

THE Grapevine

December/January 2025/6

50p

THE NEWSLETTER OF FLACKWELL HEATH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



Remembrance Day



This year's Remembrance Day service on Sunday, 9th November drew large crowds in the unseasonably good weather. The parade of young people's organisations started from Christ Church and continued along Chapel Road, round the roundabout in the centre of the village, before entering Common Road. The Revd. James Dwyer officiated over the moving service, which, after the introduction, commenced with

the hymn Abide With Me, accompanied by the West Wycombe Band, instead of the traditional Praise My Soul. There were several hundred youngsters representing the various uniformed brigades in the village, all of whom behaved impeccably. Regular attendees were moved by the occasion and considered the crowd to be larger than in previous years.

Craig Lewis



The Charities Fayre at Christ Church on 15th November attracted a large number of customers - not only for the opportunity to purchase a few Christmas items, but also for the delicious tea and cakes on offer. *Left: The Diabetes UK stall was in festive mood with blue balloons. Below: temptation!*



THE HEATH SINGERS'
Christmas Concert

Friday 5 December 2025 at 7.30pm
Saturday 6 December 2025 at 4.00pm

Joined by the Davenies School Handbells and Chamber Choir on Saturday only

Christ Church, Chapel Rd.
Flackwell Heath, HP10 9AA

Adults: £10
Children under 12: £5
Refreshments provided

TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM:
Christ Church Office, choir members or:
<https://ti.to/heath-singers/heath-singers-christmas-concert-2025>



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Flackwell Heath Fireworks & Bonfire 2025

When planning the fireworks display for the village there is only one thing left to chance, that being the weather! This year came with its challenges with a wet week leading up to the event, strong gusting winds during the set up and a downpour on Saturday evening. However the will and determination of the Flackwell Heath Scouts & Girl Guides leaders and parent volunteers from Juniper and Carrington schools pulled off another great event. A big thank you to the 2,000 plus people that ventured out in the blustery weather.



The impressive display was created for the second year by Illusion Events who came to Flackwell and delivered a show that didn't disappoint. The first show was a dramatic but quieter display for our younger audience which was followed by a magnificently colourful second show, introduced by two warning shots

which were a prelude to the main event. It was fantastic to see a happy crowd of families and groups of friends enjoying the occasion and helping us generate money for the scouts, guides and schools.

Thank you to the Daisy Gift Shop, Unit 4 News and the Cherry Tree pub for helping with advance ticket sales. We really appreciate your support in distributing the tickets, which we consciously kept at a lower price for another year to create a community event rather than a money focused display.

The bonfire was also a spectacular sight! Built by Cameron Price and David Horseman leading the team to build a stage, with a throne for the winning guy created by the red lodge of the Beaver Scout Pack. Another big thanks to Wexham School and Chadbones builders who provided wood and pallets for the fire that kept some of the crowd very warm on a damp evening. We were absolutely delighted with the great entries in the 'Best Guy' competition to start the fire and a big congratulations to the winner of the annual raffle to kick off the fireworks.

Although the crowd was smaller this year, due to the weather conditions, the volunteers still sold over 500 hot drinks, 280 pints of Rebellion beer, and 380 servings of mulled wine in two and a half hours. Additionally, the light up stand sold over 400 light up toys.

It would be remiss if we didn't give a mention to our friend Rory who created and fired the fireworks and was a member of the founding committee for many years, and who sadly passed away early this year. Therefore we dedicated this year's event to him and his wish to bring the community together in the annual charity event.

Thanks to everyone for their continued support of this important community event, particularly the hardworking volunteers of the committee.

Flackwell Heath Village Bonfire Association (fhfireworks@mail.com)

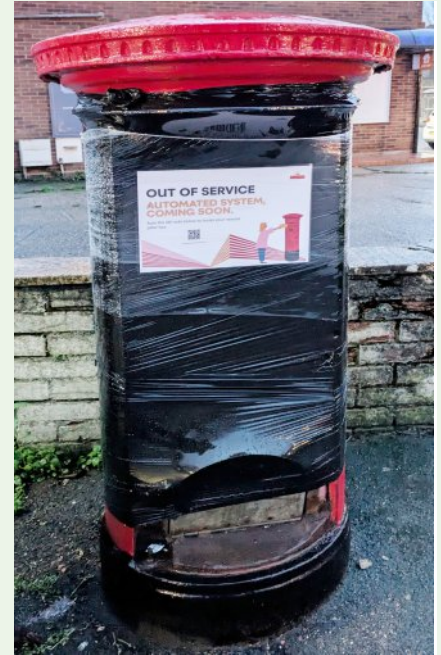
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BuchanansOnline.com🌐

Contact us on our
new office number:
0333 355 1977

Post Box

As at time of writing the post box outside the post office is out of use, with an indefinite promise of an automated one 'soon'. There are quite a few grumbles from residents about the lack of notice and the fact that this is the only box with a reasonably late last collection. (You can still leave letters inside the post office when it's open.)



The new post box will allow for the posting of small parcels as well as letters. To make use of this facility, you will need to assess the correct postage for the weight and size of your parcel, purchase said postage online, and print a label. You must then scan the barcode on the label and a drawer will open up into which you put your parcel. If, after doing this, you want proof of posting you will need to scan a QR code with an app. We suspect most residents will not consider this a major advantage over queuing at a post office.

As the boxes are solar powered, one unexpected side effect is that knitted toppers will no longer be viable as they would block the sun falling on the solar cells.

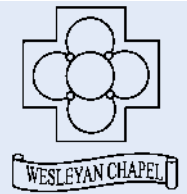
Many questions remain:

- Why must the box be put out of action while we await this technological advance?
- Will this be sorted in time for the Christmas post?
- What happens if your parcel won't fit in the drawer?
- What happens if the updated box runs out of space?

We wait to see!



Happy Christmas from the churches of Flackwell Heath



For many of us, Christmas is all about traditions. We become attached to the way certain things are done, whether that's how we decorate the tree, or when we open our presents, or what colour fairy lights we should have (the correct answer is always warm white). A healthy dose of nostalgia can be found around our tables each December and it is fun to pass these traditions down from one generation to the next.

Christmas around the world is celebrated in plenty of different ways, and some of the traditions that have developed in other countries can be a little strange – although they might well say the same about us. For instance, in Norway, it is traditional to ride on a broomstick on Christmas Eve to ward off evil spirits.

On Christmas Eve in Czechia, you need to watch out for flying stilettos: it's traditional for unmarried women to stand with their back to the door and throw shoes over their shoulder. If the shoe lands facing the door, it means marriage within the year. In Germany, children leave a boot outside their door. If they find it filled with sweets, they've been good. If it's only got a stick in it, things aren't so rosy.

But it's Japan that has perhaps the strangest Christmas tradition, which is to have Kentucky Fried Chicken for Christmas dinner. That's right, crispy American chicken wings. In a strange turn of events over the years, you now need to book a table at KFC months in advance to be able to dine there on Christmas Day, where you'll be served your chicken wings by someone dressed as Father Christmas. It makes Brussels Sprouts look positively normal!

We all celebrate Christmas differently, and that's part of what makes it such a special time of year. There are new traditions to be part of, new memories to make, and treasured memories to share with those we love.

Right at the heart of Christmas is a traditional story that's been told again and again for thousands of years. It's been proclaimed from palaces, whispered to children, and shared with millions. The way the story has been told sometimes changes, but the story itself doesn't. It's a story that many of us are familiar with, and that our children still act out and tell every year.

It's a story that seems completely ordinary until you realise it's completely extraordinary. It's a story that has given

countless people hope and peace, and it's a story we believe continues to do so today. It's a story of light conquering darkness, of a seemingly fragile baby changing the whole world. It's a story that changes everything, and it's a story you are invited to hear for yourselves this year.

We'll be telling this wonderful story – the story of Jesus – once again this year. There are lots of ways in which you can come and hear this story told at our churches this Christmas. You will find a full list of our services on the back page, and you'll discover that there's something for everyone: from traditional to modern, for young and old, celebratory and reflective, everyone is invited to find their way of celebrating Christmas this year.

You don't need to have come to church before to join us, nor do you have to worry about what you wear or where you sit. Our churches are your churches, and you can come as you are.

Whatever it looks like for you this year, may we wish you a blessed and peaceful Christmas.

For more information about Christmas services you can contact:

Christ Church Flackwell Heath
01628 533004
www.ccfh.org.uk

Flackwell Heath Methodist Church
01494 673403
www.fhmc.org.uk

Revd James Dwyer
Vicar of Flackwell Heath

Revd Kate Strange
Minster of Flackwell Heath
Methodist Church

January Services at the Methodist Church

SUNDAY 4th JANUARY, 11am: MORNING WORSHIP

SUNDAY 11 JANUARY: PICK'N'MIX SUNDAY with different activities to meet the needs of our church family and guests. You are very welcome to attend any or all of the following:

11am: COVENANT SERVICE with HOLY COMMUNION led by Rev. Kate Strange;

12.30pm: BRING AND SHARE LUNCH;

2.30pm: CREATIVE CHURCH. An informal time of worship, stories and crafting for all the family led by Rev. Kate Strange.

SUNDAY 18 JANUARY, 11am: CONTEMPORARY MORNING SERVICE led by Paul Strange.

SUNDAY 25 JANUARY, 11am: MORNING WORSHIP led by Alan Bolton.

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



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2025 in review

Flackwell Heath Residents' Association has enjoyed another fantastic year, made possible by the enthusiasm, generosity and support of our wonderful village community. I would also like to thank every member of the FHRA committee for their hard work, passion and commitment throughout the year.

Our calendar has remained full, with events and initiatives running every month. The Monthly Food Market continues to thrive and is now into its fourth year, attracting a growing number of stallholders and visitors. The introduction of the FHRA breakfast stall proved very popular and has helped to significantly increase the funds raised each month, but we are happy to return the breakfast baton to the Three Horseshoes team, now that they are back up and running!

The Repair Café has gone from strength to strength, with volunteers helping to rescue hundreds of items from landfill and raising thousands of pounds in donations over the course of the year. Our monthly litterpick continues to draw a loyal and growing team of regular volunteers (up to 30 each month), who give up their time to keep the village looking clean and welcoming.

We are especially pleased with the progress of the FHRA youth provision. Our new weekly youth club, The Chill Zone, now runs on Wednesday evenings at Flackwell Heath Methodist Church for young people. Working with Kwakz and the Relatable Role Models team, the club offers football, table tennis, art, gaming, music and even access to an in-house music studio on alternate weeks, providing a safe and welcoming space for younger residents to spend time together.

Heath Fest was our best yet this year, attracting our biggest crowd to date and raising more funds than ever before for village projects. The sun shone and it was a brilliant showcase of live music, food, stalls and family activities, and we are already looking forward to building on that success in 2026.

Alongside our regular programme, we have continued to work closely with other village organisations to support wider community events and activities, and we held our AGM in March 2025, inviting residents to hear what we have been doing and to share their ideas, thoughts and priorities for the coming year.

This year we have also set out clear goals for 2025–6. These include supporting the Community Speedwatch team and other initiatives to tackle speeding in the village, securing ongoing funding for the youth club, launching a more efficient and member-friendly FHRA membership system, and working on a more cost-effective, sustainable solution for the village Christmas lights. We remain committed to sustaining and growing our regular activities, such as the youth club, litterpicking, Repair Café, monthly market, Heath Fest and Christmas on the Heath, so that they continue to benefit as many residents as possible.

Thanks to the generosity and engagement of residents throughout the year, we have again been able to provide significant financial support to local organisations. In 2025 we were proud to donate over £12,500 to:

- Carrington Infant School
- Carrington Junior School
- Juniper Hill School
- Flackwell Heath Scouts and Guides
- The Chill Zone (youth club)
- Flackwell Heath Bowls Club
- The Nancie Ross Centre

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who supported our events, volunteered their time, or contributed in any way over the past year. Your involvement helps us to continue improving and enriching village life.

As the year comes to an end, your FHRA committee wishes you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Get in touch

If you have any questions, ideas, feedback, or would like to get involved with the FHRA, we would love to hear from you.

Email us at: hello@fhra.co.uk



Your Bucks Councillors, Stuart, Larisa and Penny would like to wish all residents a very Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year. As 2025 draws to an end we look forward to helping you more in the coming year and hopefully seeing more of you at either Bourne End Market or Flackwell Heath Market which we attend every month on the second and third Saturdays, respectively. Wishing health and happiness to you and yours.



Another artistic youngster.

Zoe Walne Smith, aged 11, created this clever Christmassy piece using a pyrography wood burner tool. Well done, Zoe!

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Flackwell Heath Women's Institute

Morning WI

As our speaker we had Jane Dunsterville, a resident of the village who has researched the local history of the area, including the mills along the Wye Valley. This time she was talking about life in Flackwell from the 1930's, starting at Hard to find Farm along Heath End Rd. A photo of the wall of the milking shed had many initials carved in the brickwork. I wonder how many descendants are here today? The date stone, 1843, from the first chapel is in the gable of a bungalow built on the site near the launderette.

A villager named Nat Bowler wrote many poems about local happenings, some of which Jane has in his own handwriting.

As Flackwell was at the junction of 3 parishes, it depended where children lived as to which school they attended, either Little Marlow, Wooburn or Loudwater, all involving an uphill climb home!

An interesting look at the past and our community library has printed records of Jane's work available to view.

In December we will be having a social occasion with a few mince pies, and looking forward to our Christmas dinner the following week.

Brenda Aldridge



Evening WI

This month we celebrated our 68th birthday with a party. Everyone bought some food and we cooked some potatoes. The yummy desserts included a trifle and meringue nests followed by a slice of the delicious birthday cake made by one of our members. It was a lovely social evening.

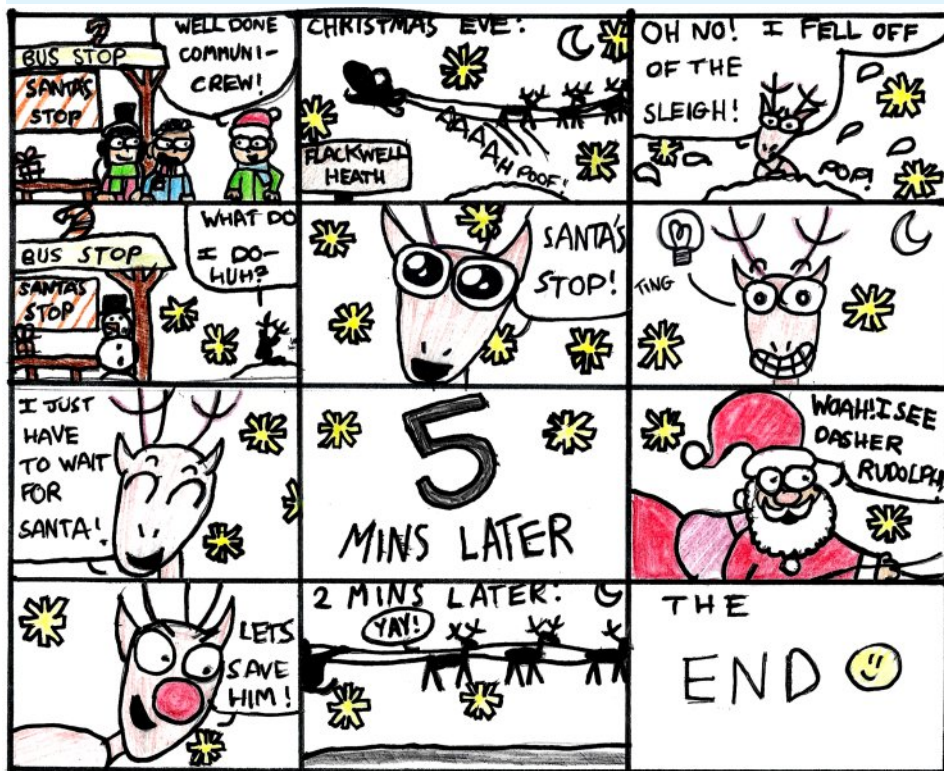
Next month Ruth Walne will be telling us about Madagascar including an insight into her role on one of several international non-profit Mercy Ships on which she has volunteered. These 'Hospitals' go to countries where there is no access to safe affordable surgery.

Come and hear more.

Helen Waller

The Lost Reindeer of Flackwell Heath

by Arjun A E Bhandar, aged 11



A Swingin' Christmas – Andrew Bourn Flackwell Heath's Local Jazz and Swing Singer

Many of you will recognise the name Andrew Bourn, a Flackwell Heath resident, who has made a name for himself not just locally, but also nationally. In 2014 he was a finalist on Britain's Got Talent as part of a swing group. Two years ago he won a place in the final of ITV's Starstruck series, singing as Frank Sinatra. His inspiration comes from the likes of Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Michael Bublé.

He has performed at The Albert Hall, in front of the King and in front of 50,000 people at Proms in the Park. But many will remember him as the top billing at our own Heath Fest a few years back.

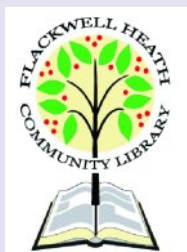
His Christmas show in Wycombe is on December 20th this year, which is fundraising for Thames Hospice and some other smaller local charities. This will be held at Wycombe Abbey School Arts Centre with a live band and promises to be a fun celebration evening of 'style, nostalgia and the timeless joy of the festive season'. Further details of his concerts can be found at www.andrewbourn.co.uk

On January 9th 2026 he will be appearing in Maidenhead and on February 14th 2026, his Valentine's Concert will be at Bourne End Community Centre. At the beginning of next month he has a new big band album being released.

Each Christmas Eve for the last few years, Andrew has sung from his roof top at 5pm, (on the corner of Bracken Way, in the village) with plenty of audience participation, and a fantastic start to the Christmas festivities. He will be doing so again this year, raising money for the FH Community Pantry. BUT – be warned! This is dependent on appropriate weather, but weather permitting, it is an event not to be missed.

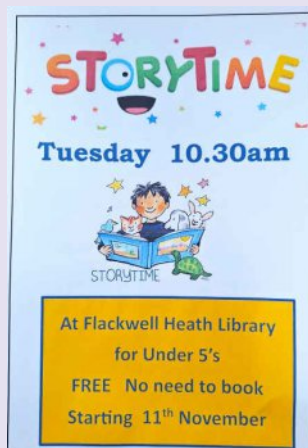
Alison Peach





FLACKWELL HEATH COMMUNITY LIBRARY

StoryTime is back!



Christmas Crafts – Saturday 13th December

We look forward to welcoming young children, along with their parents, from 10.15am to 12.30pm on Saturday 13th December, to make Christmas decorations and cards.

Parents are invited to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee while they wait. This is Free and there is No Need to Book, so just turn up.

Regular events

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

StoryTime for under 5s is every Tuesday 10.30am. 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 7.00-9.00pm. 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.

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/>



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We would like to wish all our customers a very happy Christmas and thank you all for your continued

support over the last year. It's been a record year raising funds for the upkeep of the Community Centre.

Come along on 3rd December to browse our huge selection of Christmas books and jigsaws. We will be open as normal in January.

Alison and Jeff Harvey

Skittles evening

At the end of October, my wife and I were invited to take part in a skittles evening at the bowls club by club captain, Dave Fowler. We arrived to find the club already packed with members, all of whom seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves. I'm sure the inexpensive bar had something to do with the atmosphere.

Everyone had been split into teams of 4, which proved a great way to get to know people and ensure no elitism. The 8 teams contested three rounds and it soon became evident that bowls prowess is not necessarily a transferable skill to skittles. The computer scoreboard, operated by Margaret Stagg, made it easy to see we weren't winning! Dave Fowler's team fluked the third round and ended up as winners.



And then we were into a round of killer, firstly the ladies and then the men. Margaret Stagg acted as MC and did an excellent impression of Anne Robinson when people were knocked out, "Goodbye Caroline", all that was missing was "you are the weakest link"! Dave Fowler never got to hear "goodbye Dave" as he won the killer round too and walked away with top prize (see picture).

All in all it makes a fun evening and if any clubs or organisations in the village, or beyond fancy a fun night out, why not contact Dave via davefowler424@gmail.com just don't let him play!

Craig Lewis

Girlguiding Roundup

It's been a very busy and exciting term for Girlguiding in Flackwell Heath, with lots going on in each of the sections as well as some events where all the girls from the youngest to oldest have been involved.

The Rainbows (5-7 year olds) have loved their fantastic food creation sessions, where they have made fruit rockets, decorated gingerbread men, and created mini pizzas for a Fantastic Pizza Party!

Our Brownies, (7-10 year olds), went to Wycombe Rugby Club, where they threw themselves into a Rugby session; the Brownie Leaders got involved too having a go with the tackle bags. There was an Autumn Walk around the village which ended up at the Chippy, and making gingerbread houses using malted milk biscuits and decorating them with different sweets.

The Guides (10-14 year olds) have cooked on fires, practised their whittling skills and whilst making Popcorn with a multitude of flavours that the Guides created, we also gave the Scout and Guide HQ Fire alarm system a very good test.

At the Flackwell Heath Fireworks, the Guides were very enthusiastic in selling a multitude of flashy lights to the community. In November we had a 2 night residential experience for the Guides with a Christmas theme; baking, making and finding the best Christmas lights with a full Christmas roast dinner to enjoy all together...but which Leader had the best or maybe worst Christmas Jumper!

As a group we joined with Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers and Leaders from across the county as around 1300 of us gathered at Chessington World of Adventures for a day



where some faced their fears on rollercoasters, had a relax through the woods on the Gruffalo ride, and got wet going down a log flume.

In November we took part in the Remembrance Day parade and service. We then also joined the Charities Fayre at Christ Church, running a stall to raise money for guiding in Flackwell Heath.

We have 3 events that take place in December which signal the end of term. Firstly we have our carol concert at Christ Church, where all the girls are involved in the service, with the congregation joining in for the singing of carols. Then we have our trip to the cinema where we take over a screen to watch a film together. Finally, we have our Leaders' Christmas Celebration where we get together, have food, play some festive games and start planning what adventures will be next.

Flackwell Heath Guiding is fortunate to have a lively and passionate bunch of leaders who enjoy working with the girls, watching them as they grow and flourish taking on the challenges and adventures that we offer. We are always keen to welcome new members to the leadership team. If you would like further information to find out about how to be part of this too, please get in touch with Stella Gandy on FHguiding@gmail.com.

Hannah Walne

Martin Adams

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Happy Christmas from the churches of Flackwell Heath

Sunday 7 December

Gift Service | 11am | Methodist Church

Thursday 11 December

Christmas Down Memory Lane | 11.30am | Christ Church

familiar carols for those living with dementia and their families followed by lunch

Sunday 14 December

Christmas Lunch | 12.30pm | Methodist Church

Carol Service | 3pm | Methodist Church

Carols by Candlelight | 7pm | Christ Church

traditional carol service followed by mulled wine and mince pies

Saturday 20 December

Carols in the Car Park | 4.30pm | Christ Church

carols and refreshments outside in an informal atmosphere

Sunday 21 December

Christingle and Crib Service | 3pm | Methodist Church

Christmas in the Darkness | 6.30pm | Christ Church

a reflective service on the shortest day for those who find Christmas hard

Wednesday 24 December

Christingle and Crib Service | 4pm | Christ Church

children are invited to come dressed as a character from the Christmas story

Traditional Midnight Communion | 11.15pm | Christ Church

Thursday 25 December

Christmas Day Communion | 9am | Christ Church

All Age Christmas Celebration | 10.30am | Christ Church

Christmas Morning Worship | 10.30am | Methodist Church

A Reminder

There will be no Grapevine in January. The next issue will be out at the beginning of February and can include reports of your Christmas activities. Deadline 15th January.

Dates for your Diary

Regular Events

Litter-pick: first Saturdays (Dec 6, Jan 3, Feb 7), Start from Jubilee Gardens at 10am.

Repair Cafe: No repair Cafe in December or January Next date Feb 7, Community Centre, 10am-12noon.

Paperback & Jigsaw Library: first Wednesdays (Dec 3, Jan 7, Feb 4), Community Centre, 1-2.45pm.

Food market: third Saturdays (Dec 20, Jan 17, Feb 21), Three Horseshoes car park, 9am-12noon.

December

Friday 5: Heath Singers Christmas Concert, Christ Church, 7.30pm (see p1)

Saturday 6: Heath Singers Concert with Davenies guests, Christ Church, 4pm

Saturday 13: Christmas crafts at the library, 10.15am-12.30pm (see p6)

News in Brief

Poppy Appeal: Susan Robinson writes "Due to a fractured shoulder I was unable to do my door to door collection this year. I hope that you were able to get your poppies elsewhere and I look forward to seeing you all next year." The Grapevine wishes Susan a speedy recovery.

Nancie Ross Centre: At the end of October a wing mirror was stolen from the minibus in the Community Centre car park. It looked as though it had been carefully removed as there was no glass on the ground or bits of plastic. A replacement was quoted at £562 - money that could be much better spent elsewhere.



Bus: The new 20 operated by Thames Valley buses now runs hourly (no Sundays) through Flackwell Heath on its route

between Wycombe and Maidenhead. From the village, it approaches Wycombe bus station via Cressex and Desborough Avenue, so it does not stop in the High Street.

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
www.flackwellheathcommunitycentre.org.uk

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Grapevine



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Delivery & subscriptions: Nigel & Alison Peach
01628 522413

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