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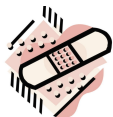
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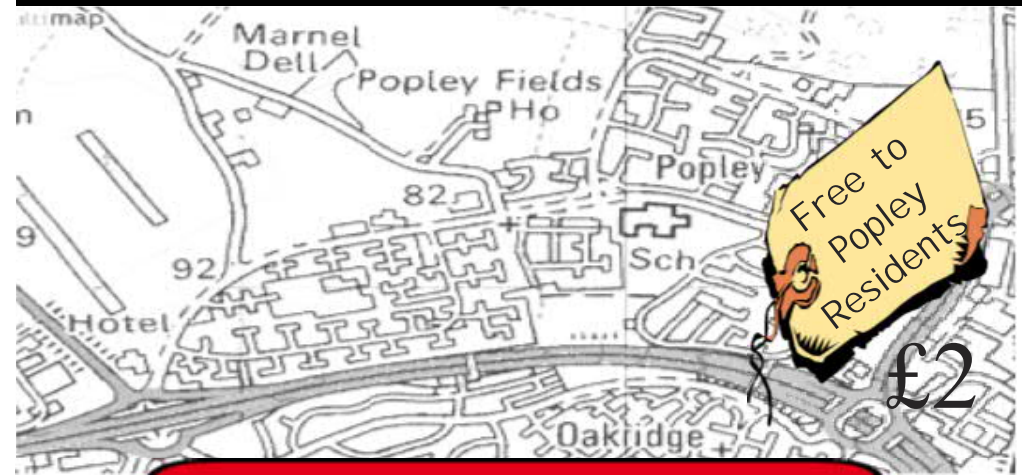
# POPLEY MATTERS

PROUDLY SERVING THE POPLEY COMMUNITY SINCE MAY 1992

January 2021

Distribution of 5,400

Issue 227



**FULL OF LOCAL NEWS AND VIEWS**

## Contents

Message from the Editor	Page 1	Our Top 10 Tips to Stay Well this Winter	Page 15
Community Food Link	Page 3	Neighbourcare	Page 17
Councillors' Page	Page 5	Arthur Botham	Page 18
Rotary Basingstoke Deane	Page 7	MHA Living	Page 20
Merton Infant School	Page 9	New Status for Local Homeless Charity	Page 20
MFC Popley News	Page 9	Bermuda Community Hall	Page 22
Lottery Press Release	Page 10	Basingstoke & District Disability Forum	Page 23
Phillips Solicitors' Advice	Page 11	Probus Hears About Libya 1969	Page 24
Air Scouts Report	Page 12	Basingstoke Old Basing u3a	Page 26
Popley Fields Community Centre	Page 14	Everest Community Academy News	Page 27
Samaritans		Chineham Library News	Page 28

Closing date to submit articles and adverts (5pm 15-01-21) editor@poppleymatters.org.uk



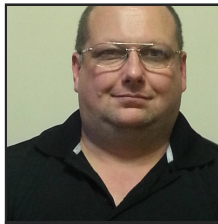
Editor  
Jane Frankum

**Editor:** Happy New Year and I sincerely hope 2021, is a lot happier than 2020 was and that's for sure!

I wonder what the year will bring. There will be some major changes in this Frankum household; more about this a little later in the year. I think a lot of people have had their eyes opened and appreciate that we need our key workers. When I was a cleaner at Basingstoke hospital I almost felt invisible; everyone praised the consultants and occasionally the nursing staff but those of us who served behind the scenes were forgotten in the most part, I guess elsewhere in industry and commerce it is the same.

I am looking forward to being able to get out and socialise and go to our community centres, pubs, clubs and the theatre again. Mind you I wonder how many will survive; I hope people buy and support locally. It must be so hard for people that have gone month after month without seeing their family and loved ones. What it has shown is just how vital volunteers are and you will see some throughout this issue. If you volunteer just one or two hours a week, you can make an enormous difference and I bet you will find that you enjoy it and even make new friends. Some are: Basingstoke Voluntary Action page 9, Samaritans on page 14, NeighbourCare on page 17, Camrose on page 20, Basingstoke Disability Forum on page 23. Paul is a Rotarian and will be volunteering to help with the immunisation program at Hampshire Court Hotel page 5 to see what the Rotarians do, on Page 5.

If anyone is having any difficulties or wants advice about Coronavirus, the number to call is 03333704000. This is a helpline run by Hampshire County Council they can advise on numerous aspects and if they can not personally, they can direct you to who can. Melrose Hall has a Food Bank type distribution with a difference every Monday. Food is donated from many different places and a lot of it is from shops and people who would otherwise throw it away so you are helping the environment. You do not have to be on benefits, it is there for anyone to use or donate. They tell me it is a shame if the food is not taken as it goes to landfill. Contact me by on phone 819924, drop me a note through our door at 405 Abbey Road RG24 9EL or email editor@popleymatters.org.uk.



Sub Editor  
Paul Frankum

The views in this publication are not necessarily the views of the editorial team, the members of the committee, or the Popley Matters magazine.

**Editorial Team:** Chair Terry Jones; Editor Jane Frankum; Sub-Editor Paul Frankum; Treasurer Christopher Martin; Proof Reader Lorraine Beaney. Area Distribution Manager Martin Biermann; Jane Frankum and Jeremy Jackman.

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**Advertising Index**

Spine Team	Page 2	Phillips Solicitors	Page 10	K.G.Matthews Carpentry	Page 21
Jonathan Williams Independent Funeral		GR Autos Service LTD	Page 13	Spencer and Peyton Ltd	Page 21
Directors	Page 2	Mickey's Property Services	Page 13	Peter's Chinese Fish & Chips	Page 25
Everest Health and Leisure Club	Page 2	The Loddon School	Page 13	Julia Tavener Foot Health	Page 25
Roller Garage Doors Centre	Page 4	Merton Pre School	Page 16	Unique Block Paving	Page 25
Lawrence Young Ltd	Page 4	1st Response	Page 16	Kids Nursery Popley	Page 25
Batchwood Flooring	Page 6	Blackstar Decorators	Page 16	Everest Community Academy	Page 27
Everest Health and Leisure Club	Page 6	Handcraft by	Page 16	J&KCare	Page IBP
JBDrive	Page 8	RM Carpentry	Page 19	Fastfare Store	Back Page
Andy Jones Window Cleaner	Page 8	IPS Hair	Page 19	Fastfare Pharmacy	Back Page
M H Autos	Page 8	Niall Catlin Plumbing and Heating	Page 19		
Rayner Appliance Care Ltd	Page 8	Mark Smith Plumbing and Heating	Page 21		

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## Greetings from Chineham Library!

You will have heard this many times before reading this, but Happy New Year!

It's the time for New Year's resolutions – if you want some inspiration for doing something new this year then pop into the library and check out our craft and hobby books (any current restrictions permitting, of course). Or if you ate too many mince pies (like me – and yes, I know I'm writing this in advance but I know it's going to happen!) then have a look at our selection of cookery and exercise books.

If you want to learn something new over the next few weeks there are a number of courses available online as part of the 'Learning in Libraries' scheme. To find out more and to book a course visit the Hantsweb shop online on <https://www.hants.gov.uk/shop/home.php?cat=369> and click on 'Online learning'. Be aware that you may need to download Zoom for course access.

We are still running the Ready Reads scheme if you would like us to pick your books for you – if you would like to register, either ring 01962 454747 or go to [www.hants.gov.uk/librariesandarchives/library/ready-reads](https://www.hants.gov.uk/librariesandarchives/library/ready-reads) to fill in the online registration form. You can specify particular genres such as Crime, Romance or Biographies, as well as choosing how many books you'd like for both you and/or children.

Hampshire Library offers a Home Library Service to support those who cannot visit a library due to ill-health, disability, or caring duties. If you do not use the Home Library Service but are taking additional health precautions, Ready Reads selections and reservations can also be collected on your behalf. Go to <https://www.hants.gov.uk/librariesandarchives/library/resources/homelibraryservice> to find out more, or ring 01962 454747.

Please remember that joining the library is FREE, browsing is FREE, the Ready Reads and Home Library Service are FREE, and our e-offerings through BorrowBox and RBDigital are FREE!

We are currently open on the following days:

Tuesday: 10 am – 4 pm

Wednesday: 10 am – 4 pm

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Saturday: 10 am – 4 pm

Chineham Library Team

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Everest  
Community Academy  
To make our best better



Christmas might have looked a little different this year but the students and staff at Everest Community Academy were still in the Christmas spirit. The Performing Arts Department spent the autumn term working alongside Years 7-10 to create a fun and festive Virtual Showcase. The performances included singing, dancing and acting from some of the most talented students at Everest. This year you can expect a trip to the outback with our very own Celebrity Jungle challenges, a Michael Jackson tribute dance piece, a powerful female dance troupe, and performances from our incredible GCSE courses from Year 9 and 10. So why not come and watch? It's already live on Everest's website!

## Basingstoke - Old Basing u3a

### Our Needles and Pins Group members lend a hand at Christmas

#### *Christmas shoeboxes*

Early in December, our Needles and Pins Group waved off eighty gaily wrapped shoeboxes, filled with toys, sweets, stationery, toiletries and bags of hand-knitted blankets. These will be opened by underprivileged children in Eastern Europe, who receive very little else at Christmas. Mustard Seed Relief Missions organise an annual appeal and with a team of willing helpers from Chineham and the Basingstoke area, the leaders Sue and John spent much of the year collecting and sorting, knitting and crocheting to help support it.

#### *Helping charities during the rest of the year*

The 40+ group members knit and crochet items for local charities throughout the year. Currently they are supporting:

- Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital, providing blankets and twiddle muffs to the Dementia Ward and small teddies, hats and mittens to the neo-natal unit
- the Safe Basingstoke charity, providing crocheted hats etc. for babies and toddlers
- orphanages in Eastern Europe, providing hats, scarves, mittens, toys and blankets

#### *Joining the group*

If you'd like to lend a hand, why not join this very friendly and sharing u3a group. Members bring along their own work - any form of knitting, crochet, tapestry, cross stitch, bead work etc. They exchange advice, patterns and ideas, and often a supply of donated wool too. For those who can't afford the wool, the group leader keeps a supply in her garage. There's usually a workshop or demonstration each month, so lots to do and their work carries on through lockdown on Zoom too.

All our u3a activities can be found at <https://www.basingstokeu3a.org> if anyone is looking for something to cheer them up through the winter. There's even a holiday in Croatia planned for 2021: <https://www.basingstokeu3a.org/excursion-and-holiday-details>

Joining instructions for new members can be found on our website, where an email address is also given for any enquiries. Membership now runs until the end of August 2021 and is only £15 for this period.

We look forward to meeting you.

County Councillor Report: On 14<sup>th</sup> December, we met a senior Hampshire County Council Highways engineer to finalise the drawings and plans to finally get a path from Tintern Close round to the bus stop and implement a path and accessible crossing across near the Apollo Hotel to the hospital and park. They will now draw up the final plans and make sure there are no utilities directly under, to redirect them would be too expensive and result in the paths not being done. The engineer was fairly confident that the path from Tintern should be OK but not sure that the other crossing with a dropped curb would be possible. However he did say he would look at other ways, so now we wait for a few weeks to hear what is possible. Of course we will update you in the Popley Matters.

Basingstoke and Deane are having a clamp down on dog fouling and fining owners who do not pick up, bag and dispose of their dogs mess properly. Popley Community Park has eleven waste bins where they can safely put the bag in so no excuse. Most dog owners do and realise it a park where families should be able to enjoy and not worry about stepping in dog mess. The order started on December 1<sup>st</sup> and people have already been fined.

Finally Paul and I wish you all a Happy New Year and hope 2021 is a lot better than 2020. Cllr Jane Frankum 01256 819924 email:- [jane.frankum@hants.gov.uk](mailto:jane.frankum@hants.gov.uk).

**Popley West:** Work started on new bin sheds for the flats in Melrose Walk. We have campaigned for years to get a solution to the problem of a cupboard that was inadequate for six households to put rubbish in. It was made worse when wheelie bins were introduced; it that it was not going to be big enough. Then came green recycle bins and glass boxes. The lack of room meant that the residents could not recycle or fit the normal waste from six families and some residents gave up out of frustration and fly tipping got worse and worse. Oakfern became Sentinel then Vivid who at last said they wanted to get a solution. Then finally this summer Vivid, Basingstoke and Dean Council, Serco and Paul and I had a site visit. BDBC said they did not want to give up more of the green play areas and that there was room on Vivid's own land. Initially Serco said they would not be able to access and collect from the fronts of the flats that face the school, but once we all met they agreed that they would collect from there. Plans were drawn up and agreed and lockable Bin sheds that are big enough to take the rubbish and allow the residents to recycle will probably be done by the time you read this.

Cllr Paul Frankum 01256 819924  
[cllr.paul.frankum@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.paul.frankum@basingstoke.gov.uk)  
 Cllr Jane Frankum 01256 819924  
[cllr.jane.frankum@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.jane.frankum@basingstoke.gov.uk)

**Popley East:** Fly tipping continues to be an issue which gives rise to many complaints and frustrations. Proving responsibility for fly tipping is often very difficult, added to which establishing the ownership of the land on which the fly tipping has occurred can be complicated. The process of contacting the land owner, producing evidence and the like is often long winded. All of which endorses the need to try to stop the fly tipping before it happens.

The penalties for fly tipping can be severe, as they should be but fly tipping blights the community and is very expensive to clear if the Council is involved.

Whilst the current limited operation of the Wade Road Depot may have contributed to the problem, much of the fly tipping is nothing more than vandalism.

In common with many areas, dog fouling of public spaces in Popley is an issue leading to many complaints.

A borough wide Dog Fouling Public Space protection order (PSPO) was introduced on 1 December 2020.

The order covers the whole of the borough and strengthens the enforcement actions against those who allow their dogs to foul public spaces in the borough.

2020 has been a difficult and challenging year and we trust 2021 will be a better year for all residents.

**Cllr David Potter 07941507801**  
[cllr.david.potter@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.david.potter@basingstoke.gov.uk)  
**Cllr Janet Westbrook 07747335200**  
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## Probuss Hears about Libya in 1969

Probuss Club member Alex Marianos is a highly qualified civil engineer and told of his time when, in 1969, he was responsible for several building projects around Benghazi in Libya.

Libya was a peaceful place and Benghazi was an important business city with first class hotels, banks, restaurants and good shops. Libya was liberated from the Italians in 1951 when King Idris declared it a Kingdom. All religious places of worship were permitted, and several European schools served the expat community.

On the morning of 1<sup>st</sup> September 1969, a radio announcement declared a military coup headed by Colonel Gaddafi had ousted King Idris. It was a textbook swift bloodless coup.

Later, Alex had a phone call from the wife of the (ex) Chief of Staff. He had met him a few months earlier when he turned up unexpectedly with King Idris at a garrison he was building. The wife was now under house arrest. She had run out of food for herself and four children. He went to their home with provisions for several days until the family was moved on.

Business soon returned to normal but there was an atmosphere of tension especially as there was a curfew from sunset to sunrise for quite a while.

Gaddafi developed the oil reserves and the wealth brought stability in the country for many years. Conservative Arab society was maintained with the added restriction on alcohol but strict religious customs were not enforced. Women were treated with respect, wore western clothes, drove cars and worked in mixed gender environments. Gaddafi, for all his faults had integrity and patriotism and all his antics were attention seeking rather than mischief.

In total, Alex spent well over five years in Libya but, in view of the current unrest, is relieved not to be there today.

For more information about the Probuss Club of Basingstoke see [www.probusbasingstoke.club](http://www.probusbasingstoke.club).



Basingstoke Deane

**Rotary**



### CONTACTS

Helen Ricketts: -  
[helen@highpathway.co.uk](mailto:helen@highpathway.co.uk)  
or  
Paul Temple:-  
[tempaul45@gmail.com](mailto:tempaul45@gmail.com)

**YOUR LOCAL  
ROTARY  
ROUNDUP**

January 2021

### Basingstoke Deane Rotary Club

#### Changing lives with Lendwithcare loans

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

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

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

Basingstoke Deane Rotary Club initially lent £345, which contributed towards the national £1 million landmark, with the club loaning to 9 groups/entrepreneurs in Malawi, Philippines, and Rwanda. Basingstoke Deane Rotary have helped 78 entrepreneurs, and 298 family members, and assisted in the creation of 43 jobs.

A relatively small investment by us goes a long way in developing countries and we have already agreed to increase our investment to £1,000 so that we will be able to help more emerging businesses and entrepreneurs

Club President Alf McCarthy said "Basingstoke Deane Rotary Club are proud to be a part of this fantastic initiative. Lendwithcare is a great way to help people out of poverty. You see exactly who the money is going to, and what they will use it for."

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



Alf McCarthy

President Alf continued: "Basingstoke Deane Rotary Club has a proud history of fundraising for charitable causes through community events, and Lendwithcare is a fantastic cause very popular with our members."

"Local people have given generously at our events and it's testament to their generosity that we've helped Rotary to reach an incredible £1 million. And that money will keep being re-lent and re-lent, translating into many millions of pounds worth of loans over the coming years."

Rotary is one of the world's largest and most successful global membership and humanitarian service organisations, with 1.2 million members in over 200 countries volunteering their time and their talents to tackle challenges at home and abroad to promote peace, fight disease, provide clean water, support education, save mothers and children and grow local economies.

For more info see [www.lendwithcare.org](http://www.lendwithcare.org)

*Basingstoke Deane Rotary is a group of 35 men and women from a wide variety of backgrounds. All live locally in the borough but some commute to work outside Basingstoke. Most joined Rotary to help others less fortunate, and they find Basingstoke Deane Rotary adds another extremely enjoyable dimension to their lives.*

*If you would like to find out more about how we enjoy ourselves, just tune in to [www.rcbd.org.uk](http://www.rcbd.org.uk) to see what we have coming up, or contact Helen or Paul above to find out more. We think you'll be pleasantly surprised.*

Facebook: @RotaryBasingstokeDeane

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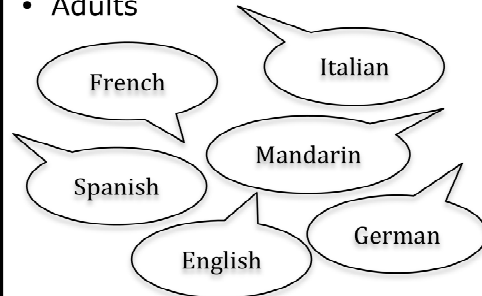
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Classes



Basingstoke and District Disability Forum (BDDF) – your local disability charity, wants to wish you and your family a Happy New Year and all the very best for 2021!

Our Services.- Last year we all quickly learned new skills and ways of living and working to keep us as safe as possible. BDDF swiftly moved our services online concentrating on fun and interactive activities to put a smile on our members' faces. We offer seated exercise for mobility and wellbeing; walking clubs for health and social interaction; Friday Teabreak - a safe online club for chat, laughter and creativity. All of our activities are free and fully inclusive.

New Support Group - As soon as it is safe to do so we are keen to offer face to face support groups. We are looking for feedback on how our disabled community would like for these to run and would welcome your thoughts and opinions via this 2 minute survey <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/KXCLZL9>.

Our Lockdown One Members survey results - The Driving force behind the new support group is addressing the needs identified by the survey which BDDF conducted to understand the impact of the lockdown on disabled people. The Top three 3 challenges faced by our disabled community were:

1. Psychological distress / mental health (50%)
2. Social isolation and loneliness (45%)
3. Difficulties accessing NHS healthcare and treatment (35%)

Keep in touch. Information on all our free services are updated regularly on our social media and website. Keep up to date by liking our page of Facebook @BDDForum, Instagram @BasingstokeDisabilityForum via our website [www.bddf.org.uk](http://www.bddf.org.uk), or tweet us @BDDForum.

We offer regular newsletters, and are offer a paper version by post if you do not have Internet access. To be added to our postal mailing list please call 01256 423869 leaving your home address, name and telephone number.

Disability Awareness Event - BDDF are preparing to host our annual Disability Information & Awareness Day in The Malls shopping centre on Friday 26 March 2021. For the first time we will be hosting the physical stalls and sessions virtually. In the hoped we can reach as many people as possible. If you are a charity who would like to be represented either via physical stall or online or if you are a key speaker on issues affecting disabled people because of Covid-19, please get in touch by emailing [info@bddf.org.uk](mailto:info@bddf.org.uk).

NEW\*\*121 Digital/IT support - Our survey results highlighted digital exclusion of the disabled and some of our older generation was adding to isolation. To address this, BDDF have been offering our members a free 90 minute 1-2-1 session with an IT expert. The aim of the session is to ensure they can be involved in online activities and keep in contact with friends and loved ones if isolating, by teaching how to get online and how to use Zoom. Do you know someone who would benefit? BDDF are happy to offer further sessions – please get in touch.

\*\* Wellbeing Course. - Start January in a positive way by joining our free wellbeing course aimed at reducing anxiety, increasing your confidence and finding inner calmness. The commitment is 2 hours per week on Tuesday mornings. Open to all. If you would like to take part, please contact us.

New\*\* Member Care Calls. - Many commented on the survey what they really want right now is a call, a friendly voice on the other end of the line. We currently have three wonderful volunteers calling our members and making a difference to their day. If you know someone who is isolated or lonely who would like to hear from us, please let us know.



# Bermuda Community Hall

Come back and join us, measures have been put in place to keep you safe!

Tiny steps pre-school is open, for further details ring Helen or Connie on 07907815270.

**Monday** from 6:30pm to 8pm we have kick boxing



**Wednesday** is yoga night with Lou Bedford. Starting at 6:15pm and finishes at 7:15pm, for more details ring 07753109222 or go to [www.loubefordyoga.co.uk](http://www.loubefordyoga.co.uk)



**Thursday** night is street dance and ballet 4:30pm to 6:30pm for details ring Samantha pike on 07811299484



Thank you for your patience,  
We wish you a Happy New Year!



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## **December News**

This year has been a year of challenges for many people in our immediate and wider community, so the children at Merton Infant School have been reflecting on how we can send our thoughts and care to you all at this festive time. This Christmas may not be the one you hope for but we want you to know that we are all thinking of you. Hope you enjoy your festive messages:

### **Year R**

Wishing you sparkle, wishing you cheer  
For a bright Merry Christmas and a happy new year!  
Love from Snowy Owls Class

Here's to happiness in your heart  
And festive memories that will last  
Happy Christmas love from Owlets Class

We hope that you have a magical Christmas with your family,  
With lots of joy and happiness.  
Love from Little Owls Class



### **Year 1**

Merry Christmas wishes from our Merton Family to yours. We hope you have happiness, laughter and sparkle delivered from Santa.

Lots of love  
Barn Owls Class

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.  
We hope you have lovely food, funny jokes and songs.  
From Tawny Owls Class



### **Year 2**

May this festive season sparkle and shine,  
May all of your wishes and dreams come true,  
These are our wishes just for you!  
Merry Christmas love Eagle Owls Class

From our bubble to yours, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy Holiday season!  
Stay safe and take care love from Wise Owls Class

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Hello Popley,  
Well with all the festivities and people out over December Christmas shopping I hope you all kept well and safe and enjoyed Christmas as best you could.

At MHA Communities we continued to support our members over the Christmas period with telephone befriending, medication pick-ups and food shopping. Our Zoom activities continued over the Christmas period too.

As a team we delivered over 300 Christmas packages to our members in and around Basingstoke and East Hampshire. Hopefully we brought a smile our members faces and of course they got to see our faces in person as some will get very few visits.

We certainly hope that 2021 will bring all our activities up and running again from our popular lunch clubs, to pub lunches and bowling healthy walks and the many other activities we do including some trips out to some very interesting places.

We are always asking for volunteers to join us to assist with activities. Once this pandemic is under control we can get our activities up and running again. We also need help with our Telephone Befriending Service that we provide to many of our lovely members.

If you have a family member or neighbour who may benefit from the services we offer across Basingstoke and East Hampshire please get in touch with myself at [Francesca.wildash@mha.org.uk](mailto:Francesca.wildash@mha.org.uk) or on 07720 680403

We wish everyone a very Happy New Year and hopefully in 2021 we shall be able to get some normality back in everyone's life's

**Many thanks  
Francesca Wildash**

## New Status for Local Homeless Charity

The Camrose Centre for the Homeless and Vulnerably Housed people in Basingstoke is now serving its clients in its own right as an independent Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Over the past 10 years, Camrose has been supported and supervised by Basingstoke Voluntary Action, of which Camrose remains a member.

Camrose continues to offer a place of shelter, hot meals, food packs, guidance on a wide range of issues and most important of all, a sympathetic listening ear to homeless and vulnerable people in Basingstoke.

"We have the support of our enthusiastic Board of Trustees, and we have recently welcomed a new Support Worker Charlotte Gruntowska to our team, enabling us to provide an even greater level of help to local homeless people" comments Clare Farrow, Centre Manager.

"We are always looking for more volunteers to help us with both client facing and back office roles. We also welcome new applications to join our Board of Trustees".

Regular supporters of the Camrose should note the new contact details, and online donations page which can all be found on Camrose's updated website [www.thecamrosecentre.org](http://www.thecamrosecentre.org).



We are back!

**We are glad to be playing football after the second lockdown.**

We are grateful for the continued support from our players and spectators. We would like to remind everyone, before attending any sporting activities, all participants, officials, volunteers and spectators must self-assess for COVID-19 symptoms:

- A high temperature
- A new, continuous cough
- A loss of, or change to, their sense of smell or taste

If you have one or more of these symptoms you should not attend any sporting activity and must follow NHS and PHE guidance on self-isolation.

MFC Popley All Stars are recruiting for players who are in Year R and Year 1. If you are interested in bringing your child along to one of our sessions, please contact: Andy Williams on - [andympfcpopley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:andympfcpopley@hotmail.co.uk)

We would like to wish everybody a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all at MFC Popley Youth.



## Lottery Press Release

Basingstoke Voluntary Action have started a community lottery in Basingstoke and Deane. The first draw took place on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and we are delighted to see the impact this lottery is already having on the good causes in our local community. With nearly 1000 tickets sold in the first draw alone and 60% of every ticket sold going directly to local causes it is proof that each £1 ticket truly adds up. Currently we are on target to raise over £30,000 in our first year, this money of course going to the 50+ organisations who have already signed up!

In the short time since the lottery began, we have seen 45 winners! From bonus tickets to cash prizes, the generous supporters of our local communities' causes have enjoyed the variety of prizes this lottery rewards! There are also additional benefits such as the national draw on 19th December. As well as their usual weekly chance of winning the £25,000 jackpot, supporters will be in for a chance to WIN 1 of 5 Entertainment Bundles! Each Entertainment Bundle includes an Amazon Echo Show8, Echo Dot, & Fire7 Tablet! If you are already supporting the lottery, we thank you and ask that you share your enthusiasm with family and friends. Stuck for a gift idea this Christmas? You can now purchase gift vouchers starting from £5; a unique gift for a neighbour, a friend who deserves a bit of luck or the person in your life who is impossible to buy for!

An incredible amount of good causes have signed up already, but we are always accepting more. We are so excited to see the impact the lottery continues to have on our local community in the coming months, especially at a time where our community needs more support than ever.

If you would like to know more about the lottery & how you can take part then please visit our website [www.bandcommunitylottery.co.uk](http://www.bandcommunitylottery.co.uk) or contact [cware@bvaction.org.uk](mailto:cware@bvaction.org.uk).



### Tax Break for Homeworkers

If you have been working from home at any time since March because of the coronavirus pandemic, you probably would have run up higher household bills.

The good news is that HMRC is able to make a small contribution in the form of a tax break towards expenses such as for electricity and heating.

To be eligible, you must be carrying out duties of your employment under homeworking arrangements. This means that you are regularly performing some or all of your duties at home.

Where, as is often the case, it is not possible to calculate the extra costs, then a claim for £26 per month (£18 per month prior to 6 April 2020) for monthly paid employees or £6 a week (£4 per week prior to 6 April 2020) can be made without having to justify the figure. This amount will not cover the cost of business calls, for which an additional claim can be made based on actual costs.

You cannot claim for any expenses that you would normally have to pay such as mortgage interest or rent, council tax, ordinary water rates and insurance.

Where your employer contributes towards homeworking expenses then you can only claim for the portion which has not already been covered by your employer. HMRC has set up a dedicated online microservice which can be found by visiting [www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home](http://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home) that will automatically apply the whole 2020/21 tax year's relief via your tax code.

In fact, you can actually use it to claim just before this tax year too as the lockdown started on 23 March 2020 – you just need to put that date in. You should be able to get a refund for the whole of this tax year, which started 6 April 2020 and two weeks extra on top.

Should you have any queries about this or any other employment issues, please contact Jacqueline Kendal, who works in our Employment Law team at Phillips Solicitors, by emailing [Jacqueline.kendal@phillips-law.co.uk](mailto:Jacqueline.kendal@phillips-law.co.uk) or by calling 01256 854626.

For information about the services offered by Phillips Solicitors, please visit [www.phillips-law.co.uk](http://www.phillips-law.co.uk). When contacting Phillips, please mention Popley Matters.



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Dear Friends

Twelve months ago, could any one of us have foreseen what a tumultuous year 2020 was going to be? It was to be a year of tragedy and triumph! Tragedy in the arrival of Covid-19 and the illnesses, deaths, separation from loved ones and the curtailment of many of our usually accepted freedoms. Triumph in the accelerated research, development and implementation of successful vaccines to combat the virus, triumph in the way we gained an opportunity to seriously reflect on the kind of society we have become and to break down some of the common barriers we had somehow erected around ourselves. The Thursday applauding of frontline staff, the new found respect for others and their care that breached the age and background barriers (Sir Tom!). The eventual outcome is perhaps a more caring community and culture that puts others first rather than self – or will it? It's up to us isn't it, it's our choice in this new year as Covid-19 is finally beaten. How will we shape the future!

Hopes and plans are important to us as they provide something to hang onto when times are tough. Hope for something better lying just around the corner, planning for a brighter future. The author of the Letter to the Hebrews in the Bible writes *"who hopes for what they already have?"*

Before I became a Christian, I used to dream of career and financial success in the belief that it would bring an end to all of my life's worries and anxieties. I used to believe that if I worked hard enough for the family the kids would grow up without suffering any of the storms of life that I'd had to sail through. Unrealistic or what? But it's what we spend a lot of our time doing for ourselves and those we love – isn't it?

In the Bible I read this: *"I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you not to harm you."* One of the first things I discovered when I became a Christian was the truth of those words and that God has the most amazing plan for my life. God doesn't promise to take away the stresses and strains of daily living but what He does promise that whatever happens He'll be their right in the thick of it with us (have you ever read that well known verse 'Footprints'?) and He promises to fulfil that longing that is deep within our hearts.

Whatever your hopes and plans for the coming year I'll be praying that you may discover the eternal hope held out in the message of Christmas and fulfilled at Easter. St Paul wrote: *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."* Perhaps you might consider making it a New Year's resolution to discover God's plan for your life – you won't regret it!

I wish you all a happy, healthy and peaceful New Year.

**Your friend and vicar**  
**Arthur. St Gabriel's,**  
**01256 324734**  
**<https://www.stgabrielspopley.net/>**

Group Scout Leader	Colin Karslake	07796772500
Assistant Group Scout Leader	Douglas Gowan	07733325498
Beaver Leader	Mandy Pain	07508204098
Cub Leader	Charlotte Bell	07919148376
Scout Leader	Kevin Pocock	07717108560

Basingstoke Air Scout Group hopes all our readers had a Merry Christmas and were able to make the most of the holiday season during these strange times and are all looking forward to hopefully a brighter and happier 2021.

In the meantime, here is a look back at the last few Zoom Meetings the Cubs and Beavers have had, all of which have been Christmas themed.



On 1<sup>st</sup> December following directions from a kids' artist on YouTube. We had fun learning how to draw a cartoon Rudolph and Father Christmas as well as a sleigh full of presents. Every one's attempts were exceptionally good.

The following week using the skills learnt the previous week we made Christmas cards and played a couple of "Guess the Hidden Object" games, which they were all too go at. I am going to have to make it harder next time round. 😊🌑

The year ended on 22<sup>nd</sup> December with a virtual Christmas party, where we invited parents and siblings to join in the fun of playing party games played in a virtual way. These included Christmas Bingo, Guess the Christmas Movie and Christmas Musical Statues.

Looking for a new challenge then read on.

The Leaders are passionate about giving every young person who wants to join, the opportunity of the life changing experiences that Scouting offers. In order to do this, we need more adult volunteers to help run weekly meetings, organise events and to share in the fun and adventure. But we also need people to help behind the scenes as well.

Why not put a spring in your step, start a new hobby, and put something back into your local community? You will find the time you give really rewarding, Scouting actively promotes flexible volunteering, so we will find you a role that matches the time you want to give. You will be surprised how rewarding and fun your time spent volunteering with us can be, so please contact either myself or Colin on the numbers above today to start your Scouting adventure and help to change the lives of the Young People

**Douglas Gowan**  
**Assistant Group Scout Leader**



The Covid-19 pandemic, has made a lot of changes to all of our lives, increased social isolation, perhaps more time on our hands?

Can you spare a couple of hours each month? Would you like to make a difference to your local community?

If so, why not consider joining Popley Fields Community Association? We meet (currently online) once a month to discuss the running of Popley Field Community Centre and other outreach activities like, events, youth club and Popley Festival.

No experience is necessary and everyone is welcome. Even if you don't feel you have anything to offer, by being willing to help you have all the qualifications required.

For more information please contact us via the e-mail below and we'll get one of the current team to contact you.

e-mail us at: [office@popleyfields.org.uk](mailto:office@popleyfields.org.uk)

Many thanks and hope to hear from you soon,

The Popley Fields Team



We have had a very successful year in many ways but we are disappointed, due to periods of lockdown, that we have not always been able to support as many of our elderly people as usual by taking them out and about.

In June we received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK.

Our coordinators, working from home, have been talking regularly to many clients and befriending has been possible by having conversations over the telephone. We are still available though to take people to hospital appointments and we are beginning to take people to Covid-19 vaccinations.

One of our clients is Valerie who we have taken to medical appointments: Valerie says "I couldn't manage without Basingstoke NeighbourCare. Their volunteers provide a wonderful service, they take me to my appointments, sit with me to keep me company, bring me back home. They are giving up their time because they want to help me, it's so lovely to have some company there to listen to you, and to chat with".

We are always looking for volunteer drivers and people who would befriend an elderly person. Please call us on 01256 423855 if you would like to know more and speak to one of our Coordinators. (They are home base currently but will return your call).

For driving we would particularly like a few younger volunteers and, although our main activity is Monday to Friday, weekend volunteers would be welcomed to take people to Covid-19 vaccinations.

[www.neighbourcare.com](http://www.neighbourcare.com)

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## Recruiting Support Workers Now!

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01256 884 639

## Basingstoke Samaritans – Over Half a Century of Support

Samaritans have been a presence in Basingstoke since 1969 and have been offering emotional support to the town and beyond from the early 1970s from our base in Essex Road.

Samaritans is a unique charity dedicated to reducing the feelings of isolation and disconnection that can lead to poor mental health, and in the saddest cases, to suicide. Every six seconds someone contacts us, every six seconds we can help someone turn their life around; our listening volunteers can make a real difference to someone's future.

Our brilliant volunteers took over 19,835 contacts from callers and gave over 3,016 volunteer hours last year. Every person supporting Basingstoke Samaritans is a volunteer.

Along with supporting callers by phone, email and face to face, we also have strong Outreach Teams supporting our Community. These teams support our schools and colleges, the railway station, give talks to Groups, distribute literature to GP surgeries, our hospital, libraries and CAB and organise events in shops and supermarkets raising awareness and fundraising.

Like all Samaritans branches, Basingstoke is completely self-funded with donations from members of the public and organisations that choose to support us.

We are always looking for new members and all volunteers receive full training in preparation for the kinds of conversations we have. New volunteers are initially supported by an experienced mentor, offering experience to ensure we are doing the right thing for our callers. If Listening isn't for you, we also have several support roles to help our branch function.

We offer a chance to develop a range of new skills and the confidence to use them.

If you are interested in finding out more come to an information session, or sign up on the below link:  
[www.samaritans.org/support-us/volunteer/](http://www.samaritans.org/support-us/volunteer/)



## Our Top 10 Tips to Stay Well this Winter;

1. Don't get caught out – keep up to date with the weather forecast.
2. Heat your home to at least 18oC (65oF) – You might want your main living room to be slightly warmer.
3. Hot drinks and food – Have plenty of hot drinks and a hot meal every day.
4. Remember to layer up – by wearing layers of thin clothing rather than one thick layer, you will trap heat better to keep warmer.
5. Wrap up on the sofa – when sitting for long periods of time wrap a blanket around you.
6. Keep active when indoors – try not to sit still for more than an hour at a time. Even whilst sitting you can move your arms and legs or wiggle your fingers and toes.
7. Keep your bedroom window closed on winter nights – breathing in cold air can be bad for your health as it increases the risk of chest infections.
8. Protect yourself from flu – if you're entitled to a flu jab make sure you have it.
9. Make sure you're receiving all the help that you're entitled to – Learn how to make your home more energy efficient, improve your heating and keep up with your energy bills at [www.gov.uk/phe/keep-warm](http://www.gov.uk/phe/keep-warm).
10. And check your heating and cooking appliances are safe – contact a Gas Safe registered engineer to make sure they're operating properly. Visit [www.gassaferegister.co.uk](http://www.gassaferegister.co.uk).