

THE Rabbiter



Issue 327
April 2026

The Community Magazine for Kempshott Rise, Hatch Warren, Beggarwood and Kempshott Park

All the regular features plus

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THE Rabbiter

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the April edition of the Rabbiter. The beautiful blossom on the front cover is a symbol of Spring coming ... at last!

Spring is a season of optimism. Flowers magically appear and the pace of outdoor activities picks up. We seem to have very good displays of daffodils this year both in gardens and on public spaces like Dorrell Bank.

This issue carries interesting articles about nature, including information about snakes we might see, and bluebells that it are always worth going to see. I find nothing more serene than a bluebell wood, with its dappled sunlight, the scent of the flowers and the blue layer that seems somehow to hover above the ground.

The birds have started nesting and we have blue tits using our bird box again this year. And a sure sign of warmer weather coming - our tortoise has woken, bang on schedule.

For gardeners and allotment-holders, this is the time to plant vegetables. I was taught that seed potatoes should go in on Good Friday – but given how much Easter can vary, that seems rather vague advice!

I hope you enjoy this issue of the Rabbiter, and are able to take advantage of the warmer weather and the world around us.

Editor



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THE RIGHTS OF RIVERS IN THE BOROUGH

Humans depend on our rivers to provide clean water for drinking and sanitation, fertile soil, and regeneration but rivers also support an extensive diversity of species and ecosystems and play a vital role in the functioning of the Earth's continuous water cycle. Rivers are also one of the largest natural carbon-transport systems on our planet, moving land-based carbon to be stored in the oceans and providing temperature regulation functions.

This council recognises that rivers are vital to the ecological health, cultural heritage, and future sustainability of Basingstoke and Deane. These waterways also include our globally rare, ecologically fragile and irreplaceable chalk streams. The borough contains the springs and headwaters of the River Loddon and River Test as well as important tributaries of the Itchen and the Kennet. Rivers and the wetlands they create give many communities a sense of place and identity. Many towns exist in their place because of a river. Despite this, rivers across the UK, and here in Basingstoke and Deane, face increasing pressures from pollution, over-abstraction, habitat degradation, and climate change. Communities increasingly demonstrate that they care for their rivers and concern grows for the poor state of our rivers' ecological health, which increasingly impacts public health.

To address these growing threats and to uphold our responsibilities to future generations, this council resolves to formally recognise the Rights of Rivers, drawing inspiration from the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Rivers.

1. The Right to Flow – to follow natural and seasonal flow patterns.
2. The Right to Perform Essential Functions within its Ecosystem – to sustain the hydrological and ecological processes that underpin the health of the waterways and landscape.
3. The Right to be Free from Pollution.
4. The Right to Feed and Be Fed by Sustainable Aquifers and other freshwater sources – to be replenished by, and to replenish, groundwater systems without unsustainable depletion.
5. The Right to Native Biodiversity.
6. The Right to Regeneration and Restoration – to recover from damage, including through active protection, remediation and investment in habitat restoration.

This council therefore declares that:

- The intrinsic rights of rivers within the jurisdiction of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council will be acknowledged.

- It will work with community groups, river trusts and environmental experts to identify and support the practical recognition of these rights.
- It will support local initiatives and citizen monitoring efforts that protect and restore river health, such as citizen science water testing, riparian buffer planting, natural flood management and creating wildlife corridors.
- It will embed river rights principles into council policies, where appropriate, particularly those concerning planning, development, land use, water quality, water management, and biodiversity.
- It will commit to council projects and strategies taking account of the principles of Rights of Rivers and chalk streams taking appropriate measures to protect these ecosystems and delivering enhancements where possible.
- It will advocate to national and regional bodies, including the Environment Agency, the adoption of river rights frameworks and enhanced protections for our chalk streams and freshwater ecosystems.



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COUNCILLOR UPDATES

Stephen Reid

County Councillor: Basingstoke
South West 07976 310206
stephen.reid@hants.gov.uk

WHAT'S THAT PONG? In early March there was a distinct whiff over Hatch Warren and Beggarwood. It coincided with maintenance work on the Anaerobic Digester, off Garlic Lane, which took somewhat longer than expected. I was only notified of the work on the day that it started, which was disappointing. I believe that the smell was a distinct 'AD' one, and thankfully the work has now come to an end.

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP: I attended the PPG for the Camrose, Gillies, Hackwood and Beggarwood surgeries when it met with the practice manager. We heard that the practice is experiencing high demand for routine appointments. To help manage this, a waiting list system has been introduced, prioritising patients based on both waiting time and clinical urgency. Changes have been made to the Total Triage system, to help release more GP time. More details can be found on the PPG's website.

UPPER SWALLICK: I attended a consultation held at St Mark's Church where the developer's plans for 2,500 homes near Cliddesden were on display. They will definitely impact Hatch Warren and Beggarwood. My major concern is that the developers are proposing two entrance / exit points to the development and one of them is a new link road going down to the Woods Lane roundabout under the M3. They told me that they forecast that this route will take 50% of the traffic generated by the development. At peak hours they estimate 1,000 vehicle movements, so that means 500 an hour through that roundabout - a significant extra load. There are only three routes that the traffic can then follow: Cliddesden Lane past the Portsmouth Arms, which could be used for 'rat-running' to the M3, Brighton Way which is congested at the approach to the Brighton Hill roundabout, or Hatch Warren Way past Brighton Hill to the Viables roundabout.

MY PREFERRED SOLUTION: At the consultation, I suggested that if Upper Swallick goes ahead, there should be two entrances off the A339 Alton Road, with improvements to the Venture Roundabout, next to the Holiday Inn hotel. That way its traffic could be routed quickly on an A road to the ring road. If the link road to the Woods Lane roundabout is built, it should be for public transport and cyclists only, reducing the risk to Hatch Warren and Beggarwood. I fear an uphill fight to get these suggestions considered.

BRIGHTON HILL SCHOOL: The secondary school being designated for Upper Swallick students is Brighton Hill Community School.

LIDL CAR PARK: Following the opening of McDonald's, I made inquiries about the locking of the car park gate at night. One of the shop managers has confirmed that it is still being locked, but half an hour later, at 11pm. I am pleased: I was worried that car meets might return if the gates were no longer being secured.

NEW CROSSING: I attended a meeting at Hounsme Fields school to discuss the need for the new signalised crossing of the A30 between the Golf Course and Hounsme Fields developments. The works are scheduled to start on 18th May and complete by 25th October. One of the points made strongly was that there needs to be a good system of pavements as well, to

enable pedestrians to get to it and I am having further meetings to progress this.

VEGETATION CLEARING: Work has started to clear vegetation to allow construction of the road into the Golf Course development from the Hounsme Fields roundabout. In time this will become the main entrance to the estate.

BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS PLAN: I attended a briefing on ideas for improving bus services in Basingstoke. High on the list is a contraflow bus lane in New Street, towards the traffic lights (Giffords Corner). I feel this unnecessary and returned to a constant theme of mine, which is that the bus routes in Basingstoke need to be reviewed. The company is still operating a 'hub and spoke' model, with the bus station being the hub and virtually every bus going there. That creates congestion at the Eastrop roundabout and that's why they want the contraflow bus lane. It also results in long journey times for some of the more distant estates. I believe we need more radial routes helping people to travel around the town as well as into it. That would make it easier to reach, for example, our doctors surgeries.

POSTBOX: The smart pillar box has been completed in Danebury Road after a wait of many weeks. These new boxes are solar powered and allow parcels to be posted with receipts being given.

COMBINED AUTHORITY: I received an update on the devolution plans for Hampshire and the Solent. Although the election of a Mayor for the area was postponed from this year to May 2028, the Combined Authority that the Mayor would head is still being established. This is important to us: the Combined Authority will be responsible for strategic planning for Hampshire, supporting the enabling and development of housing. This will include shaping where new homes and infrastructure are planned. I see this as a return to 'top down' planning.

BIRTH RATE: I chair the Health and Wellbeing Board in Hampshire, and one of its tasks is to monitor a database known as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) - an immense repository of information that will inform decisions about health issues. One of the latest updates is about birth rates. They are falling. In 2024 there were 1,946 live births in our Borough. Average life expectancy, on the other hand, has increased to 81 years for men and just under 85 years for women. The low birth rate indicates just how excessive the demands are for us to take over 1,000 new homes every year.

NEW HOSPITAL: Although the new hospital has been put back to the 2040s, the Hospital Trust has purchased its preferred site on the A30 close to junction 7. This makes it more likely to be the eventual location and should, I believe, be taken into account when other planning applications come forward in the area.

THAMES WATER has confirmed that its planned two-year disruption of Kempshott Lane is to lay new sewers to cope with the increased housing on this side of the town. The Borough Council has identified sites that will put around 20,000 homes on the West of Basingstoke and will see housing stretching down the A33 and A303. I am continuing to press for the resurfacing of Kempshott Lane.

BLOG: I post more about these issues, and others, on my blog ReidAboutBasingstoke.co.uk.

Best wishes - Stephen



Stacy Hart

Borough Councillor:

Email casework: cll:stacy.hart@basingstoke.gov.uk

Facebook, BlueSky & Insta: @allinpartyUK, TikTok: @all_in_party

Monthly resident e-newsletter: www.allinparty.org.uk

Dear residents of Hatch Warren and Beggarwood – I hope this finds you well and happy.

LOCAL ELECTIONS IN MAY: A repeat from last month's piece, but a vital reminder that postal voters now need to reapply every three years and the deadline for reapplication is 5pm on Tuesday 21st April. More info is available on www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote and I'm happy to help with questions.

EVENTS FOR CARERS: I volunteered for the day at the Carers' event organised by the CGHB Surgeries team and the Patient Participation Group. There were stalls with info from various organisations that support care needs, and presentations offered really useful info throughout. It was good to see lots of people accessing badly needed help, and also to network with other organisations to find opportunities for assisting people, gaps in provision that might be filled, and so on. If you are a carer for someone in your life, do make sure you're registered as such with your GP surgery, and I'm happy to send you information on how you can get in touch with organisations that can assist.

My colleague Dani Davies is trialling a Carer Café initiative in tandem with Beggarwood Café, ahead of a planned monthly event if there is uptake. This will be a space for anyone doing unpaid care to come along with their charges for a brew and a breather in a safe and welcoming space, and to socialise and find community and mutual support with others also doing this vital and often unrecognised work. The trial session will be at Beggarwood Café on Sun 26th April from 10am to 12pm and I also plan to be there. Keep an eye on social media for more details or feel free just to drop by!

OTHER EVENTS: The gorgeous Let's Glow light trail in War Memorial park was a huge success again; I loved seeing it packed with families stopping and admiring the lovely displays! I also went out with some of our volunteers on the latest litter pick organised by local green groups. We picked up over half a dozen full bags of litter - including a batch of bottles clearly thrown from cars with really nasty contents - in only 200 metres of Longwood Copse Lane. Disgusting, but a real sense of accomplishment afterwards.

My latest parking patrol took in Paterson Close and Gershwin Road, and I visited the new Cake Shack on Causton Road during its opening weekend. This is a lovely initiative run by a talented local baker who leaves delicious treats in the shack outside her house for passers-by to purchase and leave payment in the honesty box. I highly recommend the caramel blonde!

LEARNING AND NETWORKING: I attended a Local Government Association session on social cohesion, and how we can promote it through Council work. During these often-divisive times this is more important than ever and I came away with some really good notes and ideas to push for, especially as we progress toward a Unitary Authority.

I also went to a Stand Up To Street Harassment Bystander Training session which teaches anyone how to safely handle any incidents they may witness. This is worth everyone's time; it's free and you can attend online via www.suzylamplugh.org throughout April.

IWD 2026 CAMPAIGN: For International Women's Day this year we launched a nationwide campaign on abortion decriminalisation,

using my successful Council Motion from last year as a template to encourage other Local Authorities to take similar action and demonstrate the need for this overdue legal reform to the Government.

REPAIR CAFÉ NEWS: March's Repair café saw our first visit from The Clothes Fairy. This new partnership will see her attend every month so you can bring your preloved clothes and bags along with your broken items for fixing, and get paid £1 per kilo for all accepted items! Keeping the planet green just got *even* better for your wallet.

COUNCIL NEWS: Some excellent bits of news this month - I am delighted to confirm that the Borough Council administration has confirmed that Old Down will be moved to the very top of the list for Local Nature Reserve status! Since we announced that we would move ahead with LNR I have met with the Leader to describe how many residents have been vocal on this and for how long – I know it's been a long time coming for many of you so I'm thrilled that Cabinet has heard this and made the choice to bring Old Down forward first. There will be public consultation as part of it, so do look out and ensure you contribute, and all being well the process should be complete in about 18 months!

And at the last Full Council meeting I seconded a successful budget amendment to buy ten 'smiley face' Speed Indicator Devices for the Borough. These will be purchased and money allocated to move them around regularly for maximum effectiveness in discouraging speeding all over Basingstoke - I look forward to seeing one moving around Hatch Warren and Beggarwood! At the same meeting, there was also a budget amendment on top of town parking which I chose to abstain on. I made a video on my reasons for this as I have gotten into the habit of doing with any item that needs explaining in any depth. You can watch on youtube.com/@All_In_Party_UK and I'm always here for additional questions.

I also attended a Council drop-in session for local creatives, part of our information gathering for the Basingstoke bid to be the Town Of Culture for 2028. Having an arts background myself it was fab to see old friends and new faces, and chat about ideas and possibilities to make Basingstoke's great and growing arts scene even better.

CANVASSING AND COUNCILLOR SURGERY: Canvassing in recent weekends has seen us move from Hatch Warren into Beggarwood; as I write this today I'm just home from the Wentworth Crescent area. If you missed us, do get in touch to rebook. And for my April 'Ask Me Anything' Councillor Surgery, I'll be in the Portsmouth Arms pub from 7pm - 9pm on the evening of Monday 20th, so drop by with any local issues or queries and say hi.

Very best wishes to you all for the coming month!

Thanks to you all – Stacy.

Camrose, Gillies, Hackwood and Beggarwood



At the recent Patient Group and Practice Management meeting, May Hart (Clinical Lead for the Frailty Team) explained the role of the team, which includes a GP, nurses, a healthcare assistant and a bank nurse who covers vaccinations. The team carries out regular ward rounds in care homes and provides home visits for frail or housebound patients. Michelle, the team's social prescriber, helps coordinate joined-up care for patients and carers.

Practice Manager Stephen Collier reported that the practice continues to struggle to meet demand for routine appointments. To manage this, a waiting list system has been introduced that prioritises patients based on waiting time and clinical urgency. On the day of the update, 300 appointments were released with a further 450 due to be made available. Waiting times for routine appointments currently vary from same-day up to around five weeks, depending on clinical need as assessed by the triage doctor. The Practice Manager reassured us that there is ongoing work to review and improve how appointments are released and how staff time is used efficiently.

Bra and Breast Form Advice

Although NHS guidance on bras to support recovery and healing after breast cancer is available, choosing and buying the right products – especially online – can be overwhelming. It can be hard to judge items without seeing or trying them on, and finding shops with suitable products and knowledgeable staff can be difficult.

There is a specialist bra shop in Chandlers Ford that offers private, bookable appointments at no extra cost, including personal fitting and expert advice in a comfortable setting. A PPG member has visited the shop and spoken with the adviser and managing director to ensure the service is suitable, before adding this to the newsletter. Appointments are by booking only to ensure staff availability. Phone: 02380 270 345

www.amoena.com/uk-en/help-and-advice/showroom-fitting-service

The in depth version of this news is online at www.cghppg.weebly.com and there is also a 'Self Help A-Z' of Health and Wellbeing information, fast track treatment options, support groups and local contacts. Citizens Advice 0808 278 7829 can access the A-Z if you cannot use the internet.

PPG email: cghb.surgeryppg@btinternet.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CGHB.PPG

Membership of the Patient Participation Group is open to all patients of the practice. If you are interested in joining find out more or apply www.cghppg.weebly.com/join-the-ppg.

The Practice complaints process is on the practice website or write to The Manager at Gillies Health.

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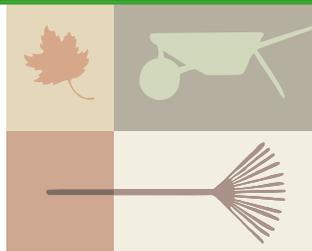
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The Group's 2026 AGM is on 9th April 2026 at Old Down Hall starting 7:30pm. We hope you can join us. There will be some refreshments (homemade cake!), a presentation on butterflies and also an update on the proposed Local



Female collecting grass

Nature Reserve status for Old Down. You are welcome to bring along your school age children. The official bit is very short, the photo presentation and discussions about wildlife hopefully more interesting.

Last month our report mentioned that *Cowslips* would start to show in late March. Well, actually a few *Cowslips* were showing in early March!! Took just a few warm sunny days for Spring to start and now there are *Cowslips* all over the meadow.

Spring is definitely here and birds will have started to make new nests (or take over old nests). A few years back there was a very successful busy rookery at the top of the site but the building works on Longacre have obviously caused too much disturbance and regrettably there are now only a couple of visible nests. Thinking of 'black birds' one of the UK's



Male

more common birds is the *Blackbird* (*Turdus merula*). They will have paired up now and be constructing their nest (well, it's the female doing the work!). The nest is constructed with twigs and grass to create a firm cup shape usually located in dense hedges and trees about 1-2 metres up. 3-5 eggs are laid and are a beautiful light blue with brown speckles. *Blackbirds* rarely re-use a nest. It is the male that is black with a dark yellow beak, the female being brown with a brown beak. Sadly, over the last few years, particularly in the South and in London, *Blackbird* numbers have declined (you may have noticed this) possibly due to a mosquito-carried virus that reared its head in the UK a few years ago and, of course, habitat disturbance and loss.

Work Parties: We meet outside Old Down Hall every Thursday 10-12noon (but not in the rain!). We really do need new members and support – this is the way to keep Old Down as a beautiful green space for wildlife and people. Check our website and Facebook for further information and/or contact us by email.

Email: old.down.wildlife@gmail.com

Website: Old Down Wildlife Group

Facebook: Old Down Wildlife Group

HATCH WARREN WI

Last month we were fortunate to hear about 'The Woman Who Led the WI Through Two World Wars' from the very entertaining speaker, Joanna Foat. We learned what an amazing woman Lady Gertrude (Trudy) Denman was. She decided at an early age that her family's wealth and status should be used for the greater good of the community. Her impressive CV includes being the first chair of the WI and Director of the Women's Land Army. We also heard about some of her more hair-raising escapades, including an account of shark fishing with a gun in her garter.

Our mascot, Hattie joined us for a group photo.



The next meeting is April 2nd when St John's Ambulance will demonstrate CPR and how to use the defibrillator stationed at HWCC.

Please feel free to join us at HWCC at 7:30

You can find more information about us from our website.

<https://hampshire.thewi.org.uk/find-wi/hatch-warren/about-hatch-warren-wi>



RABBITER CONTACTS:

Editor:

editor@therabbiter.biz

Advertising:

advertising@therabbiter.biz

Distribution:

editor@therabbiter.biz

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We are open from
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10am-2pm

Café in the Park

We look forward to seeing you!

Café in the Park
What's on April

Wednesday Quiche Wednesday Community Meal Deal 12-2pm	Weekly Thursday Beggardwood Babies group 11.30-12.30	Friday Friendship Friday Chatty cafe 10.30-11.30
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Wednesday 1st April
BVA Wellbeing Walk
Meet at 11am Outside the Café
Fun, free, and supportive walks led by trained volunteers
Community Lunch - 12.15-1.15
Join us and the community for a great value lunch
Cops N Coffee 12-2pm
Meet the local neighbourhood policing team and discuss any concerns

Friday 10th April
Card and a Cuppa - 10-1pm

Friday 24th April
Beggardwood Bookworms daytime group 11.30-12.30

Sunday 26th April
Carer Café 10.00 - 12.00
Are you an unpaid Carer? A chance to connect, share experiences, and enjoy a coffee together. Everyone welcome!

Wednesday 29th April
Beggardwood Bookworms Evening Group 7.30

Closed on Easter Sunday

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Beggardwood Community Centre
Broadmere Road, Basingstoke, RG22 4AQ

Café in the Park

Quiche Wednesday

COMMUNITY MEAL DEAL
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QUICHE, SALAD &
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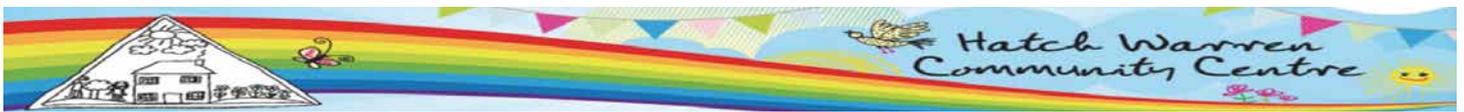
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DASHWOOD MANOR

WEDNESDAY 12-2PM
LIMITED SUPPLY

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

HATCH WARREN COMMUNITY CENTRE COACH TRIP TO



Thursday 23rd April at 7.30PM
Troubadour Wembley Park Theatre, LONDON

Good seats in Platform 2 zone
Tickets cost £85 per person

(INCLUDES RETURN EXECUTIVE COACH TRAVEL TO THE DOOR!)

Coach will depart at 4pm from our car park
This trip is open to all members of the public
Tickets are nonrefundable. Payment plans available

To book your place email OFFICE@HATCHWARREN.ORG
or call 01256 811262

38 seats must be sold for trip to go ahead
This event is being held as a fundraising event for Hatch Warren & Beggarwood Community Association
Charity No 1161117



Café in the Park
Beggarwood Community Centre
Broadmere Road, Basingstoke, Hants, RG22 4AQ

NOTICE OF AGM

Hatch Warren & Beggarwood Community Association (HWBCA)

Date & Time: Wednesday, 3rd June | 7:00 PM

Venue: Beggarwood Community Centre

Refreshments: From 6:30 PM

Come and Support Your Community Association!

You are warmly invited to attend the **Annual General Meeting (AGM)** of HWBCA.

Our charity exists to run and manage the Hatch Warren & Beggarwood Community Centres, providing welcoming community spaces to:

- Reduce isolation
- Promote wellbeing
- Create a sense of belonging for people of all ages and backgrounds
- Improve the lives of residents in RG22 and RG23

At the AGM, we will share:

- Our achievements from the past year
- Plans for the future of our community centres
- How you can support and get involved

Reserve Your Free Place
with this QR code



Your Attendance Matters

To hold the AGM, we need at least **25 members** present to achieve quorum and vote.

Please don't assume someone else will attend – we need YOU to help keep our community association running.

Membership

- £10 per family per year
- Your membership helps support the development of community services and the continued running of two vital community facilities for local residents.



AGM
Annual General Meeting

Registered Charity Number 1161117

find us on | facebook

Hatch Warren Community Centre

Hatch Warren Community Centre

Long Cross Lane, Hatch Warren

Basingstoke, RG22 4XJ

Tel: 01256 811262 Web: www.hatchwarren.org

Email: office@hatchwarren.org Follow us on Twitter @hatchwarren

We are looking for volunteers to help with our upcoming events, please email office@hatchwarren.org for further information.

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Wine, Ale &
Cider too!



Hot Food
by
Bartletts

HATCH WARREN COMMUNITY CENTRE

LAGER FESTIVAL

SATURDAY 6TH JUNE
7-11PM



This event is
supported by



This event is being held as a fundraising event for HWBCA Charity #1161117
Tickets non-refundable

Tickets £7.50
www.hatchwarren.org
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with a valid membership
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Tickets available via
the QR code



HATCH WARREN COMMUNITY CENTRE COACH TRIP

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MAMMA MIA!
THE SMASH HIT MUSICAL BASED ON
THE SONGS OF ABBA®



NOVELLO THEATRE
A DELFONTE MACKINTOSH THEATRE

THURSDAY 17th September at 7.30PM

Novello Theatre, LONDON

Good Stall seats

Tickets cost £80 per person

(INCLUDES RETURN COACH)

Payment plans are available, please ask for more information when booking

Coach will depart at 4pm from our car park

This trip is open to all members of the public

Tickets are non refundable

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or call 01256 811262

38 seats must be sold for trip to go ahead

This event is being held as a fundraising event for
Hatch Warren & Beggarwood Community Association
Charity No 1161117

This event is supported by



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Email: office@hatchwarren.org

Web: www.hatchwarren.org

Following us on Twitter @hatchwarren

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Hatch Warren Community Centre



Children & Young People's support lines
 Childline - 0800 1111 - Samaritans - 116 123
 Young Minds text service – 85258

The only Youth Club with Open Access and a Health Hub serving Hatch Warren and Beggarwood

Qualified Staff / Extensive Free Holiday Programmes/ Email: warren@hatchwarren.org Follow Us on Facebook @The Warren and Instagram @thewarrenyouthclub

the Warren

FREE ENTRY

10-13 year olds

THE WARDEN

EVERY FRIDAY

6-7:45 PM

We are proud to be the only youth facility in the area offering a wide range of activities every week. Young people can enjoy socialising with their friends, tuck shop, games, sports and crafts.

Find us on Facebook to book a space!

HATCH WARREN COMMUNITY CENTRE
 LONG CROSS LN, BASINGSTOKE RG22 4XF

CHARITY NUMBER: 1161117
 email: Warren@hatchwarren.org

Monday night is Link2 Club Night

6pm-8.15pm



WE HAVE SUCH FUN!
 Manager - Dilys Buchan 07939532667

LINK2, supported by Hatch Warren & Beggarwood Community Association, is a family orientated group for young adults (16-30) who may need a little support. LINK2 is run by experienced staff who aim to develop a relationship with all members with learning disabilities and their families to get the best outcomes for their future. We support them on a path to growing independence, as they move into adult life.

Improve general Life skills and finding their full potential through sports opportunities

Provide experiences to promote Resilience and self esteem

Boost confidence and support for independent travel

Maintain and develop our access to work programme



Supported by
 Hampshire County Council



PROBUS HEARS "THE PEN IS MIGHTIER..."

Nigel Thorley, guest speaker at the Probus Club of Basingstoke, took members on a lively journey through the evolution of writing instruments.

He began with the Egyptians, who 3,000 years ago wrote on papyrus using shaped reeds dipped into ink made from natural materials and insects. These early tools eventually gave way to quills – strong feathers from large birds, slit at the tip to allow ink to flow smoothly without blotting.

Blotting itself changed dramatically in 1801, when blotting paper was invented by accident, replacing the sand traditionally used to dry ink.



By the mid-1850s, the metal nib had been refined for dip pens. A narrow slit in the nib allowed ink to flow by capillary action, and Birmingham became a major centre of production, with one company alone employing two thousand workers. Dip pens remained a classroom staple into the 1950s, when school desks still featured ceramic ink wells refilled daily by the designated "ink monitor" a prized position. Today, steel nibs survive mainly in the hands of artists and calligraphers.

The arrival of fountain pens marked a turning point. Although early versions were made of metal, the invention of Bakelite in 1907 by Leo Baekeland revolutionised production. This mouldable plastic type material allowed pens to be fitted with a lever mechanism that compressed a rubber sac, drawing ink into the reservoir.

In 1921, the American company Parker launched the now-iconic Duofold and later solved the problem of slow-drying ink with the introduction of Quink – quick drying and fountain pen friendly. Parker's advertising dominated in the 1930s, and in 1941 the company unveiled the "Parker 51" named to mark the firm's 51st anniversary and to signal that the pen was a decade ahead of its rivals.



Eisenhower, May 7 Berenide holding Parker 51. Photo Courtesy: National Archives and Records Administration

The ball point pen, however, would change every day writing forever. Hungarian inventor Laszlo Biro and his brother created a thicker, fast drying ink that didn't blot. Granted a patent in London in 1938, the brothers later fled to Argentina during the war. The RAF quickly recognised the value of their invention, ordering 30,000 pens because fountain pens leaked at altitude.

Manufacturing of this ball pen took place from 1945 in USA where a New York store placed an order for 50,000 and sold 30,000 in the first week of this new style pen that did not need refilling for two years. Originally priced at \$12.50 today it has become a throwaway pen costing pennies.

In the meantime Parkers continue with fountain pen manufacture together with their roller ball and propelling pencil variants marketed as a luxury item to be treasured. Second-hand versions fetch good money on auction sites.

For more information about the Probus Club of Basingstoke see their web site www.probusbasingstoke.club or email secretaryprobusbasingstoke@outlook.com or phone 07814 937202 for an informal chat.



With eight patents and a lifetime guarantee, it became a symbol of innovation. Its fame was sealed when General Eisenhower held up two Parker 51s in a victory gesture after signing the documents that ended the Second World War.

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OUR MEETINGS

We were very pleased to welcome Sarah Lefebvre back, this time to chat to our Daytime Bookworms group about her newly published novel 'A Mother's Second Chance'.

Our members enjoyed the chance to ask questions and chat with a published author. They had many interesting and thoughtful questions and we all enjoyed her visit.

Many thanks to Sarah for giving up her time and visiting again.

In April the evening Bookworms are reading 'Here one Moment' by Liane Moriarty, the author of 'Big little Lies'. Her new novel is set on a plane bound for Sydney. The unassuming woman from seat 4D walks down the aisle making unsettling predictions about the passengers. Six strangers find their lives unexpectedly crossing. Meeting date is 29th April

The Daytime bookworms are reading 'The SafeKeep' by Yael Van de Wouden which won The Women's prize for fiction 2025. Meeting date 24th April.

Café in the Park



Do you love to read?

Join our friendly Daytime Beggardwood Bookworms group. Come along to the group discuss your thoughts about the book with other book lovers

Monthly on the following Friday's
11.30-12.30

24th April



For more information email
Annie
Community@beggardwood.org
www.hatchwarren.org or follow
The Beggardwood Bookworms
on social media



BEGGARWOOD Wildlife Group

Maintaining Beggardwood Park for the Benefit of
Wildlife and the Community

Community Litter Pick Sunday 22nd February

This joint event with the Hatch Warren Group was well attended by around 30 young and not so young happy helpers. An incredible amount of rubbish was collected from all areas in a few hours of litter picking.



Work Party Tuesday 3rd March

Following on from assisting the Kempshott group with Blackthorn popping and dead hedging at the end of February the volunteers returned to home soil for their March activities. The team headed out towards the play area to a patch of brambles and dogwood to be cleared and quite an area was attended to. Another task of scraping the sides of a ditch to remove moss, to provide better access for solitary bees to nest was also completed.



Our next work parties will be: -

Tue 7th April / Tue 5th May

We typically meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 9am at the Cafe in the Park (Community Centre)

For more information or to let us know you plan to join us on a work party, please email us at contactus@beggardwoodwildlife.uk

Find a warm welcome at your local parish church...

Immanuel Church
St Mark's School,
Danebury Road, Hatch Warren, RG22 4US
part of the Parish of Basingstoke Down

for info on services and events...
www.parihofbasingstokedown.org.uk
Parish Office- 01256 840502
find us on Facebook and Instagram!




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ANVIL ARTS EVENTS
01256 844244 / ANVILARTS.ORG.UK

FAIRPORT CONVENTION

With support from Jenn Butterworth
 Wed 1 Apr, 7.30pm, The Haymarket,
 Tickets: £39



AN EVENING WITH HENRY COLE

Hosted by Steve 'Stavros' Parrish
 Tue 7 Apr, 7.30pm, The Haymarket, Tickets: £35. Over 65s and
 under 25s £33.50. Suitable for: ages 14 and over

MILES HUNT

Thu 9 Apr, 7.30pm, The Haymarket, Tickets: £28.50

BOYBAND IN THE BUFF Starring Gareth Gates
 Fri 10 Apr, 7.30pm, The Anvil, Tickets: £38, £34. M&G upgrade £30
 Suitable for: ages 18 and over

LIZA PULMAN & JOE STILGOE

Hooray for Hollywood
 Fri 10 Apr, 7.30pm, The Haymarket, Tickets: £34, £24

T'PAU

Sat 11 Apr, 7.30pm, The Haymarket,
 Tickets: £36



LUCY PORTER Let Yourself Go!
 Sun 19 Apr, 7.30pm, The Haymarket, Tickets: £27
 Thomas Hopkins, Craig Haffner & Sherry Wright
 present the Hope Mill Theatre production

GLORIOUS!
 Tue 21 – Sat 25 Apr, The Haymarket, Tickets: £31

DAVID OLUSOGA A Gun Through Time
 Tue 28 Apr, 7.30pm, The Anvil, Tickets: £49, £36.50, £34
 Suitable for: ages 12 and over

DR LOUISE NEWSON BREAKING THE CYCLE
 The Power of Hormones
 Thu 30 Apr, 7.30pm, The Haymarket, Tickets: £33.50. VIP Meet &
 Greet upgrade £54

BASINGSTOKE CONCERT BAND
 presents a
SPRING CONCERT
'Around the World in 80 Minutes'
 Sheffield-on-Loddon Village Hall
 Saturday 25 April 2026 – 7.30-9.30pm
 Tickets costing £10 (U16 free) can be purchased from band
 members, at the door or visit:
<https://ticketlab.co.uk/event/id/37529#/>
 Join us for *Around the World in 80 Minutes* and
 experience music from across the globe – all
 without leaving your seat

GLORIA!
A Concert for Spring

Saturday
 18th April 2026
 St John's Church
 Hook, RG27 9EG
 7 pm

Poulenc, Purcell,
 Brahms, Rossini

Hook Choral Society
 Directed by Nicholas Woods
 Organist Philip Aspden
 Soprano soloist Emily Chamberlain

Tickets £20 (includes glass of wine or
 soft drink) Available from
 HookChoral.co.uk or 07957293641 or on
 the door

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BASINGSTOKE BLUES CLUB PRESENTS:



BACKBONE BLUES BAND
 + support from Jimmy the Dog

SATURDAY 25th APRIL DOORS 7PM

live at
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 Full details & tickets at basingsstokeblues.co.uk

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SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING

I didn't see that coming!

On occasions my memory and time management skills really let me down. Embarrassingly, I begin this article at the 'deadline' while simultaneously preparing a talk for Mothering Sunday a few days from now. However, not unrelated, a personal memory of my mother, who passed away 25 years ago has come to mind, that surprisingly had me thinking of unexpected outcomes that I didn't see coming.

One of my mother's greatest joys and now my own, is listening to Desert Island Discs. As many a reader will know, the BBC programme is about a well-known person metaphorically cast away on a desert island, with their eight music choices. The first show was aired as far back as 1942 with later years adding a luxury item and choice of book. Well, imagine my deep sense of joy as one of our sons arranged a personal edition of the programme to celebrate a significant birthday. More poignant too, as our family have not been together for eight years, let alone in the same room for what turned out to be an extensive interview; including first hearing of my pre-prepared music choices. Itself, a hugely difficult task which many 'famous' participants regularly testify.

What I didn't see coming is how deeply positive and cathartic I found this whole Desert Island experience. Sure, there was emotion expressed, even tears thinking about love lost, particularly hearing Elgar's Nimrod, a theme of personal as well as national Remembrance. However, in those ninety minutes we seem to have collected a mini memoir; a capsule of timeless history, significant family events, sliding door moments and crazy stories, some of which had never been told before. Something remarkable happened.

What I also did not see coming was the recognition of something spiritual, a connection, a pattern throughout all the years, among the maze of circumstance and life experience. It affirmed God's presence all along, often in the **"...still small voice"** referred in 1 Kings 19:12. And then a redemptive reminder, as if to make sense of all my weaknesses and certainly my poor time management skills. I had ignored God's prompting, and what I now know as the Holy Spirit for many years. Returning full circle to my dear mother; I think I will let the Psalmist David have the final word (139:13-16):

¹³ For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.

¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.

¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me were written in your book
before one of them came to be.

Personal reflection from Hilary Nickell

IT WAS 30 YEARS AGO TODAY

This recent history is compiled from past issues of 'the Rabbiter'.

By its sixteenth issue, in May 1994, the Rabbiter was well established as a four-page newsletter printed on distinctive green paper and it referred to having more content than it had space for: The main report was that plans for Hatch Warren's new public house were expected to be submitted in late May 1994. The local paper had reported that some local residents did not want it, with one prominent resident saying that he was against pubs on housing estates, full stop. As a result, the Rabbiter was planning a local survey to gauge opinion on whether it was wanted and, if so, where it should go.

In the event, the Portsmouth Arms was built by Hall and Woodhouse who run it to this day. I think it is fair to say that it has proven to be a good neighbour.

There had been vandalism at the Community Centre, targeted at parked cars. Six vehicles had been broken into and a radio stolen. As a result, the lights in the car park were to be kept on during the evenings when the centre was in use.

The Confederation of Hatch Warren Residents' Associations had met with Borough and County Councillors to make the case for traffic calming measures in Hatch Warren. The official Council reports at the time said there was not a significant problem. In the event, the clinching argument was to be the planned development at Beggarwood, which would generate a lot more through traffic. The end result was the 'build-outs' on our major estate roads, which are a bit 'Marmite' - welcomed by some, disliked by others. However in this age of car meets, I think we can be thankful that they exist to discourage racing round the estate.

In 1994, the proposed Blockbuster video rental store on the Hatch Warren Retail Park was causing concern. It was planning to open from 10 am to 11 pm, seven days a week. The company had agreed that the store would not contain arcade or computer games.

The video tape is a technology that has largely died, and Blockbusters is sometimes cited as an example of a company that failed to identify the way in which consumer demand was moving towards streaming and on-demand services, a failure that led to it going bankrupt in 2010.

The emerging local plan for our area was causing much interest. It was suggesting a Household Waste Recycling Centre (never happened), a 'local centre' at the Woodbury Road / Beggarwood Lane junction (never happened), M3 services accessed via Woodbury Road (never happened, though the slip roads on the M3 are still visible) and 800 homes in the Beggarwood Lane area (which did happen).

This was to be something of a watershed issue for the Rabbiter: Jenny Crawford was about to give up producing it (she would return later) and a new editor was sought. It took some time and the next issue appeared in November 1994, an absence of five months.

Stephen Reid



DAVE'S NATURE SPOT

April is with us and now is the prime time to see our 6 native reptiles. As the weather starts warming up it is quite usual to see our reptiles basking in sunny spots on the edges of woodland rides or in sunny clearings.

For this feature I am concentrating on our snake species. We have 3 native species in Great Britain (there are no snakes in Ireland – legend says they were banished by St Patrick in the 5th century AD) being the Adder (*Vipera berus*), the Grass Snake (*Natrix helvetica*) and the much rarer Smooth Snake (*Coronella austriaca*) only found in a few southerly heathland locations. The two species we are likely to see locally are the Grass Snake and the Adder.



The non-venomous Grass Snake has a distinctive yellow and black collar behind the head. It is our largest snake species sometimes attaining a length of around 1.5 metres and is normally found near and around water and is an excellent swimmer. Its main diet consists of amphibians (frogs, toads, newts) but they are opportunist feeders and will also take fish and other small prey.

Grass snakes are the only UK snake that lay eggs; normally 10 to 40 are laid in rotting vegetation or compost heaps in June/July and they will hatch early autumn. The young are tiny self-sufficient versions of the adult.



Adders are our only venomous snake, easily recognised by their more stocky build and the "zig-zag" pattern running down their back and a beautiful reddish eye colour. They are much more at home in drier areas than the Grass Snake and can often be

seen basking in the sun.

In the spring, male Adders may be seen fighting, known as "dancing" - a pre-mating behaviour that will establish the stronger and more dominant individual and give him the better chance of mating. Mating takes place April/May.

Adders are live bearing and will give birth to between 6 to 20 young in early August. All Adders are venomous including the newly born and are best left alone as their bite can be very painful. They will try to avoid any encounters and would rather flee than bite. Their venom is used to immobilise their prey which can be small mammals, lizards, small birds and nestlings.



The smallest (only reaching 60-70 cms) and rarest of our snakes is the Smooth Snake, a greyish brown coloured species with a heart shape on the head. It is non-venomous. The Smooth Snake is only found in the south, mainly in Hampshire, Dorset and

Surrey, although there has been a recent introduction into Devon that is proving to be reasonably successful. They are found mainly in heathland and sandy locations like the New Forest or RSPB Arne and are very secretive. They will often hide under debris or a log. 4 to 15 live young are born in September. Their diet is mainly lizards, small mammals, nestlings and insects.



Finally, I briefly mention the Slow Worm (*Anguis fragilis*) which often gets mistaken for a snake. It is in fact a legless lizard, smaller than our native snakes, it is a golden grey colour and has a glossy appearance.

ROTARY ROUNDUP

BASINGSTOKE FESTIVAL OF TRANSPORT

Sunday 10th May 2026

The Memorial Park will once again come alive with nearly 1,000 vehicles of every kind on display - from classic cars, the ones your Dad and Granddad used to own, motorcycles to buses, fire engines, commercial vehicles and even military favourites.

You'll also be able to explore a great mix of specialist car clubs, trade stalls and sellers, offering everything from motor-jumble treasures to plants, plus plenty of food outlets and live music to keep the day buzzing.



Among the trade stands, you'll also find several of the charities supported by our Rotary Club. We're delighted to give them space to share the amazing work they do and to help them raise much-needed funds. If you're able, please stop by their stalls and show them your support — every little bit helps them continue their vital work.

www.rcbd.org.uk

Facebook: @RotaryBasingstokeDeane

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**Interested in playing Bowls?
Come to our Open Day to find
out more
Saturday, 18th April 2026**



**Bowls taster
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provided**

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**THORNYCROFT BOWLS CLUB
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www.thornycroftbowlsclub.co.uk



THE BLUEBELL

It's Bluebell season and we are so lucky to have so many beautiful bluebell woods within easy reach. The bluebell is a native wildflower, and the UK is home to around half of the world's population of this wonderful flower. They are an important source of nectar for early pollinators.

Bluebells are indicators of ancient woodland, and they are protected. It takes many years for a bluebell patch to form, and it is illegal to damage or pick bluebells. Even stepping on the plants can kill them as they need their leaves to photosynthesise.



In folklore, bluebells are closely associated with the fairy world. It was thought that the flowers could produce a ringing sound which would summon the fairy folk. They hung their spells on the petals of the flowers.

Standing in a ring of bluebells could be dangerous as you could be lulled by their scent into drowsiness and then be spirited off by the fae, especially if you stand amongst them during twilight. Bringing the flowers into the house was considered unlucky as they belong to the fairies.

The bluebell had many nicknames. These included wood bells; witches' thimbles; ladies nightcaps, and fairy flowers.

Terri Reid MA FRSA

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HATCH WARREN UNDER FIVES

We have enjoyed our spring term at Kempshott Under Fives. On the calendar for this term has been World Book Day, Mother's Day, Red Nose Day, Ramadan, St Patricks Day, Holi and all of our Easter activities too

During World Book Day week the children came into preschool dressed as their favourite characters. We shared some great stories and the children were very creative and made their own book covers for our favourite books.

We celebrate Holi Hindi each year at preschool, a colourful ancient Hindu festival to welcome the arrival of spring and celebrate the end of winter. This is our most colourful week at preschool and we use lots of bright colours, splat paint and make colourful pictures.

We celebrated Mother's Day by inviting Mums, Nannies, Aunties and any other special ladies into preschool. We did some lovely activities together and had some yummy treats for snack time. The children also made some lovely cards and surprises to take home for their Mums.

We are now in the lead up to Easter and have lots of creations underway; we will of course have a little bit of chocolate too!

At this time of year we get busy in the garden and we start to spend more time outdoors. We have been enjoying the sunshine and the children have been busy with water play, the mud kitchen and obstacle courses. We also have a new slide to enjoy in the garden.

Our older children will be learning which primary school they are going to over the Easter holidays, so we are eagerly awaiting to hear the big news when we get back to preschool after the holidays. Next term we begin our preparations for the transition to big school. We will start by giving the children lots of mark making opportunities and activities that strengthen little hands for handwriting.

We are now enrolling for our next academic year in September 2026. Why not book a visit to look around and meet the team? If you'd like to learn more, please contact Siobhan on 01256 322788, or email preschoolmail@aol.com.

We also manage a lovely, smaller preschool, Kempshott Under Fives, located a short distance away at St. Mark's Church in Kempshott.

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

DANDELIONS PRE-SCHOOL

We have had so much fun this half term and it's been lovely to get outside and enjoy the sunshine that we have been having. Our new sandpit is up and running and the children have been enjoying building sandcastles. We are so looking forward to planting season where we will be planting vegetables and flowers.

At Dandelions, we acknowledge the importance of fostering a love of reading. For World Book Day, we encouraged the children to bring in their favourite story books from home and to dress up as their favourite character.

We provided a range of activities to support other areas of learning as well as embedding the foundations for a lifelong love of reading

Drama Tots have returned to us and it's been lovely to see the children engaging with Kate and getting involved in the activities. This week an Alien was lost on Earth so we all flew to space in our rockets and helped him to find his way home.

For Mother's Day we did something a little different this year. We invited our parents to come in to do some flower arranging with us. The children decorated biscuits and made cards and bracelets for them to take home. It was so lovely to see everyone and such a lovely experience to share.

Some of our parents sent feedback after the event which was lovely to read.



"Just wanted to say thank you for a wonderful Mother's Day treat that you did for the mums. Also, the time that you've taken to do the Mother's Day cards too. I'll treasure that forever.

"What a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Mother's Day with my little boy. I particularly enjoyed watching him engage with the activity of arranging the flowers in the oasis - what a great idea for little ones! It was lovely to be able to visit the setting once again and it's clear how safe and happy he feels at Dandelions as he walked me around showing me his play space."

There is so much to look forward to with Easter approaching. We are excited to be joining in the Easter Egg hunt at Dashwood Manor and we will be having one of our own here for the children together with an Easter Bonnet Competition and a raffle. We would like to say a huge thank you to Dashwood for inviting us and also to Morrisons for their kind donation of Easter Eggs.

We are currently working through our hours for September and are so proud to have filled 90% of our spaces within 2 weeks. We do have limited spaces available. If you are interested, please do not hesitate to contact us.

If you are looking for a space our waiting lists are open for 2026/2027/2028 (Tel No: 01256 818857 or alternatively e-mail info@dandelions-preschool.org.uk)

CUCKOO MEADOW PRE-SCHOOL

We had a fun winter making bird feeders, celebrating Chinese



New Year (with an in-house restaurant, dressing up and dragon dancing!) and sharing the love around Valentine's Day.

However, we are really enjoying getting outside more to ride our bikes and even paint in the sunshine. Let's hope a certain bunny visits us... Happy Easter!

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

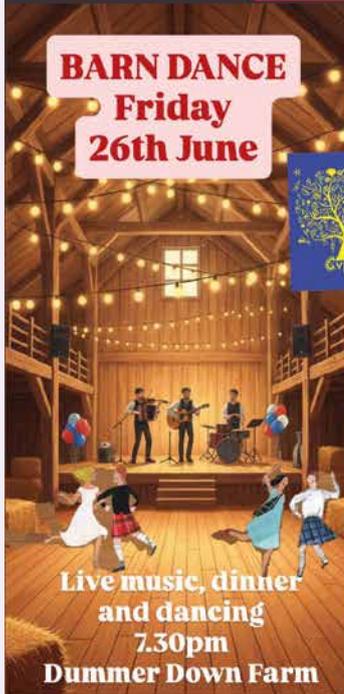
Georgia Hawken

Cuckoo Meadow Pre-School Secretary

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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 needs a deliverer:

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Love wine, but don't know your Assyrtiko from your Blaufränkisch? Then read on.....

If you're passionate about wine or simply curious to explore the world of vintages and varietals, the North Hampshire Wine Society offers the perfect monthly escape. Meeting every third Monday of the month, this friendly and welcoming group gathers to taste an exciting selection of around nine wines—each thoughtfully chosen to showcase a particular region, grape, or theme.

Whether you're a seasoned connoisseur or a complete beginner, the society provides a relaxed and sociable environment to learn more about wine. Each tasting is guided by knowledgeable hosts—sometimes industry experts, sometimes enthusiastic members—who share fascinating insights into the wines' origins, production methods, and tasting notes.

But it's not just about the wine. Every meeting is accompanied by a sumptuous buffet, carefully curated to complement the evening's selection. From artisan cheeses and charcuterie to fresh breads, salad accompaniments, the buffet is a highlight in its own right and ensures no one leaves hungry.

Held at a The Moose Centre, Basingstoke, the society's events are a great way to meet like-minded people, expand your palate, and enjoy a convivial evening out. Many members return month after month for the warm atmosphere, the variety of wines, and the chance to discover new favourites.

Guests are always welcome, and membership offers excellent value for regular attendees. So why not raise a glass and join us for an evening of discovery, flavour, and fun?

For more information or to reserve your place: www.binendum.org.uk

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UPDATE FROM THE FORCE CRIME PREVENTION TEAM

Social media job scams

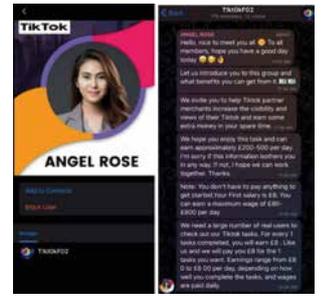
We are seeing an increase in scams which involve individuals being recruited via social media for fake job opportunities, which might include tasks such as 'liking' videos/posts, writing reviews or making payments for completed tasks.

Victims believe they are completing legitimate commission based work. Sometimes victims are instructed to send money to other individuals, or unknowingly receive money from other victims of fraud and are asked to make payments themselves with the promise of larger returns.

How to spot job fraud:

- Vague job descriptions: Be wary if the job looks unclear or lacks specific responsibilities.
- Informal channels: Contact is often through messaging apps, social media or personal email.
- Unusual salary promises: If a salary seems too high for the task, it could be a scam.
- For further advice: The rise of job offer scams | Take Five

You can report a scam to Report Fraud: 0300 123 2040
<https://www.reportfraud.police.uk/>



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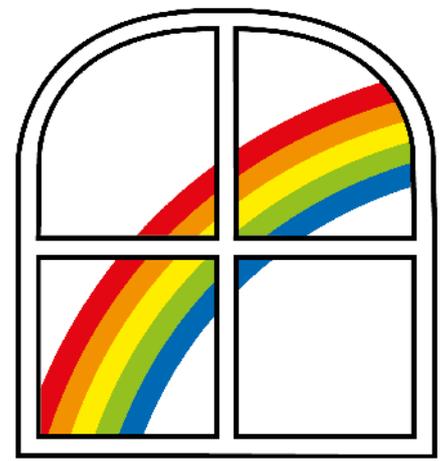


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