

THE Grapevine

May 2026

50p

THE NEWSLETTER OF FLACKWELL HEATH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



Ready to go

Easter Trail

This year's Easter trail, organised jointly by the village churches and the Residents' Association, took a few participants by surprise. The route had changed! This year, we started from Christ Church, collecting route sheets and pens dished out by the very friendly Christ Church team, before turning right out of the church, instead of left, and heading to Old Kiln Road. Then, over to the recreation ground and alongside the park, where more than one parent could be heard saying, "No, we're not going on the roundabout or the swings today!" The next clue, a chick on the fence of the tennis club, was hard to spot. The route then went into the Meadows and through the alley to Common Road and through the centre of the village to the Methodist Church, where chocolate goodies were handed out and everyone was offered hot cross buns and drinks. Despite the slightly damp and windy weather, over 150 people took part and completed the 0.88 mile course.

Craig Lewis



The Community Association AGM will be held on Wednesday 13 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.

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.



Annual Plant Sale

Saturday 16 May

10 am to 12 noon, Christ Church, Chapel Road

- Plants – vegetables, fruit, bedding flowers, shrubs and more
- Coffee & Tea by Coffee Stop
- Cake & Jam stall
- Car washing



In support of Christian Aid, which seeks to eradicate poverty in the poorest areas across the world, helping people of all faiths and none.



Flackwell Heath FC Minors

'FESTIVAL OF FOOTBALL'

6 a side Football Tournament

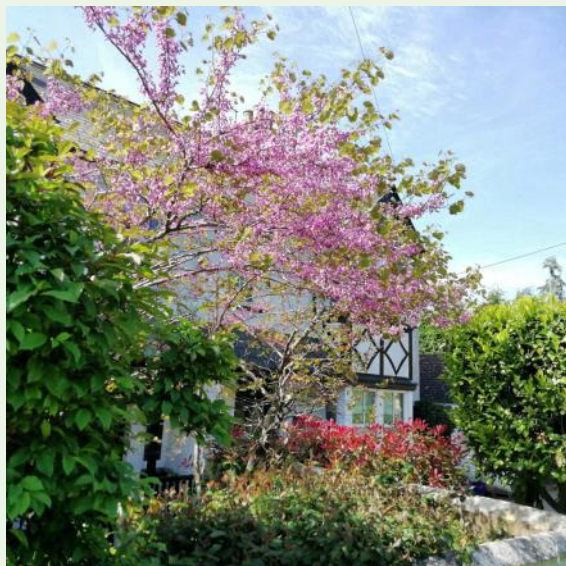
Fun for all the family

Tea Bar, Beer Tent, Barbecue, Tombola, Funfair....and much much more!

**Saturday May 30th
& Sunday May 31st 2026**

Green Dragon Lane Recreation Ground
www.fhfcmin.com

Judas Tree, *Cercis siliquastrum*



The Judas Tree is so named because legend has it that this is the species from which Judas Iscariot hanged himself, although there is absolutely no evidence for this. It is a small tree with an irregular crown, growing up to about 12 metres tall in this country. It is native to the eastern Mediterranean and surrounding regions, where it is abundant, and was introduced to this country before 1600, before reliable records exist. It is often seen in eastern England, but rare in the west. The pictured tree is

in Heath End Road nearly opposite the college entrance.

Identification is fairly easy because it is one of only two species of tree found in this country with symmetrical heart-shaped leaves. The other, the Katsura Tree from Japan, is larger, and not generally found outside parks and collections. (Limes and elms, which also have heart shaped leaves, don't count because the bases of their leaves are asymmetric, larger one side than the other.)

A member of the pea family, small bright rosy pink pea-shaped flowers open in large numbers usually in mid-May, though recently this seems to have been getting earlier (in the exceptional Spring of 2025, the featured tree was in flower in late April). The flowers are edible, and in Mediterranean countries they are often used to decorate salads when in season. The author recalls a slightly sweet but also nutty flavour, difficult to describe. In its native range it will often flower twice a year, having a second crop in late summer, but so far has only managed one crop here. Fruit is a small brown pea-type pod, also edible, and best eaten fresh like sugar snaps.



Malcolm Wiles



Pheasant in Bluebells: Craig Lewis

Downley Voices Concert

On Friday 26th June, the Downley Voices will once again be singing at Christ Church, raising funds for the Oasis Bereavement Group. Becky Holt, musical director, says "Words make you think. Music makes you feel a thought. We are featuring music that has originated from an idea in a book and become a song or musical. There is something for everyone to know, discover and love from Sweeney Todd, and Beauty and the Beast, to Lord of the Rings and a musicals singalong! We look forward to seeing you there." Tickets can be obtained from the Christ Church office or from Ticketsource.

Alex Ferguson

Following our report on the death of Alex Ferguson, Keith Chatfield has offered the following memories.

Alex Ferguson persuaded me to teach in Primary rather than Secondary and I never regretted taking his advice. I became his Deputy Headteacher for many years at Juniper Hill.

Alex was a most remarkable, hands-on Headteacher dedicated to ensuring that the children in our care were given a constant wealth of personal experiences. These formed a basis from which the essential value of gaining knowledge could be achieved while providing the needs to read, write, calculate and create.

These experiences ranged from caring for each other, for nature and nature's animal life, to strengthening the children's self-confidence by taking advantage of carefully planned field trips organised for each year group. The youngest were offered the opportunity to camp out for the night on the school playing field working up to the oldest who were offered trips to Cornwall or Tyneside for a week away. Each child produced their own field trip book which was highly prized by child, teacher and parent.

Alex retired to his home county in Tyneside and became a highly respected figure in North East theatre. He became a national award-winning writer, his work spanning radio, theatre, television and film. He also founded Bold as Brass, a youth theatre company in Tyneside championing young people and new voices.

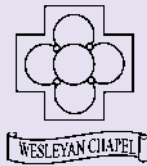
He was 95 when he died having left his highly valued mark both in Buckinghamshire as a forward-thinking Headteacher and in Tyneside as an acclaimed playwright. A remarkable life.

Julie Hailstone also sent us a link (<https://x.com/i/status/1754776948188823867>) to a video from the BBC archives.

Thank you both.

An inconvenience

The recreation ground toilets continue to be closed, allegedly because someone started a fire inside. There is no warning notice, so best make sure your little one 'goes' before venturing out.



FLACKWELL HEATH METHODIST CHURCH

SUNDAY 3 MAY, 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 – MORNING WORSHIP.

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.

SUNDAY 10 MAY, 11am – MORNING WORSHIP led by Paul Strange.

SUNDAY 17 MAY, 11am – CONTEMPORARY MORNING WORSHIP with HOLY COMMUNION led by Rev. Kate Strange.

SUNDAY 24 MAY, 11am – MORNING WORSHIP for PENTECOST led by Rev. Alan Bolton.

SUNDAY 31 MAY, 11am – MORNING WORSHIP streamed from Wesley Methodist Church led by Rev. Kate Strange.

SUNDAY 31 MAY, 6.30pm – JOINT SERVICE with CHRIST CHURCH at FHMC.

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 – for parents, carers, young children and toddlers in the church from 9.15 to 11.15 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 to 11.15 on Friday mornings during term time. Please see our Facebook page for details.

We run **LINE DANCING** classes on Tuesday mornings from 10.30 to 11.30 and 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



When I was much (much) younger than I am now I participated in the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award. One of the sections I had to complete in order to get my much-desired Gold Award was an expedition, and through some friends I managed to get myself onto a two-week trek around the Rocky Mountains in New Mexico.

It was an incredible experience, and even though it was almost 20 years ago I can still remember it vividly. The scenery was breathtaking, the walking extremely hard work, and the wildlife a little different from what I was used to (you don’t get many brown bears or rattlesnakes in the home counties, and when we saw vultures circling overhead I realised I was far from home).

Before we set out one of the guides encouraged us to make sure that we had at least one point during the expedition, preferably towards the end, where we could stop and reflect on our experience. “You’ll probably never do this again,” he said, “so make sure you find a way to remember it.” And so it was that a couple of nights before the end of the trek we lit a huge campfire (having checked there were no bears near) and told stories of the expedition we’d all been on. It was a moving and important moment.

There’s something natural about marking significant moments in life. As humans we’ve always been creatures of ritual: it’s why certain birthdays or anniversaries are so important to us. We want to celebrate these occasions surrounded by those who matter most to us. We know it’s also true when life’s sadder moments arrive: when we lose someone we love, one of the ways we mark our sadness is to gather all those who loved that person, and were loved by them, so that together we can say goodbye.

Offering a way of marking these important life moments is something we are privileged to do as the parish church of Flackwell Heath. Everyone who lives in our village – and often those who have lived here at some point or have a connection here – has the right to get married at Christ Church, have their funeral held here, and have children baptised here. It can be particularly special to hold these events in what might well be a special village for a variety of reasons – the family home, where your parents lived, or where you have raised your family. If you want to know more about any of these services then you only have to get in touch using the contact details below, or pop into church one day. We’d be delighted to hear from you.

As May arrives with its warmer weather and Bank Holidays, a reminder that our ever-popular Christian Aid Plant Sale takes place on Saturday 16th May this year. The gates will open at 10am and the event runs until midday, and along with a great selection of plants there’ll be the usual coffee and cake as well. All money raised goes towards the work of Christian Aid so not only are you snapping up a bargain, but you’re also helping others at the same time.

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**

Flackwell in Bloom

Our village is looking particularly vibrant this spring thanks to the wonderful efforts of our brilliant volunteers. Across the village, planters, beds and green spaces are bursting into colour with tulips, daffodils and spring flowers, creating a warm and welcoming environment for residents and visitors alike. These displays don't happen by chance - they are carefully planted and lovingly maintained by a dedicated group of local volunteers working throughout the year.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone involved. Your time, care and commitment make a real difference and help foster a strong sense of community pride. If you enjoy seeing these beautiful displays and would like to get involved, we would always welcome new volunteers. Together, we can continue to keep Flackwell Heath looking its best and blooming brightly throughout the seasons.

The Chill Zone

Our youth club, The Chill Zone, continues to go from strength to strength, with 35–40 young people regularly attending each Wednesday evening. Delivered in partnership with Relatable Role Models and hosted by Flackwell Methodist Church, the sessions offer a safe and welcoming space where young people can take part in sports, gaming, use the music recording studio, or simply relax and socialise with friends. The positive engagement we're seeing highlights just how valuable this initiative is to our community. We are keen to continue and grow The Chill Zone in the future, and would warmly welcome any sponsorship or support to help expand what we can offer.

Heath Fest

HeathFest 2026 returns on Saturday 11 July at Carrington Field, promising another fantastic day of music, food and family fun. Now in its fifth year, this much-loved community festival will feature six hours of live performances from talented local artists (These Certain People, Oh Aces, Jus Chillin, Gabe & Louis, Yukitan and 19Eighties) alongside a great selection of food and drink including a BBQ, street food stalls, bar, tea tent, and a wine and cocktail van. There will be plenty to keep younger visitors entertained too, with funfair rides, interactive circus skills workshops, roaming performers and a silent disco. Organised by volunteers from the Flackwell Heath Residents' Association, all proceeds from the event are reinvested back into the community.

Tickets are available now at www.fhra.co.uk, and we are also looking for volunteers to help on the day - anyone able to give a couple of hours will receive a free ticket as a thank-you.

Get in Touch

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

Email: hello@fhra.co.uk



The Community Pantry was very grateful to Juniper Hill School for its major recent food delivery. Children were allowed to wear what they liked to school at the end of last term, provided they donated an item of food that was on the list produced by the pantry. Dave Fowler, on behalf of the pantry, sends a huge thank you to all who contributed and says it will make an enormous difference.



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Flackwell Heath Women's Institute

Evening WI

When we think about the 2 World Wars memorial sites throughout world we see the graves but we don't always see the plants. Chris Leach from the War Graves Commission explained how these beautiful designs of layout and plants have been carefully chosen depending on the climate and soil, to give the visitor a sense of calm, colour and peace. In the photographs we could see how these plants did not cover the soldier's name on any of these carefully crafted gravestones. Such care and dedication.

We have been very fortunate over the years to have 2 WIs in our village. So we are very sad that the Flackwell Heath Morning WI decided to close. No doubt they will be organising where to meet as good friends.

Next month we will be discussing the Resolutions on which all the WIs will be voting. It will mean we can hopefully help our communities locally and nationally over the coming year. Also there will be the important social time too.

Helen Waller



THE HEATH SINGERS'
Summer Concert



19 & 20 JUNE 2026
7.30pm on 19 June & 4.00pm on 20 June
at Christ Church, Chapel Rd,
Flackwell Heath HP10 9AA

TICKETS: £12 FOR ADULTS, £6 FOR CHILDREN
AVAILABLE FROM CHRIST CHURCH OFFICE OR AT
WWW.HEATHSINGERS.COM

Seasonal Gardening

Every gardening year is different, and 2025 was challenging. However, with no late frosts to cause blossom damage followed by a dry summer having four heat waves, deep rooted fruit trees such as cherry, plum, pear and apple, last year produced exceptional crops. In the wild oak, chestnut and sycamore also produced well, consequently 2025 was declared a mast year. However, yields of soft fruits such as



raspberries, blackberries, blackcurrants and gooseberries were poor, largely due to their shallow roots running out of moisture during crop swell. Provided they were watered strawberries came earlier and were sweeter due to the warm weather. Commercially, strawberries are often grown within polytunnels in mangers through fabric membrane, water and liquid feed being provided via irrigation hoses out of sight below the

fabric. This results in big plants and impressive crops. Gardeners often try growing similarly through fabric laid on open ground and this can give a weed-free and clean crop. However yields are often poor due to the fabric deflecting both rain and manually applied water and nutrients. So, if growing this way don't forget good irrigation.

In our area, last winter was the second wettest on record so many soils will now be short of some nutrients and most will benefit from a dry fertiliser such as blood, fish and bone, chicken pellets, John Innes Base, or Q4 Professional raked in before planting. Fruit trees and bushes would benefit from a similar feed plus potash spread on the ground above the root ball and washed in by the rain. Most perennial plants would also appreciate a dry feed plus a mulch of compost or manure.

Vegetables need adequate nutrients so again if manure or compost haven't been applied during the winter a dressing of blood, fish & bone or similar raked in before planting will help. The exceptions are root crops such as carrots and parsnips where recently added manure and compost can cause roots to fork or fang.



Do remember that plants don't have teeth so can only take up nutrients in soluble form so to perform well they do need moisture but, like us, if thirsty they need a drink and not a shower. To reduce slug damage watering is therefore best done in the morning via a watering can with a spout so the soil is well wetted but with minimal splashing on foliage. This way both foliage and adjacent soil should be dry by nightfall. Evening watering especially via a rose or sprinkler simulates an April shower, something absolutely adored by slugs, most especially keeled slugs that spend most of the year below ground but come to the surface late May and early June in order to breed - which is just at the time we are planting out vulnerable bedding and vegetable plants.

Poor light means this spring has been challenging so 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, bedding and vegetable plants. This year's event is being held on Saturday 9th May in the car park of Flackwell Heath Community Centre between 9am and 12 noon.

John Marshall

Chairman-High Wycombe Chrysanthemum Society



FLACKWELL HEATH COMMUNITY LIBRARY

FREE Online access to Newspapers and Magazines

No need for subscriptions to multiple online news sources, as many of the most popular newspapers and magazines can be viewed online using the PressReader application.

There are several thousand titles available. UK newspapers such as: the Daily Express; Independent; Daily Mirror and many more. Newspapers from around the world include Washington Post; USA Today; The Hindu; South China Morning Post and many other countries.

There is a worldwide choice of magazines including: Good Food; Top Gear; Gardener's World; Rolling Stone; Good Housekeeping; Science Focus.

To get access to all of these, go to the Bucks Libraries website and select 'Search for a library item' Then all you need is your library card number to sign on for a month's free, renewable access.



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-1.00pm.

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

Tel: 01296 382415 email: fhcl@flackwellheath.net

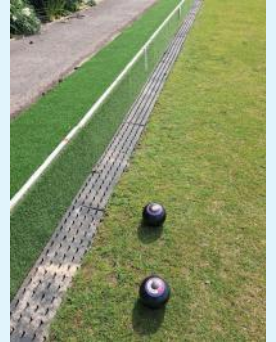
web: <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/libraries/>



Bowls Club Update

Last year, we reported in the Grapevine that the Flackwell Heath Bowls Club needed to raise £30,000 to replace broken ditches around the perimeter of the green.

A number of readers came forward with ideas of who to approach and, thanks to the generosity of the following, the work has been completed in time for the new season.



Shanley Trust

F.H. Repair shop

Chepping Wycombe Parish Council

F.H. Residents' Association

Mobbs Memorial Trust

Heath Singers

Martin Adams Garages

F.H.B.C. Members

The club would also like to thank a local resident who generously donated a large sum, making it possible to upgrade the dilapidated kitchen with new units, worktops, and wall tiles.



Martin Adams

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Carrington Infant School Easter Bonnet Parade



The sun is up early! It's a beautiful day with just the tiniest nip in the spring air. Kate Cliffe, the headteacher, is already out at the gate wearing her large rabbit ears and welcoming the parents and grandparents. In fact, I notice that all the teachers are wearing rabbit ears and I feel I should have worn a pair myself.

As I wait in the reception area, from just beyond the double doors I can hear the happy excited, bubbly chatter of the children in their classrooms. So what is going on you might ask! It's that special, magical time, which we all look forward to every year, when Carrington Infant School, and the pre-school, present their Easter Bonnet parade.

When the idea of the Easter bonnet was put into practice in the 1870s, women's hats were still

referred to as bonnets. Yes, this tradition spans back to at least the 1870s, if not earlier. It is such a lot of fun to make your very own Easter bonnet at home and decorate it to the nines with flowers, bunnies, lambs, and chicks.

Outside the merry music, capably managed by Kate's teenage son Charlie, is tempting us insistently, to hurry along and join the crowd in the playground. Who's that peeping round the corner of the classrooms? It's the youngest children from pre-school, excitedly whispering and wondering if it's their time to come out.

At last the hats start to emerge, some are huge, almost bigger than the child underneath. As we clap, the children wave back energetically to their families, and make a circuit of the playground, before sitting down in the centre. These are the best of times I think, as we stand in the sunshine, around the sea of children and hats.



The Reverend James Dwyer, from Christ Church, speaks to us about how "Easter is a celebration of new life. Eggs are about new life!" For families, these precious children are also about 'new life' and the pleasure of watching them grow in confidence in the community of the school. The school choir take their places at the front. "Do you like my Easter Bonnet", they sing merrily (and indeed we do).

Now it's time for the "Best Hat Easter Award", carefully selected by the teacher from each class. Teddy, from Beech class, proudly collects his chocolate egg. In Hazel class, it's Binh who wins an egg. Elias is selected from Oak class, Oscar from Sycamore, Joshua K from Birch and Oaklee from Chestnut.

The term will come to an end at lunchtime tomorrow, and everyone will go home for the

Easter holidays and what a lovely memory we will all take with us. The Easter Bonnet is more than just a decorative hat. Once again the annual parade at Carrington First School has captured all our hearts and become a symbol of spring, and most of all, reminded us of the joy of new life!

Juliet Bates



Road Rep Needed

We are still looking for someone to deliver to about 25 homes in Green Dragon Lane, Northern Woods and nearby streets. If you would like to take on this round please contact Nigel and Alison on 01628 522413.

STOP PRESS: if you watch BBC Countryfile on May 3, you will find some local interest and possibly recognise a few faces.


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Chance to support the Community Centre

The Community Centre has joined the Buckinghamshire Lottery.

This is a lottery sponsored by the County to help raise money for good causes.

Unlike many such lotteries, this one allows players to nominate their own good cause which will then get 50% of the value of entries sold through that cause's page. So if someone pays £1 a week for a year the Community Centre gets £26.

Signing up and entries are made online. Draws are held every Saturday night and winners are notified by email. Entries cost £1 for 6 numbers selected from 0 to 9. If you match all six drawn numbers the prize is £25,000 with other prizes down to £25 for two matches. Even two

matches will win 3 tickets for the next draw.

Other than registering its cause the Community Centre has no further involvement in running or operating the lottery. Full details are on www.BuckinghamshireLottery.co.uk or via the poster below.

You may never win if you join, but at least you will know that half of your money is not wasted! All proceeds will go back into the Community Centre funds towards keeping the Centre facilities clean and up-to-date i.e., new doors in main hall, new curtains, new window in kitchen, etc. The list goes on!

Thank you!

The Committee



Litter-pick every 1st Saturday



FLACKWELL HEATH METHODIST CHURCH is looking for a volunteer or volunteers to help maintain their garden on an occasional basis. If you would be interested, please contact Suzanne on suzstoll@aol.com for more information.

PLAY NOW
TO BOOST OUR FUNDRAISING

- Help give our fundraising a boost
- Tickets cost just £1 a week
- Win up to £25,000

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And search for: Flackwell Heath

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Flackwell Heath Community Association

Chairman: Chris Cramer
07917273077

Secretary: Chris Thomas
07719576678

Centre Bookings
Please use bookings enquiry page to be found on website
www.flackwellheathcommunitycentre.org.uk

Reg Charity No. 1044870

Dates for your Diary

Regular Events

Litter-pick: first Saturdays (May 2, June 6), Start from Jubilee Gardens at 10am.

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

Paperback & Jigsaw Library: first Wednesdays (May 6, June 3), Community Centre, 1-2.45pm.

Food market: third Saturdays (May 16, June 20), Three Horseshoes car park, 9am-12noon.

May

Saturday 9: Plant sale in the Community Centre car park, 9am-12noon (see p5)

Wednesday 13: FHCA AGM, Sarney Room, 8pm (see p1)

Saturday 16: Plant sale at Christ Church, 10am-12noon (see p1)

Saturday/Sunday 30/31: Festival of Football, Green Dragon Lane (see p1)

June

Friday 19: Heath Singers Concert, Christ Church, 7.30pm (see p5)

Saturday 20: Heath Singers Concert, 4pm (see p5)

Friday 26: Concert by Downley Voices, Christ Church, 7pm (see p2)

Grapevine

Contact the editorial team at
grapevine@flackwellheathcommunitycentre.org.uk
Delivery & subscriptions: Nigel & Alison Peach
01628 522413

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