BROOKWOOD NEWS

October 2026

BASINGSTOKE CANAL SOCIETY

It's been a beautiful long and hot summer on the Basingstoke Canal, for visitors, volunteers, boaters and wildlife too, all affected by the drought and scorching weather.



The Basingstoke Canal Authority (BCA) took early action this year and took preventative action to protect the water levels. We hope that the levels will increase soon with plenty of rain through the end of the summer and autumn, ensuring navigation can resume and wildlife can return and continue to thrive in the canal.

Earlier on in the year, we launched our volunteer lock keepers' scheme, an example of how our partnership has grown with the BCA. We all appreciate that the Basingstoke Canal is a wonderful stretch of water; however, the 28 double locks that you must climb through to the top of Deepcut can be a challenge, and this new initiative will help visitors through the 17 locks of the Brookwood and Deepcut flights.

We hope that this will in turn encourage more visiting boats onto the Basingstoke Canal, something we value as a society and love to see.



This year has also seen us celebrate our 60th anniversary in three different events, firstly in Woking, then Fleet, and most recently in Odiham where we enjoyed the Odiham Raft Race. If you also haven't had chance to take a look yet, we published a list of 60 things to do on the Basingstoke Canal to encourage people to step outside of their neighbourhood and explore a little further afield.

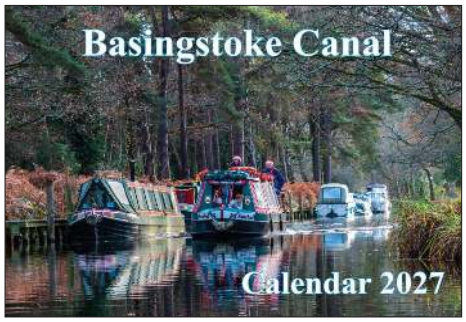
This November, as in previous years, we've partnered with will writers Kept Assets to help our members write new wills or review existing ones, free of charge. A gift in your will could help protect the Basingstoke Canal for many generations to come. As a charity we rely on donations from those who enjoy and value the Basingstoke Canal to help us continue to our work and campaign for its sustainable future. While this offer is without obligation, it also gives the opportunity to leave a gift in your will to help preserve the Basingstoke Canal for future generations. Gifts in wills can also be very tax efficient for the beneficiaries of the will.

If you do not currently have a will, Kept Assets will write a simple will for you free of charge. If you already have a will, Kept Assets will review your existing one free of charge. We will have appointments available on Thursday 19 November in Fleet.

To make an appointment for a no-obligation meeting, please contact our friendly volunteer Gren by email (gren.gale@basingstoke-canal.org.uk).

You can support the BCS by becoming a member for as little as £15 per year. What better way to feel good, to know you're supporting a local charity and the volunteer efforts of just over 300 volunteers! It's easy and quick to become a member online.

This year saw the launch of our Corporate membership. There is an opportunity for all sizes of company to join this membership scheme, with costs varying depending on the size of your organisation. To find out more, please email corporate-engagement@basingstoke-canal.org.uk or visit our website.



Last, but not least, our 2027 calendar is now available on our website. It's a beautiful selection of photos from all the competition entries this year. It will also be available to purchase at events over the Christmas period, but we'd recommend securing yours sooner rather than later (https://basingstoke-canal.org.uk/shop/).

EDITORIAL

As I write my editorial column for Brookwood News the village continues to be bathed in sunshine, and the usual hustle and bustle is evident everywhere!

Whilst the world continues to appear to be in a state of flux, there is much to continue to celebrate in our village and over in Pirbright and Knaphill. This issue for October features many of the amazing resources to keep everyone active in our community.

Thank you to all the many amazing contributors to this issue.

Richard Johnson – Editor

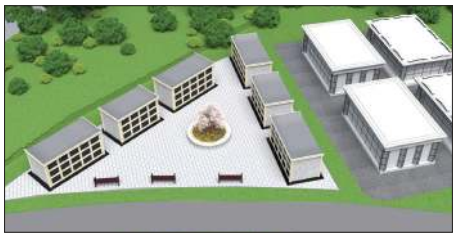
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BROOKWOOD CEMETERY



Work is due to begin on a new community mausoleum development at Brookwood Cemetery this autumn, and, looking a little further ahead, there will be a theatrical production bringing one of the Cemetery's most fascinating chapters of history back to life.

New community mausoleums

Brookwood Cemetery has announced plans for six new community mausoleum blocks, providing a further 84 chambers for above-ground interment. Work on the development, which will be situated alongside the existing community mausoleums, is expected to begin during October.

The Cemetery's first community mausoleums were built in 2008. Those original two blocks provided 98 chambers, while a further two Portland stone mausoleum blocks were completed in 2016, providing another 96. Both developments have now reached capacity.

Cemetery Manager Avril Kirby said the new development is intended to meet growing demand from families choosing above-ground interment. Brookwood Cemetery continues to offer a wide range of burial options, including woodland and natural burial, while serving people of all faiths and none.

A Computer-Generated Image supplied by Greenbridge Designs shows the proposed new blocks arranged around a landscaped paved area beside the existing mausoleums.

All aboard A Train to Woking



On Sunday 6 December, Brookwood Cemetery itself becomes the setting for an outdoor theatrical performance inspired by the extraordinary story of the London Necropolis Railway.

A Train to Woking, presented by Fleur de Lis Theatre, is a dramatic comedy exploring the 19th-century railway which transported the deceased from London to Brookwood. Through storytelling and physical theatre, the production revisits a period when London's overcrowded burial grounds could no longer cope with the city's growing population and Brookwood provided a radically different solution.

The travelling production, supported by South Western Railway, Brookwood Cemetery and Woking & Sam Beare Hospice, begins with performances at Waterloo and concludes, very appropriately, at Brookwood Cemetery. The Brookwood performance takes place on Sunday 6 December, with doors opening at 12 noon and the performance beginning at 1pm. Running time is approximately 75 minutes with no interval.

Fleur de Lis Theatre specialises in reimagining classical works and creating original productions based on history, using techniques including physical theatre, puppetry, stage combat, dance and stunts.

For a village so closely connected with both the Cemetery and the railway, A Train to Woking promises to be an intriguing way of experiencing a remarkable part of Brookwood's history in the very place where that story unfolded.

Further information about Brookwood Cemetery can be found at www.brookwoodcemetery.com, with ticket information for A Train to Woking available through the booking link supplied by the Cemetery.

A NIGHT OF LIVE MUSIC AT BROOKWOOD CLUB WITH GOLDSWORTH GERRY



Following a fantastic turnout for our end-of-summer BBQ, karaoke & disco in September, we've got more to look forward to at Brookwood Club this October.

On Saturday 17 October, we'll be welcoming popular local duo Goldsworth Gerry, live from 9pm. Expect a cracking mix of well-known pop, rock and indie favourites from across the decades, with songs from the likes of The Beatles, Fleetwood Mac, Bon Jovi, Oasis, A-ha, The Killers and plenty more.

So round up a few friends, grab a drink from the bar and come and enjoy a great night of live music right here in Brookwood. If you've never been into Brookwood Club before, why not pop in, meet a few local faces and see what the Club is all about? You can be assured of a warm welcome.

BROOKWOOD WI

Brookwood WI members were treated to a fascinating talk in our September meeting when we had a talk from author Louise Morrish about the women recruited during WW2 to act as Special Operations Executives. These women were recruited by the government to conduct espionage, sabotage and reconnaissance in German-occupied Europe, and to aid local resistance movements during World War II. We learnt about their training and the jobs they may have needed to cover. It's fair to say we were all in awe of these inspirational ladies, with us all agreeing that we would not have been brave enough to take on anything that these ladies did.

Our October meeting will be all about Christmas crafts. If you are interested in coming along to see what we are all about, we meet on the third Tuesday of the month in the small hall at 7.45pm.

FARNBOROUGH CRAFT GUILD – CRAFT SHOW

Farnborough Craft Guild will be holding a Craft Show at Lord Pirbright's Hall, on Saturday 10 October from 10am to 4pm. Come along and browse a wide selection of original handmade crafts produced by local craftspeople, including jewellery, pottery, fused glass, textiles, woodcraft, soaps, cards and much more. Admission and parking are free. A great opportunity to meet local makers and support local crafts.

LOCAL FOOTBALL CLUB GOES FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

Something special is happening at our local football club. With the adult men's team sitting second in the Combined Counties South league table, Knaphill FC looks set for an exciting season on the pitch. But perhaps more impressive is what's happening away from the 90 minutes.

The club has recently launched under-7s and under-8s teams, giving families in the community the opportunity to fall in love with the game, make new friends and learn what it means to be part of the team.

Alongside the younger players, the club also has a thriving vets team. A club for all ages, Knaphill FC has never been stronger during its 102-year history.

With attendances up by 60% this season, more people are discovering that Saturday afternoon at the football can be about far more than watching a match. It's about being part of something.

With backing from a range of sponsors in the local community, right the way across the Atlantic to our friends in Phoenix, Arizona, the club has built strong relationships to help us invest in the team.

At just £9 for adults, £5 for concessions and free for under 16s, come and give us a try and see what we're building. Fixtures are posted on our social media channels and we'd love to welcome as many of you as possible to Redding Way in the near future.

BROOKWOOD SCHOOL UPDATE

The new academic year is well under way at Brookwood Primary School and Nursery, and it has been wonderful to welcome both familiar and new faces back through our doors. The children have settled quickly into their classes and are already embracing the many opportunities that the year ahead will bring.

We are particularly proud to celebrate the first anniversary of our school-based nursery. Over the past year, the nursery has gone from strength to strength, providing high-quality early education and care for our youngest learners. It has been a pleasure to see the children thrive in a nurturing and engaging environment that helps build strong foundations for future learning.

As part of our continued development of the Early Years provision, we have made an exciting change to our outdoor learning areas this year. The Nursery and Reception outdoor spaces have been opened up to create a larger, shared Early Years Foundation Stage environment. The newly enhanced space includes a variety of learning zones that encourage exploration, creativity, physical development and collaborative play. It has been wonderful to see children aged two to five using the space together so successfully, developing friendships, confidence and independence as they learn alongside one another.

Families considering school places for September 2027 will soon have the opportunity to visit us. Tours for prospective Reception parents will begin later this month and continue weekly through to January. We warmly encourage interested families to come and see our school in action. Details of tour dates can be found on the school website, or by contacting the school office.

Looking ahead, staff and pupils are already busy planning an exciting year of events and opportunities. One highlight will be our participation in the Young Voices concert at the O2 Arena in January 2027. Young Voices is the world's largest children's choir event, bringing together thousands of pupils from across the country for a truly memorable musical experience. Our talented singers have already begun rehearsing enthusiastically at Choir Club each week and are looking forward to representing Brookwood on this incredible stage.

We are excited about the year ahead and look forward to sharing more news and successes with the local community throughout the coming months.

Wendy Thomas, Headteacher

BROOKWOOD MEMORIAL HALLS



The redecoration of our large hall and committee room is now complete, and they are looking better than ever. Please contact lettings@bmhalls.org.uk if you would like to book a regular letting or party.

Our annual Christmas trail planning has begun! We would love to have some more volunteers join us, to help spread the Christmas magic on Saturday 12 December. Please contact management@bmhalls.org.uk if you are interested in volunteering. Any help would be much appreciated!



OCTOBER ECO TIP: GIVE YOUR HOME AN ENERGY MOT

October is a good time to check how efficiently your home is using energy before the colder weather arrives. An energy audit can highlight where heat is being lost, whether your heating is working efficiently and where simple changes could reduce both your energy bills and carbon footprint.

You can do a free check online:

- GOV.UK Home Energy Check – personalised suggestions for saving energy (gov.uk – Improve energy efficiency)
- Energy Saving Trust – practical advice on heating, insulation and reducing energy use (Energy Saving Trust – Energy at Home)

Why not give your home an energy MOT this month? A few small changes could make a big difference.

Can you get up from a chair unassisted?

Can you get onto and off the floor?

Can you squat?

If you have answered **No** to these questions, you may want to consider

Pro-aging yoga

Yoga meets you wherever you are physically and mentally.
You work at your own pace, over time you will feel the benefits and your body will thank you for it!
No prior experience necessary.

We practise at the Brookwood Small Memorial Hall on Thursdays at 5.30pm
Contact Dorothy on **07714 018469** to book in or to discuss.

Independent Living for Older People in Pirbright Village






- Friendly home offering supported living for 9 independent older people
- Freshly cooked lunch and evening meals eaten together
- Pirbright Green, GP surgery, pubs & coffee shops within 400m
- Private single bed-sitting rooms with en-suite facilities
- Each with direct access to a secluded garden

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VOX CHOIR SAVED MY LIFE – FROM AN ANONYMOUS CONTRIBUTOR

If you'd told me a few years ago that I'd one day write about a choir feeling like family and saving my life, I wouldn't have believed you.

When I joined Vox Choir, I was at quite a low point in my life. I was immediately struck by how friendly and welcoming everyone was. The music, the laughter and the wonderful harmonies gave me something to look forward to, and I found myself gradually becoming part of this amazing group of people.

A few months later, my mental health took a turn and I was signed off work. I'm a private person, so I didn't tell people what was happening. Instead, I retreated to bed and missed many weeks of rehearsals. But the choir noticed I was gone. Members checked in on me regularly, and eventually I felt safe enough to share that I was struggling with depression. They offered friendship and practical help to get me back to rehearsals.

That might sound like a small thing, but it wasn't. At a time when I felt very alone, knowing that people noticed my absence, cared about me and wanted me back made a huge difference. Vox gave me a sense of belonging when I desperately needed one. When I returned to choir, it was magical. I cannot express what it felt like to realise that I was genuinely part of a family.

Since then, I've laughed, danced and even cried during rehearsals. There's no judgement. People care – truly care – about each other. Regardless of how I feel when I arrive at choir, I almost always leave feeling better. And that is why I say Vox Choir saved my life.

I'm not suggesting that singing is a replacement for professional mental health support. It isn't. But sometimes, when someone is struggling, it can be the human connection around them that makes all the difference. Having somewhere to go. Having people who notice when you're missing. Having a reason to get out of bed and something to look forward to.

For me, Vox Choir is that place. Vox Choir doesn't just give me music. It gives me connection, friendship, belonging and hope when I need



them most. I am really looking forward to the new term to start and would love to meet you there too!

Vox Choir meets in Fleet, Yateley and Brookwood, Woking. Visit www.voxskool.com for more information.

NEW BROOKWOOD PHYSIO

Clinton is new in the area and with 30 years of physiotherapy experience working in five different countries, he is now wanting to make a difference in this community and help fellow residents achieve their full functional health. Having been involved with many professional teams and individuals, his point of difference is that he is a very "hands-on" physio and yet he still has the cutting-edge equipment like shockwave therapy for effective treatment. He welcomes all residents, athletes, children, corporates and older people at extremely reasonable rates.

Brookwood PHYSIO

We bridge the gap between treatment, exercise and lifestyle in a fun, professional and welcoming environment with:

- Accurate **diagnostic** evaluation
- **Specialist** therapy consultations
- Cutting-edge **technology**
- Functional exercise **specific programs** targeted towards your goals
- **Advice** and education specific to your needs

With 30 yrs experience, Clinton has a very **hands-on approach** as this is essential in delivering the desired results. Full hour sessions at just £60.

We use all Physio modalities as well as **Shockwave therapy** for chronic tendon and calcification injuries

- **Spinal, Joint & Soft Tissue treatment**
- **Full-Maintenance sessions**
- **Home Visits**





Brookwood Physio WhatsApp business account

Scan for Appointment or Enquiries

17 Connaught rd, Brookwood, Woking,Surrey, GU240ES

07375517590

info@brookwoodphysio.co.uk

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 during term time	Brookwood Babies and Toddlers' Playgroup, 9.45am, Brookwood Memorial Hall
Every Tuesday	Pop-up Coffee, 2.30 to 4.30pm, Woodhill Church (Connaught Road)
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)
Every first Sunday	Friends of Brentmoor Heath, 10am to 12pm, Brentmoor Heath & Folly Bog nature reserves
Saturday 10 October	Farnborough Craft Guild Craft Show, 10am to 4pm, Lord Pirbright's Hall
Saturday 17 October	Live band Goldsworth Gerry, from 9pm, Brookwood Club
Sunday 6 December	A Train to Woking, Brookwood Cemetery, doors opening at 12 noon and the performance beginning at 1pm.

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 NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER IS MIDDAY 20th OCTOBER 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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