BROOKWOOD NEWS

February 2026

BASINGSTOKE CANAL SOCIETY – 60 YEARS: A MOMENTOUS MILESTONE

This year is the 60th anniversary of the Society and the anniversary team are busy working on many special events. These are headlined by a commemorative event in Woking on Saturday 18 April, which will also be tied into the launch of Kitty 2.

Amongst the many other events taking place over the year will be themed trips on the John Pinkerton II, dedicated Chobham talks, and the Odiham Raft Race. In addition, a 60th anniversary booklet will be created, a video about the restoration produced, and curating of a 60 things to do and see on the Basingstoke Canal, to be published later in the year.

If you're already feeling inspired, then why not become a member, follow the Society on Facebook or join their team of enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers. See www.basingstoke-canal.org.uk for more information.

NEWS FROM CLLR LESLIE RICE



Local government reorganisation will be effective May 2027 when Woking Borough Council will merge with other local councils to form West Surrey Council. There will be elections in May 2026. The elected councillors will have a five-year term, the first year of which will be dedicated to setting up the new council, followed by a four-year term.

Cllr Rice also reports that here in Brookwood efforts are being made to set up a Neighbourhood Forum, so that residents have a greater say in planning via its Neighbourhood Plan. As of now, it looks as though it will be difficult with so few participants. However, progress is being made with an application for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds for the Connaught Crescent play area.

Please let Leslie know of other areas of interest that have broad community support and would benefit from CIL funding. He can be contacted at CllrLeslie.Rice@woking.gov.uk or on 07932 700586.

CONGRATULATIONS MITCH!

Our last edition included an interview with Brookwood resident John "Mitch" Mitchell, head coach of the England Women's rugby union team, following his success in coaching the Red Roses to a World Cup win last autumn as they became world champions for the first time in 11 years.

It's doubly pleasing therefore to be able to report this month that Mitch has been appointed OBE in the New Year's Honours List for services to rugby union. Our congratulations to him on well-deserved recognition for his efforts.

EDITORIAL

A wealth of material this month reporting on a wide range of current activities in the village, and with hints of more to come later in the year, so the editorial is mercifully brief, other than to say that recently, while walking canines Bertie and Maude, I spotted the first daffodils above ground (just), so spring is coming! As ever, thanks to all our contributors and to our readers. We hope you enjoy this edition.

John Wheeler– Editor

EAST WEST'S NEW VENTURE

East West, Brookwood, has been serving Indian cuisine in the village for a long time.

In response to the current situation, an extra kitchen is being introduced under the name Royal Shish – Kebab & Grill. The core East West identity and services remain unchanged, continuing to serve the local community with in-restaurant Indian curries, takeaways and a delivery service, but additionally offering authentic kebabs and grilled dishes. This will allow customers to enjoy a wider range of choices. It is planned to open the new kitchen in the first week of February.

The team at East West would like to express their sincere appreciation and gratitude to the local community for their support over many years. We wish them well with this new venture.

Seymours. Successfully selling houses in Brookwood.

Interested in finding out what your property is worth?
Contact **Andrew, Simon** or **Mark** on **01483 798969**
to arrange a **FREE, no obligation valuation**.

seymours-estates.co.uk

Seymours

BEAUTIFUL NEW HEDGE AT FOX CORNER COMMUNITY WILDLIFE AREA



A stunning new front hedge at Fox Corner has recently been laid in a traditional Surrey style by the Surrey Hedgelaying Group using the existing hedge of blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel and other varieties.

Surrey Hedgelaying Group has been active since the beginning of the 1980s and is a semi-professional organisation specialising in hedgelaying and taking on laying some very overgrown hedges,

Traditional hedgelaying involves using the existing stems of trees, and partially cutting through the stems, bending them down horizontally near ground level (called pleaching), which encourages new growth from the base and creates a living fence. Then wooden stakes are inserted into the middle of the hedge to offer support. Finally, willow or hazel binders are woven in and out of the stakes to secure everything in place. The skilfully layed hedge will develop over the next year or so as new growth forms, and will provide a haven for wildlife and birds.

You are invited to come and see this beautiful old art close up and perhaps to visit the wildlife area too with its 14 acres of streams, a pond, wetlands, woodlands and meadows. Being a local nature reserve, it provides a diverse environment for many different species of animals, reptiles, flora and fauna. The new hedge will enhance the site's natural habitats.



Please note that parking is limited on site. Please see www.foxcornerwildlife.org.uk for more information about the wildlife area.

CAN YOU HELP BROOKWOOD SCOUTS?

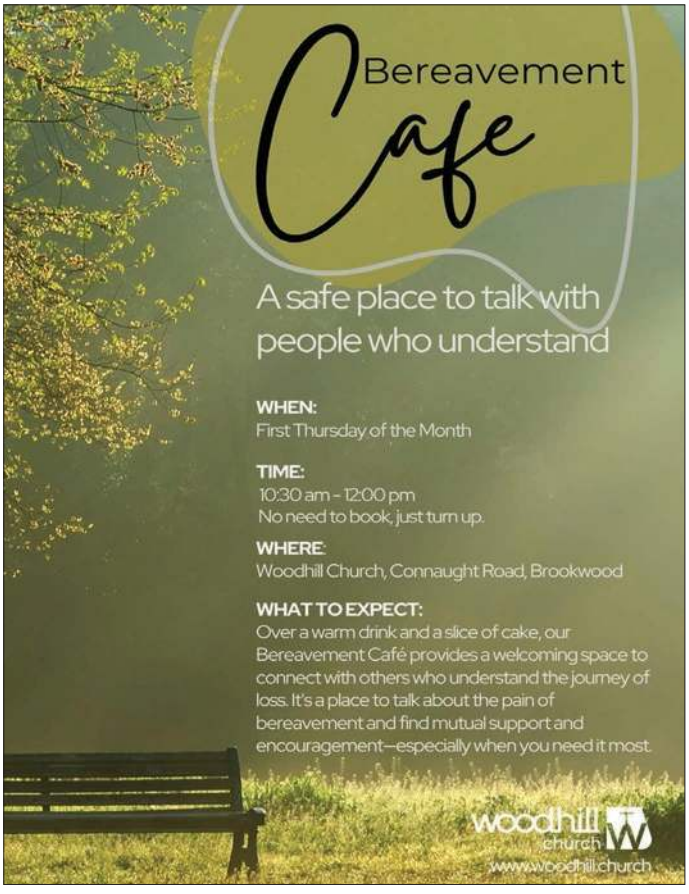
1st Brookwood Scouts are currently recruiting for leaders in Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. Meetings are held every Friday evening to help Pirbright and Brookwood's 6- to 14-year-olds get stuck into all kinds of activities that will give them skills for life.

More leaders are needed within all age groups from the youngest Beavers to the oldest Scouts. With full support and training you can volunteer on a flexible basis. Not only is it incredibly rewarding and great fun but also you'll learn brilliant skills that are transferable to the workplace and further education. Volunteers are welcomed from every community and background. You don't need to have been a Scout, and no experience is necessary. Please contact Joe on gslbrookwood@gmail.com for more information.

BROOKWOOD MEMORIAL HALLS

The Brookwood Memorial Halls Management Committee would like to thank the 1st Brookwood Beavers and Cubs for making lots of yummy baked goods for our Christmas trail in December, The Octavian Singers for their wonderful performance and to Gary's Garden Maintenance for our beautiful Christmas tree.

A big thank you also to our wonderful hirers and volunteers who keep the halls running. We look forward to seeing you all at our events this year.





BROOKWOOD CEMETERY – THE TORSO MURDERS

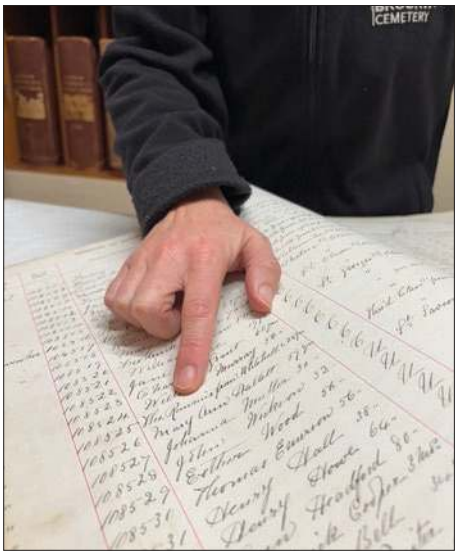
A chilling new docuseries, Victorian Murder Club, premiered this January, drawing viewers into the shadowy world of Victorian crime. At its heart lies the story of a forgotten serial killer, the infamous Thames Torso Murderer, whose gruesome acts shocked London in the late 19th century.

Presented by acclaimed historian Lucy Worsley, the series reopens this historical cold case, tracing the fragmented clues that remain. Her investigation led her to Brookwood Cemetery, the final resting place of two victims whose lives were brutally cut short.

In the opening episode, aired on 5 January 2026, viewers watched as Kim Lowe, Chair of The Brookwood Cemetery Society, guided Lucy through the London Necropolis burial records, which confirmed the arrival of the dismembered remains at Brookwood.

The victims' identities were shrouded in mystery due to the horrific nature of their deaths, with records referring simply to "The remains from Whitehall" in 1888. Yet, one name emerged from the shadows: Elizabeth Jackson, a 24-year-old woman buried in a pauper's grave in 1889.

For those captivated by Victorian intrigue, the full story unfolds in this gripping three-part series, now available on BBC iPlayer.



BROOKWOOD CEMETERY WALKS

The walks of this year's season are on the first Sunday of the month at 2pm (unless otherwise stated). They begin from The Lodge at the Cemetery Office entrance, off Cemetery Pales. A suggested £7.50 donation includes refreshments. Maximum group size 15–20 people. Book your place via email at walks@tbcs.org.uk or call 07714 289375.

On 1 March at 2pm there are three walks planned:

Introductory Walk – North Side: Alison Leech will take you to a range of notable people for this area of the cemetery.

Introductory Walk – South Side: Alison Vince will take you to notables on this side of the cemetery.

Mausoleums Walk: Join Jon Leech as he unlocks some of the cemetery's notable mausoleums and tells the stories of those within.

Details of walks later in the year will be published in future editions but one of particular note is the new Restricted Mobility – South Side walk planned for 7 June. For the first time, Kim Lowe will reveal the lives of people who lie within easy reach. This will be for people with restricted mobility and their carer only.

SHEETS HEATH PAVILION

In February 2024, Woking Borough Council adopted a community asset transfer policy to enable the community to take control in running assets to best meet local need, to support the voluntary and community sector to meet their growth ambitions, and to sustain and revitalise the assets at a time of increased budget pressures on the Council.

Sheets Heath Pavilion was listed as one such asset and last year approval was given to transfer the Pavilion to the Meadow Sports Football Club and Woking & Horsell Cricket Club.

These clubs currently provide recreational sport for a combined 1,000 members. Established in 1965, Meadow Sports provides football for boys, girls and young adults from U6s up to U23s and is a leading grassroots football club within Woking borough. Woking & Horsell CC, established in 1905, is the borough's largest cricket club and provides cricket for men, women, boys and girls from the age of 6 years upwards.

The two clubs are creating a new organisation to operate the pavilion which will ensure its use all year round, with football concentrated from September to April and cricket from May to August. The intention is also to provide a local community hub to be available for hire for small meetings or community gatherings during the week, primarily on weekdays.

The timetable for completing the formalities is not yet known, but we look forward to updating readers in a future edition.

INVITATION TO JOIN BROOKWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

A new Neighbourhood Watch scheme has been started for the residents of Brookwood. Invitations have now been posted throughout the village and the plan is to continue promoting the Watch through attending Church and School events as well as encouraging members to enrol their neighbours.

Membership of Brookwood Neighbourhood Watch is free, and it brings many benefits. Watches have been proved to reduce crime and generate a closer community spirit through greater vigilance, improved home security and timely reporting of suspicious incidents by members.

Patrick Veale is acting as the Volunteer Coordinator. If you are interested in becoming a member, please e-mail him at brookwood.nhw@gmail.com or text him on 07850 722240, confirming your name, mobile phone number and house address. Alternatively, you can join via the national website (ourwatch.org.uk/join).

KNAPHILL FOOTBALL CLUB

Knaphill Football Club is currently enjoying one of the most successful and transformative seasons in the club's 102-year history. With a young, hungry and talented team on the pitch and a group of energetic volunteers off it, half-way through the season The Knappers are second in the Combined Counties Premier Division South table, with a genuine chance at promotion to the Isthmian League. The club has never played higher than their current level so it's an exciting time to be involved. Recent form has been very strong, with just one defeat in the last 14 league games.

The club would love the support of Brookwood's residents. Every person who comes through the gate makes a genuine difference to an amateur club that is rooted in the local community. Admission prices are just £9 for adults, with under 16s free, so you're guaranteed a great value afternoon at a friendly and relaxed venue. Upcoming home games at Redding Way are scheduled for 3 February and 21 February.

Off the pitch, the club has secured more sponsors than ever before. After months of detailed work, the club has also secured a community asset transfer with Woking Borough Council. This means the club can actively manage and invest in the facilities and hire out the pitch and clubhouse for community and sporting events. For the first time, a Vets team has been formed, providing a sociable, fun environment for over 35s to play in.

In short, it's a really exciting period for the club and any and all support is extremely welcome. If you have any questions, comments or are interested in sponsorship opportunities, please drop fellow Brookwood resident Pete Waters a line (pete.knaphillfc@gmail.com).

WOKING LEISURE CENTRES' MEMBERSHIP OFFER FOR PEOPLE WITH PARKINSON'S

In December 2025 Everyone Active took over management of Woking Borough Council's four key leisure facilities and is now responsible for delivering a wide-ranging programme of physical activity and well-being services for residents, including its free membership offering for those living with Parkinson's.

Woking Leisure Centre, Pool in the Park, Woking Sportsbox and Eastwood Leisure Centre will benefit from the initiative, working in partnership with Parkinson's UK.

The free membership will provide access to gym, swim and group exercise classes. Synergy Dance online classes are also available. Free carer membership will be available, if required. Please visit www.everyoneactive/promotion/parkinsons for further information.



HONOURING THE FALLEN OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission is building a new Memorial to the Missing in Brookwood. This memorial will commemorate those who died in the United Kingdom and Ireland during the First World War and currently have no known final resting place.

The original Brookwood 1914–1918 Memorial honoured some of these individuals. However, as ongoing research has revealed more names to commemorate, and the final resting places of others commemorated on the previous memorial were identified, it became clear that a new memorial was needed.

Initially, 400 service personnel will be commemorated on the new memorial. As research progresses, additional names will be added, with space available for up to 1,200 names. Information about this project and the CWGC's approach to it is available at www.cwgc.org/our-work/brookwood-1914-1918-memorial and we're advised that even more information will become available from March onwards.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY AFTERNOON

The Sime Gallery, based at Worplesdon Memorial Hall, is holding a Children's activity afternoon in half-term from 2 to 4pm on Thursday 19 February. Chasing Bluebirds is the theme, admission is £3 per child, and parking is free..



Pop-Up Coffee
at Woodhill Church
Connaught Road
every Friday
10-12pm



VILLAGE DIARY DATES

(also see the village website at www.brookwood.org.uk)

Every Sunday	Evening Service, 6.30pm, Woodhill Church (Connaught Road)
Every Monday	Babies and Toddlers Playgroup, 9.45am, Brookwood Memorial Hall
Every Friday	Brookwood Art Group, 9.30am to 12.30pm, Brookwood Memorial Hall
Every Friday	Pop-up Coffee, 10am to 12pm, Woodhill Church (Connaught Road)
Third Tuesday each month	Women's Institute, 7.45pm, small Memorial Hall
First Thursday each month	Bereavement Café, 10.30am to 12pm Woodhill Church (Connaught Road)
Thursday 19 February	Children's activity afternoon, 2 to 4pm, Worplesdon Memorial Hall
Sunday 1 March	Brookwood Cemetery Society walks, 2pm, details to be found in newsletter

Would you like to advertise in the newsletter?

The cost of advertising is £30.00. The advert will feature on the back of the newsletter and will be no less than a 1/4 of a page. We do not normally put advertising anywhere else in the newsletter. For more information on advertising please contact us on community@brookwood.org.uk

NB: DEADLINE FOR MARCH NEWSLETTER IS MIDDAY 20th FEBRUARY 2026 preferably by e-mail to community@brookwood.org.uk or telephone 01483 480273 or a note through the door of 78 Connaught Road.

Printed by Knaphill Print and delivered to your door by a very lovely person.