

March 2026

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MARCH COVER PHOTO, NOTES AND NEWS

This month's topical cover photograph, '**Daffodils in St. Mary's Churchyard**' was sent in by **Margaret Carr** with her article for the Churchyard Conservation (PIOCC). on page 21. Thank you also to Sully Williams and Denise Adams for their village photos. The Village Show committee has 'released' the photography topics for September's Village Show; they can also be found on page 21.

We are also seeking to recruit an **Advertising Manager**; anyone interested can email the Editor for further details or go straight to page 23 for the 'advert'.

March is a month of 'days': St. David's Day on Sunday, 1st; 5th is World Book day; Sunday 8th is International Women's Day; the following weekend sees Mothering Sunday; March 17th is St. Patrick's Day; The Spring Equinox happens on Friday 20th; Clocks go forward on the following Sunday morning. March 2nd to 8th is British Pie Week!

OUR ADVERTISERS

Our advertisers are well-established and most of them have been with us for a long time, are reliable and would welcome your custom. In order to maintain the production and free distribution of this magazine, we need to maintain our base of advertisers. If you know of any business wishing to promote themselves in this area, please suggest they get in touch and advertise with us. It also helps us if you can mention seeing their advert in Basinga.

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BASINGA

The **very last date for copy** to the Editor for the **April** edition is **6.00pm on Tuesday, 10th March, although we do welcome copy in advance of this date.** Please use the forms on the **Basinga** website **www.basinga.org.uk** to get your dates, articles and letters to us. **Don't forget that we only accept articles with about a 300-word maximum: articles may be edited and are published at the Editor's discretion.**

Our Privacy Policy is available to read on the website which includes the GDPR requirements for publishing photographs. Contact names, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for all our volunteer 'managers' are listed on page 34.

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 does it endorse 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.

PHOTOS AND LOGOS FOR THE BASINGA

We now have a web form that you can use to send any 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: **editor@basinga.org.uk**

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OLD BASING AND LYCHPIT CARNIVAL



The **Royal British Legion** is set to be the venue for the Old Basing and Lychpit Carnival **Skittles** and **Darts** events, ahead of the Carnival itself which takes place on **Saturday, 20th June**.

The **Darts** event is new this year, so anyone who wants to show off their skills please get involved. It will take the form of a pairs event open to male and female players. The entry fee is **£5 per team** and the semi-finals and final will take place in **May**. Teams that are interested should email **secretary@obrbl.club** with their chosen team name, players names and a contact number.

The draw for the darts competition will be made on 1st May.

Last year saw the return of the **Skittles** event which proved to be a great success. Therefore it is set to be staged again in **June**, leading up to the Carnival. There will be two semi-finals as well as a finals evening. The set up is for teams of four as last year, so get together with your friends, neighbours or work mates and enter a team. To get an entry form simply contact **Rick Bourne on 07900 648675** or **rickbourne@yahoo.com**

The date for the Old Basing and Lychpit Carnival **Pat Brace Football Tournament** has now been decided and will take place over the weekend of **6th/7th June** at **Royals Park**, which is the football pitch next to the **Royal British Legion** in **Old Basing**.

The event is a six-a-side competition with six age groups they are:

Under-7, Under-8, Under-9, Under-10, Under-13 and Under-16.

The **Entry Cost** is **£40** for a team of up to a maximum of eight players. To show your interest please email **football@basingroyalsfc.co.uk**

Graham Merry

OLD BASING WOMEN'S INSTITUTE



Our speaker for February was the wonderful **Jackie Dimmock**, a long serving police officer, with 30 years' experience. This was our third talk and just as much fun as the previous ones. During January we had a skittles lunch, which was great fun, an evening meal at the Hatch. This was our post-Christmas meal for our ladies who are still working and not able to attend our Christmas lunch. In February, we had a Chinese meal, for Chinese New Year, a theatre trip to see the Bodyguard and a visit to Welford park to see the snowdrops. We are organising a morning to make pillows for the Pink Place, for ladies who have had breast cancer surgery.

Members have a weekly meeting for coffee, which is well attended. Once a month members meet for lunch, again very popular. We have started a "knit & natter" group, hosted by various members in their homes. Members also meet once a month for a craft session.

We meet every **first Tuesday** of the month **7.30pm**, at the **Parish Room, St Mary's Church**. Our next meeting is on the **3rd March**, when our speaker will be **Clair Fuller**, who will be giving a talk on writing fiction. All are welcome to our meetings. Guests are offered two free meetings, so if you are interested, and want to come and see if you would like to join our long running and thriving group. Please contact our President by email at **oldbasingpres@hampshirewi.org.uk**



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Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – Supporting Local Projects

Following recent decisions of the Full Council, CIL funding has now been distributed to several local organisations to support improvements within the parish.

Funding has been provided to Millfield Conservation Group towards their Boardwalk Improvement Project, and to St Mary's Church to assist with the refurbishment of cloakroom facilities and replacement of the vestry water heater.

The Royal British Legion (Old Basing Branch) has now commenced resurfacing works to their car park, with completion expected shortly. Improvements to their accessible cloakroom facilities are also due to begin imminently.

In addition, the Old Basing Village Hall flooring refurbishment is scheduled to take place during the school summer holidays, when the nursery vacates the building. These works will improve the quality and longevity of this well-used community facility.

CIL funding enables the Parish Council to reinvest developer contributions into projects that directly benefit residents, supporting local infrastructure and community facilities.

Lease Review – Protecting Parish Assets

The Parish Council is currently progressing a review of the Lychpit Community Hall lease, which has now expired. Before proceeding with renewal arrangements, Members have resolved to seek independent surveying advice on the existing lease terms, proposed Heads of Terms, and the current market rental position.

This approach ensures that the Council fulfills its duty to protect public assets and secure best value on behalf of residents.

Further updates will be provided once professional advice has been received.

Looking Ahead

The Parish Council continues to focus on maintaining and improving local facilities, ensuring sound financial management, and progressing the updated Neighbourhood Plan. Residents are reminded that agendas and minutes for all meetings are published on the Parish Council website. Members of the public are always welcome to attend meetings, and there is an opportunity to speak during the public participation session.

Meetings for March 2026

The **Full Parish Council** meeting will be held on **Tuesday 3rd March at 7.30pm**. There will also be meetings of the Facilities Management Committee on Tuesday 16th March and the Planning & Development Committee on Tuesday 24th March (both at 7.30pm). Please let us know if you wish to attend but you are unable to manage the stairs to the meeting room, to enable us to make alternative arrangements.

Dates for all future meetings are detailed on our website and noticeboards.

Parish Clerk: **Mrs Kate Hope**

Address: **The Pavilion, Recreation Ground,
The Street, Old Basing, RG24 7DA**

Telephone: **01256 462847**

Office Hours: **Mon – Thurs 10am to noon**

Contact: **clerk@oldbasing.gov.uk** Web: **www.oldbasing.gov.uk**



THE MILL FIELD CONSERVATION GROUP



Finally spring is in the air: what a lovely thought...Why not blow the cobwebs away by volunteering at the last official session of the winter 2025/26 season.

The next work party is planned for **Saturday, 7th March**. We will be clearing scrub and yet more dogwood near the play park. We also have another exciting project planned for this work party.

We are going to build a "bug hotel" if you have any materials that may be useful such as bricks with holes in, concrete tiles or curved ridge tiles please let us know and we can arrange collection. No experience is necessary just wear appropriate clothes and footwear. We will provide the necessary tools and some refreshments.



Work parties will recommence in October, but we are likely to be having some additional work parties during the spring/summer replacing rotten sleepers, so watch this space!

Due to the hard work and enthusiasm of Neil, Jackie and Jim everyone had a great time at the presentation about the nature reserve at Talks@Lychpit Hall early February (*picture on page 10*). The event was really well supported with over forty attendees. Everyone came away with a much better understanding about the history of the reserve and the ever-changing environment there. Thanks to everyone for their support.

What's around this month:

We should start hearing the resident birds such as Song Thrush, Robin and Wren in full song, while we say farewell to the Redwings, Fieldfare, Siskins and Lesser Redpolls who are heading back north. The first of the summer migrants begin to arrive starting with Chiffchaff and Blackcap (the very first ones you hear braved the winter).

The plant life suddenly starts to burst to life with Lesser Celandine and Arum Lillies (Lords and ladies) coming through with many trees starting to flower. Mammal wise Roe and Muntjac will be heard barking in the woods and when warm enough bats start to emerge. If we get any spring-like weather butterflies should start appearing such as the Red Admiral, Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell or Brimstone and maybe the occasional reptile too!

Remember we have a Facebook page, search for "Mill Field Conservation Group", there you will find posted events, photos of wildlife and other information will be shared.

Email: millfieldnature@gmail.com

Facebook: **Mill Field Conservation Group**

More Than Stone and Mortar

It is with deep sadness that we mark the recent passing of **Max Deadman**, one of our founding members. Max's vision and dedication helped establish The Friends of St Mary's, and his belief that the power of community to preserve both heritage and human connection inspired everything we do. His legacy lives on in every event we host, every



laugh we share, and every stone we restore. We are profoundly grateful for his leadership and friendship.

This mission to preserve the ancient stonework is the reason we have our events, and we love that we're also nurturing the living community that makes our parish home. This year's pantomime proved the point beautifully. Yes, it raised over £7,000 for vital repairs, but watch what happened on stage: we had people from 10 years old to 80+, families filled the hall with laughter, and volunteers of every generation worked as one. That's the real treasure.



Our events calendar reflects this spirit. Our recent **Quiz Night** brought people together in fun and friendly rivalry at Lychpit Village Hall. The next **Barn Dance** on **3rd October** promises traditional fun.



On **14th November** we will hold our popular **Murder Mystery Evening** — where you decide Whodunnit!

Plans are also underway for a choral concert with acclaimed a cappella group **Vox Lucis** at **St Mary's**,

promising an evening to revel in our church's magnificent acoustics (date TBC).

Each event, whether boisterous or serene, serves the same purpose: creating a parish where everyone belongs. From energetic dancing to peaceful concerts, from mystery-solving to countryside rambles, we're helping to weave that rich tapestry that is Old Basing and Lychpit.

Our success depends entirely on participation — your attendance, your ideas, your membership and (if you have the time and energy) your volunteering. Ultimately, we're not just maintaining a building of stone. We're cultivating something far more precious: a living, breathing community that grows stronger together.

Visit **www.FOSMC.org** to join for updates or to get involved. After all, it's only together that we truly thrive.

FRIENDS OF LYCHPIT HALL

In February, addressing a full house, Neil and Jackie from Mill Field Conservation, and local wildlife experts Jim Andrews and Alan Wilkinson, gave a fantastic insight into the history, nature and future of this wonderful area. Feedback was highly positive.



In March, enjoy amusing tales as Roger Doust recalls interesting moments in his long career in the Metropolitan Police, delivering protection to diplomats. Why are some police cars red? Why did Roger almost shoot Margaret Thatcher? Did he really confront the United States Ambassador? Come to Roger's talk to find out.

Upcoming Talks@Lychpit_Hall:

- **Friday 6th March – My 30 years in the Metropolitan Police.** Ex-police officer and author Roger entertains us with lively tales.
- **Wednesday 8th April – Twinkle, twinkle, massive stars, ever wondered what they are?** - The Universe in Reverse: From Today Back to the Beginning of Time. A fascinating journey backwards through cosmic time — from today's galaxies to the first moments after Big Bang. We'll reconstruct the universe's past, birth of stars, the glow of cosmic microwave background and mysteries surrounding the origin of space-time itself. For curious minds with no specialist background required, review discoveries, evidence and unanswered questions at the very edge of human knowledge.
- **Thursday 29th October – If osteopathy helps rugby players and steel workers, what can do for you?** Includes live demo. Achieve your optimal health through hands-on techniques that aid in diagnosing musculoskeletal complaints. Get your bones, ligaments and muscles working in harmony.

Doors open **7.15pm / 7.30pm** start. Finish about 8.30pm. Bring friends, drinks, nibbles. **Tickets £2 per head.** Lychpit Hall, Great Binfields Road. Park outside Tesco Express. Have an interesting subject you'd love to talk about? Contact fof.lychpit.hall@gmail.com
Next quiz night. Join us on **Friday, 20th March. 7.30pm start.**

Ken Surplice

THE CHILDRENS' SOCIETY COLLECTION BOXES

**The
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Society**

Thank you for your ongoing generosity to the Children's Society which supports and helps many children across the country. I shall be contacting you during the month of March to collect your boxes and receive your kind donations. If by any chance you are able to bring your box to **St Mary's Church** on **Sunday 1st or 8th March**, it would be very helpful. Alternatively, you may call the number below to arrange a time for collection

Rosemary Kershaw (*Parish Representative*) **01256 355500**



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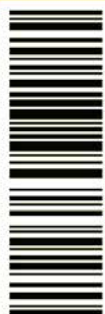


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YOUR VILLAGE HALL NEEDS YOU!

Did you know that OLD BASING VILLAGE HALL is a registered charity?



The hall was opened in 1982 and has been run by a management committee, made up of volunteers from the community. As our committee member numbers are dwindling, we are appealing for volunteers who would be interested in joining the Management Committee. It's a great opportunity to meet new people and put something back into the community. You might also learn some new skills from the work, for instance – recent projects included installing a solar energy system, installing loft insulation

and building a new website. We meet approximately six times per year to discuss the maintenance and management of this wonderful asset to the village of Old Basing.

Please get in touch with our Chairman if you are interested or require further information.

Graham Steele, Chairman email: bookings@oldbasingvillagehall.co.uk

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

We often use the term '**Community spirit**' which undoubtedly many of the resident in the Parish have. This is an unstoppable force, which is made up from groups, committees, and individuals. Who generally have one aim to enhanced the lives of people in the Community.

The Old Basing Village Hall (*above*) and Lychpit Community Hall (*below left*) are hubs which foster social interaction and gathering together the Community. These social spaces are great for hosting events, parties, educational and cultural events. Of course the more serious issues are also discussed!

Many years ago as some might remember the Villagers worked on a huge project together to build this magnificent Village Hall. Obtaining grants, up cycling and fund raising activities and Identifying land for development. This is one example of what can be achieved with the Community working together. Indeed, this is their life's work which is delivering excellent space 45 years later.



The Friends of Lychpit Community Hall have been promoting this Grade 2 listed building for lots of events. Including regular Quiz Nights and more recently talks on varied and interesting subjects. Also Spring and Christmas celebrations have been organised in the courtyard.

Many of these volunteers have been inspired to join other groups alongside residents from Old Basing. The Carnival Committee, Mill Field Conservation, Environmental Groups, Citizens' Science, and many more have been fortunate enough to have these volunteers join them. This is ever-evolving with more excellent ideas and interests

being shared by the residents all around the Parish. Gathering together and enjoying the sense of belonging in the active, vibrant and rich tapestry that we call Old Basing and Lychpit Parish.

Sheena Grassi



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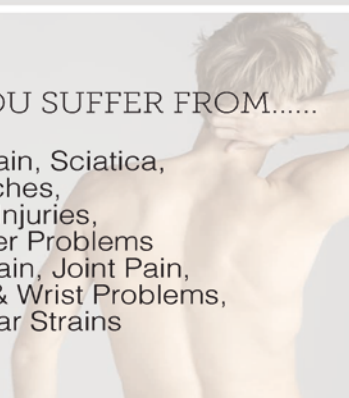


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OLD BASING GOLF DAYS FOR 2026

It is time to look forward to getting back on to the golf course with the sun on our backs! So, to enable the negotiation of competitive rates, I have already booked three dates for golf days during 2026, especially for residents of Old Basing and Lychpit, although friends and families from afar will be very welcome also.



The annual **Good Old Basing Charity** golf day will take place on **Monday, 7th September** at **Sherfield Oaks golf course** which will cost **approx. £67 per head** and will include 18 holes of golf, coffee and bacon roll, a two-course dinner, plus contribution to prizes.

The first event however, also at **Sherfield**, will be an **18-hole Team Texas** scramble which is always a lot of fun so get three other mates and

enter a team of four on **Monday, 30th March**. Coffee, a bacon roll and lunch, including a free drink, prizes and a donation to the Poppy Appeal is included in the **entry fee of around £60**. There will also be cash prizes for Nearest the Pin and Longest Drive plus a raffle/auction. Entry forms are available from me now.

Then, as an early fund raiser for **Armed Forces Day**, I have booked the exclusive **Army Course at Aldershot** for **Monday, 18th May** and this day will consist of coffee & bacon roll to begin, 18 holes and a late lunch along with the prize giving. Forms will be available in early April.

So please support these events by putting the dates in your diary NOW and request entry forms nearer the time for each. I very much look forward to seeing many of you there.

Rick Bourne 07900 648675, rickbourne@yahoo.com

Old Basing Society and RBL Golf Secretary.

VILLAGE VIBES CAFE AT THE REC.



And suddenly it's March and spring is well on the way! Here's looking forward to brighter days, flowers and trees in bloom and who knows, sitting outside with cake and friends.

With the onset of Spring, the cafe is back to weekly opening on Friday afternoons. We will be open with delicious bakes on **6th, 13th, 20th and 27th March, 2.00 to 4.30pm**, we look forward to seeing you. The **Community Bus** will be running on **13th March**.

Since we partnered with this service late last year, it has proved very popular and we have therefore, decided to continue this service once a month up to the end of July. We are hopeful that if the service continues to be used so well that we can extend the service to pick up and drop off our customers once a month on a permanent basis.

The café will be closed for Easter, but we will return to normal opening on Friday 17th, April. As you know, our bakers provide delicious bakes but do you have a favourite cake that you haven't seen at the cafe? Is there something we can add to our repertoire that you just can't resist? If there is, do let us know, I'm sure we can rustle up a favourite cake/cookie/brownie etc: we do love a challenge.

Deborah Thorne

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Can we help you? Do you need transport to an appointment or collection of a prescription? Just give Old Basing And Lychpit Good Neighbours a call on **0333 0440116**.

PLOUGHMAN'S LUNCHES

Ploughman's Lunches take place in the **Parish Room of St. Mary's Church** on the third Thursday of the month, except August when we have a break. **Booking is required** by phoning: **07946 596778**. **Doors open at 12.25pm** and there is no end time. This month's lunch is on **Thursday, 19th March**, and the following lunch on **Thursday, 16th April**.

WANTED!

DOG MINDER WANTED

Young Jack Russell, very friendly, unhappy alone. Situated in Belle View Road with an enclosed garden. Needed for the odd few hours of a weekend and the odd evening. Ideally suited for someone who has knowledge of dogs, possibly retired. If interested call **07763101285** or **07552565651**

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 34 for contact details). Ads also appear on the website: **www.basinga.org.uk** (with photographs if available).

FISHING TACKLE £100 07990602551

Large amount of sea fishing tackle, boat and beach, end tackle, weights etc only beach rods and reels etc ever used once, boat rods never used. A lot of tackle.

BONGO DRUMS £20 01256351080

Vintage Bongo Hand Drums. 160mm & 200mm. Striped Wood and good skin sounds (possibly goatskin). Used, pitted chrome work.

LASER LEVEL £20 07867576149

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EXERCISE BIKE £350 01256324749

Life Fitness C1 exercise bike. As new. Can deliver locally. On sale elsewhere.

THE IVY CLUB

Are you looking for recreation and companionship and are over 60 years of age, then why not come and join us at the **Royal British Legion**, we meet **every Wednesday**, from **1.30 to 4.00pm** and offer a number of activities and social events. The entrance fee is **£2.00** for which you are given refreshments and a free raffle. We would also welcome you if you would like to volunteer to help us run this fantastic Club as we are not getting any younger and unless we can find some fresh blood then who knows what will happen. If you would like to know more details about joining us or volunteering, then phone: **01256 328196**.

Sue Wilson

DEAR FRIENDS

Lent begins for us at St Mary's in the middle of February with our Ash Wednesday service, when we receive an ash cross on our foreheads, as a reminder of our mortality and as an expression of renewed faith. It's a simple but profound act in which we 'remember that [we] are but dust and to dust [we] shall return', but with honesty and humility we turn to God asking for grace. This service marks the start of a 40 day journey through Lent, in which we have opportunity to re-focus and simplify our lives, so we can learn to love God and our neighbour more freely. Lent is a gift to us in this respect and gives us time to prepare our hearts too for the events of Holy Week and Easter, the most important festival in the Christian year.

We are holding a number of services that week and you are warmly invited to join us. We have a Stations of the Cross evening on Tuesday, 31st March – a short time of poetry, prayer and some Taizé singing, in which we enact a simple pilgrimage around the Church, remembering at each illustrative point or 'station', the journey that Jesus took through Jerusalem towards the Cross on Good Friday. It's a moving and reflective time focusing on the extent of Jesus' love for us, dying to redeem us and opening up to us new life. His resurrection life is the joy of Easter and we meet to celebrate together on Saturday Evening and Easter Day – rejoicing that God's love is stronger even than death – a hope that continually inspires and renews us.

It was great that so many joined us for our Christmas services and all are welcome to join us again at St Mary's this Easter season. Please see in this edition, details of all our Easter services.

Rev Helen

(Assistant Curate at St Mary's Old Basing and Lychpit)

FLOWER FESTIVAL AND OPEN GARDENS

We are delighted to announce our **Flower Festival** and **Open Gardens** weekend, taking place from **15th – 17th May 2026**, celebrating the theme "**Parish Life with Petals**".

This popular event will raise vital funds for the ongoing running of St Mary's, as well as supporting the installation of the new heating system.

We would love as many gardens as possible to take part, both in Old Basing and Lychpit. Would you like to join in? Whether you have opened previously or are considering opening your garden for the first time. Large or small, formal or informal: every garden helps make the event special.

You can also support the festival by creating a floral display inspired by parish life. This may be a full floral arrangement or a simple flower-related display; all contributions are welcome and greatly appreciated.

If you would like to be involved in any way, please contact Debbie at admin@stmarysoldbasing.org.uk

ST. MARY'S CHURCH

REGULAR SERVICES

Sunday	8.00am BCP Communion 9.30am Sung Eucharist
Monday	8.45am Morning Prayer
Tuesday	8.45am Morning Prayer
Wednesday	10.00am Holy Communion
Thursday	8.45am Morning Prayer
Friday	8.45am Morning Prayer

St Mary's

Parish Church



Mothering Sunday Service – Sunday, 15th March at 9.30 am

All are welcome to join us – please just come along. If you'd like to join the 9.30 am Sunday service from home, you can do so via St Mary's Facebook page. You can keep up to date with services and events at St Mary's via our Facebook page.

Holy Week and Easter Services

We would love you to join us as we journey together through Holy Week and Easter together this year.

Sunday, 29th March	9.30am	Palm Sunday service
Gather at The Crown Pub car park to process to Church at 9.20am if you would like to join us.		
Tuesday, 31st March	7.00pm	Stations of the Cross
Thursday, 2nd April	7.00pm	Maundy Thursday service
Friday, 3rd April	noon	Good Friday
From noon ; an hour of silent reflection. From 1.00 to 2.00pm ; music and readings suitable for the day and from 2.00 to 3.00pm a liturgy based on the Cross. Come for as long as you are able, arrive and leave when you can.		
Saturday, 4th April	7.30pm	Easter Vigil
Sunday, 5th April	8.00am	BCP Holy Communion service
	9.30am	Family Communion service

GLASS MAKING WORKSHOP BY THE GLASS MAIDENS



On **Saturday, 21st March**. come and try your hand at a **fused glass-making** session at **St Mary's Church, Old Basing**. Included in the **£25** price, you will be given all the materials, tuition and equipment to make a fused glass t-light holder from the three design kits we will put together, making something uniquely yours. We shall take it away and fire it, then let you know when to collect your finished piece.

Contact Debbie Filer, St Mary's Church Administrator, to book your place on this unusual and relaxing craft.

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OLD BASING & LYCHPIT VILLAGE SHOW

It's March already – how time flies! This month marks half way between the 2025 Show and the **2026 Show** which will be held on **Sunday, 6th September**.

For the keen photographers this year's subjects will be "Local Street Scene", "On the Farm" and "Aged". Go out and get shooting or look through your old albums. Even a print from a 1990s 35mm slide can occasionally win a prize – as long as it's you who took it! Just check the website www.oblvs.org.uk for any unexpected last minute changes – hopefully as in previous years there won't be any!



Recent handicraft entries and winners



In the handicraft section we're adding a class for "Anything Made from Clay or Similar" alongside some of the old favourites. And if you're knitting a Crème Egg hat for Easter, you might want to think about putting it in the "needlecraft" class at the Show.

The new schedule will soon be ready and changes that you can expect to see in it are now on our website. We try to keep up to date and strike a balance between "it's the same as last year's schedule!" and "why does everything have to change?"

In the meantime, please feel free to contact us if you have any questions, comments or suggestions about the Show. All contact details can be found on the website

Now's the time to start planting and planning your exhibits.

CHURCHYARD CONSERVATION GROUP (PIOCC)



This month's working party will be on **Saturday, 7th March at 10.00am** – meet by the PIOCC noticeboard at the entrance to the Conservation Area. We will continue our seasonal conservation work and woodland management. All are welcome. There will be no Thursday afternoon working party this month.

At our Big Garden Birdwatch in January a lovely Robin serenaded us from the birch for most of the hour. We also saw: Wood Pigeons, Great Tits, Jackdaws, Blue Tits, a Coal Tit, Magpies, Crows and also Grey Squirrels. We heard a Goldcrest, Blackcap and Wren, and saw Herring Gulls, a Heron and a Red Kite flying overhead.

We still have a few nest boxes for sponsorship at £5 each. Email Tim Carr, or speak to Lydia Knight or Ann Price.

Next month on **Tuesday, 14th April**: we will hold our short **AGM** followed by a talk by **Margaret & Tim Carr** on "**Spring in the Greek Islands**" in **St Mary's Parish Room** at **8.00pm**. Please reserve the date. We look forward to seeing you.

The Conservation Area is a community space for everyone to enjoy. You are very welcome to visit and perhaps take a moment to sit, relax and enjoy the churchyard, a haven for us all and the early Daffodils and Primroses are appearing.

For further information please email Tim Carr, Chairman: tim@tmcarr.net

Margaret Carr www.stmarysoldbasing.org.uk

BADEN POWELL CENTRE FOR OLD BASING SCOUTS AND GUIDES



Can You Help?

We are looking to form a fundraising committee who would organise fundraising activities, events and complete grant applications on behalf of the Management Committee now planning has been secured. You do not need to be involved in



Scouting or Guiding to join us. We are looking to raise funds through fundraising and grants to help us achieve our goal of building a new hall for current and future generations of local Scouts and Guides.

To be in with a chance of winning up to £100 a month consider being a member of our **500 Club**. Our 500 club is a lottery where shares/tickets are purchased from as little as £1.00 per share/ticket per month. We now have some shares/tickets available for anyone interested in helping us with raising essential funds towards the replacement of our old Hall. Please email bpcentreproject@gmail.com

Progress Update

We have made progress over the last couple of years albeit slow but steady. A new vehicular and pedestrian entrance has been installed on to Milkingpen Lane along with a complete refurbishment of the field behind which is now usable for the groups and a firepit area is near completion. As part of this work we have recently installed an accessibility toilet block and work is almost completed on this which will then be available for groups when meeting at the field.

For any enquiries please email bpcentreproject@gmail.com

Paula McBride

Trustee of the Management Committee

MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP – TWICKENHAM

A relatively small group of men were eating breakfast and, in a rare moment of clarity, decided to book a 49 seater coach to go and see the **Army v Royal Navy Rugby** match(es) at **Twickenham** on **Saturday, 2nd May**. Our hope is to get people from all over our community to join us, have fun, learn a bit about some of the good causes/charities.

The trip we are organising will require our fellow adventurers to arrive at the **RBL and Social Club on Crown Lane at 11.00am** on the day; the coach will depart at **11.30pm sharp!** Our coach will park within the grounds of Twickenham and pick us up from there for the return trip. This plan will get us all to Twickenham with plenty of time to enjoy the retail opportunities offered within the ground before and whilst watching some excellent rugby.

Our **return trip** will start at **6.00pm** so we could be home at a reasonable time. **Tickets** for the travel and seat in the Category 1 area of the ground [hopefully L7 / L8] will be **£80**: this is a not-for-profit trip to raise funds for local charities and good causes.

Express your interest or get more information by email to secretary@OBRBL.club [including your mobile phone number please] or by visiting the club bar anytime [especially during the Six Nations tournament]. We need you to pay in full for the tickets in early March so please don't delay.

Andy Molloy

OLD BASING SCOUT GROUP



It may still be cold outside, but things are heating up at Old Basing Scout Group with a myriad of exciting activities keeping everyone busy and warm.

The Squirrels have been extremely busy exploring space, taking aim during archery and earning their Feel Good badge. A definite highlight was their first birthday party celebrating the week they launched last year. They're certain to have a fantastic second year as well. Meanwhile, the Beavers have also had lots to do having learned about China and Chinese New Year, finding out about our community with a local PCSO and taking aim with tomahawks.

Our youngest Cubs joined us for a Scouting Skills day where they got to enjoy earning badges while practising pioneering, map reading, fire lighting and tent pitching – essential skills for their scouting journey. They also enjoyed the chance to try some Air Rifle Shooting. During their weekly meetings they've also cooked pancakes, played basketball and went into battle with their Nerf guns.

Our Scouts Troops have enjoyed several extremely fun activities from celebrating Burns Night to practising their soap-carving skills and designing mini-golf holes. Our newest Scouts at Roundheads also celebrated being invested and welcomed officially into the new troop with sparklers, confetti and a ton of cake while our more established Scouts at Cavaliers work towards the highest badge a Scout can earn: their Gold award – and we're certain that they'll be able to earn it.

We are always looking for new people to join in the fun – young and old. If you're interested or want more information, then please contact us by email: group@oldbasingscouts.org.uk You can also find us on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn at 'Old Basing Scout Group' where we post regular updates on what we get up to.

Danny Evans

BASINGA – ADVERTISING MANAGER NEEDED



The Basinga Committee would like to recruit an Advertising Manager to replace the current volunteer who is leaving the area. The role includes, but is not limited to: recruitment and maintenance of our advertisers and their adverts; driving the renewal process in the last quarter of the year; liaising with the editor, treasurer and our printer to ensure timely delivery of the monthly magazine.

Our advertisers are the life-blood of the magazine; they provide the income which allows us to print and distribute this monthly magazine to nearly 3500 households and businesses in the Old Basing and Lychpit Parish.

If you are interested in joining the team, for this or any other role, or have any questions, please e-mail the editor on editor@basinga.org.uk

NEWS FROM BASING HOUSE



Basing House will reopen on **Wednesday, 25th March** and will then be open, from **11.00am to 4.00pm, Wednesday to Sunday**, until the autumn.

An admission fee is charged and tickets are valid for a year, including many of the events that are run at the site; below is a list of what we have on offer.

One of the biggest events of the year is the annual visit by the re-enactors of the **Sealed Knot**. This year this takes place over the weekend of the **18th / 19th April**.

Last year saw our staff member Dawn running a weekly **Rhyme time** for pre-school children, and this will run again this year **11.00am to noon on Wednesdays**. This and the Sealed Knot event are included in the annual ticket. We also have a **Wedding Fayre on 26th April** and admission to this event is free.

Plans are well advanced for **guided tours** of the site on **Wednesdays, starting at 2.00pm** (included in annual ticket) and led by volunteers. We will also have tours run by Civil War expert Alan Turton, once a month, but extra to the annual ticket.

As the season progresses we will be running a wide variety of other events – including a second re-enactment weekend with the English Civil War Society, and our customary Halloween Ghost Walks. There will also be craft courses - starting with Tapestry Weaving, a silent disco, a choir visit, a paranormal investigation evening, a bat walk, and history courses for home educated children. Of course, the season will end with the Christmas Fayre the last weekend in December.

More information about these will be on our website, and in the Basinga nearer the time of the events and as arrangements crystallise.

The website address is www.hampshireculture.org.uk/basing-house

Andrew Howard

THE WELCOME TEA ROOM



Fridays, 6th and 20th March, 2.00 to 4.00pm at St Mary's Parish Room. No Set Prices, donations invited.

February – Shrove Tuesday was celebrated with pancake fun, games and, of course, consumption at the Parish Room for younger members of the community. This was organised by members of the **Youth Hub** team and supported by the Welcome Tea Room. A good time was had by all!

March – and the **Spring equinox** occurs at **3.46pm on Friday, 20th March**. Should we see if we can introduce a Spring theme to our cake table that day?

April – please note that the Tea Room **will not be open on Friday, 3rd April**. This is Good Friday and St Mary's will have other commitments occurring that day. Cakes as usual on **17th April**.

On a final, but important, note the Volunteers from the Tea Room are looking to donate £1,000 to St Mary's as they look at becoming Carbon Neutral by 2030.

Best Wishes from the team of The Welcome Tea Room.

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GARDEN TASKS FOR MARCH



In the garden in March, things really start moving — soil warms up, daylight increases, and it's one of the busiest prep months of the year. Here's a practical breakdown of what to focus on:

General Garden Jobs

Tidy borders, cut back remaining dead stems from winter (leave healthy new growth). Weed early and hoe on dry days to stop weeds establishing. Mulch beds; Apply compost or well-rotted manure around plants (avoid burying crowns). Improve soil by digging in compost or soil conditioner if the ground isn't waterlogged. Edge lawns and borders for a neat start to the season.

Flowers & Ornamentals: Sow hardy annuals directly outside (e.g. cornflowers, calendula, nigella). Sweet peas (if not already started). Start half-hardy annuals indoors (cosmos, zinnias, marigolds).

Plant: Summer-flowering bulbs (lilies, gladioli — toward late March). Bare-root perennials (early March before growth gets strong).

Prune: Roses (early March is ideal). Buddleia, fuchsia, and other late-summer flowering shrubs. Cornus (dogwood) and Salix for colourful stems (if not already done). Lightly trim lavender (not into old wood).

Vegetable Garden

Sow Outdoors (weather dependent): Broad beans; Peas; Spinach; Carrots (under cloches if cold); Beetroot (late March); Spring onions; Lettuce; Radish.

Start Indoors / In Greenhouse: Tomatoes; Chillies & peppers (early March ideally); Courgettes (late March); Cabbage and brassicas.

Other Jobs: Plant early potatoes (mid-late March); Earth up autumn-sown broad beans.; Cover seedlings with fleece if frost is forecast.; Protect brassicas from pigeons.

Trees & Shrubs

Plant container-grown trees and shrubs. Feed fruit trees with a balanced fertiliser. Mulch around fruit trees (keep away from trunk). Prune apple & pear trees if not done (avoid pruning plums/cherries now). Net soft fruit before birds start feeding.

Lawn Care

First cut of the year (if grass is 5–8cm high and dry). Rake out moss. Apply spring lawn feed. Repair bare patches.

Wildlife-Friendly Tasks

Clean bird feeders regularly. Put up nesting boxes. Leave some areas a little wild for pollinators. Avoid heavy digging where bulbs are emerging.

Frost Warning

Late frosts are common in March: Keep fleece handy. Don't plant tender bedding out yet. Harden off seedlings gradually.

Old Basing and Lychpit Village Show

Now is the time to start planning your Village Show exhibits. See page 21 for their article and visit their website: www.oblvs.org.uk for the latest information about the schedule, categories and changes.

NATURE NOTES FOR MARCH

We all know a Red Kite when we see one, Tim Shapland in Lychpit certainly does as one virtually lives on his doorstep in beech trees close by but won't sit still long enough for a good picture. Indeed, Kite numbers seem to have increased yet again this year as the sky seems to ALWAYS have at least one or two in at any given time. Whether in the village, over Lychpit as I mentioned or in town, there's one there and whilst not a bad thing, you do worry a bit about the pressure their success is putting on other raptors like Buzzards, Kestrels and Owls.

Other birds of prey, such as Sparrowhawks, feed differently, hunting small birds but other potential victims such as small mammals, lizards, grubs and worms plus roadkill are the staple diet of the above group and there must be only so much to go around.

Expert local birder and photographer Jim Andrews has been busy again, sending me pictures and observations from the Millfield area. Due to its tiny size, the Firecrest is a great spot and is usually only noticed when it moves so Jim's picture (*right*) makes his skill even more special

However, the biggest achievement I'd suggest was him seeing and capturing this Jack Snipe (*middle picture*), nestled down in undergrowth that perfectly matches its 50 shades of brown! I hope you can see it. Exploring other venues in the south of the county Jim snapped Stonechat, Dartford Warbler, Spoonbill, White-Tailed Eagle and the wayward Great-Tailed Grackle.

Excellent news from the Tithe Barn area. Apparently, Natural Basingstoke, who have been doing some work around the fishponds at Basing House, have seen rare Brook Lampreys there, which is a sure sign of very clean water. It was some five years ago when, from the little footbridge that crosses the stream from the footpath to Tithe Barn field, I saw around 10 of these weird eel-like creatures writhing about among the stones under the bridge. So, despite about our misgivings of water quality, we are fortunate indeed for these primitive fish to still be here. (*see picture right*)

To underline the point above about pristine water, in a couple of months, OBLEC will be posting notices along the Loddon requesting that dog owners whose pets have recently had flea treatment spray that probably contains 'Fipronil' applied to not let their pets enter the water. Such treatments have these 'forever' chemicals in and is deadly to aquatic life.



Rick Bourne

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.



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PROBUS HEARS ABOUT A LIFE IN NUCLEAR



Retired nuclear scientist and Basingstoke resident, **Suzanne Fletcher-Mallinson** (pictured left with *Probus* President Stephen Thair) gave an outline to the *PROBUS* Club of Basingstoke of her working life in the nuclear industry.

Gaining a MSc at the University of California, Berkeley, she joined the American nuclear research facility at Lawrence Livermore which designed nuclear systems like those at Los Alamos as well as delivery system testing in Nevada (picture below, left).

At that time the USA had around 70,000 nuclear devices across 65 types. Suzanne described field testing a 6-inch diameter device using NATO guns.



Next was President Reagan's 'Star Wars' project to create a dome of defence using nuclear-driven x-ray lasers to knock out incoming missiles.

Moving to AWE in Aldermaston she married in January 1989 which qualified her for British citizenship five years later.

Following roles including managing the remaining reactor at Aldermaston, she became the Technical Assistant to the Director of Research and Applied Science. She attended conferences at Nashville Tennessee, Lucerne in Switzerland, Kyoto in Japan and London.

After a career break following the birth of her third child in 2003, she joined Serco 2007 – 2012 as a Nuclear Safety Consultant. Based at Harwell in Oxfordshire she also covered AWE Aldermaston and Burghfield as well as Winfrith in Dorset.

Suzanne rejoined AWE as an Internal Regulator in 2012 covering many of the facilities at AWE A & B sites. Moving to the Office of Nuclear Regulation (ONR) as a Nuclear Safety Officer, her remit included Sellafield in Cumbria and submarine building at Barrow in Furness and Devonport.

Moving to Security Regulation included many nuclear sites as well as assessment of two Small Modular Reactors (SMR) at the design assessment stage of Licencing. Suzanne retired in October 2024.

Today her interests include being a square dance caller across southern England and being a member of the **Ladies' Probus Club of Basingstoke**. For further information about the **Probus Club of Basingstoke**, visit their website at: **www.probusbasingstoke.club** or phone their secretary on **07814 937202** for a chat.



The **Ladies Probus Club of Basingstoke**, mentioned above, also have a busy programme of talks. Their latest, and first of 2026, by Dr. Stephen J. Goss, a former lecturer in history at Queen's University, Belfast, is about his life-long interest in the popular works of Sir Arthur Conan-Doyle: **Sherlock Holmes**. Details of this talk can be found in **Basinga Extra**.

DIARY DATES FOR MARCH 2026

For details of services and events at St Mary's Church please see page 19

March

Mon 2	2.00pm	NWR meetings. Visit: www.nwr.org.uk or Basinga Extra .
Tue 3	7.30pm	Full Parish Council meeting at the Recreation Ground.
	7.30pm	Old Basing WI meet in Parish Room, St. Mary's Church.
Wed 4	1.30pm – 4.00pm	The IVY Club meet at Old Basing RBL. See page 17.
Thu 5	7.30pm	Social branch meeting at Old Basing RBL Jack Morris Hall. Guests and prospective members welcome.
Fri 6	2.00pm – 4.00pm	The Welcome Tea Room at St. Mary's Church. Page 24.
	2.00pm – 4.30pm	Village Vibes Cafe at the Recreation Ground.
	7.15pm – 8.30pm	Talks@Lychpit_Hall: 30 years in the Met. See p10.
Sat 7	10.00am – 1.00pm	PIOCC Working Party. Meet at the Noticeboard.
	10.00am – noon	The Mill Field Conservation group working party. page 8.
Tue 10	6.00pm	Deadline for April copy to Basinga Editor
Wed 11	7.45pm	BDRS meeting and talk at the Wote Street Club.
Fri 13	2.00pm – 4.30pm	Village Vibes Cafe at the Recreation Ground.
Fri 20	2.00pm – 4.00pm	The Welcome Tea Room at St. Mary's Church. Page 24
	2.00pm – 4.30pm	Village Vibes Cafe at the Recreation Ground.
Sat 21		Glass Maiden's Glass Making Workshop. See page 19.
Wed 25	11.00am – 4.00pm	Basing House opens every Wednesday to Sunday.
Wed 25	7.45pm	BDRS meeting and talk. Details in Basinga Extra.
Thu 26	7.30pm	Royal British Legion - WOMEN'S SECTION General Meeting. Competition: A spring flower
Fri 27	2.00pm – 4.30pm	Village Vibes Cafe at the Recreation Ground.
Mon 30	early!	Team Texas scramble golf day with proceeds going to the RBL Poppy Appeal. Details are on page 16.

BASINGA EXTRA

Have you ever tried looking at the online version of the Basinga? **Basinga Extra** is found at www.basinga.org.uk and has all you find in the printed version but even more local information and articles. You can find old editions of the Basinga going all the way back to 2018! The following articles, that we unfortunately couldn't find room for in this printed version of Basinga, can be found there.

Basingstoke and District Railway Society *Rotary Round-up*

HIWWT - The Wren

National Women's Register

Sandham Memorial Chapel

Winter Wellbeing


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● OLD BASING & LYCHPIT PARISH COUNCIL

CLERK: Kate Hope 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)

ASSISTANT CURATE: Rev'd Helen Holley 07541 698235
email: curate@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 01256 323103
email: revclaire72@btinternet.com
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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