

May 2026

BASINGA



Michael Wright



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

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MAY COVER PHOTO, NOTES AND NEWS

This month's topical cover photograph, a floral display at St. Mary's Church, Old Basing, taken by **Michael Wright**, serves as a reminder of their **Flower Festival and Open Gardens Weekend** in the middle of May. Details can be found on pages 18 and 19.

The Basinga Committee would like to recruit an **Advertising Manager** to replace the current volunteer who has left 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, as you can read below, are the life-blood of this magazine, and need to be 'looked after' carefully. If you are interested in joining the team in this role, or any other, or have any questions about this, or any other 'jobs', then please e-mail the editor at: **editor@basinga.org.uk**

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.

Our website **www.basinga.org.uk** has a list of our advertisers, either alphabetically or by page: from the home page choose 'OUR ADVERTISERS', then select 'CONTRACT ADS' to list our advertisers alphabetically. For **Free Ads** visit **Basinga Extra** and fill out the form under 'Advertising with us'.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BASINGA

The **very last date for copy** to the Editor for the **June** edition is **6.00pm on Sunday, 10th May, 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 2026



The **Teddy Bear Hospital** is new for this year's Old Basing and Lychpit Carnival on **Saturday, 20th June**.

This grew out of the support the **Oakley Stitches** gave to the Chineham and Hatch Warren repair café as teddies came to be mended. Then, earlier this year, the Stitches set up a Teddy Bear Hospital at Milestones Museum during the February half-term holiday which proved to be well-received and very successful.

This is a fun experience to help children not be afraid of hospitals. The Teddy's journey starts in triage where they are booked in and from here they move to be X-Rayed to demonstrate the bones in the body (*picture, below right*).

Next up is the C.T. scanner and chance for the Teddy's parents to turn the machine on and off. The Teddy is placed on a moving bed which moves in and out of the scanner. Then it is onto the MRI scanner which is another moving bed through a tunnel, with Teddy's parents encouraged to support their Teddy if scared of the dark.



After this is a sight and hearing test, before the final department which is surgery which is all about mending and providing a small bandage. To finish things off the children made a badge for their bear to show how brave they had been.



Not everyone has a poorly Teddy, so bring along your healthy bears for a check up. For anyone who does not have a Teddy there will be bunk beds of poorly teddies in the hospital, so they can take them round and see how they get better before tucking them back into bed.

So we look forward to seeing you all with your teddies on Carnival Day.

There is still time to get involved there. Simply go to the 2026 Carnival website: **www.obalcarnival.org** then click on 'Get Involved' and then select the category you require: The Procession; Volunteering; Book A Stall.

Also don't forget that once again the **Scarecrow Festival** will run from **1st June** until **Carnival Day**. In the past scarecrows have popped up all over the parish in various disguises bringing pleasure to all who see them.

There is no set theme, but if you are struggling for ideas, you could take inspiration from the procession theme '**Toys Come Alive!**' Please email your scarecrow pictures to **oldbasingcarnival@gmail.com** for us to include them on our Facebook page for everyone to see.

Graham Merry



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PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Please see the Allotment Advert on page 15

Meetings for May 2026

The **Annual Parish Council** meeting will be held on **Tuesday, 12th May at 7.30pm**. There will also be a meeting of the Facilities Management Committee on Tuesday 19th May 7.30pm, and the Planning & Development Committee on Tuesday 26th May 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 2026 meetings are detailed on our website and noticeboards.

Keep in Touch

If you have any question, concerns or ideas that you'd like to share with the Parish Council, please feel free to get in touch. You can contact us by email, phone, or by visiting the Parish Office. We are always happy to hear from you!

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 12 noon**

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



OLD BASING AND LYCHPIT CARNIVAL – TEAM SKITTLES

ITS BACK!! The Old Basing Carnival Skittles tournament is being held again during early June, at the Royal British Legion Club, Crown Lane, Old Basing. Get together with 4/6 friends from your club, pub, road etc. and join in the fun.

The objectives:

- 1) Raise money to assist local groups and amenities.
- 2) Have a beverage.
- 3) Have a lot of fun and build the spirit towards Carnival Day on June 20th
- 4) Have another beverage to celebrate or commiserate.

Entry forms with all details on are available from me now and here are the dates you should note:

Depending on the number of entries, the early rounds will be played on **Monday, 1st and Monday, 8th June**. The winning teams from each night go through to the semis and the **final** which will be played on **Thursday, 18th June**. All evenings should commence at **7.30pm** approx.

Contact **Rick Bourne** on **07900 648675** or by email: **rickbourne@yahoo.com** for a form or answers to any questions you might have.

We look forward to seeing you all at another great event

(NB, If you know the whereabouts of the original trophies for this competition I would be most grateful if you would let me know!)

THE MILL FIELD NATURE RESERVE



Part of the work of the team who look after the site is monitoring and recording of wildlife. One example is the Dormouse boxes we have on the edge of the woods, which our licensed handler checks at various times of the year.

We also record our Reptiles – slow worms, lizards and the snake populations. This has been done by placing reptile mats around the site, where the heat generated by the mat tempts reptiles to shelter under them. This may not be everyone's cup of tea but a very important part of what we have, so if you see a black mat in the grass please leave it alone. We hoping to get a better picture of reptiles in the area and our work just doesn't help the reserve but the surrounding area. The works are being carried out by Jim and the Ranger team.



We will also be surveying the butterflies on the site. So, watch this space, we may well have some interesting information for you in the coming months.

Some dates for your diary:

Green Week 6th -14th June
Duck Race at Bartons Mill
Monday, 31st August

What's around this month:

During May we'll be seeing much more wildlife around the field, with many of our migrant species of birds returning and more butterflies beginning to appear.

Swifts will start arriving, joining the Swallows and House Martins that will already be here. Other migrants making their presence heard include the Whitethroat, Garden Warblers and Willow Warblers along with the distinctive sound of the Cuckoo, also watch for the Goldfinches singing from the tops of bushes as they're nesting.

Evening visitors to the field will likely see the Tawny Owl on its regular hunts, as well as perhaps two species of bats, the Pipistrelle with its irregular flight above head height, and the less Common Serotine, its broad wings giving it a more leisurely flight above the trees.

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

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – WOMENS SECTION

Diary Dates

General Meeting Thursday, 28th May at 7.30 in the RBL Hall. Competition: A pretty vase
Forthcoming Event

Saturday, 13th June from 2.00pm to 4.00pm in the **RBL** in aid of the Women's Section 'Bring your own bag sale': Pay £5.00 at the door and go round the stalls and fill your bag. Items for sale, jewellery, books, jigsaws, bric a brac etc. Refreshments will be available.

Sue Chewter Chairman

OLD BASING & LYCHPIT ENVIRONMENT CAMPAIGN



We would like to thank everybody who took the time to respond to the Regulation 18 public consultation on the Draft Local Plan. There were 294 submissions about the proposed development site 'Land at Whitmarsh Lane'. Many of you focused on issues relating to the incinerator, odour from the Sewage Treatment Works and the River Loddon.

The Borough Council (B&DBC) commissioned JBA Consulting to undertake a comprehensive Water Cycle Study, published in November 2025. 'Its findings are stark and cannot be ignored' says the Council Leader, Dr Paul Harvey. We are told that there will not be sufficient water to supply the increased number of houses the Government demands Basingstoke builds. A new transfer pipeline from Surrey Hill service reservoir towards Basingstoke is not expected to be completed until 2033; it is already 10 years late.

We do not know what will happen now. Will B&DBC be able to proceed to the next public consultation stage, Regulation 19? It has to submit its Local Plan by the end of 2026 or the Government will step in and take over.

Some interesting things emerged from the submissions. NHS Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board pushed back against the planned centre at the 'Land at Whitmarsh Lane' site, saying it was 'not aligned to either local or national primary care strategies' and says there will need to be 'reconfiguration and/or expansion of existing GP facilities to accommodate the new residents.' So people will be pushed towards Chineham, where the surgery is on a ridiculously small site or to Old Basing, with increased traffic along Milkingpen Lane. Will these health facilities cope?

Gill Moore

Secretary to the OBLEC Committee

Water supply: You cannot build what you cannot supply.

OLD BASING BOWLS WELCOMES BACK 'GULF' MEMBERS



We were delighted to welcome back two long-standing members from an unexpected extended stay in the Gulf. Margaret and Ray Middleton (*right*) were caught up in the recent Gulf travel problems but are now glad to be back in time to enjoy the new bowls season at Old Basing Bowls.



This season the green at the Recreation Ground will host numerous events including two **Open Days** on **Saturday, 2nd May** and **Sunday, 24th May** where anyone can give bowls a try and learn more about the club. You will get a warm welcome, free tuition and some good tips to get you started. There is no need to book - you can arrive anytime from 10am to 2pm on the days and stay as long as you like. All you need to do is bring trainers or flat shoes, all other equipment will be provided. Tea and coffee plus a fully licenced bar will be available at great prices.

Whether you want to find a new hobby, new friends, improve your game, get in shape or just have some fun with your own family and friends, come on down to Old Basing Bowling Club and meet our members including Margaret and Ray.

Look at our website for further information at www.oldbasingbowlingclub.co.uk

FRIENDS OF LYCHPIT HALL



TALKS@Lychpit Hall – Speaker Roger was a wonderful entertainer and highly amusing as he described his years in the Metropolitan Police. Thank you, Roger! Then Graeme, Lychpit's answer to Professor Carl Sagan, ably walked us through the Cosmos, from today to the beginning of time. Next, we have bubbly Toni bringing to life fascinating facts about Winchester Cathedral, where she is an official guide. Join us and let Toni be your guide. After Toni's talk we will break for the summer.

Upcoming Talks@Lychpit_Hall:

Saturday, 30th May – Fascinating facts about Winchester Cathedral. Who knew the longest medieval cathedral in the world sits on our doorstep? Official guide Toni invites you to journey through 900 years of English history held within Winchester's hallowed walls.

Saturday, 26th September – in planning

Thursday, 29th October - Osteopathy helps rugby players and steel workers; what can it do for you? Includes a demo. Achieve optimal health through hands-on techniques. Diagnose musculoskeletal complaints. Get bones, ligaments and muscles working in harmony.

Arrive **7.15pm. 7.30pm start. Finish ~8.30pm.** Bring friends, drinks, nibbles. **Tickets £2** per head. Have a subject you'd love to talk about? Contact **fof.lychpit.hall@gmail.com**

QUIZZES – Our ever-popular quiz nights are ready to tax your brains. Look forward to: 8th May, 12th June, 17th July, 11th September, 16th October, 13th November and 18th December. Arrive after 7pm for a 7.30pm start. To book your table of up to six people, please email us. Bring drinks, nibbles and table decorations and enjoy.

HAMPSHIRE RBL GOLF SOCIETY

The Society holds its four-man team Texas Scramble in the Spring each year which is a fun day ending with a few pints and an informal meal. 30th March was the day for this, and the 24th time we have run the event back at Sherfield Oaks.

We had a great entry of nine teams of four, and coming out on top was always going to be competitive but this year's day out was won by Sherfield Cobs, made up of Noel Donovan, Jim Robertson, Brian Billsberry and Derek Woodward. It was a good day for Derek as he won the Nearest the Pin prize too. Runners-up in the team event were The Golfing Wizards, third were 3 Men and a Frog (!) and in fourth were 2024 winners Stevies Wonders.

Each of the players received some wine and confectionary. Those not fortunate enough to win on the golf course then had chance to take home a bottle of something by buying loads of raffle tickets. And it was the proceeds of this, plus a donation within the entry fee, that yielded a magnificent **£675** for the **RBL POPPY APPEAL**, much appreciated by those taking part and also Tim Russell, PAO at Old Basing RBL.

I must thank all the participants for their extraordinary generosity and Slaters Menswear in Basingstoke who gave me a £100 voucher for an auction that actually went for its face value. This golf format is much loved by many so I have no doubt we will be repeating the feat next Spring.

Rick Bourne - County Golf Secretary



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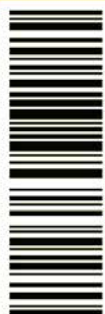


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ST.MARY'S CHURCHYARD CONSERVATION – PIOCC



Thank you to everyone who attended last month's AGM. It was lovely seeing you. We hope you enjoyed it as much as we did.

The birds are singing, the grass is growing . and this month's **Working Parties** will be on **Saturday, 2nd May** at **10.00am** and **Thursday, 28th May** at **2.00pm** – meet by the PIOCC noticeboard at the entrance to the Conservation Area. We will start the summer

season of maintenance when we strim and collect the grass for composting to reduce the fertility of the area to encourage the wild flowers.

We are a community project, not just for churchgoers Our volunteers make a real difference. We will welcome you warmly. 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) and our Thursday afternoons about two hours. All are very welcome, both our regular volunteers and new participants.

The Conservation Area is a community space for all to enjoy. The dawn chorus crescendos at first light, but the birds continue to sing during the day as they command territories for nesting. If you look carefully amongst the longer grass you may also spot Ragged Robin with its fringed pink petals and the paler petals of Ladies Smock, plants associated with traditional water meadows, like those that ran through the village alongside the Loddon.

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

Margaret Carr www.stmarysoldbasing.org.uk

OLD BASING WI



Caroline from Oakley Stitchers gave a very interesting insight to all the organisations, she and her team help with all the things they sew and knit. If you get a chance to have a look at their website, you will be amazed.

This was our end of year meeting as our AGM is due next month, so it was an opportunity to look back at all the things we have done, especially in the wider community. We have helped the Women's Refuge, Camrose Homeless Centre, the Pink Place. We took part in the carnival procession and had a stall there and at the Basing House Christmas fair. We decorated the village with poppies and took part in the remembrance day parade. One of the resolutions of the National committee of the WI was "Bystanders can be lifesavers", so we undertook CPR and defibrillator training.

We meet, every **first Tuesday** of the month **7.30pm**, at the parish room, St Mary's church. Our next meeting is on the **5th May**. 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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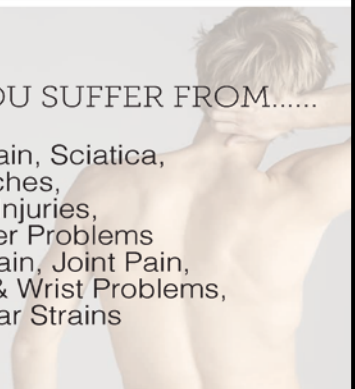


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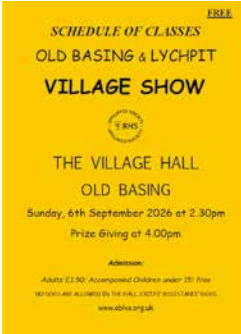
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OLD BASING AND LYCHPIT VILLAGE SHOW



The **2026 Show Schedule** is now available for inspection and download from our website www.oblvs.org.uk The website has information and guidelines for exhibitors as well as other information such as the history of the Show and the awards. And we now have our own **Facebook page** which you can find by searching for **OldBasingLychpitShow**.

We will again be sharing a plant stall at the St Mary's Flower Festival so please come along and look for some bargains. It's not too late to be planting and hopefully the frost tender plants can soon be put outdoors. If you have any left-over seedlings or plants that you would like to donate to the sale, please contact us (details

on the website) or bring them along on the day. All contributions are welcome. Committee members will be manning the stall on **Saturday, 16th May** and can answer any questions you may have about the Show. We will also have hard copy schedules available if you don't already have one by then.

As well as the horticultural classes, there are sections in the Show for domestic exhibits, handicraft, home-made drinks, photography, original writing and a children's section. Hopefully there's something for everyone!

Show day is on **Sunday, 6th September** and we look forward to welcoming visitors and seeing lots of entries on the Show benches again this year.



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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, 21st May**, and the following lunch on **Thursday, 18th June**.

THE WESSEX CHAMBER CHOIR

are performing two concerts on **Saturday, 16th May**. **The Silver Swan – Music for Spring and Summer** will be performed at **Rotherwick Village Hall** at **3.00pm**, followed by an event at **St Lawrence Church, Alton** at **7.30pm**.

These promise to be joy-filled concerts. From folk songs to madrigals, with music by composers such as Dowland, Daley, Gjelo, Lander, Rutter and Tarney; this is guaranteed to put a spring in your step! **Tickets are £17.50** (free for under 18s) and are available on our website: www.wessexchamberchoir.co.uk

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).

MOBILITY SCOOTER **£450** **07795802883**

Illusion Komfi Rider Folding Mobility Scooter, Dark Purple. Compact and lightweight. Selling on behalf of my mum who no longer requires it. Brought for £2295, good condition, comes with mains charger, two keys, original manual. Always been kept in garage.

SEA FISHING TACKLE + **£200** **07990602551**

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PANASONIC RECORDER **£60** **07990602551**

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LAWN MOWER **£30** **01256334316**

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LE CREUSET PAN. **£50** **07775945291**

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BMVC
 Basingstoke Male Voice Choir

Sounds of Summer

A concert by the Basingstoke Male Voice Choir

7:30 pm on Saturday 6th June

All Saints Church, Southern Rd, RG21 3EA

Doors open at 7:00 pm

Tickets £12:00 from Ticket Source:
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/bmvc>

<https://basingstokemvc.org.uk>



St. Mary's Church Flower Fest

Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th

Open Gardens

What could be more enjoyable than spending time in your garden at the weekend? Well, spending time in someone else's garden of course.

Yes, we are fortunate that a number of villagers have agreed to open up their gardens this year.

Entry to the gardens is buy buying an **Open Gardens Booklet**, which costs **£10 per adult** and gives you access to the gardens and a voucher for a cream tea. We have over 10 gardens to visit and the Parish Council have kindly agreed that people can visit the allotments too.

Some gardens are only open on one of the days, some allow dogs on leads, so get your booklets early and plan your weekend.

The booklets will go on early sale at **The Welcome Tea Room in St Mary's Church Parish Room** on, **Friday, 1st May 2pm – 4pm** and **Friday, 15th May 2.00pm – 4.00pm**, as well as being sold during the festival weekend.

Instagram: [@secretoldbasing](https://www.instagram.com/secretoldbasing)



Festival and Open Gardens Weekend

17th May – Parish Life in Petals



Flower Festival

St Mary's Church will be brimming with flowers this weekend with arrangements from our amazing group of flower arrangers and from other organisations advertising their services too

It's not too late to join in with **"Jam a jam jar with joy"** by bringing a jam jar full of flowers to add to our display and a donation of just **£1**. Just drop them off on the **Friday** between **3.00-5.00pm** or Saturday **8.00-10.00am**.

In the Bolton Chapel there will be a wonderful colouring opportunity for all. As always there will be lots of craft stalls, a plant stall, cakes, children's activities, a raffle and lots more.

We will see the return of our popular Teddy Zip Wire from the top of the tower. This is not exclusively for Teddies, other brave toys are welcome too.

On the **Saturday** at **11.30** we will be joined by the choirs of **St Mary's Junior School and Old Basing Infant School**. Pop along and listen to them and stay for a BBQ lunch.

On **Sunday** at **2.00pm** The BSC Chorale' will be singing George Shearing's "Songs and Sonnets" : Settings of seven Shakespeare texts. This is sure to sound wonderful with the church acoustics.

The church is open from **11am** to **4pm** on both days

Details at: stmarysoldbasing.org.uk



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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



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 at St Mary's Church via our Facebook page or visit our website: www.stmarysoldbasing.org.uk

ASCENSION DAY SERVICE AT ST MARY'S

Thursday, 14th May at 8.00am, followed by breakfast – all welcome

FRIENDS OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH

The Friends' Spring wardrobe has been dusted off and our wellies are back in the cupboard, as the weather is lovely – it'll be Wimbledon Fortnight before you know it...

The next thing on the Friends' agenda is the **Annual General Meeting**, which is set for **7.00pm on Tuesday, 19th May** – all welcome and indeed encouraged, as Gary Taylor will be giving a talk on the Bolton family. The Boltons effectively ruled Old Basing in the Middle Ages, built Basing House, welcomed Royalty and, as Royalists, challenged Parliament and oversaw the battles of Basing House, eventually resulting in the destruction of the house in 1645. Come and listen to Gary – he will tell you what happened next.



Talking of destruction: Damp has done its thing in the floor of the Bolton Chapel, which is the far bay in the South East corner as you enter St Mary's Church (with the wooden flooring). Visitors may have noticed the floor has been somewhat bouncy recently. We will need to replace much of the woodwork overlying the crypt. Incidentally, this is where a lot of the Bolton family are buried. The quotes are beginning to come in for the work and are running in the region of £17,000 currently.

The plan is to use better quality timbers than were used when it was last done in the '80s, so the replacement lasts longer. However, it's always the inevitable trade-off between cost versus income and other expenditures.

Your continued support to events like the **AGM, Quiz, Panto** and upcoming **Murder Mystery** evening helps contribute to the maintenance of our beautiful but frail Grade 1 listed church building. If you're not a member of the Friends – please have a good look at our website (fosmc.org) and consider joining.

OLD BASING SCOUT GROUP



Summer is here, and at Old Basing Scout Group our Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts are looking forward to a term packed full of adventure, challenge and fun.

As the evenings get lighter and the weather improves, our young people will be making the most of the outdoors with a wide variety of exciting activities. From learning to helm narrowboats and exploring local waterways, to visiting adventure parks and farms, there will be plenty of opportunities to try something new, build confidence, and develop practical skills. Alongside these activities, members will also take part in county-wide events, meeting other Scouts and experiencing the wider scouting community.

We are also looking forward to taking part in a number of local community events over the summer, giving our young people the chance to represent the group and play an active role in the local area.

Two of the highlights of the term will be BEASTLY26 and our annual Group Camp. BEASTLY is the biggest Scout and Guiding event in Hampshire offering a full day of activities from archery and climbing to virtual reality and Zorb Football! BEASTLY will give the young people the chance to try something new and meet others from all across the area.



Our annual Group Camp will then round off the term, bringing everyone together for a weekend of outdoor activities and shared challenges.

Both our Tuesday and Wednesday Cubs Packs (for Young People aged 7.5 – 10 years old) as well as our Tuesday Scout Troop (for Young People aged 10 – 14 years old) all currently have spaces available for new joiners to start straight away!

If you're interested in joining us or want more information, then please contact us by email group@oldbasingscouts.org.uk You can find us on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn at 'Old Basing Scout Group' where we post regular updates on what we get up to.

OLD BASING VILLAGE HALL – AGM



The **Village Hall AGM** will be held on **Wednesday, 20th May** at **7.30pm** in the **Frank Goddard Room**.

The Management Committee are looking for new members to join the team; if you have some spare time and would like to give something back to the community, it's a great opportunity to meet new people and learn new skills.

The Committee meets approximately six times per year to discuss the maintenance and management of this wonderful asset to the village of Old Basing. Why not come along on to the AGM to have a drink, meet the committee and maybe join the team.

NEWS FROM BASING HOUSE



Basing House reopened just before Easter and is now open **11.00am to 4.00pm, Wednesday to Saturday** until the autumn. Tickets are annual, but do not include some events. Volunteer led **guided tours** run every **Wednesday, 1.30pm to 3.00pm** and we have **Rhyme Time** for pre-school children, also on **Wednesdays**

between **11.00am and noon**. Both these are included in the annual ticket.

May's other events (below) are not included in the annual ticket, and there are more details at www.hampshireculture.org.uk/events?location=6 about events, and the site in general, annual tickets and event prices.

Having been the site of a major Civil War Siege, the site has long been subject to stories of ghosts and paranormal activity. From **5.00pm to 11.00pm on Saturday, 9th May Spectral Nights** are running a thrilling night of ghost hunting, using cutting-edge electronic equipment to uncover the mysteries hidden in the shadows.

Watercolours: **The Elegance of Mackintosh Florals – Springtime Flora** is our next art course, running from **10.00am to 4.00pm on Thursday, 13th May**. It will be followed by another course – the **Willow Platter Workshop on Thursday, 4th June**; a two-hour course that will run twice that day at **10.30am and 1.30pm** showing how to make a willow Free car parking is available in our car park by Barton's Mill pub. There is a five minute riverside walk (usually complete with ducks) from the car park to the visitor centre, and a torch will help greatly on this path for those returning in the dark from the paranormal event.

Andrew Howard 01256 327014

THE WELCOME TEA ROOM AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH



May is set to be a very busy and exciting month for the Tea Room with our usual openings on **Fridays, 1st and 15th May** as well as the team providing **Cream Teas** to visitors at **St Mary's Flower Festival & Open Garden** event over the weekend of **16th/17th May** (please see centre pages). As well as being available via the church, booklets for the **Open Gardens** (priced at **£10 per adult**, children no charge) will be available from **The Tea Room** at our sessions on **1st & 15th May**, which will allow you entry to all the gardens as well as a cream tea on either of the afternoons.

In other news..... We're pleased to announce that a **£1000** of the money raised will be used by **Old Basing Methodist Church** in their work with the **Community Food Link** as well as **Methodist Action on Poverty and Injustice in Basingstoke**. The Community Food Link collects fresh, nutritious food that cannot be sold by supermarkets and it is then delivered to charities, schools and playgroups in order that they can help the most vulnerable in our society. We look forward to continuing to support community initiatives going forward.

A huge thank you to everyone who continues to come along, rain or shine! We certainly hope to have more shine in the coming months when hopefully we will be able to set up tables outside! Our volunteers so look forward to chatting to you (and your well behaved dogs on leads – treats on offer!).

The Elegant Avian Scavenger

If it wasn't for the fact that this area is so used to seeing this giant bird in our skies these days, the title '**Return of the Red Kite**' might reference some miscreant in a spy service; however it was the title of the talk given to the Basingstoke Ladies Probus Club by **Keith Bretton** - writer, lecturer and occasional broadcaster and an absolute authority on the life and times of the Red Kite.



In medieval times the bird was very common over London but by 1875 – 1900 it was extinct in many countries other than Wales and the north of Scotland. Its proliferation in Hampshire has been relatively recent but dramatic, given that in 1990 there were just five, but by 2020 this had increased to 4,031 and by 2025 a staggering 6,500.

This magnificently graceful bird of prey is unmistakable with its reddish-brown body, angled wings and deeply forked tail and is said to symbolise freedom and resurrection, while also representing successful ecological conservation and resilience. Notwithstanding its 1.5m wingspan, it is remarkably

light at just 1-1.5kg, the female, which can breed from two years old, being heavier than the male and both are highly manoeuvrable and both can live up to 29 years of age if they have not been poisoned or shot, as sadly happens.

Despite negative and inaccurate publicity, the kite is physically incapable of lifting heavy prey, including lambs or small children as has been suggested, as they cannot lift much more than a small rabbit or squirrel. What they are proficient at, however, is removing small items of clothing from a washing line with which to furnish the nest to add to the more commonly used material of sheep's wool. That nest might have been previously the dwelling of another, as the kite will steal the nest of, for example, the crow or sparrowhawk. For food they will swoop down to grab food from both ground and water and have smartly learnt to follow tractors during harvesting, which can reap much upturned sustenance.



Keith, who started lecturing at age 15, is a keen world birder having seen nearly 9000 species in 123 countries. He has a particular passion for Africa and is Chair of the African Bird Club. In the UK, he is heavily involved in bird monitoring in Hampshire, where he is Chair of the Hampshire Ornithological Society. He has been a Council Member of both the RSPB and British Trust for Ornithology.

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The Club was delighted to host such an expert – in the words of one member who gave the Vote of Thanks, 'In these days of political misery, the talk had been wonderfully entertaining' – and she had stayed awake!

If you're interested in knowing more about BLPC membership and the upcoming programme, contact the Admin Secretary by email: reverendjane@hotmail.co.uk or by phone: **07754 296994**

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YOUR GARDEN IN MAY



May is one of the busiest, and most rewarding, months in the garden. The soil is warming up, plants are actively growing, and it's the perfect time to set things up for summer success. Here's a clear breakdown of what to do:

Planting & Sowing: Sow carrots, beetroot, lettuce, radish and spinach outdoors. Plant out (after last frost) your tomatoes, courgettes, pumpkins and sweetcorn. Summer bedding plants like petunias, geraniums and marigolds can go out now, as can basil, parsley and coriander.

In north Hampshire, the climate is slightly milder than most of the UK, so you can often plant a bit earlier, but still watch for late frosts.

Flower Garden Care: Deadhead spring flowers to keep blooms coming. Stake tall plants (like delphiniums and peonies) before they flop. Weed regularly, they grow fast now. Mulch beds to retain moisture and suppress weeds.

Lawn Maintenance: Mow weekly (but don't cut too short in dry spells). Edge borders for a tidy look. Feed the lawn with spring fertiliser. Water if needed, especially in dry, windy weather.

Fruit & Veg Jobs: Net strawberries to protect from birds. Support climbing crops (beans, peas) with canes. Thin seedlings so plants have space to grow. Tie in greenhouse crops like tomatoes and cucumbers.

Greenhouse: Water thirsty crops such as tomatoes, cucumbers and courgettes regularly as the weather starts to warm up. Tie the stems of indoor tomatoes, cucumbers and aubergines to canes as they grow. Check plants regularly for pests, on shoot tips and the underside of leaves, and treat with biological controls if desired. Put up shading to lower daytime temperatures and reduce scorching. Open doors and vents on warm days, but close them in the evening as nights can still be cold.

Wildlife & General Care: Plant pollinator-friendly flowers (lavender, foxgloves). Keep bird baths topped up. Turn compost heaps to speed decomposition. Water early morning or evening to reduce evaporation.

Watch Out For: Slugs & snails (especially after rain), aphids on soft new growth and, if late frosts do happen, cover tender plants if needed.

THE IVY CLUB



Fish and chips all round - celebrating Easter

The Ivy Club, shown at their weekly meeting in the Royal British Legion. Thanks to Oliver's Fish and Chips. There were raffle prizes of Easter Eggs and a name the bunny competition.

We are a group of OAPs where for **£2.00 per week** you get refreshments and a free raffle. We have entertainment, quiz afternoons, play bingo and much much more.

Sue Wilson – Chairman

NATURE NOTES FOR MAY

I found a week or two after I'd written my opening sentence last month (Spring has sprung) that I'd fallen into the trap that countless millions had done before me, and that was to become a paid-up member of 'The Fools Spring club'. Yes, lesson learnt, don't think it's the change of season until IT IS! March, after a promising start, delivered an icy northern blast for 10 days or more that made us all dive for the jacket we thought we had seen the last of. But fear not, a brief southerly draw of air enticed the first Swallows to cross the channel.

My friend from Huish, Lawrie Spicer, was the first to see one and in his words, 'probably the earliest ever' that being on 18th March. David Rocke, whose Lower Mill farm buildings always attract several breeding pairs each summer, noted a flyover bird a day or two after that so it's a good omen that summer migrants are on their way.

I heard my first Chiffchaff on 21st March at Sherfield and any glimpse of the sun seems to have brought a plethora of Brimstone butterflies on to the wing.

Blue Tits are getting very serious about nest box inspections and as I write at the end of the month, actual nest building should commence with laying and incubation to follow, timed perfectly to match a good hatch of invertebrates during mid to late May.

I've never worked out entirely why birds that are more commonly seen way out in fields



just decide they want to visit gardens at this time of year. I refer to Red-Legged Partridges (sometimes called Frenchmen, *pictured left*) who often go sightseeing in urban areas, this time in Stephen Thairs garden, where a pair wandered around for 30 minutes or more: pretty bird though.

Last month's video clip/photos of Lamprey on the Loddon excited a few people across the County, with location and dates now recorded for two main reasons. The first being that it's just interesting to have these rare fish here but also useful as a means of providing essential data to dissuade any further exploitation of our rare chalk stream. Protecting the amount and quality of the

water in the Loddon and Lyde is absolutely paramount not only for us parishioners but for the country as a whole. Chalk streams are essentially the jewel in the crown of the UK's wildlife environment and CANNOT be replaced if destroyed. And at last, at least one water authority has recognised this and have pushed back on over-development locally, simply because there wouldn't be enough water to go around, and if there was, Thames Water couldn't deal with the waste anyway.

Rick Bourne

Don't forget to send all your nature related stories and photos to rickbourne@yahoo.com or naturenotes@basinga.org.uk

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DIARY DATES FOR MAY 2026

For details of services and events at St Mary's Church please see page 21

May		
Fri 1	2.00pm – 4.00pm	Welcome Tea Room at St. Mary's Church.
Sat 2	10.00am – 2.00pm	Old Basing Bowling Club Open Day. See page 9.
	10.00am – 1.00pm	PIOCC Working Party at St. Mary's Church.
Mon 4	10.00am – 11.30am	Basingstoke Veterans Club. See poster on page 30.
Tue 5	7.30pm	Old Basing WI meet in the Parish Room, St. Mary's.
Thu 7	7.30pm	RBL Branch meeting, at Old Basing RBL Jack Morris Hall. Guests and prospective members welcome.
Sun 10	6.00pm	Deadline for June Copy to Basinga Editor – See p3 for details.
Tue 12	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting at the Recreation Ground. Page 7.
Wed 13	7.45pm	BDRS meeting: Restoration of BR Standard 4 Tank.
Fri 15	2.00pm – 4.00pm	Welcome Tea Room at St. Mary's Church.
Sat 16	3.00pm	Wessex Chamber Choir at Rotherwick Village Hall.
Tue 19	7.00pm	Friends of St. Mary's Church AGM. Details on page 21.
Wed 20	7.30pm	Village Hall AGM in the Frank Goddard Room. Page 22.
Sun 24	10.00am – 2.00pm	Old Basing Bowling Club Open Day. See page 9.
Mon 25		Rotary Duck Race at Barton's Mill. See Poster on page 15.
Wed 27	7.45pm	BDRS meeting: Western Canada 1981 / 2016.
Thu 28	2.00pm – 4.00pm	PIOCC Working Party. Meet at the Noticeboard.
	7.30pm	RBL Women's Section meeting in the RBL Hall.
Sat 30	7.15pm / 7.30pm	Talks@LychpitHall – Winchester Cathedral. see page 10.
June		
Tue 2	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting at the Recreation Ground.

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.

Age Concern *Basingstoke and District Railway Society*

Basingstoke Veterans Club *Citizen's Advice Bureau*

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust *National Women's Register*

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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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