

*the magazine for town and parish since 1872*

**yB**

Your Berkhamsted

February 2017

**Bespoke Verse on Dragon's Den**

**Berkhamsted Common:**

**A Small Civil War**

**Berkhamsted Raiders Girls Team**

**Review**



Exploring the past, reflecting the present and looking to the future in Berkhamsted

# In this issue...

**Welcome to the February 2017 edition of Your Berkhamsted.** I hope you like history? In this issue, we have our resident history expert, Jenny Sherwood featuring the life of Edward Popple, a respected Headmaster with an artistic talent; and one of our readers has given us a history on Berkhamsted Common with the bonus of some great artistic talent. We also have a feature on the origins of Valentine's Day - don't forget those cards and flowers! Well done to local business woman, Joanna Miller with getting onto Dragon's Den—please read her story on page 28. On the sports side the Berkhamsted Raiders Girls Team are doing a great job and hoping to emulate the boys section. *Our what's on page shows events in February in and around Berkhamsted, also look out for YB tweets on @Yourberkhamsted. Please see email below and get in touch if there are any ideas or stories you may have, either to publish or additions/changes to the magazine for consideration.*

Jacqueline, Editor

editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk



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**Front cover:** Front cover: Thank you Mitzie Green for the beautiful front cover – Still Life with Elderflowers. Please see Mitzie's work on her website: [www.mitziegreen.co.uk](http://www.mitziegreen.co.uk)

## ***The Town and Parish Magazine of St Peter's Great Berkhamsted***

Responsibility for opinions expressed in articles and letters published in this magazine and for the accuracy of any statements in them rests solely with the individual contributor.

# Berkhamsted in the News

By Julian Dawson



You should know by now that I have a number of fixations. Firstly, non-league football. So I will direct you this month to [hellenicleague.co.uk](http://hellenicleague.co.uk), which has suggestions of amateur football rooted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it was all to play up, play up, and play the game. Of course the reality is different, but it still sounds romantic. Less prosaic was Basildon's [echo-news.co.uk/reporting](http://echo-news.co.uk/reporting) on the progress of Essex County League teams in the FA Vase. Our very own team stopped Hullbridge Manor in their tracks.

Another obsession is of course Bunting Magnetics. So, I bring you the most exciting of news from the enigma of a website that is [eurobulksystems.com](http://eurobulksystems.com). At the beginning of January the firm announced that it had signed an agreement to acquire Master Magnets Ltd, the UK manufacturer of magnetic separation equipment. So, an attraction to separation. An oxymoronic dream marriage. Master Magnetics are delighted to join a firm of international renown.

Old news now, but Ashlyns is now without a special needs and PE teacher since a certain Bake Off winner joined the pantheon of the legendary show. So it won't be surprising to see that [greateducation.co.uk](http://greateducation.co.uk) was advertising for "a Teacher of Girls PE to work in a prestigious and well equipped secondary school near Berkhamsted". It won't take Sherlock

Holmes to work out to which school they are referring.

January saw a number of reviews for 2016, one of which came from [faithdwight.com](http://faithdwight.com). This photographer's blog related a number of highlights, including "Photographing Jack + Sally in the fields and forests of Ashridge, near Berkhamsted". Unfortunately we can't see the results of her work, and whether it was for a *Jackie* picture story (girls of a certain age will get this reference) or perhaps a wedding montage. If the latter the marriage may have involved wellington boots and Barbour coats.

Remaining in the world of the surreal, the town made an appearance on the prestigious tech website [wired.co.uk](http://wired.co.uk). An intriguing piece entitled "Five internet of things devices that really shouldn't exist" discusses the more bizarre household objects that could be connected to your wireless network and internet. Matthew Reynolds concludes his sceptical piece by concluding "It's only a matter of time before I pop in the loo and my smart toilet paper is arguing with my connected bath mat about the fog situation in Berkhamsted." Spookily it is actually foggy as I write this.

Back to love and marriage, and this month's guest website [whimsicalwonderlandweddings.com](http://whimsicalwonderlandweddings.com). Apparently no distance is too far to get the right dress for

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the occasion. So the site reveals that “After looking at several bridal boutiques in Surrey, Esther went to Brides of Berkhamsted with her mother and found the dress she wanted.” Really? I never knew Surrey was so bereft of wedding attire. But let’s be thankful that our retail excellence leapt to her support.

Prize for most far flung site of the month goes to kippee.blogsport.co.uk, a blog in which Canadian Elizabeth Kipp describes

her genealogical endeavours and finds that her ancestors married in St Peter’s church on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1793. No mention is made of whether the photographer dragged them up to Ashridge, or where they bought the dress.



Drawings of Berkhamsted by  
Jenni Cator, Art at 88,  
88 High Street,  
Berkhamsted, HP4 2BW Tel.  
01442 769110  
info@artat88.co.uk.

## Slice-and-bake Valentine’s biscuits—BBC Good Food

**Ingredients:** 300g plain flour, plus a little extra for dusting, 200g salted butter, diced, 120g golden caster sugar, 2 large egg yolks, 2 tsp vanilla extract, ½ tsp rosewater, or 25g/1oz freeze-



dried raspberries, whizzed to a powder, red or pink food colouring  
**Method :** **Tip the flour and butter into a food processor and whizz to fine crumbs. Add the sugar and yolks then whizz to a smooth dough. Remove one-third of the dough, add vanilla to what’s left and pulse to whizz in. Wrap this dough in cling film and leave at room temperature.**

♦ Put the reserved dough back in the processor with the rosewater or dried raspberries, if using, and a drop of food colouring. Pulse and add more colouring to achieve an intense colour. If the dough has

become too soft, pulse in a few spoonfuls more flour until a similar consistency to the vanilla dough. Put the dough in the fridge, remembering to remove it 30 mins before you need to roll it out.

- ♦ Thickly roll out the coloured dough between baking parchment. Use a small 3-4cm heart cutter to stamp out hearts. Keep re-rolling and stamping until all the dough is used. Line up hearts on top of each other and press to form a cylinder, taking care to retain the heart shape. Wrap in cling film and freeze for 3 hrs until solid.
- ♦ When the heart dough is hard, roll the vanilla dough, using your hands, into 3 cylinders the length of the heart stack. Stick one to each ‘side’ of the hearts, pat together to form a fat cylinder, then gently roll on your work surface until it completely encircles the coloured dough, with the frozen heart dough hidden in the centre. Chill for 2 hrs.
- ♦ Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Use a sharp knife to slice the log into 1cm-thick discs. Place on trays lined with baking parchment, allowing space for spreading, and bake for 20 mins. Cool on wire racks. Will keep for up to 4 days in an airtight container.

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# What's on

Berkhamsted Artisans, Arts & Crafts Market (**1<sup>st</sup> Saturday every month**) 10am to 4pm. The Town Hall, 196 High Street, Berkhamsted, Herts, HP4 3AP Through the double doors above Carluccio's on the High St. Lift access at back. If you would like a stall contact Claire - Mob: 07968 627 179; Email: [berkhamstedmarket@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:berkhamstedmarket@hotmail.co.uk); [www.greatmarkets@vpweb.co.uk](http://www.greatmarkets@vpweb.co.uk)

Tring Farmers Market (**Alternate Saturdays**). The Marketplace, Brook Street, Tring 9.00am - 12.15pm. Tring Farmers Market promotes local food for local people For more info email: [enquiries@tringfarmersmarket.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@tringfarmersmarket.co.uk)

\*\*\*\*\*

For events at Ashridge please visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ashridge](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ashridge) or contact the Visitor Centre on 01442 851227 [Ashridge@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:Ashridge@nationaltrust.org.uk)

**1<sup>st</sup> Feb to 24<sup>th</sup> Feb @ 10am to 5pm – Capability Brown Anniversary Exhibition** - Come and admire Capability Brown's work at Ashridge in this fascinating exhibition. An extensive exhibition of Capability Brown's life and works with special reference to his work on the Ashridge Estate. Children are welcome with accompanying adults. Dogs on leads are welcome. Meet at Visitor Centre.

**13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> Feb @ 10am to 3.00pm – Half Term Trail and Crafts.** This event is for children and families. Due to wet conditions, the trail may be muddy in places and therefore not suitable for pushchairs. Dogs on leads are welcome. Meet at Visitor Centre. Child £3.

**Sat, 4<sup>th</sup> Feb @ 7.30 pm: Music - Sacconi String Quartet** This well-known quartet will be playing music by Haydn, Mozart, Glass and Mendelssohn. Civic Centre. [www.berkhamstedmusic.co.uk](http://www.berkhamstedmusic.co.uk) Annual sub: £48; visitors £14 at the door, under 18 free. Tickets: 862798 or [kennedyn@btinternet.com](mailto:kennedyn@btinternet.com)



**Candlemas Taizé Service Sunday 5 February 2017 at 6.00 pm.** St Mary's Church, High Street, Northchurch, HP4 3QW A quiet meditation

service with chants and silence to celebrate Candlemas. Tea/coffee and cake to be served afterwards. All welcome

**Weds, 8<sup>th</sup> Feb @ 8pm: Talk - The Bucks and Herts Rothschilds.** Talk by Society member Bill Willett. Town Hall. [www.berkhamsted-history.org.uk](http://www.berkhamsted-history.org.uk) Annual sub: joint £12, single £7, visitors £2.50 (no conc); DC. [KSherw9100@aol.com](mailto:KSherw9100@aol.com) 865158

**Sat, 11<sup>th</sup> Feb @ 8pm: Jazz - Pasadena Roof Orchestra Special 35th Anniversary Concert** Duncan Galloway (voc, leader), Olly Wilby (ts), Dal Pritchard (as), Robert Fowler (bs), Manny Baxter and Dave Ford (tpt), Adrian Fry (tb), Tom Langham (g, ban), Simon Towny (p), Dave Berry (b). Civic Centre. [www.berkhamstedjazz.co.uk](http://www.berkhamstedjazz.co.uk) Visitors £13, members £10. Annual: couples £15, singles £10. DC. SAE to Berkhamsted Jazz, 6 Longfield Gardens, Tring HP23 4DN. [bjazztickets@gmail.com](mailto:bjazztickets@gmail.com) 824173

(Continued on page 8)

**Mon, 13<sup>th</sup> to Tues, 14<sup>th</sup> Feb @ 8pm: Film - Suite Française** In occupied France, a lonely woman (Michelle Williams) begins a romance with the German officer billeted with her mother-in-law (Kristen Scott Thomas). Dir: Saul Dibb/2014/UK,France/Cert 15/107min. Civic Centre. [www.berkhamstedfilmsociety.co.uk](http://www.berkhamstedfilmsociety.co.uk) Annual sub: joint £65, single £35, visitors £5 at door (no conc). 863155

**Tues, 21<sup>st</sup> Feb @ 8pm: Art - Still life in acrylic** A demonstration of painting still life in acrylic by Keith Morton. Civic Centre. [www.berkhamstedartsociety.co.uk](http://www.berkhamstedartsociety.co.uk) Subs £20, visitors £3 on the door, no DC

**Weds, 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb @ 8pm: Talk - Love Your Life** Ros Taylor MBE talks about her time at the Hospice of St Francis. Town Hall. [www.berkhamstedcitizens.org.uk](http://www.berkhamstedcitizens.org.uk) £5 (your entrance fee will also entitle you to a year's membership). Entrance free to members

**Weds, 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb @ 10.00 am : Machins Solicitors and Dementia Friends - free information session**  
10.00am-11.30am at Shendish Manor, London Road, HH. HP3 0AA  
The information sessions will be informal and interactive and will enable you to understand more about what dementia is and the small things you can do to help people with the condition. We will also be able to provide some practical legal advice on the importance of putting plans in place for the future. Aimed at relatives, carers, businesses and residents in the Hemel Hempstead area the session will be delivered by local Dementia Friends volunteer and champion, Doug MacDonald. To register, please contact Daryl Sullivan on 01442 872311 or email [daryl.sullivan@sumtab.co.uk](mailto:daryl.sullivan@sumtab.co.uk)

**Mon, 27<sup>th</sup> Feb @ 7.45pm: Talk – Stonehenge** Professor Mike Parker Pearson, FSA, UCL Institute of Archaeology. Music Room, B'sted School. [www.berkhamstedarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.berkhamstedarchaeology.co.uk) Annual sub £15, Family £17.50, junior £5. Members £1, visitors £3, DC. 254801

**Mon, 27<sup>th</sup> Feb @ 8 pm: Film - The New Girlfriend**

An audacious, elegant and witty melodrama. Claire is startled to discover how her deceased best friend's husband is coping with his grief. Dir: Francois Ozon/2014/France/Cert 15/108min/Subtitles. Civic Centre. [www.berkhamstedfilmsociety.co.uk](http://www.berkhamstedfilmsociety.co.uk) Annual sub: joint £65, single £35, visitors £5 at door (no conc). 863155

**Wed, March 22<sup>nd</sup> @ 8pm: BERKHAMSTED LIVE** with award-winning artists ZOË THORNBURY-PHILLIPS and CHRISTINE ROLLITT demonstrating face & body painting and mixed media & stitch; music from gifted indie/folk duo TINLIN; local journalist DAVID GUEST with his debut novel, *A Pressure of the Hand*. Kings Arms, Berkhamsted, HP43HL £5.00/£3.00 supporting Pepper Nurses. Book at [lstate@btinternet.com](mailto:lstate@btinternet.com)

<https://www.dayoutwiththekids.co.uk/things-to-do/east/hertfordshire/berkhamsted>

### **Out of Town**

The Court Theatre -

[www.courttheatre.co.uk](http://www.courttheatre.co.uk)

Aylesbury Waterside Theatre: for information - <http://www.atgtickets.com>

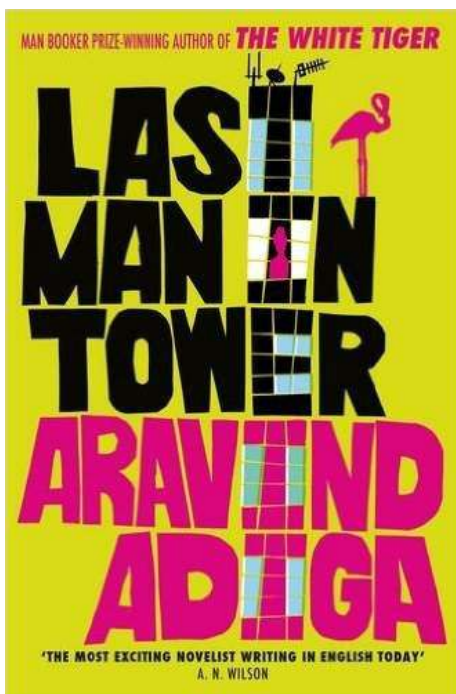
Watford Colosseum: for information -

<https://watfordcolosseum.co.uk>



## Book Review

by Julian Dawson



**Last Man in Tower.** By Aravind Adiga. Atlantic Books

Man Booker Prize winning novelist Aravind Adiga sets *Last Man in Tower* in the rapidly changing and developing Indian city of Mumbai. The scene is set in a dilapidated tower block that has been ear-marked for demolition by a grasping property developer Dharmen Shah. We get to know each of its inhabitants, their lives unveiled with all their problems, desires, hopes and past disappointments. But their relatively content and settled lives are upset by Shah's extremely generous offer to purchase their apartments so that he can create a gleaming new tower complete with art deco fountain.

However one man stands his ground, firstly to support some elderly friends. Retired school teacher Masterji sticks to his principles, but in so doing we see the other block's residents turn against him one by one so the extent that they are prepared to commit murder in order not to lose their dreams of a better life for themselves and their dependents.

Adiga's book is full of Indian colour, atmosphere and smells. The bustle, contrasts and juxtaposition of great wealth and extreme poverty of the city are revealed as a background to the unfolding drama. The characters to a greater and lesser extent win our empathy, if not quite necessarily our sympathy. Cleverly the author's portrayal of ambitious Dharmen Shah leaves us undecided if he is the real villain of the piece, coming as he does from a poor rural village. But ultimately against the tapestry of the Mumbai resident's struggle for dignity we can identify our own inner personalities, and that is the markings of a great writer.



## Berkhamsted Museum and History Society

### EDWARD POPPLE, A RESPECTED HEADMASTER AND

### TALENTED MAN

The number of boys from Victoria Boys' School who remember Edward Popple as their revered Headmaster is dwindling as the years pass by. A few more remember him as Chairman of Berkhamsted Urban District Council or as the first Chairman of the Berkhamsted & District Local History Society, which was set up in 1950 and which is now known as the Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society.

Edward Popple was born on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1879, in Provident Place, Berkhamsted, where Waterside now is. He was the second son of John and Elizabeth Popple. John was a boot closer. Neither John nor Elizabeth were natives of Berkhamsted. John was born in Lincolnshire and Elizabeth in Clerkenwell. However, they were married in Berkhamsted in the spring of 1877.

We do not know much about Edward's early childhood. He probably attended Chapel Street Infants' School and we know that he attended Victoria Boys' School whence he proceeded to Berkhamsted Grammar School. On finishing his education he returned to Victoria School, initially as a pupil teacher. There

he was to remain for 48 years, later as an assistant teacher and finally as its Headmaster, a post he was to hold for 36 years.

From the 1901 census we learn that the family at that time was living at 8, Victoria Road and his mother was a widow.



Edward's elder brother had left home. Edward was working as an assistant master and his younger brother, Harry, aged 15, was a builder's clerk. The two youngest members of the family, Herbert and Winifred, were respectively nine and three years old.

Edward became Headmaster at the age of 36 and was even at that age held in high esteem. This is indicated by the evidence given before the military tribunal, reported in *the Gazette* newspaper on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1917, when the Managers of Victoria Church of England Schools appealed for total exemption (from military service) of Edward Popple, the Headmaster. Mr R. A. Norris, one of the Managers, stated that the school contained 200 boys and they claimed that the Headmaster as such was engaged in work of national importance and he had no doubt that a man holding such a position in France or Germany would be considered doing work of the greatest importance. He had been engaged at the same school for 17 years and for 2 years had held the head position.'

Mr Charles Henry Greene, Headmaster of Berkhamsted School backed up the appeal. He stated Victoria School was one of the largest in the neighbourhood (the next he believed was in St. Albans) and it was a matter of extreme national importance that the boys of the future should receive good training. The Managers would never be able to find anybody to carry on the school with the proper attention it required. The tribunal granted a six months' extension initially, which later must have been extended since Popple remained as Headmaster. He, himself, stated he was quite willing to serve.

It was indeed above all to his work with the boys that the Rector paid tribute to Popple at a special presentation ceremony in May 1947 to mark his retirement in December 1946. 'As teacher and Headmaster he had not merely given instruction but had opened youthful minds and equipped the boys to seek and obtain knowledge, to use the abilities God had given them to make sure of knowing what was worthwhile. That was real education.' Four Old Boys, Messrs. W.S. Sear, C. Young, J.R. Harrowell and R. Glenister reminisced of happy school days.

Something of the extent of the education offered to the boys was reflected in Popple's reply, when he spoke happily of his long association with the school and of pleasant memories, the school garden, the flowers, the music festivals, the loyalty of the staff and especially the boys, hundreds and hundreds, so many he could not recall the names of some of them. His boys had gone out all over the world, taking with them something of the character and 'esprit' of Victoria School. He was grateful and proud to have had some part in their make-up. I feel sure

there are still a number of Old Boys today who are grateful to their former headmaster and who are proud to have been at Victoria School at that time. It is not just as a long-serving and dedicated headmaster that we remember Edward Popple. He was a man of great versatility: a very fine artist, a musician, conductor, naturalist, horticulturist, with an interest in the history of the town and a love for the countryside around Berkhamsted. Public service was also important to Popple, notably service on the Urban District Council, of which he was Chairman 1945-1947. He was not only a founder member and Chairman of the Berkhamsted Local History Society, but also Chairman and Secretary of the Berkhamsted Arts & Crafts Society, President of Victoria Old Boys' Association, Chairman of Berkhamsted Building Society, Clerk of the Bourne Educational Foundation and Salter's Charity, an active member of the Citizens Association, BAODS, the Music Festival and other local organisations.



WW1

Cont page 11

For many years he was a member of St. Peter's Church Choir: indeed a man of many parts and also a friend to many!

Edward Popple died on 18<sup>th</sup> Au-

gust 1960, in Withington Hospital, Manchester aged 81. He had moved to Bowdon, Cheshire in 1958 to be near his daughter, Elizabeth. His name lives on, not only in the many musical and concert programmes we have among the Society archives, but in his very fine paintings and drawings of bygone Berkhamsted, that still remain today in many Berkhamsted households.



An insight into the thoughts and character of a young man in Edwardian times can be found in the book, *'The Charm of Travel: an Edwardian Cycle Trip through France and Spain'*,

which is based on the diary of a cycling trip the young Edward Popple made in 1908 with a former childhood friend. The book was published by James White, Edward Popple's grandson. To mark the centenary of the trip some members of the family followed the route that Edward had taken.

Jenny Sherwod

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## Your Garden

### The Royal Botanic Gardens in Kandy, Sri Lanka by Helen Reeley

The second city in Sri Lanka is dusty, dirty, noisy & difficult to navigate so a visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kandy was a most welcome relief. Not so much a botanic garden in the sense that we would recognise here in the British Isles, more of an arboretum.

The trees were magnificent, huge & exotic. They far more captured my attention than the colonial styled formal flower beds of which there were a few rather undaunting pieces. I'm not a fan of symetrically designed planting arrangements-we do it well in this country but I don't favour them over trees & more natural, wilder-styled planting.

Various visiting dignitaries have planted many auspicious trees over the years here, but the tree that stood out for me was the appropriately named cannon ball tree *Couroupita guianensis* that may have been planted by King George V & Queen

weigh like a canon ball.

Do not stand under these trees in high winds. It has a flower that when opened reveals a tiny stupa like appearance & is

known as the stupa flower.



There are vast avenues of palms, some being re-planted, huge iron-wood trees, humungous

teak trees & a huge Javan fig tree that stood splendidly on the main lawn in all its glory proudly taking up 2,500 m2. The gardens are in excellent shape, the plants & beds in very good order-Sri Lankan gardeners habitually sweep up leaves every day. We travelled around the gardens in a buggy with a guide who stopped frequently to talk about salient specimens. We were shown the massive fruit bats hanging in the conifer trees & a resident water monitor that hangs out in the river beneath the suspension bridge & many birds which make their homes on the vast estate.



Mary in 1901. The fruits are the size of and resemble a galia melon but

Cont on page 21

# Berkhamsted Common

By Jenny Thorburn

## Berkhamsted Common: A Small Civil War

Many people will be aware of the 'Battle of Berkhamsted Common', 150 years ago last year, when the Brownlows put railings across the middle part of the Common, then torn down by navvies paid for by Augustus Smith. However there was a more extensive attempt at enclosure in the years before the Civil War. This is less well known now, but if it had completely succeeded we would not in all likelihood have any Common.

At that time there was a lot of unmet demand for farmland, and the Crown was short of money, as ever, so it was looking at ways to get more value from its assets. In 1617 the Prince of Wales (later Charles I), who was Duke of Cornwall and therefore the owner of the Common, agreed with the townspeople of Berkhamsted that 300 acres should be enclosed in exchange for a charter of incorporation for the town. The Northchurch commoners were unhappy with this arrangement but were pressurised to go along with this, it being preferable to the alternative which was to split the Common between the town and village. It seems that Northchurch had more interest in the Common, as they had more animals grazing on it. I doubt they were motivated by ideas of public rights and benefits, which is a modern idea, and did underlie the 1860s campaign. They were concerned with their own economic interests just as the Duchy was – and these were in opposition. The first enclosed area is now Hill Farm, the lonely farmland lying within the loop of the 'horseshoe' of the Common

between Coldharbour and Northchurch Farms.

Twenty years later, in 1638, the Duchy tried to enclose a larger part of the Common. Again the people of Berkhamsted were willing to do a deal, involving being given 100 acres for the 'benefit of the poor', but Northchurch was not. Led by William Edlyn of Norcott Farm, which is next to the Common, they objected that at the time of the previous enclosure they were promised that there would be no further attempts. As a result of his objections Edlyn was arrested and imprisoned (illegally), presumably to intimidate the commoners of Northchurch into conceding. He was released by order of the Lord Treasurer. In 1639 The Duchy proceeded to enclose 400 acres of the Common. In March 1640 Edlyn took direct action: like Augustus Smith 220 years later, he employed a gang of 100 men to pull down the hedges and fences. The Duchy then petitioned the House of Lords to punish the men. On April 2 1641 William Edlyn, his son John and Francis Fenn appeared before the House of Lords: they were then kept in custody for four months. The House of Lords was not sure of its position on the legality of the enclosure, although the men were released without punishment. Further fences were pulled down the following year but nothing was done. It probably helped that the men of Northchurch were supported by Lord Bridgewater. The Lords also faced larger problems with the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642. After the war, Parliament sold Berkhamsted Manor and Common to Messrs Ellis and Phillips, and in 1653 Ellis put up the 400 acres for sale,

assuming the inclosure was still valid in law. John Edlyn challenged Ellis to prove title to the land, which he failed to do, and so the matter was dropped and the land remains unenclosed to this day. The area to be enclosed was larger than that the Brownlows tried to take in the nineteenth century. You can still see the hedge lines from the failed enclosure on the Common: one runs from near the car park by Hill Farm across the end of the open area on 'Northchurch\*' Common then zig zags through the woods to the corner where Aldbury Common meets our Common. Another runs across the Common below the Frithsden Beeches, east of Brickyard Cottage. If the enclosure has succeeded the only bits of open land left would have been the steep slopes on the edge of the Northchurch end of the Common, and the area which is now the Golf course, through to Potten End - and no doubt these would also have been

taken into private control over the centuries and we would not have the glory that is our Common. Next time you walk up there remember the Edlyns who were willing to risk prison, and maybe even worse at a very dangerous time, to keep our Common open.

The western end of the Common is often called Northchurch Common, and is so marked on modern Ordnance Survey maps. However, strictly speaking there is only one Common, all of it called Berkhamsted Common. But maybe the people of Northchurch are justified in laying claim to it given that they were the ones who kept it open.

*Over the last year I have been walking and sketching on the Common. I am having an exhibition of the resulting woodcut prints, drawings, collages and maps, at the Upstairs Gallery, Berkhamsted (upstairs from the Post Office) between 7 and 18 February 2017.*



*Park Hornbeam by Jenny Thorburn: Woodcut*

## Your Berkhamsted Clergy

In our country it is not unusual for Churches to make public statements about public issues, like poverty and social care, education, the environment, international development and defence. Archbishop Justin Welby led an effective campaign against pay-day loans. The Church of England has published support in principle for fracking for gas on church owned land. Some groups support this and others oppose it. That's how political issues are, but the church has taken a position. I once listened to a sermon in Berkhamsted shortly before a General Election firmly arguing that Labour was the only way for a conscientious Christian to vote. And on the whole this is all considered quite normal and acceptable. I certainly think so. Most of Jesus' teaching is about the values and aspirations which shape relationships between individuals and groups of people, and that is inherently political territory. Our faith speaks directly to political questions and the church would be remiss to avoid them.

This is not the case everywhere. In the USA churches are prohibited by law from promoting political causes or candidates. In 1954 (then) Senator Lyndon B Johnson promoted a law to prohibit tax exempt organisations like churches from political campaigning. It appears this law is honoured as much in the breach as in the observance because the tax authorities don't have the resources to enforce it. Once a year (last year it was October 2<sup>nd</sup>) US churches coordinate Pulpit Freedom Sunday when pastors all get up and present overtly political messages. Good for them I say.

However, help might be at hand in the form of President Donald J Trump who has promised to repeal this law. He is quoted as saying "The Johnson Amendment has blocked our pastors and ministers and others from speaking their minds from their own pulpits...if they want to talk about politics...they risk losing their tax-exempt status. And I will repeal the Johnson Amendment if I am elected your president, I promise. So important." If he is as good as his word there are a few sermons I wouldn't mind delivering in the States (but I bet there will be a long waiting list).

The freedom of our churches to speak publically without fear or favour on the Christian dimensions of political issues is precious, but it is a privilege we have to protect. The best way to do that is to base what we preach on high quality research and advocacy. There is no shortage of this. The Children's Society, Christian Aid, the Church Urban Fund and many others produce excellent relevant research.

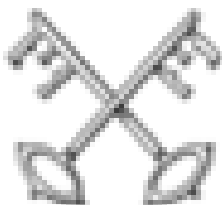
It is also important that church organisations are seen to be competent. We must not conform to the world in ways which compromise our faith, but as human organisations we will be judged by some worldly standards. The financial difficulties of Peterborough Cathedral and the HR problems of York Minster's bell ringers, currently in the national news, sadly reflect a lack of core management skills which weakens the Church's credibility.



Two years ago Lord Green prepared a report on the management and leadership training of Church of England clergy. Some people gave it a rough ride. But can we seriously doubt its long term importance?

As always, if you disagree with me – I would love to hear from you.

Richard Hackworth



**PEOPLE NOT BORDERS:** The next collection is on Sun 5th Feb. Please leave in the box at the back of St Peter's before 11am on Sun 5<sup>th</sup>. This month we are only accepting urgently needed donations for the SNUG and HEALTH appeal. Due to restrictions of storage at the warehouse collection points we are unable to accept other items.

SNUG: Socks, Neck-warmers (scarves), Underwear and Gloves (packed in a sandwich bag).

HEALTH: Hairbrush (and comb); Emergency shelter - tents / sleeping bags / tarpaulin / blankets; Aid supplies - first aid kits (list) and crutches; Ladies' sanitary towels; Toothbrush and Toothpaste; Hand Sanitiser.



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visit: [www.helpinghands.co.uk](http://www.helpinghands.co.uk)



## Regular Church Activities

- 3rd Mon Pastoral Network, 7:45pm, The Court House. Contact Philippa Seldon 871534.
- 1st Tues Tuesday Club, 7:30pm A lively women's group with guest speaker. The Court House. Contact Rosslyn Laidler: tel 01442 879992
- Tues Chuckles Parent & Toddler Group, 10–11:30am. All Saints' Church Hall. Song Time or short service as announced. Contact Kate Spall 873470 .
- Tues St Peter's Choir, Children 5:15–6:15pm. St Peter's. Adrian Davis 01296 632263 or Jean Wild 866859.
- 3rd Tues Mothers' Union, meet in members' houses at 2.30pm. New members always welcome. Contact Kathie Lally, 863526.
- 4th Tues Mothers' Union Prayer Group, 2:30pm. 120 Valley Road. Tell us if anyone needs your prayers. Contact Margaret Burbidge 862139
- Wed Julian Meeting, meets about twice a month, 11:30am. All welcome. At Jenny Wells, 57 Meadow Rd, 870981 or at Ruth Treves Brown, 3 Sherwood Mews Park Street, Berkhamsted HP4 1HX
- Thu Bellringing, 8pm, St Peters. Contact David Burbidge 862139.
- Fri Little Fishes Parent & Toddler Group 9:30–11:30am. The Court House. Weekly, with short service on 1st Friday in St Peter's (10am), Tracy Robinson 863559.
- Fri St Peter's Choir, Children 7–8:30pm, Adults 7:30-8:30pm. St Peter's. Adrian Davis 01296 632263 or Jean Wild 866859.
- 3rd Sat Berkhamsted Churches Prayer Breakfast, 8am, The Way Inn. Rachael Hawkins 866324.
- 1st Sun Sundays Together Lunch 12.30pm, Court House. For anyone on their own on a Sunday. Carolynne Charman 869003

## Regular Church Services

### St Peter's

#### Regular Sunday services

8:00am Eucharist

9:30am Sung Eucharist and Sunday School

6:00pm Evensong

#### Regular weekday services

Morning Prayer – Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00am (St Peter's), Tuesday 9am (All Saints' Shrublands Road)

Eucharist – Tuesday 9:30am (All Saints'); Wednesday 8:30am, (St Peter's)

### Key Church contacts:

Parish Office, Hilary Armstrong & Kate Perera, Court House, 878227.

Fr. Tim Pilkington, 01442 879739, (day off Friday), Team Rector, St Peter's.

Simon Vivian, Assistant Curate

# This Month's Diary

## Your Berkhamsted February 2017 edition

**Events at St Peter's Church or the Court House, Berkhamsted, presented by The Cowper Society supported by the Friends of St Peter's**

Mon 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 8.00pm: TALK in the Court House. Cowper Society Winter Talk 2 – The Revd Simon Vivian former BBC Religion & Ethics Radio Producer. 'The Church of the Air' - a talk on the history of worship on BBC Radio. Free Entry. Retiring Collection.

Sat 11<sup>th</sup> Mar 7.30pm: CONCERT in St Peter's Church – Bridgewater Sinfonia, Director Adrian Davis. Beethoven Overture: Egmont; Beethoven Symphony No 7, Brahms Piano Concerto No 2, soloist Dinara Klinton. Tickets: [www.bridgewater-sinfonia.org.uk](http://www.bridgewater-sinfonia.org.uk) £15 in advance or £16 on the door. U18s free. Aitchison's High St; 873205.

Mon 13<sup>th</sup> Mar 8.00pm: TALK in the Court House. Cowper Society Winter Talk 3 – Adrian Davis, Director of Music, St Peter's Church, Berkhamsted. 'Getting a handle on Handel'. Free Entry. Retiring Collection.

### **St Peters**

Baptisms - None

Weddings - None

### **Funerals**

15<sup>th</sup> December Christine Judith Bromfield

29<sup>th</sup> December John Edgar Finney

### **All Saint's**

5th Fourth Sunday before Lent  
10am Morning Worship - Richard Hackworth  
4pm Messy Church - Revd Rachael Hawkins & Messy Church Team

12th Third Sunday before Lent  
10am Holy Communion (Café Style) - Revd Rachael Hawkins  
4pm Taize Service - Tracy Robinson

19th Second Sunday before Lent  
10am Morning Worship - David White

26th Sunday next before Lent  
10am Holy Communion - Revd David Chapman

Registers : There were no baptisms.

Funerals – Audrey Hope 16 January

### **Further information available from our church websites:**

[www.stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk](http://www.stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk) and [www.allsaintsberkhamsted.org.uk](http://www.allsaintsberkhamsted.org.uk).

# News from the Hospice of St Francis



**February  
2017**

The Hospice provides care and support

when it matters most to over 2,000 people a year living with, or affected by, a life-limiting illness in West Herts and South Bucks.

We rely on our community's support to help us raise over £5 million a year so we can help patients like Emma, who was diagnosed with incurable cancer nearly three years ago, carry on living life to the full. She says, "The team at the Hospice's Spring Centre have been, and continue to be, fantastic. I've had CBT (cognitive behavioural therapy), taken part in their HOPE course to improve my resilience and enjoyed therapeutic reflexology.

Read on to find out how you can help get involved in our fundraising efforts!

## **Join our Bubble Rush!**

Our Bubble Rush is back for 2017 and this year it's coming to Bucks too!

Open to all the family you can run, walk or dance your way through bubble stations as you are blasted by cannons blowing out crazy-coloured *bubbles*, covering you in safe, frothy foam. There are no age restrictions and the 5 km route is child friendly. All we ask is that you come and have fun and raise what you can in sponsorship for the Hospice.

Join us on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April at Gadebridge Park, Hemel Hempstead or on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July at Lowndes Park, Chesham.

Register now at [stfrancis.org.uk/bubblerush](http://stfrancis.org.uk/bubblerush)



## **Bubble Rush**

### **Returned to Glory Art Exhibition**

Our pre-loved furniture showroom on the Northbridge Road, Berkhamsted, is holding its popular annual Art Exhibition over the weekend of Saturday Feb 25<sup>th</sup> and Sun 27<sup>th</sup> February showcasing paintings, prints, glassware and ceramics from over 20 local artists. Put the date in your diary for a chance to enjoy and purchase beautiful local art pieces – with all profits going to support our care.

### **Make a Will in March**

Have you been meaning to write a Will for ages or had a recent change in your life? Make a Will Month helps make the process of writing or updating your Will straightforward and easy to arrange.

Local solicitors will write a standard Will with no charge for their service, instead kindly asking you to make a donation that will go directly towards the work of the Hospice. For a list of participating solicitors, please visit [stfrancisorg.uk/maw](http://stfrancisorg.uk/maw)



There is no obligation to leave a gift to the Hospice in your Will, but if you decide to leave a legacy it will help fund future care for local people.

Last year, over 100 people made their wills in March and donated their legal fees to the Hospice, raising just over £16,000.

### **Student Volunteer Week**

It's National Student Volunteer Week on 20-26 February! We welcome students from all backgrounds to apply to volunteer with us, either as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award, to gain valuable work experience to support their education or to further their interests.



This year, 16-year-old Zak Tomlin has been gaining valuable experience in our Berkhamsted charity shop, saying, "My role is very varied and involves all sorts of jobs as they are needed around the shop. It is good to volunteer because I get a taste of a working environment, I meet people of all ages, I get a buzz out of helping plus it will look great on my CV."

### **Forthcoming dates for your Diaries**

Berkhamsted Golf Day – Friday 19 May, Berkhamsted Golf Club. Join us on the fairway for a fun day followed by gala dinner and auction!

Markyate Plant Sale – Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May from 10am

The Hospice of St Francis Garden Party, Ashridge House – Sun 11<sup>th</sup> June 1 – 5pm

**Further details at:** [stfrancis.org.uk/events](http://stfrancis.org.uk/events) or call 01442 869 555

**Facebook -The Hospice of St Francis**  
**Twitter @hospicstfrancis**

## **Your Garden cont..**

Cont from page 13

There have been royal gardens in Kandy since the 14th century when a king held court near the river adjacent to the current 150-acre site. Once the British were given the Kingdom of Kandy designs began to form the start of the botanical garden as it's seen today, under the guidance of Alexander Moon. Originally coffee, cinnamon & spices were grown but the garden now has in excess of 4,000 specimens of plants, trees, palms, orchids & medicinal herbs. The garden has

thrived under various superintendents for nearly two hundred years & now yields 2 million visitors a year. The entrance is £8 for tourists but just £1 or so for locals. Our visit was one of the highlights of our three week tour around the island of Sri Lanka.

TTFN, next time the garden of Geoffrey Bawa in Bentota, Sri Lanka.  
helen@reeleylandscapes.co.uk 07708 643313 do drop me a line with any garden enquiries.

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# Origins of Valentines Day

There is a lot of mystery behind the story of Valentine's Day and its patron saint. St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains fragments of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition. The Catholic Church recognise at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus - all were martyred.

The various legends are as follows:-

- Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers so he outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret and consequently Claudius ordered that he be put to death.
- Valentine may have been killed for attempting to help Christians escape harsh Roman prisons, where they were often beaten and tortured. According to one legend, an imprisoned Valentine actually sent the first "valentine" greeting himself after he fell in love with a young girl—possibly his jailor's daughter—who visited him during his confinement.
- Valentine's Day is celebrated in the middle of February to commemorate the anniversary of Valentine's death or burial (around A.D. 270)
- The Christian church may have decided to place St. Valentine's feast day in the middle of February in an effort to "Christianize" the pagan celebration of Lupercalia. Lupercalia was a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman god of agriculture, as well as to the Roman founders Romulus and Remus. Lupercalia survived the initial rise of Christianity and but was outlawed at the end of the 5th century, when Pope Gelasius declared February 14 St. Valentine's Day. During the Middle Ages, it was commonly believed in France and England that February 14 was the beginning of birds' mating season, which added to the idea that Valentine's Day should be a day for romance.

Information sourced from History.com

## Valentine's Day

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

## Word Search

FEBRUARY  
CLAUDIUS  
LUPERCALIA  
CARDS  
MARRIAGE  
DAY  
ROMULUS  
LEGEND  
ROMANCE  
CHOCOLATE  
FLOWERS  
GREETINGS  
REMUS  
FAUNUS  
CELEBRATE  
VALENTINE  
LOVE  
FOURTEEN  
GIFTS  
CHAUCE

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## Your Charities

### Appledown Rescue Dog of the Month



Bronn is a German Shepherd who was born in 2013. This affectionate boy is a stunning dog with an amazing coat, which will need care and grooming. Bronn will need a home with owners who have experience of this guarding breed and who have the time to give him the exercise he needs. Bronn needs a child free home but he could probably live with another dog pending introductions.

If you can offer Bronn or any of our other dogs a forever home, please call in at the kennels any day between 10 am and 4 pm, or phone for more details. Please note that there are restrictions on rehoming dogs to families with children under seven years of age. Full details of the rehoming process can be found on our website, or please contact the kennels.

**Appledown Rescue and Rehoming Kennels, Harling Road, Eaton Bray, Beds LU6 1QY**

01525 220383 e-mail: [appledown.kennels@btinternet.com](mailto:appledown.kennels@btinternet.com)

Website: [www.appledownrescue.co.uk](http://www.appledownrescue.co.uk)

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**Don't forget it is  
Shrove Tuesday -  
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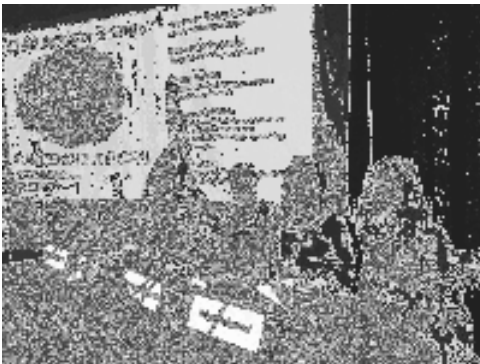


## Seminar on Child Anxiety

Local family law firm, Rayden Solicitors, hosted a seminar about child anxiety for parents and professionals working with children, at the Abbey Theatre, St Albans. Despite a flurry of snow, over 100 people attended to hear from a panel of experts; Dr Lisa Barkley, principal clinical psychologist at Great Ormond Street Hospital, Lucy Mortimer mindfulness coach and founder of the Mindful Child and Susanne Wiechert, transformational health, life coach and art therapist.

Dr Barkley outlined what anxiety was and why children can suffer from anxiety as well as giving specific, practical tips for supporting children of all ages who might be struggling with it. Lucy Mortimer, a local primary school teacher as well as qualified mindfulness coach, took the audience through a mindfulness exercise whilst sharing her expertise on how mindfulness for children can not only reduce anxiety but develop stronger attention and concentration skills. Finally, Susanne Wiechert discussed how to combat anxiety by creating freedom for children through expressive art, art therapy and language.

Senior Associate, Priya Palanivel who chaired the panel, said “People might not expect family law solicitors to put on an event about child anxiety but we often deal with clients who are concerned that their relationship breakdown may have consequences for their children. As a parent myself, I am only too conscious of the fact that almost every child will experience anxiety, whether about school, homework, friends, relationships or even gender issues. I read recently that the 2015 NSPCC Childline annual review reported that: “Anxiety was the top issue mentioned in relation to low self-esteem/unhappiness, mentioned in a quarter of counselling sessions” and we felt that an explanation about the different strategies that can be employed would benefit all parents. I am delighted that despite the weather so many people came. I certainly learned a lot and I hope that our attendees did too.”



The event was such a success that Rayden Solicitors are hoping to put on further seminars on related issues in the future.

All profits from the event will be donated by Rayden Solicitors to local charity Herts Young Homeless.

***Picture: Dr Lisa Barkley, Lucy Mortimer, Susanne Wiechert, Priya Palanivel (chair for the evening and senior associate at Rayden Solicitors)***

- ◆ Dr Lisa Barkley: Principal Clinical Psychologist at Great Ormond Street Hospital [Barkleytherapy@gmail.com](mailto:Barkleytherapy@gmail.com)
- ◆ Lucy Mortimer: Founder of Mindful Child, Bed (Hons), MBSR, MiSP [contact@mindful-child.co.uk](mailto:contact@mindful-child.co.uk)
- ◆ Susanne Wiechert; NSHS Dip Nutrition Master Practitioner NLP, transformational health, life coaching and art therapist. [sw@energizeme.co.uk](mailto:sw@energizeme.co.uk)
- ◆ Nadia Biles Davies, Partner at Rayden Solicitors can be contacted on 01727 734260 or [nbd@raydensolicitors.co.uk](mailto:nbd@raydensolicitors.co.uk)

# Poetry in the Den

Berkhamsted business woman and poet Joanna Miller pitched her business Bespoke Verse to Dragons in the Den on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> January at 8pm.

## **About Bespoke Verse**

Joanna is a former English teacher and education adviser for Hertfordshire. She has a degree from Oxford University in English.

A mum of 3 who lives in Hemel Hempstead, Joanna set up her online poetry gift business at the kitchen table writing rhyming wedding speeches. She celebrated 5 years in business on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2017.

The idea for her business came from writing her own wedding speech in rhyme. Commissions from friends followed and it was clear there was gap in the market for well-written and witty personalised verse.

Bespoke Verse is now based in a studio in Berkhamsted and employs 4 local mums. The business makes funny and moving gifts with the theme of rhyme, including mugs, prints, cards, tea towels, aprons and chopping boards. All products rare of a high quality and are manufactured in the UK, many of them being personalised in-house.

Part of the product range includes witty bespoke poems which are written entirely from scratch - Joanna has created a team of professional writers that she knows and trusts. These fully personalised poems have been described as 'gifts of lifetime'.

In 2015 and again in 2016, Joanna was awarded Partner of the Year by notonthehighstreet.com. Joanna is an Ambassador for the marketplace and has received over 57,000 orders on there to date. Bespoke Verse products are also sold on their own website, Etsy and Hard to Find in Australia.

Bespoke Verse has a growing wholesale side,

stocking over 100 boutique gift shops and has recently started to supply Paperchase with prints and make-up bags.

Bespoke Verse has featured on BBC TV and Local Radio, Channel 4's Gogglebox and in lots of 'glossies' including VOGUE, Prima, Woman & Home, Easy Living, Good Housekeeping and OK! Magazine. We have many returning and celebrity customers.

Recent awards:

- Partner of The Year Collaboration 2016 - notonthehighstreet.com
- Online Retailer of the Year 2016 - Hertfordshire Digital Awards
- Website of the Year (Marketing and Creative) 2016 - Hertfordshire Digital Awards
- Creative Business of the Year 2016 - Hertfordshire FSB
- Partner of The Year 2015 - notonthehighstreet.com
- The Poetry Prize 2015 - Bloomsbury Publishing & The National Literacy Strategy
- Most Promising New Business 2015 - Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce
- Most Inspirational Mumpreneur 2015 - Mumpreneur UK

## **The Den**

Joanna's experience in the Den lasted an hour but was edited down to 3 minutes of the show.

Joanna pitched to the Dragons entirely in rhyme. It took her around two hours to write, but around 3 weeks to learn off by heart. The Dragon's reaction was all she had hoped. Touker said it was 'the best pitch I have ever heard on Dragon's Den. Deborah led the applause and called it 'your wonderful poem' and Nick said it was 'brilliant'. Peter was moved to rhyme himself, calling the pitch 'very clever.'

Joanna was seeking £50,000 for a 20% equity stake in Bespoke Verse. She hoped to use

investment to scale the business – her aims were to increase brand awareness, lower manufacturing costs, invest in production machinery and expand into the US market.

Despite the positive reaction to her pitch and products, including gifts designed especially for the Dragons, she was unsuccessful.

Peter Jones entertained the Den by writing poems but declared himself out early by stating that ‘you haven’t got a business’ – a claim which the others Dragons clearly disagreed with. Nick was quick to point out a business with half a million pound turnover was already successful. He, however, was not convinced that the business could scale with such a small investment being requested.

Deborah Meaden said she’d like to work with Joanna, but described the business as too niche and was concerned the products would go out of fashion. Deborah declared herself out using an ‘I’m in/I’m out’ mug specially made by Bespoke Verse.

Sarah Willingham said that she thought the business was perhaps too reliant on marketplace notonthehighstreet.com, and didn’t know how she could help. She declared she would be shopping with Bespoke Verse and that Joanna’s children should be very proud of her.

Touker said he was in two minds, saying Joanna needed a mentor not a dragon. He finally declared himself out, agreeing with Deborah about the niche nature of the business.

Joanna says ‘Small creative businesses set up at home are becoming an increasingly important part of the UK economy. It has taken a great deal of time and commitment to develop the business in the current climate, but I am fortunate to have a very supportive family and a really strong team.

Filming Dragon’s Den was exciting and a very worthwhile experience. It forced me to look closely at my business and how I can grow it. I took the preparation very seriously.

There are obvious challenges to expanding a business based solely on your creativity. As Touker identified when he described me as both the strength and weakness of my business. Sarah told me to ‘keep doing what you’re doing’ and I will certainly carry on putting my business plan into action. We have hit a number of milestones since filming, including our biggest order day ever on Black Friday 2016.’



### Contact information

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**High resolution images are available on request.**

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## Your Sports by Matthew Dawson

### **Berkhamsted Raiders girls hoping to emulate boys section**

Berkhamsted Raiders is one of the biggest youth community football clubs in the country with teams throughout the age groups, from under 7s right through to the senior team, boasting fantastic numbers and commitment. In 2014/15 the club received the 'FA Community Club of the Year' award which was presented at Wembley stadium. Then in 2015, Raiders won silver in the 'UEFA European Grassroots Club of the Year' award. Those were testaments to the amount of hard work that has gone on behind the scenes at the club, particularly within the boys teams where the amount of numbers that play week in, week out on football pitches around the county, is a particular highlight.

However in more recent times, the girls section at Berko Raiders has been given extra attention and focus, something which has only been helped by the increase in popularity of the women's game. At Raiders the girls section now has 12 teams with 150 girls, which is a significant amount for a local girls club. The plan is clear, to become as successful as the boys team is, and they are certainly heading in the right direction after membership trebled over the past season.

Because of the increase in participation there has been a need for more pitches too. At Bridgewater School they have been given a new home, where many of the girls teams now play their football. It's something which is only furthering the growth of the girls section at Raiders who

now have exclusive use of the school fields at Bridgewater on a Saturday morning. Eight pitches are being established and the club is going to invest £5,000 in a storage shed, permanent goals, nets and equipment.

Sarah Whale is the person in charge of the girls section, and she has played a massive factor in the added attention on the girls when previously it had been all about the boys. She said, *"It's been a bit of a journey for the club and we now have a thriving girls section. Lots of girls are benefiting from Raiders which is great. Raiders is a very well run community club, offering a great sports provision but in the past the girls in the community were missing out a bit on this."*

Raiders often pride themselves on the voluntary work that goes into the club, and that is also the case with the girls teams. Whale was the only volunteer last season, but they now have eight women volunteering on the girls side which indicates just how keen people are to get involved. *"The majority [of volunteers] have no experience of football. What they do all have is a passion for supporting the girls to have the best experience in their sport that they can have. I have seen it make such a positive impact this season,"* Whale said.

However it is a new senior paid role that is helping to develop the girls section even more. Dan Dodge, who is an FA mentor and has a UEFA B qualification was appointed 'Head of Girls Football Development', a role Whale has high praise for, *"We have a great person in post, Dan is very progressive. This role is*

*vital to take what is happening on match day and link it in to their training."*

The case with a lot of footballers, including myself, when I played for Raiders was that I didn't enjoy training as much as the matches. With the girls section however, training is benefitting the girls hugely and they seem to enjoy it massively. Whale

said, *"The girls are always smiling, respectful and they are very resilient."* These are huge attributes for young girls learning to play football, and if the section continues to develop in the manner they are currently, there is no reason why they cannot replicate the success of their male counterparts.

**HELP !**

Your Berkhamsted magazine would like some help to review its distribution system and see how it could be improved.  
Might you be able to help us do this?

We distribute in the region of 500 copies of the magazine each month, either direct to subscribers or through local shops and we want to think about how we could do this better.

Basic data about subscribers and costs etc is available. We want to someone with relevant skills to help us analyse this and identify options for how we could distribute the magazine more efficiently.

This is a one-off exercise and would not commit you to any on-going support of the magazine. Of course, if you find you would like to continue to work with us in some way we would be delighted to explore this with you.

If you are interested please contact the Editor and we will be delighted to give you more background and to talk further. We think this exercise will require something like 5 or so days, but of course we would review this with you when you know more about what is required.

[Editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:Editor@yourberkhamsted.org.uk)

**THANK YOU!**

**Copy Dates:**            11 Feb            11 Mar            11 Apr

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