

THE Grapevine

May 2025

50p

THE NEWSLETTER OF FLACKWELL HEATH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



May: a Month for Gardens

We have two very popular plant sales in the village this month.

On **Saturday 10**, there is the annual sale by **High Wycombe Chrysanthemum Society**, who set up tables in the Community Centre car park from 9am till 12noon. Here you will find, not only loads of healthy plants, but some keen and knowledgeable gardeners. John Marshall has written a very informative article on growing salad crops (see p7).

The following **Saturday 17** it is the turn of the **Christian Aid Sale** at Christ Church from 10am-12noon. There's always an excellent selection of plants on sale including the ever popular fruit and vegetables; cucumber, strawberries, courgettes and tomatoes. (Last year there was a queue: see below). As well as the chance to purchase plants inexpensively, it's a great place to meet up with other residents and share coffee and cake provided by the hard-working team from Christ Church's Coffee Stop. There's also the opportunity to get your car washed as willing hands from Christ Church will be slaving away with buckets and sponges in the rear car park.



Not again!

During April, driving in and out of Flackwell Heath became something of a challenge. As well as the 4-way lights at the roundabout (gas this time), there were also roadworks in Bourne End, on the A40, and in Daws Hill Lane. Green Dragon Lane was closed for a few days and Sheepridge Lane one day. Thank goodness it was the school holidays!

A police car negotiates the queue for the 4-way lights



The knitters commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day in the library.



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**Saturday May 31st
& Sunday June 1st 2025**

Green Dragon Lane Recreation Ground
www.fhfc.com



The Community Association AGM

will be held on Wednesday 14 May at 8pm in the Sarney Room at the Community Centre.

All village residents welcome.

Come and find out the latest news and have your say.

Refreshments will be served.



What's New at Heath Fest This Summer?

Get ready for an unforgettable day at **Heath Fest** on **Saturday 12 July, 12:30pm–10:00pm** at **Carrington Field**.

This year's line-up is bigger and better than ever:

- **Live Music All Day** – From toe-tapping country tunes and nostalgic '80s ballads to an acoustic duo and the very best of Brit-pop, there's something for everyone.
- **Headline Act** – *Thinking Out Loud*, the UK's number one **Ed Sheeran tribute act**, will take centre stage for a spectacular finale.
- **Katy Kartwheel's Circus Passion** – A fun, free-flow circus workshop where kids can learn juggling, balance, and more.
- **Silent Disco** – A new addition especially for teens (and anyone who loves a good dance with headphones on!).
- **Basketball Challenge** – Kids can test their skills and challenge their friends.
- **Tea Tent** – Run by the **Community Pantry** and **Oasis Bereavement Group**, raising funds for two brilliant local causes.
- All this in addition to the usual fabulous **street food vendors, stalls, rides and drinks tents**.

A huge thank you to our generous sponsors **Brittons Solicitors** and **Martin Adams Vehicle Servicing** for supporting this fantastic event.

Tickets available now at www.fhra.co.uk

Community Speedwatch - Volunteers needed.

Volunteers Paul Grandidge and Beverley Jewell have been keeping our Community Speedwatch team afloat, but they are in great need of additional volunteers to help encourage drivers to keep our community safe. If you are worried about speeding in Flackwell and can volunteer as little as just one hour per month, please do get in touch at hello@fhra.co.uk. All training and equipment is provided.

Easter Bonnet Parade

It is an absolutely beautiful afternoon. We are sitting on little chairs, (designed for very small bottoms), around the edges of the playground at Carrington Infant School. The sun is shining and music plays, as we wait for the Easter Bonnet Parade to begin.

It's almost time to start! Is that the flutter of a hat ribbon at the corner? Yes here they come. The pre-school children (the youngest in the school), are first to appear. Smiling faces peep out shyly from underneath large, colourful hats and Kate Cliffe, the headteacher, bends down, her huge rabbit ears nodding, to welcome these tinies.



As the children set out on a circuit around the playground, the mums and dads (and grandparents and younger siblings) start to cheer and clap in delight and the hats wave back to their families. More and more children are streaming out into the sunshine and there are lots of "Oohs" and "Aahs". We are all delighted and amazed at the imaginative and creative hats, some of which are almost as big as the child underneath.

Each class circles the playground twice before the children quietly sit down, cross legged. A sea of colour is growing in front of our eyes, until it seems as if the entire playground is covered in



wonderful hats, decorated with chickens, eggs, rabbits and flowers and everything you could think of.

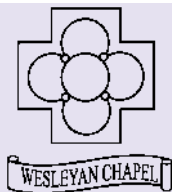
And now it's time for the prizes. Each class has a winner for the best hat, nominated by the class teacher. Koby (Willow class), Ava (Diamond), Joshua (Opal), Ronnie (Ruby), Alfie (Emerald), Emily (Amethyst) and Junior (Sapphire). The winners stand proudly together, and each receives an Easter egg.

And so, with much clapping, the Easter Bonnet Parade comes to a close and parents hug their children and prepare to make their way home. Colourful hat ribbons dance along in the tiny breeze. It's really hard to imagine that the sunny playground, filled with excited, chattering children, will soon be empty and tomorrow the children will all disappear for the holidays. But what a truly wonderful treat it has been to see this year's magical Easter Bonnet Parade, and we are all so thankful for this wonderful tradition at Carrington Infant School.

Juliet Bates



It's that Craig person taking our picture again!



FLACKWELL HEATH METHODIST CHURCH

SUNDAY 4 MAY, 11am – MORNING WORSHIP led by Rev. Kate Strange, followed by our COMMUNITY LUNCH. All are welcome – please put your name on the list in the church so that we have an idea of numbers.

SUNDAY 11 MAY, 11am – MORNING WORSHIP led by Paul Strange.

SUNDAY 18 MAY, 11am – CONTEMPORARY MORNING WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION led by Rev. Kate Strange.

SUNDAY 25 MAY, 11am – MORNING WORSHIP: a Circuit service streamed from Marlow, led by Rev. Kate Strange.

SATURDAY COFFEE MORNING: Every Saturday, the church is open from 10am until 12noon to provide a friendly space to enjoy company, so please just drop in.

GIRLS' BRIGADE meets in the church on Tuesday evenings from 5.45 during term time. If anyone needs further information, please contact us at suzstoll@aol.com and we will put you in touch.

PARENT AND TODDLER (PAT) GROUP – in the church from 9.15 on Wednesday mornings during term time. Please see the Flackwell Heath Wednesday PAT Group Facebook page for details.

FHMC WOMEN'S GROUP meets on the third Thursday of each month in the church from 10.30am to 12noon. Tea and coffee are available from 10am.

PLAY & PRAISE – in the church from 9.15 on Friday mornings during term time.

We run a **LINE DANCING** class on Wednesday evenings 7.30 - 9pm. For more information, please contact Grace on 07929 517064.

To book the hall for events, please contact Grace on the above number.

If you have specific prayer requests or need any information, please contact us on the links below; our Facebook page has regular updates.

www.facebook.com/FlackwellHeathMC
prayer.requests@fhmc.org.uk



If there were such a competition as 'Best Month of the Year,' I've always thought that May would be a strong contender – and that isn't just because my birthday falls in the fifth month. There's lots to like about May. There are two Bank Holidays for a start. Then there's the sense of spring turning into summer, of long sunny evenings, and flowers blooming all around us. For football fans there's the FA Cup Final, and for horticulturalists the RHS Chelsea Flower Show provides its annual dash of glamour.

Given all that, I wasn't surprised to hear that May has been designated National Smile Month – but I was a bit less excited to learn that this wasn't about warmly greeting one another with big grins, but about oral health issues. Don't get me wrong; I'm very much in favour of good dental hygiene. But I'm not sure I'd relish spending a month celebrating flossing.

We know that a smile, of course, can make a big difference. It's amazing how something as simple as a smile can change the course of our day – and it's always worth remembering when we're going about our usual business. Next time you get to the checkout, remember to smile at the person serving you, because you have no idea what sort of day they've been having. And next time someone smiles at you, notice how it makes you feel. It's hard to stay grumpy when you're surrounded by smiles!

Smiles and celebrations go hand in hand. May is a popular time of year for family gatherings, in part because of the aforementioned holidays and good weather (in theory – the British weather is such that nothing is ever guaranteed). This is then a good moment to extend the invitation to explore having your **baptism** or **wedding** with us at Christ Church. If you're a resident of Flackwell

Heath you're entitled to these services, so if you are thinking about it, we'd love to hear from you. These are precious moments and marking them with a church service can make them feel extra special.

Of course, sometimes life isn't all smiles. There are times when things are hard, and we're here for those as well. Whether it's someone to talk to at **Coffee Stop**, companionship for different ages at **Oasis** or **Play Café**, or simply popping into church during the week when it's open for a moment of quiet, our purpose as a church is to be there for you. And at life's saddest points, when a loved one dies, we're privileged to be able to offer **funerals** as well. Don't feel you have to be full of smiles to come and talk to us – just come as you are.

Finally, if you're looking for some new plants to brighten up your garden, our annual **Christian Aid Plant Sale** takes place on Saturday 17th May, from 10am-12noon. It's a village tradition and is as popular as ever. Come and browse from a wonderful array of plants, and enjoy a coffee and a cake as well, all in the name of a good cause.

Have a peaceful May, and keep smiling.

Go gently,

James Dwyer

Vicar of Flackwell Heath

Contact

Phone: 01628 533004
Email: admin@ccfh.org.uk
Website: www.ccfh.org.uk

Regular services

9am Holy Communion
10.30am Morning Worship
6.30pm Various services

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Priestfield Arboretum Spring Weekend



The trustees write:

The opening of Priestfield Arboretum to the public for a day in Spring has always been a highlight of our annual programme. This year, we have decided to extend the usual one-day Open Day to cover a whole weekend – the weekend of May 17/18.

It will include all the usual activities including tours, either in groups headed by one or two of our 'more knowledgeable' members or assisted by our updated self-guide pamphlet, fun challenges for children (of all ages – up to 90) and specific presentation of our champion trees.

The arboretum is in Stony Lane, Little Kingshill; use HP16 ODS in a satnav. Opening times are 10.30am to 4pm and Malcolm Wiles, one of the 'more knowledgeable' members will be leading a tour at 11am on the Sunday. And yes, there is a tulip tree (see p5). More details are available online if you search for Priestfield Arboretum.

Craig tries Lawn Bowls

Dave Fowler, club captain of Flackwell Heath Bowls Club invited me to their annual open day on Easter Saturday. Contrary to predictions on various weather apps, the weather was warm and sunny, as was the welcome I received on arrival, just after lunch. Dave was delighted to tell me that the morning had been very busy with 7 new members signing up. He suggested I have a go alongside another visitor, Ken. Our hand size was quickly assessed and we were given appropriate bowls to use. Dave briefed us on various markings on the green and how far we could bowl the jack etc. before explaining how the bias works on the bowls before letting us have a go.

Ken and I played a few ends with honours about even, before retiring to the club house where my partner enquired about membership whilst I tested the bar and found out a little more about the club. Dave told me that he and his better half, Sue, joined up during Covid as it was something you were actually allowed to do outdoors. Both have already made it onto the very

impressive club honours board. The club has over 50 fixtures in a season which began this year on Easter Sunday and finishes in mid-September.

I was looking for a photo opportunity and my prayers were answered when Caroline and Philip Mason turned up to have a go. Caroline, who works at Carrington Preschool, admitted she's very competitive and had every intention of beating her recently retired husband. Phillip got off to a great start winning the first few ends before disaster struck and he inadvertently left Caroline scoring three which made her extremely happy! Both thoroughly enjoyed themselves and rushed off to the clubhouse to sign up.

The club was founded in 1984 and now has about 70 members. If you missed the open day and would like to join, you can email the secretary, Barbara Shennan, at fhbcsecretary@gmail.com.

Craig Lewis

Right: Caroline releases her bowl watched by husband and Sue Fowler.

Carrington Preschool's

50th celebrations



Carrington Preschool will be celebrating its 50th anniversary this May. To mark the occasion, we will be celebrating with the children as well as former staff and committee members from over the years.

The Preschool's journey began in 1975, when the head of Carrington Infant School Miss Freeman, along with a teacher, approached a group of local mothers who were volunteers. With support from the Preschool Learning Alliance, Carrington Preschool was established.

Today our preschool is a CIO Charity, supported by local trustees, with a dedicated team of eight qualified staff members.

Over the years, we have provided a safe, caring, fun educational environment for over 1,000 local children, giving them a positive start in their learning journey.

Della Ashton/Hayley Ede



Martin Adams

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Flackwell Heath Women's Institute

Evening WI

What an entertaining talk we had when David Dennis transported us to Antarctica at our April Meeting. First he told us about the brave explorers who were determined to try and reach the South Pole in the 19th and early 20th Century – Scott, Amundsen and Shackleton. What amazing feats of courage! Then he reminded us of the main types of penguins each a different size and with unusual features.

When we were truly cold he allowed us to see the latest deluxe cruise ship which he was travelling on, sailing to the edge of the Antarctic. As his photographs captured clearly - the beautiful scenery, blue ice and mammals were stunning. But for how long will it look like this – as he pointed out the temperature has been monitored over the years and it is rising. He directed us to a small 30-year-old charity, EIA, the Environment Investigation Agency which actively exposes environmental destruction round the world and gives this evidence to governments so they can act. You can see more on their website, www.eia-international.org.

Next month, May, we are talking about the Resolutions we can collectively support as a National Institution. Finally, we will be inviting members to read a poem which means something to them or invokes hopefully happy memories.

Helen Waller

(No morning WI report this month as the April meeting was too late to make the deadline)

Tulip Tree, *Liriodendron tulipifera*

This handsome tree grows in Blind Lane. Another, as yet somewhat smaller Tulip Tree occupies a prominent location on the corner of Chapman Lane and Straight Bit. The Tulip Tree is a native of south-eastern North America, from Pennsylvania to Mississippi, and was introduced to this country* sometime around 1650. It is the state tree of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Indiana. Tulip Trees are related to Magnolias.

Tulip Trees are vigorous and fast growing; here, a tree can reach 20 metres height in 40 years, and 36 metres when mature, but it needs a sunny location to do well.



The species takes its name from its large greenish-yellow tulip shaped flowers, which open in June. These can be tricky to spot, as they are almost the same colour as the leaves until open. It used to be said that Tulip Trees flowered only in hot summers in the UK, but with climate change flowers seem to be becoming more common. The picture above shows a flower on the Chapman Lane tree in June 2024. Older trees flower more prolifically than younger specimens. Its lifespan is about 300 years; autumn colour is usually a rich butter yellow.

In the US, the Tulip Tree is a valuable hardwood timber tree. Its wood does not suffer from the brittleness often



associated with fast growing species, and the trunks are usually straight for 20 metres above the ground. In this country it has only ornamental uses.

If you are interested in learning to identify trees, then the Tulip Tree would be a good choice with which to start. The 4-lobed leaves (see below) are unusual and distinctive, and resembled only by a few rare species of Catalpa (which are very different plants).

Malcolm Wiles

* Brought to England by John Tradescant (the younger 1608-1662) – see also 'Virgin Earth' by Philipa Gregory.



News in Brief

We heard recently of the death of **Denis Barber**. Known for his many appearances on TV quiz shows, he was also keen on local and family history. He researched material for Gwenda Grange's book, "Flackwell Heath: The Making of a Chiltern Village", a copy of which is available in the library.

The **boxing gym** in Aries House, has had its council tax relief cut and is threatened with closure. The gym operates as a not-for-profit and does a lot of work with local schools, charities, and youngsters generally. A GoFundMe has been started to raise £2,800 to keep the club going while other options are considered. To donate, search online for 'flackwell boxing gofundme' or contact the Grapevine.


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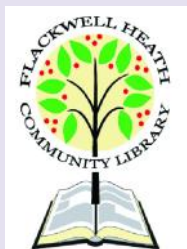
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FLACKWELL HEATH COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Memory Bags – a resource for people with dementia

Memory Bags are a new way to reminisce and stimulate conversation; especially for those with dementia.

Topics available:

At the seaside

1950s/60s

Childhood /family

Christmas

School days

Football

Home

In the garden

Pets/animals

Royalty

Memory bags are designed to be used with friends, relatives or groups.

Each bag contains a selection of books, pictures, games or objects to encourage conversation and/or evoke memories. Designed for reminiscing and also for those living with dementia.

Just search online for 'Memory bag' and make the reservation the same as other books. They can be loaned for 3 weeks There is no charge and there are no overdue charges.

Regular events

Bounce & Rhyme for under 5s is every Thursday 10.30-11.00 during school term time. No need to book – just turn up

Knitting & Crochet group is every Friday morning 10.00am-12.00noon. For details contact Glen Colman via email: colgas39@aol.com

Craft & Chat group runs on the fourth Wednesday of each month 7.00-9.00 pm. For details contact Alison on 07803 044 298 or admayall@btinternet.com

The library may be booked for meetings and other activities outside of normal opening hours. Contact Michael Russell - michael@sedgmoor.plus.com

Opening hours

We are open on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays 10.00am-5.00pm. On Saturdays we are open 10.00am-1.00 pm.

Keep up-to-date

Please keep an eye on our Facebook page or the library noticeboard for the latest library news.

Flackwell Heath Community Library, Chapel Road, Flackwell Heath, HP10 9AA

Tel: 01296 382415 email: fhcl@flackwellheath.net

web: <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/libraries/>



New Facilities at Carrington Infants

A sensory room and communications hub have been installed at the school, thanks to a generous donation of £25,000 by Wooden Spoon, a nationwide children's charity with links to rugby. The facilities were officially opened on March 18 by Stephen Jones of Wooden Spoon, Chilterns region, and a resident of Flackwell Heath.

Both staff and governors are delighted with the new facilities and very grateful for the donation.



Head teacher, Kate Cliffe, by the new facility. Photo: Wooden Spoon

We had not heard of this charity before and hope to interview Stephen with a view to finding out more. Meanwhile there's lots of information online if you search for 'wooden spoon charity'.

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Seasonal Planting

Growing your own salads can be very satisfying and a couple that can be planted soon are tomatoes and cucumbers.

Tomatoes are popular. There are two types. One is indeterminate; these grow tall and need their side shoots and eventually the tip removed. Come autumn many gardeners have a glut of green tomatoes; this is generally due to allowing too much blossom to develop which can be avoided by removing the growing tip about 31st July. This might seem too early but by early August six or seven good trusses should have formed, but with diminishing daylight there is insufficient daylight and warmth for further blossom to set, swell and ripen. Tomato plants grown outside are prone to blight, a fungal disease that appears late summer, one solution is to grow blight resistant varieties such as Crimson Crush or Crimson Cherry.

Tomatoes grown in a greenhouse or poly tunnel are far less prone to blight but can attract whitefly. French marigolds planted alongside can attract predatory insects which are then a deterrent. Shirley, Alicante, Moneymaker and for cherry sized fruit Gardeners Delight are all good varieties.

The other type is determinate or bush tomatoes; these are popular as they don't need deshooting or the tips pinched out. One plant in a 10" or 12" pot will produce a huge crop of cherry sized tomatoes. Tumbler and Red Tumbling Tom are good varieties and Lizzano is fairly blight resistant. Growing this type of tomato plant is a very good way of introducing young children to gardening.

Soon after planting it is worth giving your tomato plants a couple of half strength feeds of a high nitrogen liquid fertiliser such as Miracle-grow or Chempac No 2. This will help develop plant stature then, once the first truss of blossom has set, switch to a weekly feed of high potash tomato fertiliser. Black patches on the bottom of tomatoes are blossom end rot due to irregular watering, the plant being unable to take up essential calcium. So in addition to normal watering, once blossom is setting, a teaspoon of calcium nitrate in a two gallon can of water and given to the plants once a week, say a pint a plant, normally solves the problem.



A flourishing greenhouse

Cucumbers can be planted soon but are tender and although they can be grown outdoors will perform far better in the shelter of a greenhouse. Marketmore is a traditional outdoor variety but will perform better in a greenhouse. Most other varieties do well in a greenhouse especially Passandra and Burpless which both produce a heavy crop of 8" cucumbers.

In a greenhouse they can be grown in a soil bed or a large pot. If grown outdoors cucumbers can be allowed to trail over the soil but if trained up trellis they can suffer in high winds. They are vigorous plants so when grown in the greenhouse can be trained vertically up a cane then horizontally. Soon after planting a weekly feed of a high nitrogen liquid fertiliser such as Miracle-grow should keep them producing until autumn arrives. Cucumbers can attract red spider mite; however this can be deterred by damping down the greenhouse floor with water in the morning during hot weather.

If you have been unable to start off your own plants the annual High Wycombe Chrysanthemum Society plant sale provides an opportunity to obtain basket plants also a wide range of other bedding and vegetable plants. This year's event is being held on Saturday 10th May in the car park of Flackwell Heath Community Centre between 9am and 12 noon. (See p1)

John Marshall

Easter Trail

I got a bit of a surprise following this year's Easter trail around the village. When I turned up at Christ Church to grab a map, I found the route had been reversed and a little trip to the monthly market at the Three Horseshoes added in which means it's now exactly 1 mile. Another surprise, free hot cross buns were available at the church and no entry fee to take part.

The first clue this year, bunny ears, was attached to a bench in Jubilee Gardens before I found the lamb strategically placed on a stall in the market - and who should be standing right next to it, but our editor Joyce Wiles! Then it was on to the Recreation Ground where there was a picture of a candle and over through the alley into Hedley Road and down Sedgmoor for more Easter related pictures.

The trail ended at the Methodist Church where everyone was offered free coffee and cakes along with prizes of Easter eggs for the children. Despite the morning weather being a little unsettled, numbers were well up on last year with nearly 20% more people taking part giving a total of 170. The Easter trail is an annual joint event run by our two churches and the Flackwell Heath Residents' Association.

Craig Lewis



Mouth open as usual! Ed

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The Nancie Ross Centre in Flackwell Heath needs an additional carer working two days each week, to join our small friendly team providing day centre services to local older people.

The centre is open Mondays to Thursdays and the working hours are from 8.30am to 4.30pm. The key responsibilities are to provide and support the care needs of our clients including personal care, crafts, activities and exercises together with some administration and housekeeping.

This is a salaried position and actual working hours/days will be discussed as part of the interview process. The ability to work flexible hours/days would be a bonus, although not essential.

Experience of caring for the elderly would be ideal but we are happy to consider anyone who has care experience, a can-do attitude and excellent communication skills with a good command of spoken and written English. Training will be provided to support you into your new role.

If you feel ready for a change and have the necessary caring skills, come and join our great team, which really supports the needs of senior members of our local community. We offer you a salaried position with generous holidays, working in a safe and caring environment.

To apply please contact Lorretta Keating, our Manager, on 01628 526113 or email fh.l.daycentre@gmail.com



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Diary

Regular Events

Litter-pick: first Saturdays (May 3, June 7) Start from Jubilee Gardens at 10am.

Repair Cafe: Also first Saturdays Community Centre, 10am-12noon.

Paperback & Jigsaw Library: first Wednesdays (May 7, June 4) Community Centre, 1-2.45pm.

Food market: third Saturdays (May 17, June 21), Three Horseshoes car park, 9am-12noon.

May

Thursday 1: Local elections. Vote at the Community Centre, 7am-10pm

Saturday 10: Plant sale in the Community Centre car park, 9am-12noon (see p1)

Wednesday 14: Community Association AGM, Community Centre, 8pm

Saturday 17: Plant sale at Christ Church in aid of Christian Aid, 10am-12noon (see p1)

Monday 19: Local History Group talk 'The People of Cookham Abbey' with Dr Ceri Falys, library, 7.30pm

Saturday 31: Festival of Football, Green Dragon Lane (see p 1)

June

Sunday 1: Festival of Football, as above

Friday 20: Heath Singers Concert, Christ Church, 7.30pm (see p8)

Saturday 21: Heath Singers Concert including Carrington School Choir, Christ Church, 4.30pm

Flackwell Heath Community Association

Chairman: Chris Cramer
01628 526129

Secretary: Chris Thomas
01628 520361

Centre Bookings

Please use bookings enquiry page
to be found on website

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