

THE Grapevine

March 2026

50p

THE NEWSLETTER OF FLACKWELL HEATH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



Have Your Say on Parking in Flackwell Heath

Since becoming ward members for Flackwell Heath and the Wooburns last May, many residents have contacted us about parking concerns. We recognise that parking in the village centre is already limited, and that pressures may increase further if additional housing is delivered in this area through the Local Plan.

We would like to hear directly from you. While we have identified a number of the key problem areas, it is important that we gather a wide range of experiences, ideas and potential solutions from across the community.

Please join us at 7pm on Tuesday 10 March at Christ Church Hall to share your views and help shape the conversation about parking in our village.

Your Councillors



School time chaos in Old Kiln Road

(All pictures from the Grapevine team)



Abandoned car removed from Sedgmoor Road...



...but this legally parked van hasn't moved for months.



Completely blocking the pavement



On double yellow opposite the church

We are beginning to see more and more parking issues.

Dave Johncock had quite a lot to say on the subject when we interviewed him. (See p8)



On the zig zag school markings



Get your own copy of the Grapevine

Find out how to subscribe by calling Nigel and Alison, or by emailing us. Phone numbers and QR code for email on the back page.

Flackwell Heath Allotment Association presents

Growing Pains

Questions, answers and panel discussion on gardening dilemmas.

Christ Church hall
Chapel Road, Flackwell Heath, HP10 9AA

Friday 6th March 2026
7pm

£10 per person
(£5 for FHAA members)
Light refreshments included.

To book: www.ticketsource.co.uk/fhaa
or email: jwrwaine@gmail.com

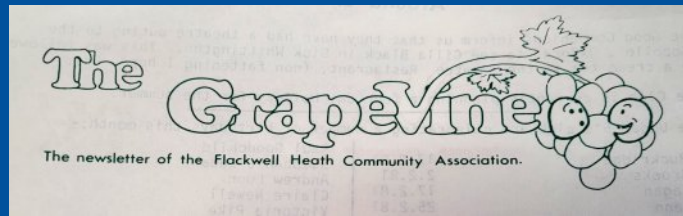
The Grapevine: the first 10 years

I was thinking of tracking the progress of a village organisation as told through back issues of the Grapevine. With this rough idea in mind I took myself off to the library. Here you will find back issues from 1984 to the present day. There are also 2 copies of its predecessor, 'The Advisor'.

I admit I got side-tracked here. We moved to the village a little over 30 years ago and much of the first 10 years of archive is before my time, so I was quite interested.

At that time the magazine was very much the preserve of the Community Association and was edited by its chairman (Robin Clarke at the beginning). Early on, it comprised just one sheet of black & white A4, progressing later to 4 pages. Up until the end of 1984, the magazine was free, but this proved unsustainable and a yearly subscription of 50p was introduced from January 1985. Copy was delivered by hand to the editor's home address, quite probably handwritten, and typed up by a willing wife or secretary. It was then delivered, again by hand, to the printer.

Much of the actual content of the magazines was focussed on the Community Centre, roof repairs and fund-raising, notably for the extension for the Day Centre. A few groups reported activities - Silver Circle was a regular. The Fennels Wood Conservation Group was very active with walks, teddy bears' picnics, and fungus forays. There were coffee mornings, bazaars, barn dances and tea dances. All very much the fund-raising activities of the time. For a while there was a regular crossword on the back page with both cryptic and straight clues. Having tinkered with crossword compilation myself, this must have been quite a chore every month.



Whilst on the subject of cost, we have sadly come to the end of free issues of the 'Grapevine' to all houses in the village. Although we would like to carry on with a freenewsletter, our income at the centre will not allow us to.

STORM DAMAGE IN FENNELS WOOD

On January 25th 1990 the storm force winds that were sweeping the country took their toll of trees in Fennels Wood. On inspection it was found that over a hundred trees were down and those trees still leaning or having broken tops would account for another thirty.

Planning and Planning

On another subject altogether, I expect most of you are aware of the fact that we no longer have a resident policeman in Flackwell Heath. It is my belief that the disappearance of the Village Bobby is one of the biggest contributory factors to the growth of hooliganism and vandalism which is far too often evident in our village today.

For a period, there was also 'recipe of the month' (in pounds and ounces).

Nowadays, most of our content comes to us via email, often Word files and pictures from phones. It is prepared for print by a wonderful piece of open source desktop publishing software and speeds to the printers in seconds over the internet. However, some things remain the same. The Heath Singers' concerts were well publicised and there was a 'Dates for your Diary'. The publishing deadline is still 15th of the preceding month. An explanation for this is given in one of the back issues: it takes a few days to type, collate and proof-read the material, a week at the printers, and then time for the magazines to be distributed to reps and subscribers. In spite of the progress of technology, still true!

The concerns of the village at the time echo modern ones. There is much relief at the installation of the village roundabout which eased congestion, but

dismay at the queues on Treadaway Hill during the morning. Plans to install a roundabout at the bottom of the hill were held up while widening of the M40 was under consideration. There is concern too when, in January 1992, the village is without its local policeman. "People are parking on double yellow lines, there is graffiti on the toilets, and 2 fire extinguishers have been stolen." All sounds very familiar. There is a good deal of discussion around accidents near the war memorial and concern over the possibility of a waste dump in Warren Wood. In January 1993, there was a problem with Budgens' trolleys being abandoned in the Community Centre car park, with a threat that it may be necessary to restrict parking to Centre users. That one never has worked very satisfactorily!

So far, I've only made it as far as the end of 1994. Watch this space.

Joyce Wiles



Flackwell Heath Bowls Club

The Recreation Ground, Straight Bit,
Flackwell Heath, HP10 9LT

Welcomes you to come to our open day

On Saturday 18th April between 10am – 4pm

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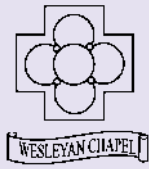
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FLACKWELL HEATH METHODIST CHURCH

SUNDAY 1 MARCH, 11am – PICK'N'MIX SUNDAY with different activities to meet the needs of our church family and guests. You are very welcome to any or all of the following:

11am - HOLY COMMUNION led by Rev. Kate Strange

12.30pm – COMMUNITY LUNCH – a two-course hot meal. All welcome – please put your name on the list in the church so we have an idea of numbers

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

SUNDAY 8 MARCH, 11am – STREAMED SERVICE FROM MARLOW led by Paul Strange

SUNDAY 15 MARCH, 11am – CONTEMPORARY MORNING WORSHIP FOR MOTHERING SUNDAY led by Richard and Charlotte Alexander

TUESDAY 17 MARCH, 6pm – GIRLS' BRIGADE ENROLMENT SERVICE led by Rev. Kate Strange

SUNDAY 22 MARCH, 11am – MORNING WORSHIP led by Rev. Kate Strange.

SUNDAY 29 MARCH, 11am – MORNING WORSHIP FOR PALM SUNDAY

SUNDAY 29th MARCH, 6.30pm – JOINT SERVICE WITH CHRIST CHURCH AT CHRIST CHURCH

SATURDAY COFFEE MORNING: Every Saturday, the church is open from 10am until 12noon to provide a warm 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.

WIGGLE AND PLAY – in the church from 9.15 on Wednesday mornings during term time. Please see our Facebook page for details.

FHMC WOMEN'S GROUP meets on the first and third Thursdays of each month in the church from 10.30am to 12noon.

PLAY & PRAISE – for parents, carers, young children and toddlers in the church from 9.15 on Friday mornings during term time.

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

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



"Dear March, come in!" Those are the opening words of a poem by Emily Dickinson, and this year I

doubt I'm alone in hoping that March will come in and bring with it some sunshine and blue skies. Because my goodness, what a grey winter it's been. I've lost track of the number of people who I've heard say, "I'm desperate for some sunshine."

It's become increasingly clear over the last few years that the weather can affect our mood. The more scientists investigate, the more they make connections between our mental health and the weather. It's not the only factor, of course, and there are plenty of other things that can impact us. But the weather is definitely something that can affect us more than we realise.

The challenge, of course, is that we don't have the ability to make the clouds clear and the sun shine. Humans have tried all sorts of things over the years to make the weather do what they want. My favourite was the belief that if you shot the clouds, they'd leak out rainwater through the holes. It was a valiant effort but to no avail. At the same time, while we aren't able to change the weather in these small ways, we know that on a global level our climate is changing drastically. I'm no scientist, but I wonder how much of the weather we've seen this winter is a sign that our climate is changing permanently.

Amid all the potential doom and gloom around us (and let's not talk about the news), it's more important than ever that we have a community to be part of. It's by coming together with others, sharing our sorrows and delighting in our joys, that we find strength and comfort for all life throws at us. Flackwell Heath is a place that's good at community. We've got a brilliant Residents' Association, super uniformed

organisations, passionate schools, and plenty of sports clubs, groups, societies, and communities. There's

something for everyone.

Community is something we really value at Christ Church. Our hope is that everyone in Flackwell Heath would know that they are welcome to come and be part of the Christ Church community: because after all, it's your community. The reason we're here is to be here for the community. So whether that's coming to one of our Sunday services and seeing what it's all about, or coming to Coffee Stop during the week to meet friends over a drink, or coming to Oasis or Play Café or Messy Church or the many other things we do, you'll find a community ready to welcome you. We can't promise to sort the weather out (sorry), but we can delight in getting to know you and hearing your story. That's how communities grow.

One exciting new community we're growing is Café Church, which now meets at 4pm on the third Sunday of every month. It's church but not as you know it, and it's a great way to come and be part of church at a different time and in a different way. I'd love to invite you to come and give it a go, and you can have a look on our website for more information.

Later on in March we'll be getting ready for our Holy Week and Easter services. Palm Sunday is on 29th March and marks the start of Holy Week before the celebrations of Easter on 5th April. You'll be able to find information about all of this on our website and around church as we get closer to the end of the month, so keep your eyes peeled and know that we would love to welcome you to Christ Church.

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



**FLACKWELL HEATH
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

FHRA Annual General Meeting

The FHRA Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday 4 March at the Three Horseshoes Pub at 7.30pm.

At this year's AGM, members will be asked to vote on a special resolution to change the charity's legal structure. FHRA is currently an unincorporated charity, which means trustees are personally liable for its obligations. As the organisation has grown - and the scale and profile of our events have increased - the Executive Committee believes it is now more appropriate for FHRA to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), the charitable equivalent of a limited company.

As part of this process, we will also be preparing a new constitution to better reflect how the charity has evolved in recent years. These changes are largely administrative and will not affect our day-to-day activities - we will continue to deliver the same great events and initiatives for the village.

Everyone is welcome at the AGM, whether you are a member or not. This is a community meeting, so please come along to hear about what we've been working on and to share your own ideas. To help us plan for numbers, we would appreciate it if you could let us know by email if you intend to come.

Heath Fest

Planning for Heath Fest (11 July) is well underway, and we're delighted to confirm that the line-up is now booked!

We're especially pleased to announce that These Certain People - a fantastic local band from Marlow - will be headlining this year's event.

Those who came along last year may remember that These Certain People truly saved the day. When one of our acts had to withdraw at the last minute due to a car accident, they stepped in at very short notice - and even honoured the original fee agreed with the other band. Not only did they rescue the event, but they delivered a brilliant set to rave reviews, quickly becoming one of the firm favourites of the day. It felt only right to invite them back to headline this year.

Tickets are available now at www.fhra.co.uk.

We are also in need of volunteers to help with set-up, clear-up and marshalling on the day. Anyone who can commit to a two-hour volunteer slot will receive a free ticket as a thank you.

Get in Touch

We love hearing from residents! Whether you have questions, ideas, or feedback - or if you'd like to get involved with FHRA - please reach out.

Email us at: hello@fhra.co.uk



First signs of spring: Photo: Craig Lewis



Gary Edwards
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Advertisements in the Grapevine

We try not to take up too much space with ads, but our regulars do help to keep your subs down! If you contact someone as a result, please do give us a mention.

Alternatively, if you would like to support this community magazine then consider placing an ad. For more details the QR code on the back page will take you to our email address, grapevine@flackwellheathcommunitycentre.org.uk.

Flackwell Heath Women's Institute

Morning WI

We had invited a member of the Evening WI, Jackie Hill, to be our speaker, as she is an expert craftswoman. She took us through literally from A to Z on types of embroidery, felting, quilting, etc, etc, with an amazing display of items incorporating each method, most of which were made by herself. Jackie also knits tiny teddy bears which are sent to hospitals for young children, and attends craft fairs. Unsurprisingly she uses two rooms at home for all this work!

Our March meeting may well be our last one, sadly, unless there are any replacements for the three officers who are retiring.

Brenda Aldridge

Evening WI

Despite the rain, we managed to meet at the Community Centre for our monthly evening meeting. We then had a fun evening of games – Guess what is in the bag; where is this? And Name the Company who produced this Product? Not all the products are on sale now so there was plenty of head scratching!

Two of our members found an interesting report about the 'Do it for

Denman 2005/ 2006 – the Cuba Cycle Challenge' which they read out. It was raising money for our National College. First, they had to raise £2,250 to go. They held craft days, made endless pots of jam, marmalade and chutney as well as being talented in making bags, scarves, cards and jewellery which they sold when they visited 34 WIs in the county.

Then there was all the hard work in training – cycling every day as well as learning how to maintain the bike and ensure you did not fall off because of obstacles or animals on the road. Finally they joined 43 other WI cyclists on their Cuban adventure. There, they donned their Lycra and with their Cuban guide and support team, cycled up plenty of hills with stops for flat tyres, water, bananas and chocolate, provided you found a suitable place to sit. At the end of their trip they had raised £5,800. Bet they were sore too! Well done ladies.

This month, March, we will have our Annual Meeting. We will be looking back on the year, voting members onto the committee and generally looking at next year's events. I expect there will be time for a quiz too.

Helen Waller

All the way there and back

I was asked last year by Chris Cramer, chair of the FHCA, how far it is from one end of the village to the other. With the recent weather being, shall we say, slightly moist, my usual daily walk up through the woods didn't look appetising so I set out early with the intention of answering Chris' question.



Starting at the village sign at the Whitepit end of the village, I walked along the Straight Bit and then Heath End Road to the other sign, by as straight a route as possible without ending up as a customer of Arnold's! My Garmin device recorded 1.71 miles. The nagging scientist in me reminded that one result is never enough, so I repeated in the reverse direction and was extremely pleased to get an identical reading.



On the return journey, I pondered where the middle of the village was. I was hoping for the Cherry Tree, but it turned out to be the junction of the Straight Bit with Old Kiln Road. Now all I have to do is send my shoe leather expenses to the treasurer!

Craig Lewis

Planning Updates

Legion Building

The latest planning application has now been refused. Grounds for refusal include:

- detract from the character of the surrounding area (we draw a veil over the Swim Centre building here!)
- insufficient space for parking and manoeuvring
- loss of privacy to existing residences
- no viable surface water drainage system proposed
- poor standard of accommodation for potential residents.

This may not be the end of the story as an appeal could be raised.

Local plan

The green belt area bounded by Bourne End, Wooburn and Flackwell Heath appears to be being considered as a potential site for development within the local plan. We hope to bring you more on this next month.

Boxing gym

An outline planning application has been received (reference PL/25/6234/OA) with a view to erecting a 'new 594.60 sq.m. portal frame barn style building to provide internal sport and recreation facilities specifically to accommodate Flackwell Boxing and Fitness', eight padel courts, and a small car park. The proposed site is in grounds towards the summit of Whitepit Lane. It is considered that this will be walking distance from both Flackwell and Wooburn.

At time of writing there is still no decision on the Aries House development.



FLACKWELL HEATH COMMUNITY LIBRARY

Spring Crafts – Saturday 21st March

With the approach of Easter, all young children are welcome to join our Spring Crafts event on Saturday 21st March from 10.15am -12.30pm. Parents & guardians can have a tea or coffee while they stay with their children. This is FREE and there is no need to book - just turn up.

Blood Pressure Monitors

Following on from the national 'Heart Month' campaign in February, we would like to remind residents that we have two blood pressure monitors available in Flackwell Heath library that may be loaned free for up to 3 weeks, so that you can check your blood pressure at home.

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 7.00pm-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-1.00pm.

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

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Growing Pains



Growing Pains will be a light-hearted, enjoyable evening, discussing a range of gardening issues and dilemmas. Run by the Flackwell Heath Allotment Association (FHAA), the event takes place in the Christ Church hall on Friday, 6th March, commencing at 7.00 pm.

The format will be similar to "Any Questions" or "Gardeners' Question Time", with questions from the audience to be discussed by a panel of experienced gardeners from the FHAA and elsewhere.

Tickets (£10) are available by emailing Jono Walne jwrwalne@gmail.com or using the Ticketsource link www.ticketsource.co.uk/fhha.



FLACKWELL HEATH
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

4 MARCH 2026

7.30PM AT THE THREE HORSESHOES

This is a community meeting. Come along, meet your committee, ask questions, raise your issues and concerns, hear what we've been up to and our plans for the year ahead!

ALL WELCOME

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Scots Pine, *Pinus sylvestris*

The Scots Pine has the largest natural distribution of any conifer: from the west coast of Ireland, through Scotland and most of northern Europe and Siberia east to the Okhotsk Sea, inside the Arctic Circle in Scandinavia and south as far as the Caucasus Mountains of northern Turkey. It was the only conifer tree and dominant species in the once vast Caledonian Forest, which a thousand years ago covered most of the Scottish Highlands, and which is now sadly reduced to a few dozen small remnants.

It counts as a native English tree, because to reach Scotland it would have travelled through England from mainland Europe behind the retreating glaciers at the end of the last ice age around 10,000 years ago. There are no known descendants of those original pioneers, so while it is common in England, all specimens seen today are re-introductions or their descendants.

The handsome tree pictured grows conspicuously in a garden in Carrington Avenue. It is a little unusual, because most Scots Pine trees tend to be tall with a domed crown and no lower branches. This is probably because they usually grow in forests or plantations where they have to compete for light and space. This tree, growing in the open, has not had to do either, so it is comparatively short and full crowned. There are a number of Scots Pines in the hedgerow on the right of the field through which the



path down to Little Marlow runs (the evergreen trees in the inset) which are more typical.

The needles grow in pairs, are blue-green in colour and about 5 cm long. They normally remain on the trees for 2-3 years. The bark is flaky and orange-red when young, grey-brown when



mature. The orange colour of the upper parts of the tree is a useful identification feature. Scots Pines are quite long lived, to 300 years or so in the wild. They are still an important timber tree, though less so these days, and used for general construction. Ecologically it is designated a keystone species, creating an environment in which many other rare species including orchids, lichens, the capercaillie and the red squirrel can survive.

Malcolm Wiles

Dave Johncock

We spoke to Dave Johncock about his experience as a County Councillor

Dave Johncock was elected as a Conservative Wycombe District Councillor in 2015. When Dave first joined Wycombe, it took him a while to work out how everything was organised and as a backbencher he soon discovered you needed to be on committees to have any say. In his second term, he held the post of Cabinet Member for planning allowing him to not only have a significant input in this area but to be privy to what was going on in other council areas too. As a long term Flackwell resident, Dave was actively engaged championing causes within our village.

In 2020, Wycombe District Council was merged into the new unitary authority of Buckinghamshire Council. Dave was disappointed not to be selected for the cabinet, leaving him as a backbencher without any say meaning he was unable to shape policy. His aspiration had been to make the council as good as it could be and be constructively involved with the new Bucks local plan. Disillusioned, he decided not to stand again and instead concentrates his efforts as parish councillor (currently vice chairman), enjoying the non-political

nature of Parish Council life whereby everybody works together for the good of the community. Looking back, Dave's opinion is that having district and unitary councils non-political would significantly enhance their effectiveness.

One particular concern for residents was, and still is, parking and Dave was instrumental in achieving double yellow lines along a number of roads in the village including Highlands and Greenlands.



Dave Johncock

Despite the council's Community Board paying thousands of pounds for these additional lines, Dave, like many of us, is beyond frustrated that there's no enforcement. He spent a considerable amount of time reporting, documenting and photographing offenders, all to no avail. In some areas, the council are considering employing volunteer wardens, so if you've got time on your hands,

please sign up!

Parking outside the village schools has long been an issue. Juniper Hill were proactive and worked with the council and Declan Breen to use the Green Dragon Sports Ground for a "park & stride" scheme. The hardest part of the plan was finding a lollipop person. Indeed, this has been true for Carrington schools too and parking on the double yellow lines and the zig-zags in Chapel Road continues to be a major issue.

Interestingly, the lines opposite the church entrance were considered essential to ensure hearses could turn into and out of the church but Carrington parents continue to park there. They used to park in the old Budgens car park until it was changed into a residential development with the loss of 64 spaces. Like many of us, Dave remains mystified as to why the parking survey conducted by the council at the time concluded there wasn't a parking issue in the village. Maybe it had something to do with Inset days and being undertaken just after the Covid lockdown!

Part of Dave's remit was to help identify roads that need resurfacing, whence they're put into a programme and then Bucks officers decide on the priority based on money. Whilst Treadaway and Blind Lane were done in their entirety, the Straight Bit and Chapman Lane were partially resurfaced. Another job for councillors is liaising with the local area technician to manage potholes and then of course, there's abandoned vehicles – who'd be a councillor?

Picture courtesy of
<https://www.cwpc.org.uk/flackwell-heath-2/>

Dates for your Diary

Regular Events

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

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

Paperback & Jigsaw Library: first Wednesdays (Mar 4, Apr 1), Community Centre, 1-2.45pm.

Food market: third Saturdays (Mar 21, Apr 18), Three Horseshoes car park, 9am-12noon.

March

Wednesday 4: FHRA AGM, 7.30pm, Three Horseshoes (see pp 4, 6)

Friday 6: "Growing Pains", a gardening Q & A session, Christ Church, 7pm (see pp1, 6)

Tuesday 10: Meeting re parking, Christ Church, 7pm (see p1)

Saturday 21: Spring Crafts at the library, 10.15am-12.30pm (see p6)

April

Sunday 5: Easter Sunday

Saturday 18: Open day at the Bowls Club, 10am-4pm (see p2)

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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