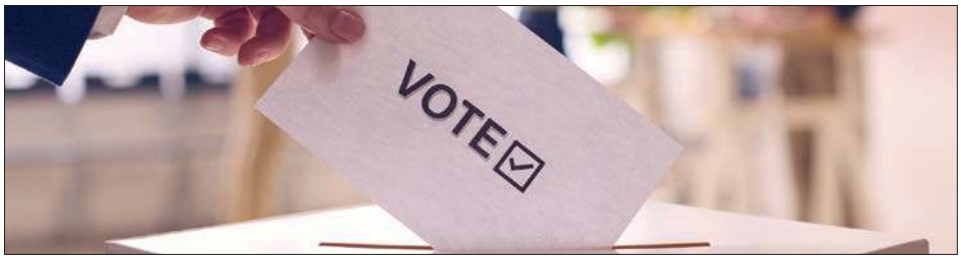


BROOKWOOD NEWS

May 2026

LOCAL ELECTIONS



Surrey is preparing for a significant tidy-up of how our local services are organised. At the moment, we all deal with Surrey County Council as well as one of the 11 district or borough councils. From 1 April 2027, this two-tier system will be replaced by two new unitary councils: East Surrey and West Surrey. Each will look after everything from waste collection and planning to social care, roads, housing support, and community services, meaning residents will only need to deal with one council instead of two.

On Thursday 7 May 2026, we'll head to the polls to choose the councillors who will shape these new authorities. They won't take charge straight away; instead, they'll spend a year working on "shadow councils", putting all the behind-the-scenes essentials in place. That includes setting the first budgets, designing how services will run, agreeing staffing structures, and speaking with residents and local groups about priorities for the new councils.

The big switchover will take place on 1 April 2027, when the existing 12 councils officially close and the two new unitary councils take over. The hope is that this simpler structure will reduce duplication and make services easier for everyone to navigate.

We are encouraging all residents to use their your voices and vote in the upcoming elections to be held at Brookwood Memorial Hall. You will have two votes, to choose from 11 candidates. Please remember that you MUST take along some kind of photographic evidence in order to vote.

At the time of this newsletter being printed, we believe that these are the candidates:

Conservative and Unionist Party – Ayesha Azad

Conservative and Unionist Party – Robert Alan Kwiatkowski

Green Party – Helen Kingstone

Green Party – Mahil Vasanth

Heritage Party – Tim Read

Labour Party – Sean O'Malley

Labour Party – Zamzam Ilyas

Liberal Democrats – Leslie Rice

Liberal Democrats – Dale Shaun Roberts

Reform UK – Gavin John Browning

Reform UK – Charles Thomas De Burgh Wilmot

EDITORIAL

How very different this feels from writing the editorial a few months ago! As I write this, the sun is shining, the birds are singing in the garden, laundry is drying on the line and I can hear children playing at the park. The sun is encouraging the trees to bud, the flowers to start thinking about blooming and it gives the ducks an opportunity to show off their ducklings! One of the nicest things about Brookwood is how many familiar faces you meet on a simple stroll from one end of the village to the other or down the canal. Spring draws everyone out at once – gardeners comparing notes, dog walkers swapping stories, neighbours pausing for a sunny chat. It's a gentle reminder that our village isn't just where we live; it's a community we step into every time we open the door, a community that supports and cares for each other, where everyone has a place. Here's to a summer filled with small kindnesses, shared moments, and the simple joy of being part of Brookwood.

Jackie Kenny – Editor

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HOLY TRINITY PRE-SCHOOL

Brookwood has a wonderful Pre-School right in the heart of the village based behind Woodhill Church. Holy Trinity Pre-School has been established for many years and has enriched the lives of many local children (and their parents!) and continues to provide wonderful opportunities for the children they look after.

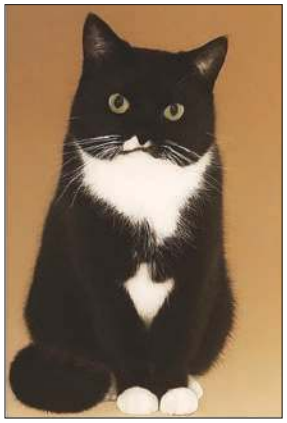
They offer childcare from 7.30am to 6.00pm and have been rated Good by Ofsted. If you are beginning to think about the next steps for your young children, Holy Trinity Pre-School has places available for September with both 15 and 30 hours of funding available.

If you fancy going to see what makes them so special, please drop Sarah an email (Sarahb@holytrinitypre-school.com).

MYSTERY OF MISSING MISCHIEF, A BROOKWOOD CHARACTER

Mischief the cat went missing from Heath Drive for 10 days in March. Those 10 days were full of people caring about his whereabouts, and amazing village support from neighbours, train station staff, even people we had not known before. Posters and leaflets were made and distributed, social media posts went up in any possible outlets, people were stopping by or calling, walking and looking, even at night (with head torches) encountering foxes instead of cats, letting us know of any black and white cats in the area, and then gradually sightings further afield. We followed every lead and were encouraged to keep looking by so many.

Mischief was finally found when military man Jack saw a poster by the school one evening, and we learned that Mischief was AWOL in the Pirbright military camp. He had been watched over. Within a few hours a search party was sent out within the camp, so the stowaway was extracted and handed over safely at the gates of the camp.



What a relief! We are grateful to each and all who played a part in solving the mystery. With thanks from Amanda and Hayley (Mischief's 'owners') and Ian and Alison (the cat's 'guardians').

BROOKWOOD SCOUTS: TROPHIES, TREKS, AND FROSTY ADVENTURES

It has been an action-packed few months for the Brookwood Scouts! From navigating the dark woods of Surrey to testing their endurance on lightweight hikes and braving the winter chill, our local troop has been incredibly busy. Here is a quick update on what our young people have been achieving lately.



Member of !st Brookwood Scout group at Frost Camp held at the end of January

Champions of the District Incident Night Hike

Back on Saturday 22nd November, our Scouts headed out to Wisley Common for the annual Scouts District Incident Night Hike. It was a fantastic, challenging event with 12 teams competing across 14 different incident bases in the dark.

We are absolutely thrilled to announce that Brookwood took home the victory with a comfortable lead! A massive thank you goes out to all the leaders, Explorers, and helpers who ran the bases, as well as the extended district team for organizing such a brilliant event.

Valiant Defence at the Lightweight Challenge

In March our Scouts were out again, this time in the Farnham area, defending our victory from last year in the District Lightweight Challenge.

The demanding event saw 15 Scout teams hiking approximately 20km over a day and a half, carrying their gear and cooking their own lightweight dinners and breakfasts on Trangia stoves out in the field. It was a fantastically close competition this year with an incredibly high standard across the board.

While 7th Woking Team narrowly pipped us to the post to take the trophy this time, Brookwood secured a very proud second place. Participating in this event contributes heavily to several Chief Scout Challenge awards – including the Adventure, Expedition, Outdoor, and Teamwork awards – so we are incredibly proud of the resilience and practical skills our Scouts demonstrated.

Braving the Elements at Frost Camp

At the end of January the troop wrapped up warm for Frost Camp. This winter camp is always a massive highlight for the Scouts, offering a brilliant mix of adrenaline-fuelled activities and classic camp traditions.

We like to vary the activities each year to keep things fresh, but this winter's campers were kept incredibly busy with an action-packed itinerary. Just a few of the adventures included:

High adrenaline – zip lining, tree climbing, the leap of faith, Jacob's ladder, and the gladiator challenge.

Tactical teamwork – laser clay pigeon shooting, Nerf wars, donning ghillie suits, the cave maze, and the night line.

Pure fun – pedal karts, aeroball, an adventure course, movie nights, and even a silent disco.

And, of course, no winter camp would be complete without everyone gathering around a roaring campfire to warm up at the end of the day.

We Need You!

Participating in these incredible events from night hikes on the common to massive winter camps takes a lot of behind-the-scenes magic. To keep providing these memorable adventures and teaching vital life skills to our local young people, we need your help.

Whether you can spare a few hours a month to help with admin, want to assist as a leader on camp trips, or have a specific skill you would like to share with the troop, we would love to welcome you. Volunteering with the Scouts is incredibly rewarding, a brilliant way to meet your neighbours, and quite a lot of fun, too. If you are interested in getting involved and supporting Brookwood Scouts, please reach out to us at gslbrookwood@gmail.com. We cannot do it without you!

UPDATE FROM COUNCILLOR LESLIE RICE

Woking's Planning Committee met recently to approve the outline planning permission for 58 new dwellings, including affordable housing. The plan includes the relocation of three Traveller Pitches, but no increase.

The land was removed from the Green Belt in 2019.

The Committee Chair commented that despite 48 invitations to residents to comment on the application, there was no response within the statutory period and only one comment on the day of the meeting.

WBC Enforcement continues at the Travellers' Site.

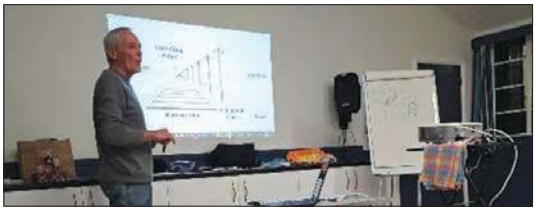
The allegedly unauthorised felling of trees in the woodland adjacent to the Travellers' Site is being investigated by the landowners, Surrey Wildlife Trust.

If any resident would like to ask a question at a meeting of WBC or its Executive, I should be happy to provide support for that.

Additionally, progress is being made on putting together a Request for Proposal for the Connaught Crescent play area.

Contact me at CllrLeslie.Rice@woking.gov.uk and 07932 700586 if you have any comments or questions.

BROOKWOOD WI



Brookwood WI held its April meeting on 21 April and had a very informative and interesting talk by local legend (although he denies it!) Neville. Neville has had a very successful teaching career in local schools and spent an entertaining evening with us exploring different drawing techniques and perspectives.
In usual Neville style we deviated many times but were amazed at what we could turn a line or a circle into. We all left feeling like we could actually draw!
If you would like to come along or are interested in joining, we meet on the third Tuesday of the month at 7.45pm in the Memorial Hall.

BROOKWOOD MEMORIAL HALL LOOKING FRESH AND READY FOR USE

We're delighted to share that the small hall at Brookwood Memorial Hall has recently been beautifully redecorated by Chameleon Decorators. Together with the floors having been resealed, the hall is now looking lovely and fresh and feels like a really welcoming space for our hirers.

Brookwood Memorial Halls continue to be a wonderful community resource, offering excellent spaces for parties, clubs and regular bookings. Whether you are planning a celebration, running a local group or looking for a venue for a regular activity, the halls provide a flexible and friendly setting for all sorts of occasions. Go to https://www.brookwoodmemorialhalls.org.uk/ to make a booking.



The halls are run by volunteers, and we are always keen to hear from anyone who may be interested in giving a little time to help. If you would like to join our committee and support this valuable village facility, we would be very pleased to welcome you (email Louise at management@bmhalls.org.uk).

ROYAL SHISH KEBAB & GRILL



East West, Brookwood has been serving Indian cuisine for a long time. In response to the current situation, we have introduced an additional kitchen under the name Royal Shish – Kebab & Grill. Our aim is to continue serving our local community with Indian curries while also offering authentic kebabs and grilled dishes.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to our valued local community for their support over the many years.

WOKING & SAM BEARE HOSPICE RIBBONS AND HEARTS WALK

The Ribbons and Hearts Walk returns to the beautiful grounds of Horsley Towers this year, offering a gentle 4-km family-friendly route through peaceful fields, woodland, and even the historic 100-metre underground tunnel, newly reopened after 40 years. Part of the Woking & Sam Beare Hospice Go Grab Life series, the event invites participants to remember loved ones by writing a message on a colourful ribbon and placing it, along with a handknitted heart, on the special Memory Tree. Each entry includes a Tshirt, ribbon, heart, and a packet of seeds to plant at home. The walk begins at 11am and is followed by the East Horsley Big Village Picnic, running until 5pm with refreshments, a beer tent, and children's activities. Adults £22, under-16s £12, under-5s go free; well-behaved dogs are welcome for £3. To take part, contact Kerry Gibb at k.gibb@wsbh.org.uk or 01483 881750 Ext 1801.

VOLUNTEER LOCK KEEPERS WANTED FOR THE BASINGSTOKE CANAL

The Basingstoke Canal Authority and the Basingstoke Canal Society are looking for volunteers to join a new team of lock keepers to help support boating on the canal this season.

Volunteers will work in pairs to welcome visitors, assist boats through the 17 locks at Brookwood and Deepcut, and help improve water management – an important part of keeping the canal navigable during the summer months. Full training is provided; you just need enthusiasm, good communication skills, and a reasonable level of fitness (expect around 7km of walking per shift).

Shifts will take place on Mondays, Wednesdays, or Fridays when boats are booked, with the aim of starting from late April.

Please contact jayne.raby@hants.gov.uk or ken.sankey@basingstoke-canal.org.uk if you'd like to get involved or find out more.





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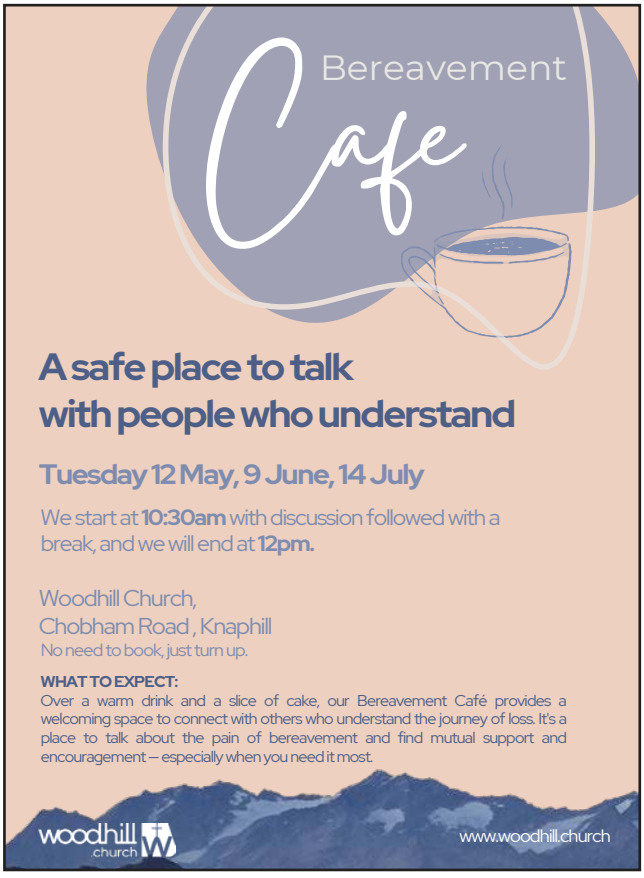
Personal Hygiene - washing, showering & dressing
Preparing food, changing bed linen, light housework & shopping
Going out to appointments, social visits or perhaps a walk
Prompting medication

Many other everyday tasks that you might find it increasingly difficult to keep up with.

VILLAGE DIARY DATES

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

Every Sunday	Evening Service, 6pm, Woodhill Church (Connaught Rd)
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 Rd)
Thursday 7 May	West Surrey Council elections
Saturday 9 May	Plant Sale, 11am to 2pm, Pirbright Church
Sunday 24 May	Memorial Day, Brookwood American Cemetery, 2pm



Would you like to advertise in the newsletter?

The cost of advertising is £35.00. 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 JUNE NEWSLETTER IS MIDDAY 20th MAY 2026 preferably by e-mail to community@brookwood.org.uk or telephone 01483 480273 or a note through the door of 78 Connaught Road.

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