

***the magazine for town and parish since 1872***

**YB**

**Your Berkhamsted**

December 2021

**Winter Wildfowl  
by Dennis Furnell**

**Rectory Lane  
Cemetery**

**Open Door News**

**Things to do in  
your Garden**



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

## *In this issue...*

### **WELCOME TO THE DECEMBER 2021 EDITION OF YOUR**

**BERKHAMSTED.** Can you believe it is nearly Christmas already? Here is hoping it's a better one than last year. Please look at events going on within our pages. I will introduce the What's On Page from next year but in the meantime see the link below for art events going on in and around Berkhamsted. There are some great awards for the Rectory Lane Cemetery project. The video is very interesting too. There is still time to do some jobs in your garden and Sarah Dawson suggests what to do. I hope you have a great Christmas and Happy New Year. Please look out for YB tweets on @Yourberkhamsted. Do get in touch if there are any ideas or stories you may have, either to publish or additions/changes to the magazine for consideration. And please give us your feedback on the features.



**JACQUELINE - [YBEDITOR@GREATBERKHAMSTED.ORG.UK](mailto:YBEDITOR@GREATBERKHAMSTED.ORG.UK)**

<https://www.berkhamstedartstrust.org.uk/diary>

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**Front cover: Thank you Mary Casserley for your lovely picture of "The Coronation Scot passing through Berkhamsted" 1939. Cards and prints available from Berkhamsted Imaging**

***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.

## Rambles from Berkhamsted by Julian Dawson



2022 will be a momentous year for St Peter's, marking as it does the church's 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It has reached the local press, with living-mags.info taking time for an interview with Father Stuart Owen, which it published on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Your Berkhamsted will be sure to report in detail on the year's events which will have two strands. Celebrate Berkhamsted will see St Peter's opening its doors to the town's wide range of groups and societies to host concerts, lectures and exhibitions. Berkhamsted Celebrates in turn will see a programme of events for everyone. A huge date for the diary - Peter-tide Fair will return after a long hiatus on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

There are web forums for every topic under the sun. Perhaps I should run a guest forum feature – and so in this issue I introduce you to vvaudioforum.co.uk. One for all you German car enthusiasts – Vorsprung durch Technik. Vehicle diagnostics for VCDS (no, me neither), has its own section for Berkhamsted, where a certain 68jackh (is that you Ed?) has some electrical gremlins. "Willing to travel if someone could assist." It almost sounds like dating. Well apparently

VCDS is short-hand for VAG-COM Diagnostic System allowing for real-time reading, logging, and graphing. My life is now complete.

Berkhamsted FC have had a cracking start to the season. At the time of writing they are due to travel to Barton according to lutontoday.co.uk, having returned to the top of the table having beaten erstwhile leaders Bedford in a mid-week match. This was rearranged following the problems with petrol supplies at the beginning of autumn. The club has exited the FA Trophy having lost to senior opponents Cheshunt; both teams shared the kudos of having the best defence in the league. Meanwhile fixture confusion reigned with two matches being scheduled for the same day. The club appealed to fans to travel to Harlow rather than Didcot.

Several news outlets have reported on the very sad death of Geri Halliwell's brother, a resident of Berkhamsted who died at the age of 54. Geri was herself a former resident of the town. Bizarrely en.brinkwire.com completely mangled the story, giving

**Cont Page 5**

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the impression that both Geri and her brother had passed away. Deliberate fake news or a story written by a dodgy AI app? The rest of the website has similarly questionable content relating to Covid, the housing market and even Dementia.

Rather more reliably bucksherald.co.uk reports on the local road-works in progress set to spoil your journey, including night time surface patching on the Berkhamsted Road in Chesham. Or I should say Berkhamstead Road, taking it as it does a couple of extra characters before econ-

omies of scale reduced the town's length. Indeed it wasn't until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that the spelling was standardised. In the censuses of 1851, '61, '91 and 1901 today's spelling was used. But 1851 actually had the spelling Berkhamstead too, just to compound the confusion. 1861 also had the Berkhamstead spelling used in Chesham. That spelling wasn't used at all in the 1851 census, giving the impression the town was empty in that year. 1939 finally saw a standardised spelling and confusion finally concluded. Except for street names!



Photo Mussi Katz

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## Christmas, a time for looking back and forwards, with the hope of better things to come.



As we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child this Christmas it is more than ever a time for looking back and for

looking forward; back to what has been for many a difficult year, and forward to the hope of better things to come as we enter a New Year, in which we commemorate the 800 years of St Peter's Great Berkhamsted. Christmas is a family time, a time for getting the family together which was not possible last year. Uncertainty for those of us with family in continental Europe still remains.

Now let us look back at earlier Christmases, how the rich and the poor celebrated Christmas, how we remember our childhood Christmases and how people spent Christmas in Victorian times. Although the weather can be snow and ice or fog or rain, how did our forefathers enjoy the winter weather?

I remember the Christmas lunch, roast chicken with a much better flavour than any we have today. My mother caught the chicken, wrung its neck and plucked it. It was war time. We had chickens then. In the winter we had eggs which had been pre-

served in a bucket of isinglass. We had some sort of Christmas pudding, but dried fruit was very short and difficult to come by in times of rationing. We made our own Christmas presents and Christmas cards for friends and relations. We made some decorations but mainly gathered greenery, holly and mistletoe from the fields. On Christmas Eve we hung up our stockings and were up early to see our little presents. Christmas Day was church and Christmas dinner and, of course, a Christmas tree without lights. There was a magic about everything. One Christmas we hung our stockings on the handle of the cupboard under the stairs, my two brothers and I. Bombs were expected. Boxing Day was our time for writing thank you letters, something that was expected then.

Christmas cards depict snowy scenes but some Christmases are wet and foggy and comparatively mild, but I remember a Christmas when my husband's grandmother spent the night sleeping in an armchair because the roads were too dangerous to drive her home. On another occasion my brothers and I escorted an aunt home in deep snow, a round trip of about six miles. Weather is often unpredictable



There are several aspects to Christmas - the winter weather, Christian worship, the celebration of the birth of the baby Jesus, enjoyment, family gatherings, parties and the fun which can come with snow and ice. There is also traditional food associated with Christmas but for those facing poverty there was nothing special to look forward to. The message of Christmas is portrayed in the traditional Nativity plays and carol services held on the days running up to Christmas. In days gone by, children went round people's houses to sing carols and if they were well sung they might, if lucky, receive a mince pie or perhaps a few pennies. Not so long ago, the Round Table used to send Father Christmas round the streets in his sleigh collecting for charity. Many firms used to hold Christmas dinners for their staff. In Victorian and Edwardian times, numerous parties were held. All the big houses; The Hall, Berkhamsted Place, Rossway and Ashridge held balls between Christmas and the New Year and there was a grand one at the Town Hall. During the War, a programme of parties, magic lantern shows, all manner of entertainment was provided for the evacuee chil-

dren, of which there were a large number in the town.

Except when rationing limited these parties a large and varied menu was served. The menu card of 1898 for employees of Cooper's chemical works included roast beef, plum pudding, rhubarb tart, apple tart, mince pies, blancmange, tipsy cake, jellies, cheese and celery. Not everybody was able to enjoy such a varied menu. If the weather had been bad, many had had no work and nothing with which to purchase food. They went hungry. A doctor attending the birth of an infant was horrified to see there was no food in the house, gave them a little money so that they could buy some food. The father hoped it would snow so he could earn a few pence sweeping snow from the steps and drives of the 'better off.' In bad winters the soup kitchen was a saviour for the poor. One operated from the Castle, where the visitor room now is and one from Foster's Brewery behind the Swan. In 1877 soup was distributed twice a week on Wednesdays and Saturdays between 11am and 12noon.

**Cont Page 10**



Christmas is not a happy time for those in extreme poverty or for those who are alone. In 1887 nearly 500 people were in receipt of outdoor relief and 50 adults, and 2 children spent Christmas in the Workhouse. Normally, local tradespeople ensured that the workhouse inmates had a good Christmas dinner, even if their normal fare was somewhat limited.

In really severe winter weather when the canal, the Castle moat and various local ponds such as that on Brickhill Green froze over, skating and sliding on the ice was a very popular pastime. One enterprising trader set up a little stall on the canal with hot soup available, a brazier for people to warm their hands and there was music and a real party atmosphere. For Berkhamsted children with its steep hills on either side of its valley, there were many good runs for tobogganing in fields and even on roads. As soon as the snow settled many children

arrived in Ivy House Lane by Meadway with their toboggans or tin trays and tobogganed down the hill, gathering speed as they reached the railway bridge hoping no car would venture forth attempting to climb the hill.

As we move towards a new year we hope for a better, healthier year for all the families of Berkhamsted here and elsewhere. Those in Berkhamsted on New Year's Eve should gather by our trusty yew tree as they did in years gone by and as the clock strikes 12 join hands together and sing Auld Lang Syne.

*'Should auld acquaintance be forgot  
And never brought to mind?*

*Should auld acquaintance be forgot  
And auld lang syne?'*

**A Happy and Blessed Christmas to all  
readers of Your Berkhamsted.**



Yew Tree



Skating on Castle Moat

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## Observations by Dennis Furnell (The Natureman)

### Winter Wildfowl

Where on earth did 2021 go? It seems to have gone in a flash. However, I feel that the year was marked with a new social spirit and an increased interest in the natural world. People were out and about more enjoying the simple pleasures of the countryside, sometimes for the first time in ages. Taking in the sights and sounds of nature and, hopefully, establishing a habit that will last a lifetime.

We are so fortunate to live in a beautiful part of the British Isles with Ashridge Forest on our doorstep. Not to forget the canal balancing reservoirs at Tring, or BBONT's nature reserve at College Lake or, indeed, the Box Moor Trust lands in Hemel Hempstead. Winter is an excellent time to enjoy all these places. It brings an astonishing change to the look of the countryside. For instance, trees, their structure hidden in the growing season by a canopy of leaves, are now stretched against the winter sky like so many sculptures in a natural gallery. Banks of bracken are dressed in frost and form a backdrop for a winter robin.

Winter is also the time of year for wildfowl and grebes on the reservoirs at Tring and lakes at College Lake -

the latter site has well placed observation hides as well as level paths for less able walkers and wheelchairs. Places like these have helped enormously during the pandemic by simply being there for us to enjoy, but the pandemic has also meant a change in how they are managed. It's not healthy to crowd into a bird hide.

What is to be seen at this time of year depends upon the prevailing wind and temperature. Our Isles are influenced by the Gulf Stream, a warm ocean current giving us, for the most part, a mild moist maritime climate. It is something that birds have been taking advantage of for millennia. Tens of thousands, sometimes millions, of migrant birds flock to our shores and inland waters. Among them come the redwings and fieldfares making an amazing journey from the Taiga forests of Siberia, crossing the North Sea, and using the prevailing winds to find their way to feast on frost softened hawthorn berries in Hertfordshire hedgerows.

One of my favourite winter pastimes is watching wildfowl. Geese, duck and the straight-necked, elegant Whooper swans that have bred in the high arctic and migrate in family parties. The musical Bewick's swan also travels in family parties. And, among the

sounds of winter is the chirruping call of a teal sipping seeds in the shallows at College Lake or the 'whee-oo' call of widgeon at Wilstone, the males resplendent in plumage of grey and orange, their mates in camouflage

pelage of browns and cream to match the colour of their tundra nesting site.

These things and the quality of the light is why I love winter.

Dennis Furnell



**Picture: Widgeon by Dennis Furnell**



## WORKING TOGETHER



The United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow has dominated the news over

the last few weeks. I was fortunate to be able to attend the conference, not as an official delegate, but to support an event in the Green Zone, where there was a whole host of events, talks, cultural performances, exhibitions, stalls etc. I travelled to Glasgow on behalf of a charity of which I am the Chair. The charity is an ecumenical Christian charity called Grassroots Luton, which seeks to promote community cohesion, peace and reconciliation across Luton's diverse community.

At COP26 I attended an event organised by 'Faith for the Climate', a coalition of people of faith working on climate change. It was good that this faith event took place as there has been some criticism that faith groups were somewhat sidelined at COP26. A panel of people representing a variety of faith traditions – Buddhist, Quaker, Muslim, Christian, Hindu and Sikh – spoke about how they were working with their faith communities to reduce their carbon footprint at the grass roots level. This of course is the

challenge not just for faith communities but for all of us, of faith or no faith – what can we do that will make a difference? It is easy to feel overwhelmed by what faces us and the planet which is our home, or as Pope Francis describes it 'our Mother earth.' Jonathan Sacks, the former Chief Rabbi once said in his characteristic wise approach to human dilemmas: 'Optimism and hope are not the same. Optimism is the belief that the world is changing for the better. Hope is the belief, that, together, we can make the world better.' So by working together, people of faith and no faith, can hope that we can make the world better.

In a world where religion often gets a bad press and religion is cited as the cause of so much conflict and unrest in the world, it is indeed encouraging to see the different faith traditions working together on the issue of climate change. To offer another quotation from a respected Roman Catholic priest and theologian the late Hans Kung: 'There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. No peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions.' Of course dialogue between religions has been taking place for many years now and indeed in 1987, The Inter Faith Network for the UK was founded to promote good

relations between people of different faiths in the UK. Since then many inter faith groups have sprung up throughout the country bringing together ordinary people of faith to share their faith traditions, learn from one another and to work together for the common good. Inter Faith Week is now an annual event encouraging local groups to stage a variety of events to celebrate the religious diversity in our country and to strengthen relationships among different faith communities. This year's Inter Faith Week took place between 14 and 21 November and if you log onto the Inter Faith Network website you will see something of what happened this year. Also on the website is a list of local inter faith groups, with Watford, St Albans and Hemel Hempstead being groups closest to us in Berkhamsted. St Peter's does its own little bit of inter faith co-operation by offering space in The Court House to members of the local Muslim community for their Friday prayers.

This issue of Your Berkhamsted will appear just before Christmas when Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. It is interesting how people of faiths other than Christianity recognise how important Christmas is to Christians and they will often send greetings to their Christian friends. I have a Jewish rabbi friend and former colleague who never forgets to send me greetings at Christmas and

Easter, as he appreciates how important these festivals are for me. I am sure the opposite is true and many Christians who have friends of other faiths will also mark their festivals and holy days with particular greetings. This is all about good relationships, respect and mutual understanding across faith communities and can only contribute to developing a more cohesive and tolerant society. I return to the words of Hans Kung reminding us all of the importance of good inter faith relationships and they begin at the grassroots level where we all live and work: 'There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. No peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions.'

Fr David Lawson



Picture - Christmas Flowers at St Peter's Church by Sarah Dawson

## In 2022, St Peter's will be 800 years old!

From the occupation of the castle to the arrival of soldiers in WW1 and major life and civic events up to the present day, St Peter's has been a constant presence in Berkhamsted for 800 years!

We want to celebrate this momentous occasion with the whole town!



### **WHAT WE'RE PLANNING**

It's early days but we have many ideas for events to mark the anniversary from picnics to time capsules, historical displays to commemorative services.

We are exploring the option of holding a St Peter's Festival in the summer of 2022 (when hopefully Covid-19 will be behind us) and coinciding with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We are looking for organisations and local businesses you represent to get in touch to tell us how you'd like to be involved.

Would you like to put on a music event, hold a yoga session in the churchyard, run a craft or creative session in church or organise a book talk, dog show or wine tasting? We'd love to hear your ideas so we can start to plan a schedule.

### **LOVE YOUR CHURCHYARD!**

With all of us spending more times outside these days, we'd like to revitalise our churchyard as part of the 800<sup>th</sup> celebrations.

As many of you know, the churchyard is a green sacred space at the heart of the community, bounded on all four sides by listed buildings of beauty and significance to the town; the church of 1222, the School of 1544, the 16<sup>th</sup> century Court House and early Victorian private dwellings. It also contains several ancient trees which give it a unique character.

**What are your ideas for enhancing the space? How can we encourage more community visits?**

[800@greatberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:800@greatberkhamsted.org.uk)

**Join Us!** We'd love more people to get involved with the 800<sup>th</sup> activity. If you'd like to volunteer to help or are bursting with ideas, please get in touch!

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO CELEBRATING TOGETHER!**

## Christmas at St Peter's



Advent is a special time when we look forward with great anticipation to the birth of Jesus. It begins 4 Sundays before Christmas Day, and this year, the town's Festival of Light falls on Advent Sunday.

**Everyone is very welcome at our Advent and Christmas services.** With the ongoing public health situation, we ask everyone to **book your place online** (except Christmas morning). There is no charge – this is just to help us to manage numbers in the building. Seasonal services are very popular, and we regret that some events may become “fully booked”. On Christmas Eve, we are offering two “sittings” for the Crib Services and Midnight Mass to accommodate as many people as possible. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

We wish everyone a peaceful and blessed Christmas.

<https://www.stpetersberkhamsted.org.uk/worship/christmas/>

### ***Carol Service - 19th December 6 pm - sold out - join waiting list***

A service of carol singing as we look forward to Christmas (booking required)

### ***Children's Crib Service - 24th December (2pm and 4pm)***

A special Christmas service for young children (booking required)

### ***Midnight Mass (early) - 24 December 2021 7:00 pm***

We celebrate the holy time of Christmas Eve (booking required)

### ***Midnight Mass (Late) - 24 December 2021 11:30 pm***

We celebrate the holy time of Christmas Eve (booking required)

### ***Christmas Day Parish Mass - 25 December 2021 9:30 am***

"Yea Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning!" - join us in celebration at the Parish Eucharist (no need to book)



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

## News from Rectory Lane Cemetery



It's been a pretty amazing month and we'd like to celebrate with you!

### Green Flag Awards

In October we succeeded in gaining our **Green Flag Community Award** - the international quality mark for public parks and green spaces managed by volunteers.

Earlier this month we were delighted to be declared **Joint Winner of the Green Flag Team of the Year Award** - one of a number of special awards created to celebrate Green Flag's 25th Anniversary.



Our successful submission for the award emphasised how each member of the team brought unique skills and experience whilst also developing innovative

strands to the project, pushing boundaries and challenging people's perceptions of cemeteries as 'dead spaces'. Of course, the nominated team members represent just the tip of the iceberg, the award is shared with everyone who has contributed over the years to this unique community project. As one of the founding volunteers of the project said, *'I am particularly proud of the **Green Flag Team of the Year award** - because we have achieved what we have by a number of people all doing 'their bit' but also coming together and all pulling in the same direction.'*

Our fellow winner from the shortlist of 11 parks and green spaces across the UK in that category, was Newry, Mourne and Down Forest Parks in Northern Ireland. We were also shortlisted in the **Green Flag Most Improved Spaces Award** - congratulations to Leavesdon Country Park who won that category.

Virtual Awards can be seen here:-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6womyqeIMMk>

## Landscape Institute Awards



Two days later it was the virtual award ceremony for the Landscape Institute Awards. The Landscape Institute is the chartered body for the landscape profession, whose aim is to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment for public benefit, through the work of its members. Their annual awards are about celebrating people, place and nature, and the myriad ways that landscape projects can connect them. They celebrate the exceptional contribution of landscape designers, managers, planners, researchers and more across the world.

73 very diverse finalists were up for awards - It felt like a huge achievement to win not one, but two awards - ***Excellence in Culture and Heritage*** and ***Excellence in Community Engagement***. The feedback we received from the judges was wonderful and we are thrilled on behalf of everyone involved in the project and particularly grateful and delighted for Edd Snell of Above Zero, who was responsible for the landscape design.



Here the project was competing with Lews Castle Grounds, Nottingham Castle and Sunderland's Minster Park. The judges described our project *'as a sensitively designed and detailed scheme which effectively balances change with architectural and nature conservation issues. It demonstrates an exemplary level of historical research, conservation approach, community and artist involvement, alongside a keen eye to the future of the site, which has resulted in a successful cultural asset that is accessible to a diverse range of users. The project illustrates thoughtful levels of sustainability, from interventions that support biodiversity, environmental education and best use of resources to mental health benefits. The judges noted that the huge increase in footfall since its completion, along with extensive volunteer contribution indicates that it is a project of exceptional value.'*

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*The judges 'were unified in their deep appreciation of this project, from concept and design through to management and maintenance, it's been carefully considered and crafted throughout, with community at its heart. The sense of empowering people and enabling agency was palpable and clearly this site is intended as a place where everyone feels a sense of belonging and a connection. The vision of the site is clear and shared, which in turn drives commitment, interest and participation of those involved. It's a terrific instance of community-driven design and co-production working in concert with professionals.'*

We are looking forward to hanging more plaques on the wall by the Rectory Lane entrance!

**We commissioned videographer Phil Richardson of YellowMelen to capture the story of the physical transformation of the Cemetery and this short video is now available to view on our website:**

**Dead Space to Living Place**  
[www.rectorylanecemetery.org.uk/#anchor4](http://www.rectorylanecemetery.org.uk/#anchor4)



We have delivered two sessions in the first term of the large Year One class of Swing Gate School - Science and Local History -and our Education Officer had planned a great Forest School session to complete the term. Unfortunately, this session has had to be deferred.

The school have kindly provided us with valuable feedback on what the children, teachers and parent helpers have experienced through their collaboration with the cemetery, which shows us that these sessions have been very welcomed. A couple of examples:



**How has the project impacted your teaching of local social history?** *The project has bought the subject of farming and history alive for the children, by using local relevant examples of individuals involved in the farming world in Victorian times. This has engaged the children so that they want*

*to share their findings about their local community with their parents, grandparents, siblings and carers. This has resulted in them taking their relatives to the cemetery and becoming local 'experts'.*

**How has the project impacted upon your well being as a teacher?** *The positive responses from the children and their parents and carers have helped us to build a more cohesive year group community, especially important after the long enforced separation we have had to endure recently. Being able to take the children out from the school environment to*

*explore a local resource has enabled the children to bond with one another and also given them some wider experiences that they have missed out on. As a class and a year group they have grown with the shared experience, which makes for a lovely classroom environment. For teachers it is wonderful to see all of the children enjoying the experience, and it is so positive to be learning outside. This enables all the children to access the learning, benefiting our inclusive ethos.*

We hope to continue building on this successful pilot with the school next term.



## **Parkinson's Knock Out**

**Exercise for Parkinson's**

**121 Training**

**Boxing for Parkinson's**

**Group Classes**

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

[corinne@parkinsonsknockout.co.uk](mailto:corinne@parkinsonsknockout.co.uk)

07988 649275



## Recycling your (real) Xmas tree

What do you do with your Christmas tree after the festivities have finished? For those who choose a synthetic tree, it will be back in the box until next year. But for many others who have bought a farm-grown tree, it's a tricky decision – a choice of leaving the tree outside or squeezing it into a green wheelie bin, which Dacorum Council will only collect at the end of February.

To encourage tree recycling, Dacorum's waste services team are again setting up a shredding machine, in Water Lane Car Park, Berkhamsted for one day only: Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The pine trees are chipped, and these natural chip-pings are then used to keep council flower beds weed-free across the borough. Helping local citizens to recycle their Christmas trees are the various Scout Groups from round Berkhamsted and Northchurch, co-ordinated by the 1<sup>st</sup> Berkhamsted Scout Group. 1<sup>st</sup> Berkhamsted Group has organised a tree-collection service for over 10 years, where Christmas trees are picked up from people's houses and taken to the shredding site.

"The shredding day is popular, and there is often a queue to drop off a tree", says Paul Chambers, 1<sup>st</sup> Berkhamsted Scout Leader. "We save people time by taking their tree for them in our large vans, which cuts the number of individual cars trips to the shredder. It's better for the environment, and you don't have to spend ages clearing pine needles from the back of your car!"

Since launching the service in 2009, the local Scouts have helped to transport more than 6,000 Christmas trees for shredding. The charity suggests a minimum voluntary contribution of £4 per tree collected. The collection service involves over 80 volunteers and includes Scouts of all ages. It has sponsorship from local organisations including the new Lussmanns restaurant, S Dell & Sons Removals, and Berkhamsted School.

The funds raised go towards equipment and activities for the children, maintenance of the Scout Huts, and financial support for trips and expeditions for the various local Scout groups.

'It is a significant group effort with many volunteers and local businesses providing support, but we are proud of the community service we provide', says Jenny Jenkins, Chair of the 1<sup>st</sup> Berkhamsted Group.

The tree collection service is available for addresses in the Berkhamsted town and North-church areas.

Tree collections can be booked and paid for in advance at

[www.1stberkhamsted.org.uk/trees](http://www.1stberkhamsted.org.uk/trees)

which will be open for

bookings in mid-December. The deadline for online bookings is

midnight, 8th January. Alternatively, between 9-3pm on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> January, customers can buy a pre-paid collection tag (cash or card accepted) at the Scout Christmas tree stall on Berkhamsted High Street.



## Magnificat!

A celebration of Christmas Music

by

**Bach and Buxtehude**

Thursday 23rd December 2021 7:30 pm

St Peter's Church, Berkhamsted

**Directed by Adrian Davis with the Bridgewater Sinfonia**

**Soprano - Kathryn Jenkin**

**Alto - Jeanette Ager**

**Tenor - Phillip Conway-Brown**

**Bass - Christopher Foster**

**£15 in advance, £18 on the door, under 18s free**

## A Rose By Any Other Name

Fortieth birthdays have long been considered special, marking a significant life milestone, and the Heather Club is no different, and like all good stories about a birth, there was much discussion over our name. From the outset it was going to be The Chrysanthemum Club. However, 40 years ago looked very different to now, not least the lack of personal computers, laptops and most importantly no Spell Check. So, the debate continued, would people be able to spell Chrysanthemum? It was decided to stick with the horticultural theme but something everyone could spell and so the Heather Club was born.

Other historians may point out that the first Chairman was Scottish and that this may have influenced the name, but I know which story I prefer.

The Heather Club offers a warm caring environment for people living with memory loss and early stage dementia. Friendships are formed over table activities, hot lunches and music and yes dancing sessions twice a week in a Church Hall in Hemel Hempstead.

Of course, in our 40 -year history we have had many ups and downs, but it took a global pandemic to actually close our doors. It was a necessary, but none the less heart wrenching decision, and I recall the lengthy discussion that took place. Three or four

days after we agreed that we had to close, the whole world shut down, and life was changed for the foreseeable future.

As they say, out of great adversity comes innovation, and if our members were unable to come to the Heather Club, we had to find ways that the Heather Club could come to them. 'The Heather Club at Home' was born and our outreach programme launched. We were fortunate to receive some great support allowing us to rent Grand Pads (tablets designed for the elderly) along with someone to run our online sessions so that we could bring activity into people's homes. All alongside of course the hard work, grit and determination of the volunteers and trustees. Due to the demographic of our members and their lack of exposure to technology, we were only able to help a few, but we knew that it was worth it. And for those that weren't comfortable with technology, we supported them in other ways – through telephone calls, doorstep visits when lockdown and the weather allowed and seasonal treats at Christmas and Easter. People were generous with their time and financial support, to make it work.

No matter how good our innovation, nothing compares to an actual visit to

the Heather Club, and we worked hard (and continue to do so) to introduce Covid safety measures and precautions.

Sadly, Covid has taken its toll on our membership, but even without advertising, new members have found their way to us and are enjoying making new friends and taking part in a variety of activities.

Over the last 40 years a large number, of volunteers have passed through our doors, without whom the Heather Club would not be able to continue. I haven't got the names of everyone that has contributed over this period, but I salute each and everyone that helped or continues to help, in any way, either as a volunteer, a trustee, a fundraiser, donor, supporter or advocate.

However, we are a small group with growing demands on our time and we need more volunteers and Trustees. To be a volunteer at our day centre, you need to have some spare time on a Monday or a Wednesday (when the Heather Club is open) along with a warm and generous spirit.

We are urgently seeking more trustees, particularly with a background in finance or human resources. It only takes a smile from one of our members or their carers, to realise how worthwhile the Heather Club is and continues to be.

I would like to think that the people who created the Heather Club would be pleased to know that we are still going strong and still serving our members, in the way first envisaged, 40 years ago, and I can't help wondering, what will be written when the Heather Club celebrates its 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

To find out more about the ways that you can become part of the Heather Club story please contact us at

W: <https://www.theheatherclub.com/> E: [theheatherclub@outlook.com](mailto:theheatherclub@outlook.com) T: 07836 560684

F: <https://www.facebook.com/theheatherclub/> I: [https://www.instagram.com/the\\_heather\\_club/](https://www.instagram.com/the_heather_club/)

Michael Rowan



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## News from Hospice of St Francis

### December 2021



The Hospice of St Francis relies upon community fundraising to help fund the £5 million needed each year to provide **free** care. By supporting the Hospice, you are helping more people in the local community to feel safe and supported through a life-limiting illness and to live their precious life well.

### News and Events

#### **Shop For Good**

The Hospice has launched a new exciting online shop – ‘Shop For Good’. This innovative online offer has well-being, eco, sustainability and ‘doing good’ at its heart. Keep up to date with the shops launch by following them on Instagram:

@shopforgood\_hosf or visit:  
[www.shop-for-good.org.uk](http://www.shop-for-good.org.uk)

#### **Books For Good**

Looking for a quirky gift for a birthday or Christmas present? Then why not sign up to Chapter Two’s ‘Books For Good’ book subscription! Receive

one pre-loved book every month chosen by book expert and Chapter Two manager Mark. Each book arrives beautifully wrapped with a special Chapter Two bookmark. Visit: [www.stfrancis.org.uk/shop-with-us/chapter-two/books-for-good](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/shop-with-us/chapter-two/books-for-good) to register.

#### **Christmas Tree Collection 2021**

The Hospice Christmas Tree Collection is back and going big for 2022. Collection dates are the Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The Hospice team will be collecting trees in the usual areas; Hemel Hempstead, St Albans and Harpenden, but also in Tring, Berkhamsted and the Langleys! Full list of postcodes can be found on the Hospice website:

[www.stfrancis.org.uk/support-us/events/detail/christmas-tree-collection](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/support-us/events/detail/christmas-tree-collection)

#### **Hospice Skydive**

We are delighted to announce a new skydive date for 2022! Through popular demand from all you amazing thrill-seekers, we have secured a date early so snap up your spot to join the team and leap from the skies now! Sign up to the March 26<sup>th</sup> 2022 event here: [www.stfrancis.org.uk/support-us/events/detail/skydive](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/support-us/events/detail/skydive)



### Accessing our Care – Self Referral

The Hospice of St Francis is there to help in any way they can, with care provided **Free**. If you, or someone you know, is living with cancer or a life-limiting illness such as a heart, lung, kidney or neurological condition we might be able to support you. (We support from early diagnosis and through treatment and remission). Please fill in our short referral form online: [www.stfrancis.org.uk/selfrefer](http://www.stfrancis.org.uk/selfrefer)

### And finally...

#### Virtual Light Up A Life Event

Join the Hospice this weekend for a live event in the comfort of your own home on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> December at 4:30pm on the Hospice Facebook page.

Follow us on Facebook

**@TheHospiceofStFrancis**, Instagram

**@HospiceStFrancis**, Twitter

**@hospicstfrancis** or call us on **01442 869555**.



### Virtual Light Up A Life Event

## Green Community Grants now available

'Think global and act local' for your community group to be awarded a pot of up to £3,000. As part of our climate and ecological emergency work, and to encourage meaningful action within the borough, more Green Community Grants are being made available.

The grant scheme is specifically designed to support projects in our community which benefit the environment, as well as Dacorum's residents. The purpose is to encourage and enable local groups to 'think global and act local' whilst tackling environmental challenges. This ties in with the objectives of the newly launched Dacorum Climate Action Network.

Any voluntary and community groups are invited to apply, including school groups and parish and town councils.

Projects must demonstrate that they will actively help towards the mitigation of the climate and ecological emergency locally within Dacorum. This could be with projects that reduce carbon emissions, increase active travel, improve biodiversity, increase sustainability or raise environmental awareness locally. The environmental projects must also engage with or benefit the local community. The projects with the greatest impacts will be awarded the funding.

Groups can obtain a maximum grant of £3,000, from a total pot of £20,000.

The Green Community Grant scheme is open for applications until 16 January 2022. Successful projects will be notified in February, with grants being allocated by March.



**Dacorum's Green Community Grant**

'Think global and act local' for your community group to be awarded a pot of up to £3,000.

**Apply now:**  
[www.dacorum.gov.uk/grants](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/grants)

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[www.berkhamstedquakers.org](http://www.berkhamstedquakers.org).**

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## JOBS FOR THE GARDEN

Even though the weather may be cold there are still plenty of jobs to be getting on with in the garden.

### December

Place a tennis ball in your pond to prevent it from freezing over. Ensure you have removed any dead leaves from pond plants and any leaves that have been blown into the pond.

Check your greenhouse heaters are working if you're overwintering tender plants or germinating seeds. Tidy plants and water sparingly.

If you haven't got a greenhouse cover or wrap tender plants with horticultural fleece.

Move containers and pots to a south facing wall and group them together to give protection. Raise the pots up on feet to prevent waterlogging.

Put out a variety of different food and keep containers topped up to attract birds and help them through the winter. Don't forget birds also need water to drink and to bathe in. Ensure to keep the water free of ice.

Sweep leaves, collect and make leaf mould for the garden.

Hard prune overgrown deciduous shrubs and hedges while they are dormant.

Harvest Brussels sprouts, parsnips and leeks.

Collect foliage from your garden to make a Christmas wreath for your front door.



Some jobs you can do indoors on a cold day include ordering seed & plant catalogues to select next year's bedding and perennials. Also plant up hippeastrum bulbs (Amaryllis) as these make lovely easily given Christmas presents. Check, clean and sharpen garden tools.

If you have a real Christmas tree recycle it on Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> January at the Canal Fields, Broadwater, Berkhamsted, HP4 2AL - 8am to 3pm. If you could ask for a bag of the clippings for St Peter's Church garden it would be gratefully received and used as a mulch. Please leave bags behind the large church noticeboard on the High Street.

After all the hard work you have put into your garden sit back in the warm and enjoy looking out on it while having a cup of tea and a mince pie. Happy Christmas everyone.

Sarah Dawson



Berries



Christmas Lights at Waddesdon

**Your Berkhamsted Team**

**Editor and layout: Jacqueline Hicks, [ybeditor@greatberkhamsted.org.uk](mailto:ybeditor@greatberkhamsted.org.uk)**

**Features: Julian Dawson, Committee: Sarah Dawson, Circulation: Jane Morgan**

## One off events, courses and workshops

**New exhibition opens - 'Hidden Treasures'**

**Monday 6th December - Saturday 8th January 2022**

**Free to visit the exhibition - why not have a cuppa in our donations café too!**

Visit our exhibition featuring work from a range of artists, around the theme of 'Hidden Treasures'. See <https://www.opendoorberkhamsted.co.uk/exhibitions.html> for details. **No need to book - pop in between 10:30-3:30 Monday to Saturday**

**Our Advent Window - the big reveal!**

**Tuesday 7th December, 6pm - Free. No need to book**

We are thrilled to be taking part in the Berkhamsted Advent Windows project for the second year running. This community project brings extra happiness to the town this December - each evening a Berkhamsted resident unveils a festive-themed window which is then lit-up every subsequent night until 5th January. Lights go on in the windows from 6pm-10pm. By Christmas Day, 24 windows are revealed, creating a wonderful festive wonderland.

We are number 7, so come down for 6pm on the 7th to see our wonderful window being revealed! Maps of all of the windows are available at Open Door or at [www.facebook.com/groups/berkhamstedadventwindows](http://www.facebook.com/groups/berkhamstedadventwindows)

**Christmas Sugarcraft workshop**

**Tuesday 7th December, 1-3pm**

**Suggested donation £5**

In this festive workshop, come and have fun making a small Christmas wreath in sugarcraft to take home and put on your Christmas cake! Materials provided.

**For more information and to book, go to [www.bookwhen.com/opendoor](http://www.bookwhen.com/opendoor)**

**Support Group for Parents of Neurodiverse Children**

**Thursday 9th December 2021, 7-8pm (and every 2nd Thurs of the month)**

**Free, but donations welcome towards running costs**

We are setting up a new support group for parents of neurodiverse children - those on the Autistic spectrum. The group will be run by parents, for parents, with the aim of sharing stories, experiences, and ideas. It can be very lonely and isolating when you have a child who is neurodivergent. We hope that by setting up this group we can offer support for one another and a new community.

**Please email [ponkgroup24@gmail.com](mailto:ponkgroup24@gmail.com) for more info or to book**



## **Christmas open day - Saturday 18th December, all day**

We have a fun-packed day of fabulous festive activities, with live music, crafts, delicious festive treats and Santa himself joining us with his trusty Elf.

### **Throughout the morning, from 10:30:**

- UkeRythmics, our wonderful local ukulele band will be playing some festive songs throughout the morning, in the downstairs café area
- Mince pies and other festive refreshments will be on offer
- Christmas crafts for kids
- **Kids Christmas Card Making session** - 11:30-12:30 - children aged 7+ are invited to drop in to this informal session led by Canvas Crew, to make Christmas cards for their loved ones - suggested donation £3.

### **In the afternoon, until 3:30:**

- Mince pies and other festive refreshments will be on offer
- Christmas crafts for kids

**Father Christmas at Open Door** - 1:30-3:30 - donations welcome - The man himself will be paying Open Door a visit - book your slot for your children to have a chat with Santa, pick up a gift, do some Christmas crafts and enjoy some festive refreshments.

**For more information and to book, go to [www.bookwhen.com/opendoor](http://www.bookwhen.com/opendoor)**

**Edwina's Christmas pottery & art workshop for kids aged 5-10** - 2-3pm - booking required, £15 - [weenawilks@hotmail.com](mailto:weenawilks@hotmail.com) or 07595310951

**Festive soup lunch** - Monday 20th December, 12-2pm

**Meal deliveries** - 4pm on 14th, 16th, 21st, 23rd & 30th December

**[info@opendoorberkhamsted.co.uk](mailto:info@opendoorberkhamsted.co.uk) or 01442 768120**

## **Repair Café**

**(first Saturday of every month)**

**Donations welcome**

Throw it away? No way!

Do you have something that needs fixing? Prefer to mend it than throw it away?

You're invited to pop in with your broken things and let our experts take a look – you can even enjoy a cuppa and a cake whilst you wait – either inside, or in our lovely garden. We ask for a voluntary donation in exchange for your repair, and any refreshments. No need to book!

**For more information see our <https://www.opendoorberkhamsted.co.uk/repair-cafe.html> page.**



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