th Hatch Warren Youth Club with football coach
- 10th Friday night Disco at the Chineham village hall.
- 13th Portsmouth Arms
- 20th Hatch Warren Youth Club
- 27th Bowling and dinner at McDonald's



Older Sessions

Don't forget if you're in year 9 or above we are open 8pm-9.30pm every Friday! If you want to play pool, air hockey, X-Box or just want somewhere to hang out come on down. The older session also receives FREE food and hot drinks.

Our youth workers are trained to be able to offer relationship and sex advice to our older session attendants.

For the latest info please keep an eye on our Facebook page or Email our Youth Manager at Emily@hatchwarren.org



HATCH WARREN UNDER FIVES

It's been a lovely start to 2023 at Hatch Warren Under Fives, the children have settled back into the routine brilliantly and we have also welcomed some new children who are really enjoying their introduction to preschool.

We are focusing on books and comprehension this term, we have been exploring words and rhymes, following pictures and predicting what will happen next and asking the children questions about the story. Our "Books of the Week" this term, voted by the children, have been *The Gruffalo* and *Stickman*. In addition to our reading comprehension activities the children have enjoyed lots of lovely crafts based around the books, we've also extended the stories into our baking and making sessions and have iced and decorated some amazing Gruffalo biscuits. Our next book of the week will be *The Dancing Dragon* – a perfect start to Chinese New Year and part of the *Gigi And the Giant Ladle* series which is written by a local Basingstoke author.

2023 is the year of the Rabbit and we will have lots of activities to celebrate Chinese New Year. Our role play area will be changing into a restaurant – children will practise their mark making by taking food orders, they will work on their motor skills by experimenting with chopsticks and the best part is that they will sample some yummy new Chinese foods.

Valentine's week will be full of arts and crafts and making special creations for loved ones and pancake week will involve pancake racing and pancake treats for the snack table.



We have a new arrival at Preschool, Theo the Travelling Teddy. The children take Theo home for the week then share his diary of

adventures when he returns to preschool. He has been a big hit!

Read more about our preschools at www.hatchwarrenunderfives.co.uk

CANDOVER VALLEY PRE-SCHOOL

Happy New Year from CVP!

We hope you had a wonderful Christmas and New Year with your family and we are very excited to start the new term.

We will be sharing our stories and pictures from our Christmas adventures over the holidays, looking at who we visited, where we went, our family traditions and presents we received and gave to others. We will be focusing on rhyming through stories and songs for our phonics work. Exploring *Stickman* and *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* stories, linking this with exploring our family trees, making our own *Stickman* families to play with and role playing the stories.



We will also be talking about our teeth and how to clean them using toothbrushes as well as using brushes to practice cleaning the toys and explore new ways of painting.

We are looking for a special person to join our team. Are you a Level 3 Childcare Practitioner or Qualified Teacher. Term time only, flexible to suit school hours, pension, annual bonus. We would love to see your CV!

Best wishes,

Lisa Collisson

Pre-School Head, Tel: 01256-389008
www.candovervalleypreschool.co.uk/

DANDELIONS

What a busy and fun half term we have had and we still have lots more planned.

The children have shown a real interest in counting and number recognition. The team have enhanced this area of learning by providing a range of resources to embed knowledge. Therefore, providing a strong foundation for future learning.

To foster the children's love of reading, our group times have focused on the use of story sacks. These have been a great hit with the children. Stories such as *The Gruffalo*, *The Enormous Turnip* and we have even had a puppet show with the *Three Little Pigs*.

There are many benefits to using story sacks such as extending children's vocabulary, supporting interactions and promoting



communication skills. This is a great starting point for children to progress to their own story telling.



We have so much to look forward to with Valentine's Day approaching where we will be talking about those that are special to us and why.

For Shrove Tuesday we will be cooking pancakes and seeing how high we can

make them fly before covering them with tasty treats and sitting down to eat them for snack.

We are currently working on our September 2023 register and spaces are filling rapidly. Our waiting lists for 2024 is also open.

If you would like to consider Dandelions for your child's early years please do contact us as soon as possible for a registration form and to arrange a show around.

Tel: 01256 818857 or alternatively e-mail info@dandelions-preschool.org.uk

CUCKOO MEADOW PRE-SCHOOL

Hello from Cuckoo Meadow Pre-School.

It has been a busy few weeks since the start of term, but all the children including all of our new starters have settled back in well.

We have been running a winter animal theme which has brought lots of fun activities, this worked well with the letter of the week being "P" the children were busy making Puffins, Polar bears and Penguins. We also used this theme to do some winter animal yoga postures which was great fun.

Braving the weather, we have been outside learning how to safely play and use bikes on wet, slippery ground as well as splashing in puddles with their wellies. This has been rounded off with great games such as "what's the time Mr Wolf" and our normal circle play including toys that go round and round encouraging turn taking and social interactions.

We have had in Sports for Kids getting the children outside having lots of fun doing exercises as well as playing some sports games. We will soon be looking into getting more clubs and classes back in to give the children exposure to new hobbies and activities.

To find out more please contact Jo or Fiona on 01256 398172

THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LIONS CLUBS

PSA (PROSTATE CANCER) TESTING

Offered for men aged 40 and above Saturday, 11th March 2023, 10am – 2pm

United Reformed Church (URC), 20 London Street, Basingstoke, RG21 7NU

The Lions Club of Basingstoke has joined forces with the Graham Fulford Charitable Trust (GFCT). Roughly one in eight men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime (*Prostate Cancer UK*). Black and Asian men have an even higher risk, with the odds being one in four.

A phlebotomist will take a blood sample and send this off to a laboratory and the result will be sent by email or text within 24-48 hours. A consultation with a GP is recommended should a PSA level show as being abnormally high. Tests are £22 each.

Tests by appointment only. Book via <https://gfct.mypsatestests.org.uk>, or by calling the PSA Test office on 01926 419959

Note: Other tests are available on the day for men and women – Diabetes, Cholesterol, Iron Count, Thyroid, Liver Count and Kidney Count.

Lions Club contact: Bill Lenihan, email: wjdvlenihan@hotmail.co.uk. Tel 07986232017.

PROBUS HEARS ABOUT THE IMMORTAL MEMORY

Many people have attended a Burns' Supper around 25th January, the birthdate of Robert Burns, the National Bard of Scotland, Scotland's Favourite Son, and will have witnessed the piping in of the haggis and someone giving the *Address to a Haggis* in "Lalland Scots" being virtually unintelligible to all the sassenachs present. But at the best of such occasions, irrespective of wherever in the world there is a Caledonian connection, the guest of honour has the responsibility of telling those present their view on Robbie Burns, the Ploughman's Bard.



Such was the situation outlined by the latest speaker at the Probus Club of Basingstoke, member John Kynoch. Although born in New Zealand, the son of an ex-pat Scot, as a teenager he came to join the family woollen manufacturing business in Scotland and lived for over thirty years in Keith, to the east of Inverness.

This talk, *The Immortal Memory*, was John's personal insights and long past connections with Robert Burns who was born in 1759 in Alloway, Ayrshire and died at the early age of thirty-seven. The sister of John's great grandfather married a man who was a friend of Burns whose own father started an educational establishment for apprentices that today is the Herriot Watt University in Edinburgh.

Around the time of Burns' birth, the British Empire was developing with Wolfe capturing Quebec making Canada British rather than French. George III was soon to reign as was Catherine the Great in Russia, Hayden got a job making music in the court of Prince Esterhazy in Hungary and Captain Cook discovered New Zealand. Less than a decade before Burns was born the Duke of Cumberland, the King's brother, carried out the last battle on British soil at Culloden near Inverness defeating the final Jacobean rebels.

During his short life, the bard had been a tenant farmer, a flax dresser, a continual rebel against orthodox religion and eventually a Revenue & Customs Officer and a member of the militia in Dumfries, despite being a nationalist at heart. He also penned 559 writings of which 368 were songs often putting new lyrics to existing Scottish traditional and folk melodies.

At the age of 28, and only 14 months after his first book was published, *Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*, Burns undertook a coach trip on poor roads around that part of north-eastern Scotland where the speaker had lived. In such a short time, and without the ease of communications we have today, his fame had spread to the extent that he was feted by the great and good. He was described as the equivalent of a Rock Star; a working-class hero, gifted beyond measure, attracted by and attracted to, the opposite sex (he had nine children with his wife, his last son born an hour after his death, and at least four more with other women) and finding further distraction in misuse of substances, in his case "the drink."

At one such meeting at Duff House, in Banff, Burns met a young boy who had his book at home and knew some of the poetry by heart which gives some idea of the popularity of the Bard's work. That a schoolboy in Banff, so far north from Ayrshire, where much was written, should be familiar with his work so soon after it was published, is quite remarkable.

One can only marvel at the genius of this man who could produce such words that we still admire and can quote at times, almost off the cuff. Robert Burns was obviously a man of huge intelligence with a great understanding of the human condition. Words and ideas that have been translated into more than 60 languages around the world and used as reference points by many great people in history such as US President Abraham Lincoln who wrote of Burns "From Shakespeare I learnt the sonnets. From the Bible, the scriptures. But it was from this man that I learnt humility."

After the guest of honour has concluded their reminiscence about Robert Burns, they then request the audience, "Raise your glasses... the toast is... to The Immortal Memory."

The final act at a Burns' supper and at Hogmanay, on New Year's Eve, throughout much of the world, is of course singing the famous farewell "Auld Lang Syne." This is one of Burns' songs that even sassenachs know.

See www.probusbasingstoke.club for more information about this social club for retired professional and business managers.

BASINGSTOKE CREMATORIUM CAROL SERVICE UPDATE

Basingstoke Crematorium (owned by Dignity) held a Carol Service on the 8th December 2022.

As well as being a free community event for people to come together, there was a collection for local charity Sebastian's Action Trust.

Father Paul Leonard led the service, with over 100 people enjoying an evening of carols, readings and poems. Morrisons Basingstoke supplied mince pies, Coop, Kings Road, South Ham provided tea, coffee and hot chocolate and local printers Colourinc produced the order of service booklets.

Members of staff and local celebrants, gave up their time to ensure that the evening ran smoothly, serving warm drinks and refreshments afterwards.

The event raised £683.80.

RABBITER CONTACTS:

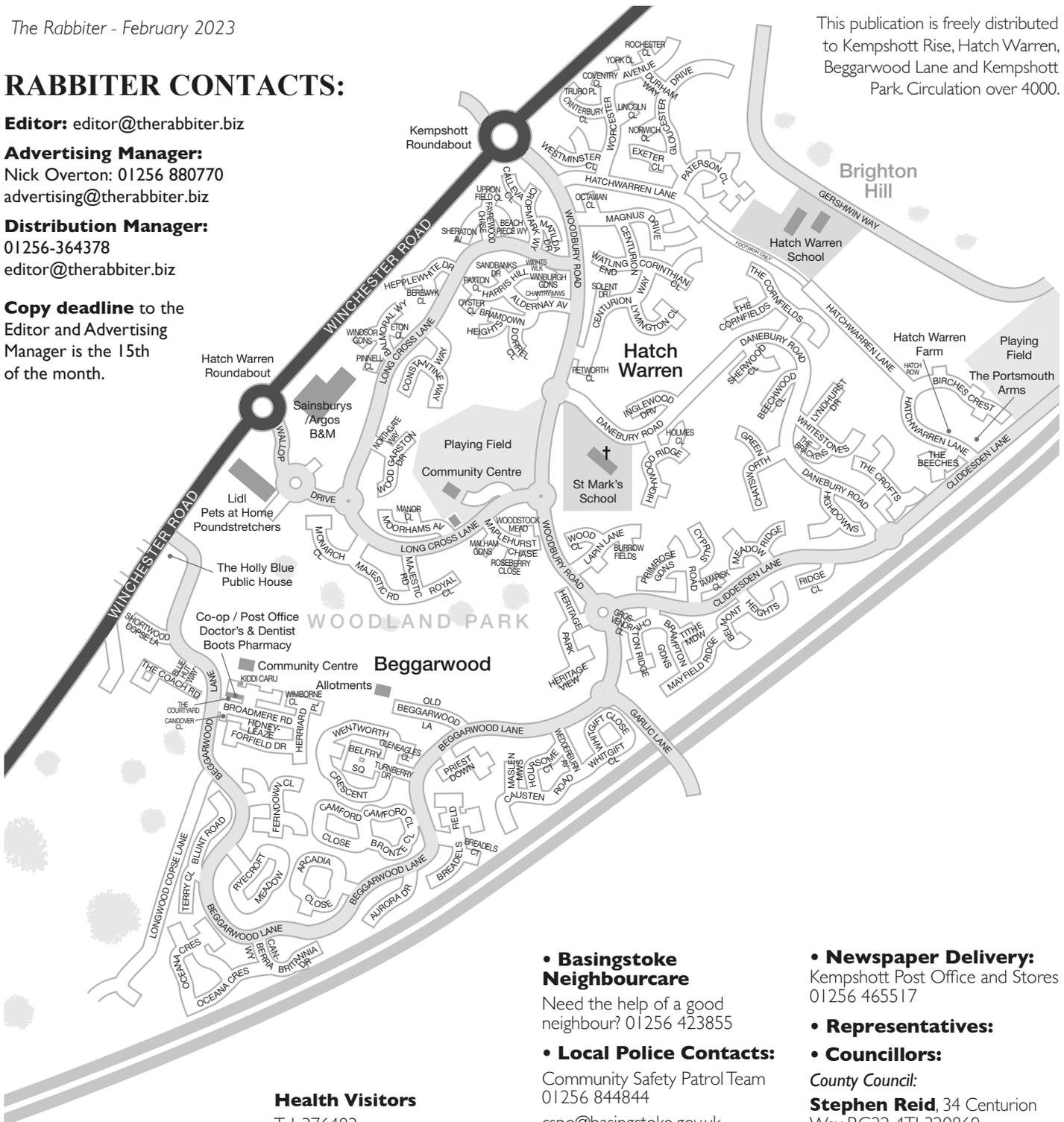
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• Churches:
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Hub Community Church
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Dan Putty, 1 Gloucester Drive, RG22 4PH 356650
cldr.dan.putty@basingstoke.gov.uk

• Member of Parliament Hatch Warren:
Maria Miller
millerm@parliament.uk

BASINGSTOKE CIVIL SERVICE RETIREMENT FELLOWSHIP



The first meeting of 2023 was held on 4th January with 45 members attending. The Chairman, David Cowling, wished everyone a Happy New Year and then proceeded to give an update on the upcoming trips planned for the year. Christine Broadbent, the Welfare Officer, gave an update on various members and also thanked David for all his hard work throughout 2022.

The guest speaker this month was Pam Durroch from Basingstoke Food Bank which is part of the Trussell Trust. Pam informed us that the food bank was set up on 1st October 2012 so had been in operation for 10 years. In the first year, they supplied 1046 parcels for 2000 people. By last year this had increased to 2500 parcels for 5500 people, an increase of 45%. The parcels they supply are intended to last for approximately 3 days and she showed us an example of the different items included. These parcels are only supplied to people who have been referred to the Food Bank by official bodies including Citizens Advice, Housing Associations, District Nurses, Schools etc. These parcels are then collected by the clients, although should the occasion arise, they can be delivered. Pam expressed thanks on behalf of the Food Bank and their clients for all the food and money donations received by the public and from members at the meeting. If you require further information please go to the website at www.basingstoke.foodbank.org.uk

The next group outing is on Monday 20th March which is a tour of the Houses of Parliament with the coach leaving Oakley at 7.15 and the Leisure Centre at 7.30. The price of the trip is £28 (£30 for non-members). On Thursday 27th April at 2.15 we are having Afternoon Tea at BCOT with a variety of sandwiches, cakes and scones with unlimited tea all for £11.

The next meeting is on 1st February when we have a return visit from Mel Rees who will give a talk titled "... and another thing I meant to say...". At the 1st March meeting we have our AGM with a talk from Able Care which will then be followed by lunch at the Conservative Club.

The group meets on the first Wednesday of each month at the BrookVale Village Hall from 10am to 12 noon and all retired Civil Servants, their relatives and friends are welcome. Further details about the group and information about our meetings and trips can be obtained by contacting csrfbasingstoke@gmail.com

Margaret Atkinson

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Parish Office- 01256 840502
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THE PARISH OF BASINGSTOKE DOWN

••••• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •••••

February sees the start of the season of Lent. My immediate thought was "I'm rubbish at giving bad things up or starting up good things for that matter; I won't write about that". However it was when I was tucking into some Fish and Chips and thinking "Nah, not giving these up" that I started to think about the Bible story that inspired Lent (I can get inspiration from the oddest places!). According to the story, Jesus headed off into the wilderness where he fasted for 40 days and 40 nights and was tempted by the devil.

It struck me immediately that for many of the last three years have a wilderness experience i.e. a really hard time. We have had Covid and now the Cost of Living Crisis. Many people are struggling to make ends meet and are seriously worried about the future.

Life feels hard. So where is God in all of this?

Now this is a massive question and a one page magazine article ain't the place to answer it in. However, I do believe that the story of Jesus in the wilderness offers encouragement and comfort. Before going into the Wilderness Jesus heard a voice from heaven saying, "This is my Son, whom I love". I am sure these words kept Jesus going throughout his experience.

The same applies to us. The fact is that no matter what we are going through, God Loves Us. That is a consistent message throughout the Bible.

So, what the heck does it mean in practice? I'd like to share a story from my own experience that has always come back to me when times get tough. My dad died when I was only 8. It was very sudden and he died in the middle of the night.

My mum, understandably, was awake all night and in the morning, came into my bedroom where I was still asleep. Reeling from the shock, she was wondering how on earth she was going to tell me what had happened. Moreover, how on earth was she going to bring me up on her own? When I was older, she told me that at that moment, she had never felt so alone. So she prayed that incredibly articulate and theologically profound prayer "God! HELP!"

She suddenly felt, at the worse moment of her life, an amazing feeling of peace and God's presence and a sense that God was saying "I've got this! I love you!"

She found the words that morning to tell me about Dad. Then she found the strength was there throughout the years (which can't have been easy) to bring me up. There were good time and challenging times but that sense that God was with her to support her never left her

I believe that God says to each one of us in these hard times "YOU are my child, whom I love and nothing can separate you from my love"

Rob Marsh

Parish of Basingstoke Down



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References available. Contact Ingrid.e.berry@gmail.com.

TAKING STEPS TOWARDS NET ZERO CARBON IN BASINGSTOKE

When the heating system at Saint Mark's Church in Kempshott was condemned as unsafe, the Church Council knew they had an expensive problem, and one which would limit the building's use by the community. But in January 2021 the Council decided to grasp the opportunity to pursue replacing it with a carbon friendly alternative. This is in support of the Church of England's aim to be Net Zero Carbon by 2030.

Taking advice from the Diocesan heating advisers, Chris Reading Associates, a scheme was developed to install a new system using BioLPG rather than fossil fuels. But it wasn't going to be cheap. The challenge of raising the significant funds needed was met head on. Led by Will Hooper, the Chair of the Premises Committee, congregational fund-raising began in earnest and applications for grants were made.



The congregation raised over one quarter of the total. And the church is grateful for the generous grants they received from the Veolia Environmental Trust, Four Lanes Trust and the Garfield Weston Foundation.

In addition to a new boiler and radiators to heat the church, the installation required a large, yellow tank to be buried in the grounds. The tank supplies Futuria Liquefied Gas from Calor, which is made from a blend of waste residues and sustainably sourced materials, making it an environmentally friendly alternative to conventional Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG). It also means a reduction in CO2 emissions by up to 85%.

As a result, the church has a significantly reduced carbon footprint and no longer uses fossil fuels for heating. As the price of 'town gas' has gone up so much recently, Saint Mark's expects to be spending 35% less on gas. It's also warm again, which means the church can open up as a Warm Space for the community this winter.



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WOMEN'S EQUALITY PARTY

There are different ways our group decides what to do next. There are the local issues and events we pick up on, such as the 5G mast application in Hatch Warren, say, which I have appealed against both times having found the vast majority of local residents not in favour. Another example was the recent Parliament Week session I ran for a Hatch Warren Guide group. That was huge fun: we discussed democracy and voting, why it's so important to be engaged in these issues, and then staged a mini election with competing manifestos. I was very happy to be in a room full of bright future leaders that evening!

But on top of those things we want to proactively engage with the community, whether through door to door canvassing work or open meetings. So I ask – what matters to YOU in 2023? We have plans and ideas that cover everything from cost of living and equal pay, to childcare and local infrastructure, to healthcare and education. But WE Basingstoke want to be guided by you. So why not get in touch and tell us what you want us to turn our formidable volunteer team to?! Maybe that's development, ideas for your green spaces, concerns over school parking – anything you care about, I'd like to hear about.

You can pop along to my next 'Ask Me Anything' in-person session at the Portsmouth Arms pub on Wednesday 22nd February between 7-9pm, and talk to me about your thoughts on what Hatch Warren and Beggarwood needs in 2023, reach me via social media @wepbasingstoke, or email basingstoke@womensequality.org.uk. WE are here to listen and serve the community.

There's more info on YouTube on bit.ly/wepbasingstoke or sign up to my Hatch Warren & Beggarwood newsletter on the QR code. I hope 2023 has started as and continues to be a healthy and blessed one for you and yours!



Stacy Hart

Women's Equality Party Basingstoke Leader



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HOMELESSNESS CHARITY CALLS ON COMMUNITY TO JOIN THE BIG BASINGSTOKE SLEEP OUT

Local homelessness charity Julian House is bringing the Big Basingstoke Sleep Out back to May's Bounty Sports Ground on Friday 24th March 2023. Families, friends and colleagues are being challenged to sleep outside for just one night, swapping soft beds for sleeping bags and cardboard mats.

Event Organiser Gavin Osborn said "The Big Sleep Out has been one of our most successful events in Bath for many years and we are delighted to bring it back to Basingstoke. As those who came along last year will agree, it's a great way for the community to come together as well as a chance to reflect on the challenges rough sleepers face every single day".

Last year Julian House provided life-changing support to over 1,800 vulnerable individuals who were experiencing, or at risk of homelessness across Basingstoke, Bath, Bristol and the South-West.

Julian House is encouraging people of all ages; families, friends and work colleagues, to sign up early and start their fundraising. It's free to register and guarantees to be an experience you will never forget.

If you'd like to take part with a team or by yourself, go to the website www.julianhouse.org.uk/support-us/events/big-basingstoke-sleep-out/



HATCH WARREN WI

We started our 2023 programme in January by discussing and voting for one of the four resolutions proposed by the National Federation of Women's Institutes. The four resolutions included: the increasing strains on the UK's water supply, the plight of women tea workers existing on low wages, the harm caused by the growth of online gambling, and the need for cleaner rivers for people and wildlife. We discussed these at length and then everyone voted for the resolution they wanted to support.

Afterwards we all had a go at making something using the Japanese art of origami which was great fun.

We meet at Hatch Warren Community Centre and our next meeting will be on Thursday 2nd February at 7.30pm. We will be having a fish and chip supper, followed by a presentation by one of our members about her travels around the world. For more information please contact our President Shirley on 07979 217220.



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RESTAURANT REVIEW

THE PUREFOY ARMS

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Most readers will have heard of the Purefoy Arms at Preston Candover and of the chef patron Gordon Stott, the winner of many awards and accolades in the hospitality industry since he took over this pub/restaurant a few years ago. The proof of his culinary expertise is a table of awards inside the main room and a Michelin plaque outside the front door.

But the proof of the pudding, as they say, is in the eating. So, this review is something of a homage to the quality of fare that is available here. Madam and I met family members on a Wednesday lunchtime and the reservation said 12.15 to 2.45pm. While we all arrived before time it was in fact almost 3.45pm before we left. This extension was partly due to our talking and to the time it took for our food to arrive due no doubt to everything being prepared daily. But no matter as we were not in a hurry and savoured every moment.

There were two menus, with a wide selection of starters, mains and desserts at fairly high prices including a tasting menu costing £62.50 each (and everyone at the table had to order this), then there was a daily "specials" with a reduced offering of four or so alternatives, which we decided was more appropriate for our group.

For the sake of space on the page I will cover only what Madam and I consumed. We decided that we would forego having a starter and went straight in for our main course. Madam had beer battered Haddock served with triple cooked chips, a ramekin each of tartare sauce and crushed peas and fennel salad. The price was £16.95 but she described it as probably the best fish she had ever tasted. Praise indeed. My choice was braised whole rack of ribs (lamb) served in a BBQ marinade with triple cooked chips and coleslaw. The meat was so tender and flavoursome that it fell off the bone. It was absolutely delicious and very filling. The price was £23.95 and worth every penny.

Our dessert was apple crumble with walnuts topped with clotted ice cream and cost £8.50. Again, superb quality.

For drinks Madam had her usual slimline tonic with ice and a slice and I had half a pint of lager. Two flat white coffees and a complimentary homemade chocolate truffle completed a wonderful meal.

Be aware that the Purefoy Arms are closed on Sundays and Mondays. And do not go there expecting splendid surrounding as that is not the style here, instead visitors go in anticipation of enjoying top quality fare at reasonable prices if you are sensible in your menu selection.



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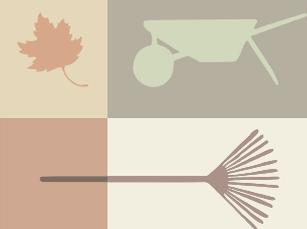
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