January 2024

BASINGA

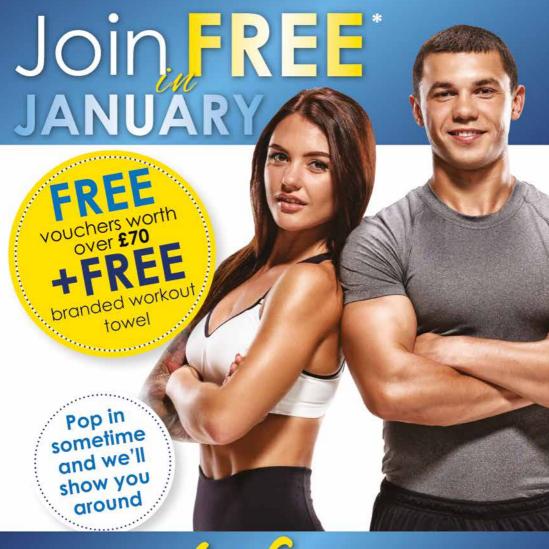


Terry MacAnish





Old Basing and Lychpit Parish Magazine www.basinga.org.uk



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JANUARY COVER PHOTO, NOTES AND NEWS

This month's **cover photograph** is of a group of hungry **Goldfinches** on a bird feeder, by **Terry MacAnish**.

I would like to wish all our readers a **Very Happy New Year**, and what a way for the Basinga to start 2024 with the news below!

NATIONAL PARISH MAGAZINE AWARDS 2023

The **National Parish Magazine Awards** is a 'free to enter' award scheme for editors and their fellow volunteers all over the country who devote an enormous amount of time and effort free of charge to producing parish magazines that service their communities every month of the year.

It is the aim of the scheme to give magazine editors recognition for the service they provide, which so often goes un-rewarded, and perhaps give an incentive to those who are considering joining their ranks in future.

The **results** of the **2023 National Parish Magazine Awards** have recently been finalised. The awards have been divided up into five categories:

BEST DESIGN – Focuses on any artwork within the magazine, page layout and use of graphics.

BEST CONTENT – The variety of articles, use of photos and general information included.

BEST EDITOR – Order of content, variety, accuracy and interest value.

BEST PRINT – Quality of printing and finishing of the magazine.

BEST OVERALL MAGAZINE – A general overview of all the above categories.

Certificates are presented to each category winner.

For the year 2023, out of nearly 450 entries, the Basinga, I am very pleased to announce, achieved fourth place over-all in the A5 Magazine Category and WINNER of the Best Editor Category.

THE COMPLETE LIST OF RESULTS IN THE A5 MAGAZINE CATEGORY

1ST PLACE AND BEST OVERALL MAGAZINE AWARD

The Parish Magazine of Wargrave with Knowl Hill (Berkshire)

2ND PLACE AND BEST DESIGN AWARD

Yealmpton Press (Devon)

3RD PLACE AND BEST PRINT AWARD

News & Views, Caythorpe & Surrounding Villages (Lincolnshire)

4TH PLACE AND BEST EDITOR AWARD

Basinga, Old Basing and Lychpit (Hampshire)

5TH PLACE AND BEST CONTENT AWARD

Parish News, Sampford Peverell & Uplowman (Devon)

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the wonderful articles and photos our contributors send us on a regular, or occasional, basis. We thank you all, and do hope you will continue to provide us with interesting, local stories and images.

Colin Follett and Lyn Caswell (Co-Editors)

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BASINGA

We welcome both regular and occasional items for the Basinga. The very last date for copy to the Editor for the February edition is 6pm on Wedneday, 10th January. Please use the forms on the Basinga website www.basinga.org.uk to get your dates, articles and letters to us (see box on page 15 for further instructions).

All advertising enquiries – classified, free adverts or inserts (flyers) can also be made via the website. Don't forget that we only accept articles with about a 300-word maximum and articles are only published at the Editor's discretion.

PHOTOS AND LOGOS FOR THE BASINGA

If any reader would like to offer a **photograph of the village environment** we would be happy to receive them, either for immediate use or to build up a portfolio of 'village views'. We now have a web form that you can use to send a photograph for the website archive and possible use in the magazine, go to **www.basinga.org.uk** and the form can be found on the **'Contributors Submission'** menu. Should you wish to submit multiple photos, or a photo is too 'large', they can be emailed directly to the **Editor** at **editor@basinga.org.uk**

This feature should **NOT** be used for Free Ads or article photos, which can be attached to their own forms. We welcome **club** and **society logos**, with the option to use them within articles. Please send graphics to **editor@basinga.org.uk**

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S PANTOMIME - DICK WHITTINGTON

The **Friends of St Mary's pantomime**, *Dick Whittington*, returned in December, after its Covid mothballing! The script was written by Rowena Hackett, Rosemary Kershaw and Tim Shaw. This is the story:

Wandering Minstrel (Steve Donnelly) welcomes us and then Narrator (Joan Cole) tells the tale. Appropriate music, from cries of Old London to sea shanties, from Music Director (Stuart Hicken) and the Basing Singers accompany the events. Dick Whittington (Kerry-Ann Chamberlain) leaves Old Basing for London where his opposition to the crooked Lord Mayor (Alan Turton) impresses Fitzwarren (Nick Harris), a wealthy merchant and his wife (Kate O'Neill), and he joins his household.

Fitzwarren's business, the Crispy Crust Café is run by Mme Cholet (Ian May-Miller) and Sous Chef Susie (Kate Medhurst) and impeded by Idle Jack (Ali Smee). The Mayor's officials Dot It (Katie Heydon) and Cross It (Fiona Wright) threaten the café with closure and Dick befriends Tabby (Susan Webb), leader of some delightful street cats (Charlie O'Neill, Jess Croxon and Lottie Jarrett). He soon falls in love with Fitzwarren's daughter, Alice (Harriet Brannam), but King Rat (Tim Shaw), the corrupt Mayor's henchman, frames Dick, who is exiled.

After many adventures at sea, and an encounter with desperate pirates, captained by Steve Donnelly in another hat, Dick is wrecked on the Isle of Wight, suffering at that time from a plague of rats (mischievously played by Evelyn Hilton, Scarlett Hanvey Meyer, Poppy Ramsden, Millie Rudman and Ellie Taylor under evil King Rat). Dick and Tabby eliminate those rats and, rewarded with riches, return to London where King Rat's lies are exposed, the Mayor is thrown out and Dick becomes Lord Mayor and marries Alice.



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PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Councillors and staff hope you had a wonderful Christmas and wish all readers a Happy and prosperous New Year.

Below is a schedule of Parish Council meetings for 2024.

Meetings take place on **Tuesday evenings** starting at **7.30pm** at **The Pavilion**, **The Recreation Ground**, **Old Basing**, and are open to the public with time allocated for any member of the public present to address the meeting. If you wish to attend but have difficulty with stairs, please let us know (preferably no later than 11am on the day) to ensure the meeting takes place in a ground-floor room. Agendas are published in advance on the Parish Council website and notice boards. Meetings may be cancelled if there are no items for discussion.

FULL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

9th January, 6th February, 5th March, 2nd April, 7th May (Annual Parish Council Meeting), 4th June, 2nd July, 6th August, 3rd September, 1st October, 5th November, 3rd December.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

16th January, 20th February, 26th March, 23rd April, 21st May, 18th June, 23rd July, 20th August, 24th September, 22nd October, 19th November, 17th December.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

23rd January, 19th March, 14th May, 9th July, 10th September, 12th November.

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

20th February, 16th July, 15th October.

The **Annual Parish Council Meeting** on **7th May** is when the Parish Council elects a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the year ahead, Committee members determined and Policies and Procedures are reviewed.

The **Annual Parish Meeting** will take place on **28th May**. This is a public meeting which usually includes a speaker and light refreshments. Details of the speaker and venue will be published nearer the date.

Parish Clerk: Mrs Sandra Tuck Deputy Clerk: Mrs Kate Hope

Address: The Pavilion, Recreation Ground, The Street,

Old Basing, RG24 7DA Telephone: 01256 462847

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CHANGES TO BIN COLLECTIONS OVER THE FESTIVE PERIOD

Residents across Basingstoke and Deane and Hart are being reminded that there will be changes to bin collection days over the festive period. Waste and recycling collection days will change for three weeks with no collections taking place on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Unless adverse weather affects bin rounds, collections will return to normal from Monday, 15th January. The crews will take extra rubbish sacks on the first collection after Christmas only and as usual they will pick up extra recycling too.

NORMAL COLLECTION DATE

Monday, 25th December
Tuesday, 26th December
Wednesday, 27th December
Thursday 28 December
Friday, 29th December
Monday, 1st January
Tuesday, 2nd January
Wednesday, 3rdJanuary
Thursday, 4th January
Friday, 5th January
Monday, 8th January
Tuesday, 9th January
Wednesday 10th January
Thursday, 11th January

Friday, 12th January

FESTIVE COLLECTION DATE

Wednesday, 27th December
Thursday, 28th December
Friday, 29th December
Saturday, 30th December
Tuesday, 2nd January
Wednesday, 3rd January
Thursday, 4th January
Friday, 5th January
Saturday, 6th January
Monday, 8th January
Tuesday, 9th January
Wednesday, 10th January
Thursday, 11th January
Friday, 12th January
Saturday, 13th January

There is no limit on the amount residents can recycle and any extra recycling that cannot fit in the recycling bin can be put into clear sacks next to it for collection. In dry weather, residents can leave large, flattened, cardboard boxes (maximum 1m x 1m) next to their recycling bin but the polystyrene and plastic packaging must be removed.

There are lots of other items that can be recycled during the festive season and all year-round including paper, cardboard and magazines, food tins including biscuit and sweet tins, drinks cans, aerosols and plastic bottles. Brown wrapping paper with any ribbons removed can be recycled. All other Christmas wrapping paper cannot and needs to go into the waste bin. Christmas cards can be recycled but only if they do not contain glitter, ribbons or bows. Garden waste collections will take a two-week break as usual, stopping after Friday, 22nd December, and restarting from Monday, 8th January in Basingstoke and the following week in Hart. Unlike waste and recycling there are no changes to residents' collection days. Garden waste customers can leave their real Christmas trees out for collection in the new year, although trees over six feet tall should be cut in half and all decorations removed. Residents across both Basingstoke and Deane and Hart can also take their real Christmas trees to collection points in their areas.

There is more information on festive bin collections on the councils' websites at www. basingstoke.gov.uk/festive-bin-collections-2023 or www.hart.gov.uk/waste-recycling

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OLD BASING WI



Old Basing WI has been very busy leading up to Hampshire Christmas. Fifteen members visited the Houses of Parliament at the invitation of our MP. We had a very informative tour of the building and an

explanation of the traditions and the history behind it and we got to see the famous painting of the Siege of Basing House. Some members stayed to see David Cameron give his maiden speech in the House of Lords whilst others listened to a debate in the Commons.

Our next big event was at the two-day Basing House Christmas Fayre. I would like to thank all our members who crafted, baked, donated and helped on the day. Without you it would not have been such a success. We actually sold out of cakes on the Saturday and some of our ladies spent Saturday evening baking even more to sell on the Sunday! We met up later in **December** for our annual **Christmas lunch** at Avenue Nurseries and also took part in the Christmas Tree Festival at St Mary's Church.

Our January meeting takes place on Tuesday, 2nd, January, at 7.30pm at the St Mary's Parish Room when we will be debating the NFWI proposed resolutions for 2024. There will be no competition or raffle this evening. Later in the month we will be having an evening meal at Bartons Mill and in March we will be celebrating our 105th Birthday.

All are welcome. If you would like to join our long-running and thriving group, come along or contact our President, Sue Stewart, email oldbasingpres@hampshirewi.org.uk

THE IVY CLUB

We saw 2023 out with a bang, celebrating our Christmas Party, with food, wine and entertainment. We had a fantastic raffle and our thanks go to Olivers Fish and Chips, M&S, All Aspects Letting Agency, The Co-Op, Martins VW Garage and not forgetting Tesco for their support. We are closed until Wednesay, 3rd January, when we welcome our members back with an afternoon of bingo. We have exciting ideas and events for next year, why not join us? We meet every Wednesday at the RBL Hall from 1.30 to 4pm, cost £2. There are refreshments and raffle, the only thing we ask is you bring your own mug.

Sue Wilson (Chairman)

CHRISTMAS AT THE COURTYARD, LYCHPIT

On Thursday, 7th December, a wet and windy evening, we hosted our first Christmas at the Courtyard, Lychpit. We were treated to a superb programme of Christmas carols from the school orchestra at St Mary's Junior School who were accompanied at times by the parents band. Basingstoke Male Voice Choir sang some festive songs and Christmas carols to end the evening. Plenty of mulled wine, kindly donated by councillor Elaine Still, and hot chocolate was served, we even had a visit from Father Christmas who gave out chocolates and sweets. Delicious mince pies were served by a local outlet. There was a raffle and tombola to try everyone's luck. Thanks to all who supported the event and the volunteers who made it possible for us to put on this free community event. Please join us next year for a grander affair on Sunday, 1st December, 2024.

Friends of Lychpit Hall, Lychpit Community Residents Association (LCRA)

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ADVERTISERS NEWS

Welcome to The Frame Gallery on page 9, Hackwood Marketing on page 9 and Industrialware Carpentry & Joinery on page 12.

We ask for submissions to the magazine and website to be made via www.basinga.org.uk using the web forms:

Selection for Articles/Letters and Diary Dates will be found on the "Submissions" drop down and for Free Ads and Concession/Poster Ads on the "Advertise with us" drop down. Paid advertising enquiries can also be made from the same dropdown menu.

Submissions made via the forms now provide a common input for both the magazine and website and are automatically routed to the member of the team responsible for processing them. All submissions must be received by the 10th of the month (6th in December) previous to the magazine issue month.

If you have trouble finding the forms, you can of course contact us and we will advise.

Our Privacy Policy is available to read on the website which includes the GDPR requirements for publishing photographs.

Contacts for general enquiries and assistance:

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All Advertisements in the magazine and website are inserted in good faith and the Basinga Management Committee accepts no responsibility for any statement, omission or errors made by the advertisers; nor endorses the products or services advertised. The views and opinions expressed in the Basinga are those of the organisations, individuals and authors concerned and not necessarily those of the Basinga Management Committee.

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FREE ADS - BUY AND SELL

Note: All ads are processed in received date order. Ads not included this month will be entered in the next issue, space permitting. If you do not want your ad to appear later, contact the Advertising Manager (see page 42 for contact details). Ads also appear on the website: www.basinga.org.uk (with photographs if available).

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Halfords "commuter" cycle helmet. Brand new, unused and in the box but the box is a little tatty. Size medium which is an adjustable 54 to 58cms

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The Ploughman's Lunch, in the Parish Room, St Mary's Church, is on Thursday, 18th January, at 12.25pm. Book in advance (Tel. 07946 596778) as numbers are limited.

HIS MAJESTY'S ROYAL MARINES AT THE ANVIL

Basingstoke Deane Rotary present His Majesty's Royal Marines at The Anvil on Sunday, 4th February, at 3pm. The majestic full concert Band of His Majesty's Royal Marines, the Corps of Drums and everyone's favourites, our very special guests, The Chelsea Pensioners, will again make this a fantastic event. So much more than just a military band! Tickets on sale from Anvil Box Office.

MENCAP CHARITY DINNER AND QUIZ NIGHT

Fundraising-event to make a difference to the lives of people with a learning disability takes place at **The Restaurant, Basingstoke College of Technology**, Basingstoke RG21 8TN, **Thursday**, **1st February**, at **7pm** (doors open from 6pm).

A fun-filled evening, delicious food and brain-teasing questions. Welcome drink on arrival. Price £28.50 per person for a two-course dinner. Up to six in a quiz team. Guest speakers, a bar, raffle and a prize. For more information and tickets visit www.CharityDinnerQuiz-01Feb24.eventbrite.co.uk

BASINGA ADVERTISERS

The Basinga magazine is distributed free of charge to over three thousand households and premises in the Old Basing and Lychpit area, and a growing number of web 'browsers'.

The magazine is produced and distributed by teams of volunteers. While our printing costs are covered by paid adverts from local businesses, without the income from adverts we would not be able to function and our readership's support for our advertisers is crucial in maintaining this magazine.

When you are looking for a plumber, electrician, roofer, builder or anyone/anything else, please look in the Basinga first. Our advertisers are well-established and most of them have been with us for a long time, reliable and would welcome your custom.

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Managing someone else's affairs can mean a number of things, including:

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Are unable to make decisions for themselves, because of mental illness or other reasons

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OLD BASING AND LYCHPIT GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Old Basing And Lychpit Good Neighbours are glad we have been of service to the residents of Old Basing and Lychpit and we thank your service users for their most generous donations, which in turn has enabled us to donate to various organisations in the village. We look forward to being of service to you in 2024 and wish you a happy and healthy new year. Don't forget we are here to help, just phone **0333 044 0116**.

Sue Wilson (Chairman)

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A reminder of our opening dates for the next few months (we are **opening monthly** for **January** and **February**, returning to **weekly** dates in **March**), **Fridays 2 to 4pm.**

- 12th January
- 2nd February
- 1st March
- 8th March
- 15th March
- 22nd March

As you know, here at the Village Café, we like to raise funds for local projects and support the community as much as we can. For the past few months, we have been raising money for St Mary's Junior School to enable them to repurpose one of their existing rooms and refurbish this to provide a sensory room. This will be a safe space for children to use when they are in crisis or feel heightened and we are extremely proud to be able to help. Thanks to the fabulous support of our customers, we have been able to raise the required funding and I'm sure that, once the space is completed, it will make a huge difference to many children.

It is always incredibly fulfilling to all of us at the café that we are able to achieve our fundraising goals and make a difference which is down to all of you who come along and continue to support us: a heartfelt thank you from us all.

We have been lucky to have a few new volunteers join our team recently and it's fabulous to have these lovely ladies on board, I'm sure you will get to meet them on your visits to see us. We are always grateful to any who wish to volunteer and join our team so please do contact us if you have any spare time on a Friday afternoon or love to bake. you would be very welcome.

We look forward to welcoming you all back to the café after our festive break and continuing to support local projects. It's a real pleasure for all of our team to be able to make a difference and help all sectors of the community.

Deborah Thorne

OLD BASING METHODIST CHURCH

During **January** are **Morning Worship** as usual at **10.30am**, all are welcome.

Services are followed by tea and coffee over a chat.

EVENTS FOR JANUARY

Wednesday, 10th (noon to 3pm)

Tuesday, 16th (noon to 3pm)

Tuesday, 23rd (11.30am to 1pm)

MHA lunch for members

Church belated-Christmas lunch

Cameo' bring along your crafts to do and

share an interest.

A light sandwich lunch will be served.

ST MARY'S CHURCH CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Thank you to everyone who joined us at St Mary's 'The Holly & The Ivy' – Environmentally Friendly Christmas Tree Festival and to all our amazing volunteers.



The Friday night sing-along was enjoyed by all with a mix of classic Christmas tunes and funny tales from our compère Jo Jarrett-Kerr, accompanied by Paul and Marilyn Wright. It was wonderful to see and hear everyone contributing to the joyous atmosphere of the event. The festive fayre, complemented by the stunning array of Christmas trees, created a weekend that will linger in our memories. It was a blend of festive delights and captivating displays that truly made the event unforgettable.

We are pleased to say that 'Holly and Ivy' by St Mary's CE Junior School (see left) was voted most eco-friendly tree by the Churchyard Conservation Group. They had a real tree which is going to be planted in the school woodland area. All their decorations were made from recycled materials and they had even used an old, ripped school jumper to make some of the decorations.

The visitors' favourite tree was the stunning 'Madame Le Houx Du Lierre' by the Jarrett Family (see right).

A special shoutout goes to the businesses that generously supported our raffle this year: The Crown, Olivers Fish and Chips, The Street Bakeshop and The Hatch. Also thank you to the school choirs from both Old Basing Infants School and St Mary's CE Junior School and the Royal British Legion Corps of Drum who kept us entertained. Your support made a significant difference!

We look forward to welcoming you all at the Flower Festival over the weekend of 21st and-23rd June. Please save the date for this popular event.



Julia Wright

ST MARY'S CHURCH

REGULAR SERVICES

Sunday	8am	BCP Communion
	9.30am	Sung Eucharist
Monday	8:45am	Morning Prayer
Wednesday	10am	Holy Communion
Thursday	8.45am	Morning Prayer
Friday	8.45am	Morning Prayer





All are welcome to join us – please just come along. If you'd like to join the **9.30am Sunday service** from home, you can do so via **St Mary's Facebook page**. You can keep up-to-date with services and events both via our **Facebook page** and by visiting our website **www.stmarysoldbasing.org.uk**

BASINGSTOKE FOODBANK AND PET FOODBANK

A huge thank you to everyone who is supporting the **Foodbank** at this time. A reminder that we have a collection point outside the church, or please drop items off to the Co-op on Linden Avenue or Tesco at Chineham. For a list of items that are in particular short supply please visit **www.basingstoke.foodbank.org.uk**

We are also taking in donations of pet food/items on behalf of **Helping Dogs & Cats Rescue UK**, based in Basingstoke. There is a separate box where donations can be left.

WEDDINGS AND BAPTISMS AT ST MARY'S

Did you know that if you live in the parish of Old Basing and Lychpit, or have a strong link to the parish (what we call a 'qualifying connection') you may be able to marry at St Mary's. Please do get in touch if you'd like to explore the possibility of having your wedding at St Mary's. We also welcome all baptism enquiries.

PASTORAL SUPPORT

If you would like **pastoral support** please contact **Rev'd Jo** on **01256 363612**, email **vicar@stmarysoldbasing.org.uk** or contact **Debbie**, St Mary's Administrator, telephone: **07541 698235** or email **admin@stmarysoldbasing.org.uk**

HALL FOR HIRE

The **Parish Room** at St Mary's Church, including the kitchen, is available for hire. There is availability for both regular bookings and one-off bookings. All enquiries to **Debbie** (see above).

WEEKLY BULLETIN

Every week we send out a **bulletin**, with information about what is happening at the church. If you'd like to be added to our distribution list please contact **Debbie** (see above). We are also able to hand deliver bulletins to those without internet access.

CHURCHYARD CONSERVATION GROUP (PIOCC)



Happy New Year! We hope you enjoyed St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival (see page 22)last month and took the opportunity to visit the Conservation Area and the seasonal trail.

This month's working parties will be on Saturday, 6th January, at 10am – meet by the PIOCC noticeboard at the entrance to the Conservation Area. We will continue our seasonal conservation

work and woodland management. On **Thursday, 18th January** (the **third Thursday of the month**), **at 2pm** we will meet by the shed as we plan to help Rev Jo tidy up some of the wilder areas in the Vicarage garden, once again to encourage the wildflowers and help the wildlife. Everyone is welcome. We look forward to seeing our regular volunteers and also new participants.

Churchyard Conservation is a community project, not just for churchgoers, so please come along. Just turn up in gardening clothes and bring gloves. The tools are provided. Our **Saturday morning** sessions last about **three hours** (with a coffee break and chance to relax in the warm). Perhaps your New Year resolution could be to join us; we'd love to to see you.

The 2024 Big Garden Birdwatch is from Friday, 26th to Sunday 28th January. We will be surveying the Churchyard's Conservation Area on Saturday, 27th January (8.30 to 9.30am). All welcome to help us find as many birds as possible.

FLOWER ARRANGERS NEEDED FOR 2024

If you have a creative streak, or just love flowers, do consider joining **St Mary's Church Flower Arrangers**. We are a very friendly group of about 15 people and will welcome you. No previous training is needed, but guidance will be given if requested.



We each do about six or seven arrangements a year and there are five arrangements in the church at any one time.

Our next rota will be distributed before Easter 2024 but we would love to hear from you as soon as possible.

If you're interested, please contact **Debbie Filer** (Church Administrator) – either email: admin@stmarysoldbasing.org.uk or tel. **07541 698235.**

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ST MARY'S CE SCHOOL

Happy New Year! As we all make our New Year's resolutions and celebrate a new beginning for learning and having fun for another year, St Mary's CE Junior School welcomes you to 2024!

This term, the **Year 6** pupils will continue to widen their knowledge through their topic 'Let Me Entertain You – How has entertainment changed across the years?' As part of this topic they will be studying the work of William Shakespeare.

The **Year 3s** are also working hard, learning about various authors and genres through the topic 'Enter the Classics'. They are looking forward to putting on play at the end of this half term.

Year 4's topic this term is based on a local Geography study and they will enjoy finding out more about the physical and human geography of the local area.

Finally, the **Year 5** children are enjoying learning more about Ancient Greece through their topic 'What did the Ancient Greeks ever do for us?'

Junior and **senior choir** are starting to learn lots of different songs now that all of the Christmas concerts are over.

We are looking forward to lots of trips, sharing assemblies, sporting events and many more fun things at school this term.

We wish everyone in Old Basing and Lychpit a happy and healthy New Year.

Leon, Abi, Scarlett and Aidan (Year 6, St Mary's CE Junior School)

OLD BASING SCOUTS

Well, 2024 is here and the **Old Basing Scouts** are looking forward to a year of brand new adventures. However, the new year is not all that Old Basing Scouts are welcoming.

Just before Christmas we held our first taster session for Squirrels.

Squirrels is a brand new section at Old Basing Scouts for 4 to 5 year olds that is opening for the first time this year. The Squirrels can look forward to adventures in the future including exploring the outdoors, becoming super chefs and playing lots of games. Everyone at Old Basing Scouts is excited to welcome in our brand new Squirrels so that they can join in the fun.

Our **Beavers**, **Cubs** and **Scouts** are also looking forward to some amazing opportunities this year. The **Beavers** will be joining with other Beavers from across the district in a few weeks to go around the world in 80 minutes to experience and learn about other cultures. Our **Cubs** are looking forward to continuing to develop skills for life whilst having fun during their Cub meetings. Finally, the **Scouts** will be busy preparing for lots of different camping opportunities coming up in the next year.

We are always looking for new people to join in the fun!

If you're interested or want more information, then please contact us by email **group@** oldbasingscouts.org.uk

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- Visit the walled garden and learn about fascinating history in the museum
- Walk your dog, let the kids adventure outdoors and find a picnic spot to enjoy the views



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hampshireculture.org.uk/basing-house

LINGUATASTIC LANGUAGE SCHOOL



How did you see in the New Year? Did it involve throwing old plates at menus doors. The throwing of dishes symbolises friendship and the sending of good luck! So maybe you wish you had

woken up to a large heap of broken crockery on your front doorstep?!

On the other hand, some say "you make your own luck". Indeed, as it's a new year and time to think about what changes we would like to make in our lives, maybe one of your New Year's resolutions will be to learn another language? Or improve on a language you already know?

A study conducted by the European Commission a few years ago, found only 39% in the UK – a quarter of whom are native speakers of other languages – can, in practice, have a conversation in a foreign language. This compares to an EU average of 54%. There are 14% in the UK who can speak two languages other than their own, compared with 25% across the EU. So, if you'd like to improve our "performance" in languages against other European countries, whilst of course also socialising and improving your health (yes, there is also research on the benefits to the brain of knowing/learning another language), get yourself registered with us! Linguatastic offers evening classes for adults in a variety of languages, at a variety of levels from complete beginner to advanced conversational practise.

If now doesn't suit you, but you have a child you would like to offer the opportunity of language learning to, then please do contact us about our sessions. We have groups for children from as young as 18 months and as old as secondary school pupils about to sit their GCSEs. For further information, please email info@linguatastic.com or telephone 01256 471474

OLD BASING BOOK EXCHANGE'S LATEST FAN



They are perhaps one of the most iconic features of Britain, but with most people having mobile phones, the need for the classic red telephone box diminished. Many of these kiosks, such as the one on Old Basing Recreation Ground have been repurposed.

The Old Basing Book Exchange (see left) opened in 2018. One of it's youngest users must be Lauren (see right), aged just two and half. The book she chose must make her one of Richard Osman's youngest fans!





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THE MILL FIELD CONSERVATION GROUP

Happy New Year! Why not have a break from weekend chores for a couple of hours and, instead, try your hand at conservation work at your local nature reserve, **Mill Field**, on **Saturday**, **20th January**? This month we will be fixing the paling fence and clearing scrub by the top path.

No special skills are required, but volunteers are asked to bring their own gardening type gloves and wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Tools will be provided as well as refreshments. We will meet at the paling fence, next to the top path opposite the entrance from Feld Way/Bartons Lane corner of the field at **10am** and work for about **two hours**.

The last work party of the year was held on **Sunday**, **3rd December**. This session was, as always very productive. It is always satisfying to see how much can be accomplished in a couple of hours.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR THIS MONTH

Mill Field 🔩

Conservation

Group

If you are out walking the dogs at dusk you may see Linnets, Reed Bunting and Yellow Hammer going to roost most nights. Redwing, Fieldfare will be shifting round with the chance of a Water Rail, Snipe or Jack Snipe or maybe a Bittern or Waxwing if the weather becomes harsher. Siskins and Lesser Redpoll can be seen along the wood edge and flocks of Long tailed Tit will be moving through the field mixed with the occasional Chiffchaff or Goldcrest.

Email: millfieldnature@gmail.com Facebook: Mill Field Conservation Group

BASINGSTOKE LOCAL RSPB GROUP



Basingstoke Local RSPB Group are delighted to welcome Dr Bob Gibbons again. This time to entertain us with his talk on "Birds in Flight: Stories, Humour, Science and World Class Photography. It takes place on Wednesday, 17th January, at 7.45pm, in The Barn, Church Cottage, St Michael's, Basingstoke.

To those more familiar with his wonderful flower photography (see an example of his work, above), this talk will be a departure from his usual subjects. It is, however, every bit as spectacular and entertaining. All visitors are welcome. There is a charge of £3.50 for non-members covering tea/coffee.

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WINTER SLEEPERS – THE HIBERNATING HABITS OF EUROPEAN HEDGEHOGS, BATS AND HAZEL DORMICE

As the temperature drops for winter you may have observed a change in local wildlife as species adapt to cope with the colder weather. Some species will avoid the unfavourable conditions through migration and others grow thicker winter coats, but a handful of Britain's wildlife will tough out the cold weather through hibernation.

Hibernation is a process of a prolonged period of inactivity that allows animals to survive when food is scarce and the weather is harsh. To prepare for hibernation animals will build up a reserve of body fat by eating as much as possible in the lead up to winter, before retreating to somewhere safe where they will enter a torpid state. Once settled, almost all of the animal's bodily functions will either completely stop or slow down significantly, the body temperature will cool, and breathing and heart rate will slow down. For example, a bat's heart rate will slow to an astonishing four beats per minute but can reach 1,000 bpm when flying. This reduces the amount of energy its body must burn to survive.

There are only three UK mammals that truly hibernate: **bats**, **Hazel dormice** and **European hedgehogs**.



Dormice and hedgehogs hibernate right through the winter by developing enough brown body fat (fat reserves they can utilize during prolonged periods of sleep), which they build up by eating fat and sugarrich foods. In some cases, they can increase their own body weight by over 30%.

As omnivores (an animal which eats both plant and animals) hedgehogs are not picky eaters. These iconic creatures will feast on anything from fruit

and insects to beetles and frogs, and will reach a weight of 500 to 700 grams. Hedgehogs are also not fussy when deciding where they will overwinter. Some will build their own nest from dead leaves and twigs, whilst others will happily take shelter under a pile of logs, your compost heap or under a garden shed. Be careful when moving piles of leaves or wood over the winter as there may be a hibernating hedgehog underneath.

In woodlands, dormice gorge on a menu of nuts, seeds and berries, building up vital energy reserves. Dormice construct insulated nests hidden in hedgerows and thickets, where they retreat for hibernation (see photo above of a hibernating Hazel dormouse (c) Danny Green).

During autumn, **bats** are especially active in hunting and finding a place to overwinter. Bats are unable to dig or build their shelters so have to look for the right spot. They like to roost in veteran trees that are hollow as well as man-made structures. You might find them wedged into holes in an old brick wall or in the roof of your house, but old barns and abandoned buildings are also favoured spots.

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OLD BASING ROYAL BRITISH LEGION





The Old Basing Royal British Legion Branch Meeting takes place on Thursday, 4th January (7.45pm for 8pm start), in the Jack Morris Hall

Rick Bourne

NATIONAL WOMEN'S REGISTER (NWR)



Human beings are social animals, and the tenor of someone's social life is one of the most important influences on their mental and physical health. Make it your New Year's Resolution to improve your social life. National Women's Register (NWR) might be for you. It offers friendship and lively discussions.

Chineham and Old Basing NWR meet at 2pm on the first Monday of the month. With rarely more than 10 at each meeting, we take it in turns to host a meeting. We have a monthly lunch at various local venues on different days and a subgroup which meets at 8pm on the fourth Thursday of the month to discuss a chosen book.

In December we had a home-cooked Christmas lunch in the cosy Old Basing Cricket Pavilion organised by Dusty. In **January** we will talk about anything we choose beginning with the letter 'I'. Our annual planning meeting is in **February** when we decide democratically what we want to do in the year ahead. As well as discussion meetings the programme might include wine tasting, walks or visits. Our group prefers to participate rather than listen to outside speakers.

New members would be made very welcome. To find out more visit nwr.org.uk or contact our Local Organiser: Dusty Brough, tel. 01256 357276 or email dmbc861@gmail.com

Sandie Tapping

BASINGSTOKE & DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY



Basingstoke & District With membership numbers and meeting attendance rising again following the Covid disruption, we will be continuing our twice-monthly meetings in 2024. We begin on Wednesday, 10th January, with an 'Evening of Commercial Films', put together by member Ian Clare. Included will be Beyer Garratt locomotives in South Africa and a history of the 'Deltic' diesels of the 1960s.

The Society AGM will be held on Wednesday, 24th January, This will be followed by a further selection of BBC 'Railway Roundabout' films from 1961. The selection will include London Transport, Lancashire and Yorkshire, Welsh narrow gauge, Southern locomotives, and Severn and Wye Valley lines.

Our meetings are held at 7.45pm at The Wote Street Club, which has a licensed bar, in New Road, Basingstoke RG21 7NG, and usually conclude by 10pm.

Membership details are on our website at www.bdrs70d.com or call the Secretary on 07837 320790.

JANUARY IN YOUR GARDEN

You never can be sure what the weather is going to be like, whether we will get a repeat of the 'Beasts From The East" from recent past winters or not, but if we do, be prepared to be on constant snow patrol, especially if you have large coniferous trees or a greenhouse, snow must be brushed or knocked off as soon as possible to avoid damage due to the excessive weight.

But let's think positively. The cold weather will not come as harshly as some winters, and we will be able to get out into the garden. There is much planting to be done, Raspberries, Gooseberries and currants can be planted, as well as Roses, so long as the soil isn't frozen or too waterlogged.

If you are thinking of growing peas this year, and would like them earlier than usual, place a cloche over the soil to allow it to warm up (tip: if you had a real Christmas tree, the stripped down branches can make an excellent pea support). And while we are on the Christmas theme, you can press mistletoe berries into the bark of apple trees to establish your own mistletoe plants for next Christmas.

Remember to keep off wet soil to avoid compacting it. If you have to walk on it in the wet, stand on a plank, spreading your weight. While you are there you can do some weeding ready for the spring, simply hoe off or pull out any annual weeds and dig out perennial ones.

The most pleasing course of action is of course to stay inside where it is warm! If you need an excuse to do so, turn your mind to browsing the seed catalogues and online shops, maybe trying something new this year? Also sort out your old seeds, throwing away empty or out-of-date packets.

For January seed sowing try some early sowings in trays. All you need is a bright, cool windowsill as germination temperatures of around 55°F (13°C) are adequate. Try Lettuce, Summer Cabbage and Cauliflowers, plus round varieties of Carrots, Spinach, Salad Onions and Turnips. If you are lucky enough to have an electric propagator then plant Tomatoes, Aubergines, Chillies and other crops that need a long, hot growing season, providing you have an indoor area that receives a lot of light to pot onto. Keeping them starved of light as they grow will result in leggy, useless plants. If you have a heated greenhouse you can sow greenhouse tomatoes as early as this month.

As well as the usual varieties, why not have a look for some more exotic or newer species. Pluots are a mixture between a Plum and an Apricot, and do well in the south of England. Self-fertile varieties are available too. If you're feeling adventurous try a Medlar tree. Medlars are ornamental, flowering trees with pretty blossom, good autumn colour and fruits, which are edible, although not to everyone's taste. Their fruit is tart if eaten raw, but makes pleasantly flavoured jellies or can be used in desserts. Left to soften the fruit mellows and is a traditional, if unusual, treat.

Cover rhubarb plants with a bucket or terracotta pot to force an early crop. Rhubarb 'Timperley Early' is regarded as the earliest maturing variety – if forcing you can expect tender pink sticks as early as February, though it can be grown in the normal way.

For houseplants, reduce watering now as plants aren't growing much, and leaves don't lose moisture in cool conditions. All you need to do is keep plants just moist, and there is no need to feed plants until March. You can just mist the underside of leaves to keep humidity high if you want.

NATURE NOTES FOR JANUARY

A very Happy New Year to you all and I hope you all had a great Christmas with friends and family.

Having just endured a really cold snap where much of the north suffered travel difficulties, I've my fingers and toes crossed that no such issues arose around the festive period. The only positive thing about a rush of winter is that the garden can suddenly come alive with birds. It's been a quiet autumn here for us in Cavalier Road but last week, as the month turned, I couldn't fill the feeders fast enough. At one point we had eight Blue Tits all taking it in turns to snatch a sunflower heart and dash back into cover, only too aware that Sparrowhawks are hungry too so best not to become lunch!

Thanks for readers who messaged me last month, mainly to concur with what I've written above, that Goldfinches, Greenfinches, Greater-Spotted Woodpeckers, Great and Blue Tits have all appeared like magic especially first thing in the morning and just as the light starts to go. Alan Williams (Park Lane), **Terry MacAnish** (Cavalier Road) who sent in this great picture of literally loads of Goldfinches on his feeders (**see photo, front cover**), and Stephen Thair (Park Lane) all contributed so please keep it coming.

Birders everywhere across the UK will now be hoping for an influx of winter visitors which along our coasts (well worth a visit during January) could include wading birds of many species, Ducks, Swans and Gulls, plus smaller birds like Waxwings, Bramblings and Arctic/Snow Buntings. The really best times to see rare visitors to these shores has just passed, ie, when the autumn storms from the Atlantic bring unsuspecting American passerines here. Whether it's the ferocity or increased frequency that's creating a wider variety of sightings or not, we don't know but in the last decade there have been many 'firsts'.



No fewer than 21 species were recorded here this year including a Baltimore Oriole and a Swainsons Thrush, but one beauty that arrived on these shores a few weeks ago was this Canadian Warbler (see photo left). Now, wouldn't that be worth stumbling across?

Finally, on behalf of the Old Basing Biodiversity group, I'd like to thank the Parish Carnival Committee for their donation so that we may purchase and locate Owl nest boxes at Lodge and Poors Farm. Both sites have known presence of

Tawny and occasional Barn Owl species so it would be brilliant if we could encourage either to breed there in the years to come.

Don't forget to send all your nature-related stories and photos to **rickbourne@yahoo.com** or **naturenotes@basinga.org.uk** – for all your bird food requirements, order from me at 'Bird Drop-ins', use the former email address or ring/text me on **07900 648675** to place an order or get a form.

Rick Bourne

DIARY DATES FOR JANUARY 2024

For details of services and events at St Mary's Church please see page 23

January	1		
Tue 2		7.30pm	WI Meeting (Parish Room, St. Mary's Church)
Wed 3	1.30pm –	4.00pm	Ivy Club Meeting (Royal British Legion Hall)
Thu 4		7.45p	RBL Branch Meeting (Jack Morris Hall)
Sat 6	1000am		PIOCC Working Party (meet at PIOCC noticeboard)
Mon 8	2.00pm		Chineham and Old Basing NWR Meeting (see page 35)
Tue 9	7.30pm		Parish Council Meeting (Pavilion, Recreation Ground)
Wed 10	6.00pm		COPY FOR FEBRUARY BASINGA TO EDITOR
	7.45pm		BDRS Talk (Wote Street Club, Basingstoke)
Fri 12	2.00pm –	4.00pm	Village Café (Parish Room, St. Mary's Church)
Wed 17	7.45pm		Basingstoke Local RSPB Group Meeting (The Barn, Church Cottage, St Michael's, Basingstoke)
Thu 18	12.25pm		Ploughman's Lunch (Parish Room, St. Mary's Church)
	2.00pm	PIOCC W	Vorking Party (meet by the shed)
Sat 20	10.00am		Mill Field Working Party (meet next to the top path opposite the entrance from Feld Way/Bartons Lane)
Wed 24	7.45pm		BDRS Talk (Wote Street Club, Basingstoke)
Februar	у		
Thu 1	7.00pm		MENCAP Charity Dinner and Quiz Night (The Restaurant, Basingstoke College of Technology)
Fri 2	2.00pm –	4.00pm	Village Café (Parish Room, St. Mary's Church)
Sat 4	3.00pm		His Majesty's Royal Marines (The Anvil)

BASINGA EXTRA

The following articles, that we couldn't find room for in this printed version of Basinga, can also be found on **Basinga Extra**, our website: **basinga.org.uk**

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• OLD BASING & LYCHPIT PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK: Sandra Tuck 01256 462847

OFFICE AND HOURS: The Pavilion, The Recreation Ground

Monday to Thursday 10am to noon

• CHURCH INFORMATION FOR THE AREA

Church of England (Parish of Old Basing & Lychpit)

VICAR: Revd. Jo Mulliner The Vicarage, Church Lane, Old Basing. 01256 363612

email: vicar@stmarysoldbasing.org.uk

ADMINISTRATOR: Debbie Filer email: admin@stmarysoldbasing.org.uk 07541 698235

Regular Services at St Mary's Church, Old Basing

SUNDAY: 8am Holy Communion; 9.30am Sung Eucharist

OTHER DAYS: Wednesday, 10am - Holy Communion: Monday, Thursday and

Friday, 8.45am - Morning Prayer

Changes to the regular service pattern and other weekday services are shown in the weekly news-sheet, a copy of which is displayed on the noticeboard in the church porch

Old Basing Methodist Church

MINISTER: Rev'd Claire Simpson 0118 3271592

SUNDAY SERVICE: Morning Service 10.30am

Roman Catholic

PRIEST: Fr. John Lee 01256 465214

St Bede's Church, Popley Way, Basingstoke **SUNDAY MASSES:** 9am, 11am and 6pm



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