

MARCH 2026

# Bentley & Binsted

PARISH MAGAZINE

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### Parish Magazine

Articles and Advertising: Any copy or advertising enquiries

should be sent to Gemma Ball on the **5th** of the month,

by email ([magazine@benbinfro.org](mailto:magazine@benbinfro.org))

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Christ as a light, illumine and guide me.  
Christ as a shield, overshadow me.  
Christ under me; Christ over me;  
Christ beside me, on my left and my right.  
This day be within and without me,  
Lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.  
Be in the heart of each to whom I speak;  
In the mouth of each who speaks unto me.  
This day be within and without me,  
Lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.  
Christ as a light; Christ as a shield;  
Christ beside me on my left and my right.

**T**his version of the famous prayer known as “St. Patrick’s Breastplate”, is the perfect prayer for our journey through Lent which covers the whole of March, including St. Patrick’s feast day on 17th March.

Lent is the season of self-examination and simplicity which prepares us for the Easter story, the Last Supper, the trial and death of Jesus, and his victory over death by his resurrection. Lent reminds us of our frailty and need of God, particularly his strength in times of difficulty. It reminds us that we cannot draw near to God, but that he draws near to us. He knows our weakness and promises his presence and strength.

Lent confronts us with the challenge of what we do with all that God blesses us with and invites us to reorient ourselves,

to act in service of others and to build up community. To see the value and worth of all people in God’s eyes and to confess our selfishness and greed.

It is a season of honesty, where our defences are lowered and we allow God to speak to us as we lift the needs of the world to him.

May God bless you and yours, this Lent. May you discover afresh his love for you and may we watch and wait for his salvation. I encourage you to pray St. Patrick’s Breastplate each day, and may you know God’s protection and care always.

Matt Boyes

*Rector of Bentley, Binsted and Froyle*

You are invited to...

# four: twelve

YOUTH GROUP FOR YEARS 4-6

1 TIMOTHY 4:12

1 TIMOTHY 4:12

1 TIMOTHY 4:12

1 TIMOTHY 4:12

1 Timothy 4:12 – “Do not let anyone treat you as if you are unimportant because you are young. Instead, be an example to the believers with your words, your actions, your love, your faith, and your pure life.”

WHEN  
AND  
WHERE?

**FRIDAY 13TH MARCH**  
**At Bentley Church Hall**

**FRIDAY 27TH MARCH**  
**At Bentley School Hall**

TIME?

**5-6:30pm.**

WHAT?

**FUN & GAMES,  
SHORT BIBLE  
TEACHING, GROUP  
ACTIVITIES, TUCK  
SHOP.**



Contact Pippa for more info  
[admin@benbinfro.org](mailto:admin@benbinfro.org)



# UPAGEAR

**Youth group**

**School years 7+**

**A welcoming and fun space for young people to gather, to build friendships, and explore Christian faith and values with significant snacks!**

**Thursdays 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> March**

**5-6:30pm**

**Bentley Church Hall**

# Meet the Team

*Jill Kiely*



*Pictured: Jill Kiely*

## 1. Quick-fire questions!

**Tea or coffee?** Hot lemon water first thing please, then tea

**Winter or summer?**

Winter – heat and I don't mix well.

**Sunrise or sunset?**

I love a beautiful sunrise.

**Sweet or savoury?** Can I say both equally – I do like a nice piece of cake, but cheese scones are equally delicious!

**Apple or android?** Android 100%

**Air guitar or air drums?** Air drums

**Movies or books?** Books

## 2. What's your favourite way to start the day?

When we had our English Springer Spaniel, it would be an early morning walk (preferably in the dry) with him, enjoying the bird song and time to think. Looking forward to restarting this routine when we are joined by our new spaniel later this spring.

## 3. Tell us more about your role at Benbinfro and how you ended up here?

We moved to Bentley in 1989 and I joined the church shortly after and was co-opted into the then choir. I become more involved in the running of the church once I retired from commuting up to London some twelve years ago and have two main roles. Firstly, as one of the two

churchwardens at St Mary's Bentley where I help organise the various services, drawing up the rota for our lovely volunteers who welcome, read, lead prayers, serve coffee and provide cake, and also choose the worship songs and hymns (so you know who to blame!).

My second role is as Parish Safeguarding Officer for Bentley. We are all aware from the media of the failings across the Church of England that reports of abuse were not properly investigated and actioned. We want to ensure that all the churches in our benefice are inclusive, welcoming and a safe space for anyone. Safeguarding is not just about children and vulnerable adults; it applies to everyone; nor does it stop when we leave church on a Sunday. So, if you have any concerns about someone's safety whether at church or in the community, please do report this – contact details for our Parish Safeguarding Officers are at the front of the magazine or on the posters in the church porches.

## 4. What things in your role do you look forward to the most?

I really enjoy welcoming people into church, particularly when we have a baptism or a wedding, and hopefully making them feel part of God's family.

## 5. Outside of parish life, what things do you get nerdy or excited about?

My husband would say paperwork and committees! This is the first time in the last seven years that I haven't been doing a course that has necessitated writing essays with deadlines, that I typically missed – it's been liberating! I'm also very closely involved with an independent school and adult day service for those with autism, which we help to set up some 25 years ago, where I am a trustee and governor – so yes, more meetings and paperwork, but a great deal of satisfaction in seeing the positive impact on the lives of the pupils, adult learners and their families.

## 6. What's your most embarrassing moment?

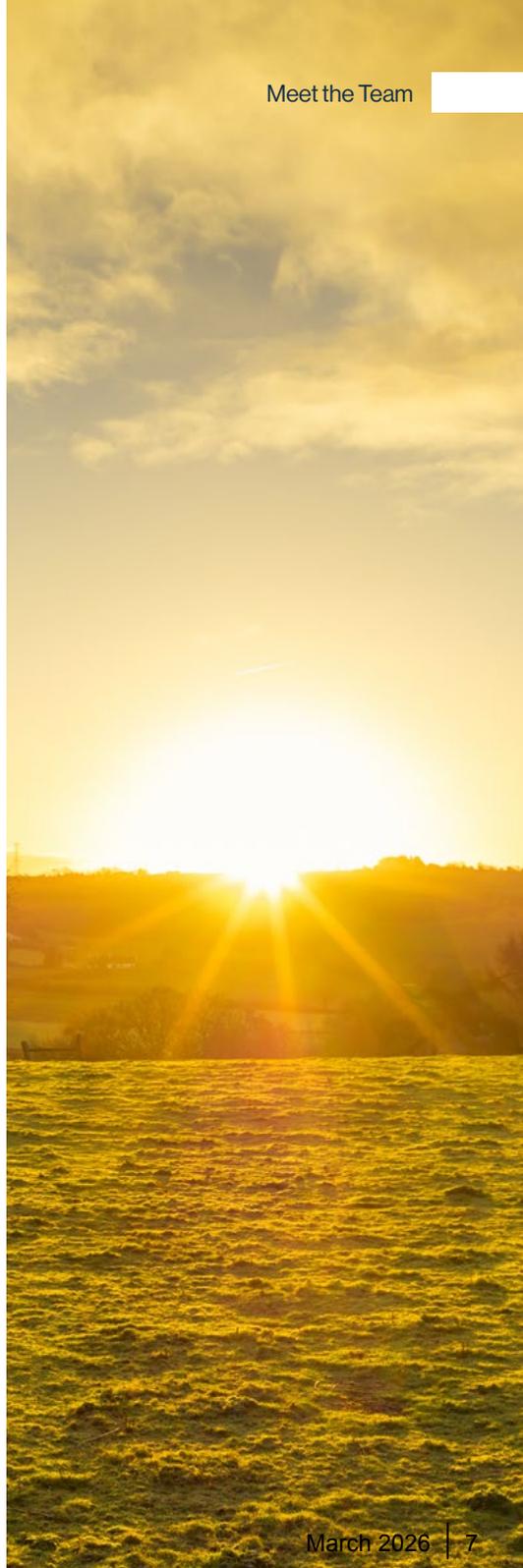
I'm sure there have been many of them, usually where I've said something and there's been another meaning that could be attributed, although I try to forget these. It's like when you come away from a conversation and think I really wish I'd said such and such.

## 7. If you could invent one thing to make your life better, what would you invent and why?

Something that would help me sort everything that's been accumulated over the years on the basis that it might be useful one day but which you know should really be got rid of.

## 8. To finish, what is your go-to bible verse when you need some encouragement, and how can it help encourage others?

There are two that are close to my heart – Matthew 28 verse 20 “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” and Psalm 121 that speaks of being able to depend on God for help and that he will protect us. There were a couple of occasions when I was working when I suffered from burn out and depression, these verses helped me realise that I was not alone and that by trusting in God, I would come out the other side more resilient. God is dependable no matter the circumstances, you can rely on Him to protect us and keep us safe.





*March's theme: Mother's Day*



**SUNDAY 15<sup>TH</sup>  
MARCH**

**9:30AM  
DURING THE  
MORNING SERVICE**

**FROYLE CHURCH  
GU34 4LB**

**Mother's Day crafts and activities will take place during Froyle's Morning Worship service instead of the usual time in the afternoon. Refreshments will follow after the service.**

**No cost, just rock up and enjoy!**



# Children's Church in March



A friendly and fun group for children during the Sunday morning service. With stories, games, songs, and crafts, children learn about God and faith in a way that's easy to understand and enjoy.

All ages are welcome – come and join us!

## **1st March**

9:30am Holy Cross Binsted

## **8th March**

9:30am St Mary's Bentley

## **22nd March**

9:30am St Mary's Bentley





# The Bereavement Journey

A 6 week course for anyone who has suffered bereavement, no matter how long ago.

This course provides a safe place to talk with others, as we reflect on the various ways in which our lives are impacted by loss, whilst also exploring how we can move forward, despite our loss.

**Thursdays, 12:30pm - 2:30pm**  
**16<sup>th</sup> April - 21<sup>st</sup> May**

**Mill Court, GU34 4JF**

*(please contact - see below - for directions if you are unsure where to go)*

A light lunch will be provided

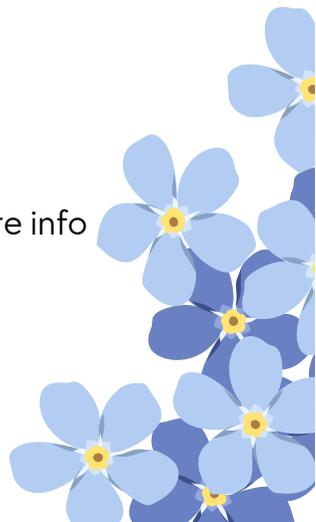
All welcome

Please let us know if you would like more info  
or would like to come along:

**Email: [admin@benbinfro.org](mailto:admin@benbinfro.org)**

**Call: Fran - 07709 569262**

**Call: Kathy - 07710 623784**



# Work from home

## at Bentley Church Hall



Come along to our 'working from home' sessions at Bentley Church Hall. We will have structured days with quiet times for focussed work through the day and the opportunity for a social lunch to beat the loneliness, share ideas, and cheer each other on.

We are getting very popular!

We're so glad we can provide a space that is appreciated and enjoyed.

But we are now starting to get quite busy and would love it if you could sign up in advance if you are planning to come, so we can provide enough lunch and make sure we don't run out of desk space.

This is still FREE, but please book your space through the QR code here.



9am - 5pm

Dates:  
March 10th  
March 24th

Bentley Church Hall  
Church Lane  
GU10 5NA

FREE soup lunch or order  
from Bentley Stores

Structured but flexible  
work days

Tea & coffee

WI-FI

Warm space in winter

chat to Becky or Gemma  
or email [admin@benbinfro.org](mailto:admin@benbinfro.org) for more info

# Easter 2026

## **Palm Sunday**

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March



11am Benefice Holy Communion at Binsted

## **Maundy Thursday**

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April



6:30pm Choral Service at Froyle

## **Good Friday**

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April



12pm Good Friday Reflection at Binsted

## **Easter Saturday**

Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April



10am Easter Garden Making at Froyle

9pm Easter Night Vigil at Bentley

## **Easter Sunday**

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April



6:15am Sunrise Holy Communion at Bentley

9:30am Holy Communion at Bentley

9:30am Holy Communion at Binsted

11am Holy Communion at Froyle

11am Holy Communion at Oakhanger



# EASTER EGG HUNT

COME AND JOIN IN THE FUN!

SATURDAY 4TH APRIL

Calling all pre-schoolers and those at primary school

Join our big Easter Bentley Village Quiz and win yourself an Easter Egg.

The questions can all be answered from clues that can be found around Bentley, and you can always ask a grown up to help you!

Bring your completed quiz to Saturday Café at the Memorial Hall to claim your free Easter Egg

Quiz sheets will be available via Bentley School, Dottie Tots and at Bentley Church or from Saturday Café on 4th April.

**EGGS TO BE CLAIMED FROM SATURDAY CAFÉ,  
BENTLEY MEMORIAL HALL BETWEEN  
10.30 AND 12.30**



## Saturday Café



**Bentley Memorial Hall**

**Saturdays 10.30am – 12.30pm**

**Coffee, tea and cakes**



We look forward to seeing you for a catch up and lively chat.



On most Saturdays. Look out for the banner outside the Hall.

# **BENTLEY**

**COME DINE WITH ME**



**25th  
April 2026**  
**THREE COURSE  
MEAL WITH WINE  
£35 PER PERSON**

**Join us for a fun evening.  
We will meet at the Memorial Hall at 7pm  
for a glass of fizz, and you will then find  
out where you will dine.  
Come as a couple or by yourself.  
It is a great way to meet new people in  
the village and support fundraising for  
St Mary's Church.**

For more information or tickets please contact  
**Linda Fuller [lindafuller1105@gmail.com](mailto:lindafuller1105@gmail.com)**

# Bentley & Binsted

PARISH MAGAZINE

**The parish magazine for Bentley & Binsted is distributed to all the houses in our two villages. Most of the costs for producing the magazine come from advertising revenues, in 2024 we had a shortfall of over £3,000, which Bentley and Binsted PCCs need to cover.**

It costs us around £1 to produce each copy of the magazine and we publish 10 editions per year. If you feel that you are able to contribute towards the costs of producing the magazine, please contact the magazine treasurer at [bentleytreasurer@benbinfro.co.uk](mailto:bentleytreasurer@benbinfro.co.uk) or you can donate online by either:

- scanning the QR code below
- or go direct to our donations page at: <https://tinyurl.com/2tv9rtxu>.



Thank you for helping us keep the magazine as something for everyone in Bentley and Binsted.



# GOOD MORNING



let's have breakfast



introducing

# MATT'S CHATS

***Good food and meaningful conversation.***

*A relaxed hour with our vicar, exploring Christian ideas from the big to the small. Open to all whether you're a lifelong believer or just curious.*

**9:30am**

**14th March 2026**

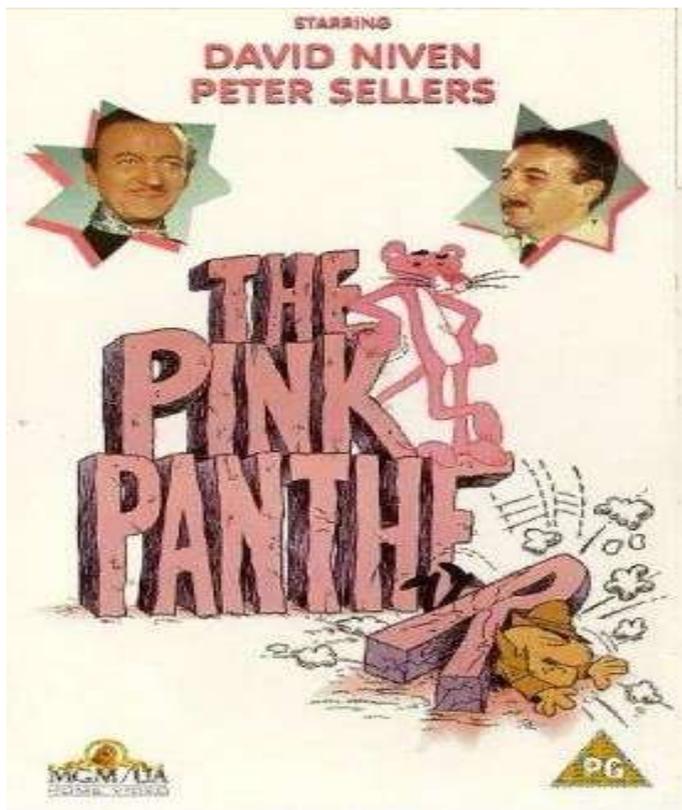
**The Star Inn, Bentley  
Breakfast provided**

Bring your questions, Bring a Friend and Bring an Appetite.

# Bentley Memorial Hall Association

## Presents

### The Pink Panther (Original 1963 version)



**SAVE THE DATE**

**Fri. 17<sup>th</sup> April, at the Memorial Hall**

***YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE.....***

***SO SEE THE PINK PANTHER TWICE !!!***



**WICKHAM INSTITUTE  
SPRING SUPPER  
SATURDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2026  
7.30 PM**

**Come and join us for good home-made  
food and pleasant company.**

**Tickets cost £20 each and can be booked by  
calling 01420 23157 or emailing  
treasurer@wickhaminstitute.co.uk**

**Early booking is recommended as this is always  
a popular event.**

**Please note that you will need to provide  
your own drink.**



LOTTERY FUNDED



# January 2026

WEATHER STATISTICS



## Temperature



### Daytime maximum

10.9°C (12<sup>th</sup>) to 2.5°C (5<sup>th</sup>)

5 days above 10°C and 5 days below 5 °C



### Nighttime minimum

- 9.7°C (6<sup>th</sup>) to 6.7°C (20<sup>th</sup>)

11 nights below 0°C

## Rainfall



### Total for month

7.72 inches (196.1 mm) over 26 days



### Wettest days

1.20 inches (30.6 mm) (27<sup>th</sup>)

## Wind



### Dominant wind direction

West South West



### Maximum gust

23 mph (9<sup>th</sup>)

*Parish Weatherman*

# Benefice

# Weekend Away

20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>  
March



As a church, we are so excited to be going to Horsley Towers, DeVere Hotel, in March for a weekend away! Church doesn't just happen on Sundays, we have lots going on around our parishes throughout the week, but this is an event we are all really looking forward to. We will be staying for 2 nights with lots planned including teaching from Emmy Wilson (bio right), worship for everyone, and some Saturday night entertainment – to be planned! Food and accommodation is included in the cost, as well as access to the leisure facilities (gym, sauna, pool). There are some beautiful walks around the hotel grounds too.

### Cost

Full weekend: £245 per adult

Day until 5pm (Sat or Sun): £50 per adult

Day including evening meal: £80 per adult

**We are almost full** - so if you would like to come please let us know as soon as you can!

Email [admin@benbinfro.org](mailto:admin@benbinfro.org)  
for questions and a booking form.

**£245**  
per adult

**Horsley Park**  
**Ockham Road South**  
**East Horsley**  
**Surrey**  
**KT24 6DU**

**Kids go**  
**FREE!**

# Reverend Emmy Wilson

Emmy Wilson has lived in London for over 50 years. She spent 14 years training and practising as both a State Registered Nurse and a Registered Sick Children's Nurse, culminating in 4 years nursing those affected by HIV and AIDS.

In 1985 Emmy ended her nursing career when invited to join the staff at Holy Trinity Brompton. She began to help those in society whose lifestyles made them most vulnerable to this disease, working with people suffering from AIDS, as well as those caught up in prostitution, drug addiction, alcoholism and homelessness.

Emmy became involved in Prison work in 1991, helping as a part-time volunteer with the Chaplaincy at Holloway Prison, once the largest women's prison in London. In December 1994 she began taking teams to other prisons in the UK to introduce Alpha.

Since 1995 Emmy has visited prisons and spoken about her work at Alpha conferences and Alpha Prison Trainings all around the world, including Scotland, Wales, Isle of Man, Ireland, Rwanda, Zambia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Botswana, Trinidad and Tobago, Grand Turk, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Colombia, Panama, Argentina, Brazil, Fiji, Australia, New Zealand, USA,



Canada, France, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Russia, Poland, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Hong Kong, India, China, Japan, Taiwan, and Guam

She was ordained by Bishop Johnson Gakumba in Northern Uganda in 2011 as Chaplain to the Worldwide Prisons, and is based in London.

She has become involved in the fight against human trafficking - having visited brothels in Calcutta and Mumbai - and is passionate not only to raise awareness about this vital work, but to help those enslaved to find freedom.

She retired from HTB's staff on her 70th birthday in February 2023, but is keen to continue to serve the wider Church internationally whenever the opportunities arise, having been appointed as a Global Ambassador for Alpha.



# Hazel

**I was reminded of Hazel in January when the flashy yellow male catkins appeared. As usual they were the first flowers of any native tree. Hazel is monoecious, meaning that both male and female flowers are found on the same tree, although hazel flowers must be pollinated by pollen from other hazel trees. Female flowers are tiny and bud-like with red styles.**

January was also the time of Hollywood razzmatazz, and the film Hamnet reminded me that Hazel nuts were the snack of choice for theatregoers in Shakespeare's time. Hazel was grown in the UK for large-scale nut production until the early 1900s. Cultivated varieties (known as cob nuts) are still grown in Kent, but most of our hazelnuts are now imported.

Hazel is often coppiced, but when left to grow, trees can reach a height of 8m and live for up to 80 years (if coppiced, hazel can live for several hundred years. There is a stand in Argyll called Ballachuan Hazelwood which is believed to have been in continuous existence since around 7500 BC.) However, coppicing is not always good for Hazel as it can disturb sensitive ecosystems such as the ancient Atlantic Hazel woods of Scotland's rainforest.

It has a smooth, grey-brown, bark, which peels with age, and bendy, hairy stems. Leaf buds are oval, blunt and hairy. It grows across much of Europe, parts of north Africa and western Asia. In the UK it's often found in the understorey of oak, ash or birch woodland, and in scrub and hedgerows.

Hazel leaves provide food for the caterpillars of moths, including the large emerald, small white wave, barred umber and nut-tree tussock. Where hazel is coppiced, the open, wildflower-rich habitat supports species of butterfly, particularly fritillaries.



Hazel has long been associated with the dormouse (also known as the hazel dormouse). Not only are hazelnuts eaten by dormice to fatten up for hibernation, but in spring, as they awake, the leaves are a good source of caterpillars, which dormice also eat.

Hazelnuts are also eaten by woodpeckers, nuthatches, tits, wood pigeons, jays and small mammals. Hazel flowers should provide early pollen as a food for bees. However, bees find it difficult to collect and can only gather it in small loads. This is because the pollen of wind-pollinated hazel is not sticky and each grain actually repels against another. If this worries you, you can always plant some mahonia in your garden. The bees will be grateful.

Hazel has a reputation as a magical tree. A hazel rod is supposed to protect against evil spirits, as well as being used as a wand and for water-divining. In some parts of England, hazelnuts were carried as charms and/or held to ward off rheumatism. In Ireland, hazel was known as the 'Tree of Knowledge', and in medieval times it was a symbol of fertility.

Hazel wood can be twisted or knotted, and as such it historically had many uses. These included thatching spars, net stakes, water-divining sticks, hurdles and furniture. Today, hazel coppice has become an important management strategy in the conservation of woodland habitats for wildlife. The resulting timber is used in lots of ways and is becoming increasingly popular as pea sticks and bean poles used by gardeners.

Ben Hamlin *Tree warden*  
Binstedtrees@gmail.com

# BENTLEY MEMORIAL HALL



The perfect venue for celebrations, children's parties, meetings, exercise classes or exhibitions. The Hall is conveniently located in the centre of the village and has kitchen facilities and ample car parking.

Downstairs accommodates events for up to 100 people across two rooms.

Upstairs accommodates events for up to 40 people and is ideal for meetings.

## Your Hall Needs You



We are always looking for new Trustees to help run the Memorial Hall. Without new blood, the existing Trustees will wither away with age and the Hall will die.

If you want the Hall to continue to be part of village life, please consider becoming a Trustee.

For more information, please contact [bentleymemorialhall@gmail.com](mailto:bentleymemorialhall@gmail.com).

## The Bentley Memorial Hall 100+ Club

The winners of the February draw of the Bentley Memorial Hall 100+ Club are:

1st Adrian & Linda Job 2nd Andrew Joy 3rd Jennifer Bryan-Brown

**Congratulations to the winners.**

We welcome new members to the 100+ Club. Each number costs £12 per year (£1 per month) and there are three prizes every month! 50% of membership fees go to the 100+ Club prize fund while the remaining 50% goes to the Memorial Hall to help with our running costs. The more people who join the 100+ Club, the more money paid out in monthly prizes.

To join the 100+ Club, please e-mail a request to [bentleymemorialhall@gmail.com](mailto:bentleymemorialhall@gmail.com).

For room bookings and additional information about the Hall, please visit our website [www.bentleymemorialhall.org](http://www.bentleymemorialhall.org).

# Bentley CE Primary School's Eco Warriors

Children at Bentley school are passionate about our planet and love getting involved in practical environmental action from litter picking to hosting second-hand stalls. Through regular meetings and school-based environmental projects, Bentley's Eco Council is definitely making a difference to our planet.

Last month, several members of Eco Council participated in large events with other schools in Hampshire. The first event was the Hampshire Climate Unity Virtual Conference for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The agenda for the morning's event was varied and exciting, ranging from conservation of painted dogs in Africa to learning about the world's most sustainable football club and seahorses in the Solent. The children who were lucky to attend were inspired by conservationists and environmentalists as well as fellow school eco warriors and have a long list of ideas ready for their next Eco Council meeting!

Following the virtual conference, Eco Council's Team Food attended the Young ACAN (Alton Climate Action Network) Schools Eco Conference, 'Eating for our Planet' at Alton College. Together with 13 other schools from the local area, the children from Years 1 to Year 6 participated in a range of workshops about food including making smoothies with the Smoothie Bike Company; seasonal food; food waste; permaculture in Gumbi, Africa and learning about milk production with Milk Club. The children were really enthused by the event and are now getting ready to lead a whole-school food day later in the month to share their knowledge with their peers with the aim of reducing food waste at lunchtime and raising the value of food.

If you would like to support Eco Council with their projects, they would love to hear from you. Please contact Emma Jones via the school office – [adminoffice@bentley.hants.sch.uk](mailto:adminoffice@bentley.hants.sch.uk).



JOIN OUR DEDICATED TEAM

# LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANT



## PART-TIME MORNING ROLE

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S  
LEARNING AND WELLBEING,  
WITH A FOCUS ON  
INCLUSION

## TERM-TIME ONLY

## ANDREWS' ENDOWED PRIMARY SCHOOL

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HANTS.SCH.UK



At Binsted we believe in the Christian values of Faith, Hope & Love.

## Binsted Primary Entry - Beech Class

In Beech class we have been learning about the French artist Henri Matisse. Henri Matisse was born in 1869 in Northern France and he went to school in Paris. Henri Matisse's early paintings were very exciting and were full of lots of different colours. This style was very different to the work of most artists at the time. In his later years, Matisse began to experiment with cut outs. He made collages from these using different coloured paper. In 1947, he published a book called 'Jazz' that became really popular. Some of the collages in the book have become famous works of art and have sold for over £15 million.



Beech class were so impressed with this that they thought they could create their own collage cut outs in the same style. They layered different coloured paper to create a collage effect, which was very effective. We were so pleased with the result!

Beech class have also been writing letters to their local MP. They are so passionate about the environment that they are desperate to reduce carbon emissions and want to increase the rate at which the government pursues net zero! Before they wrote the letters they had a debate in which they voted for this outcome.



# Binsted Parish Council

## Blacknest Fields

**If you're looking for new ways to get closer to nature and connect with like-minded souls, why not join some outdoor activities at Blacknest Fields?**

After such a wet January and February, we're all hoping for a sunny spring and the opportunity to get outside again!

### **Why not join one of our Spring conservation work parties at Blacknest Fields?**

These are quite gentle affairs, where half a dozen or so of us come together to get specific tasks done. This can be anything from planting honeysuckle, to fixing fences, or mowing paths in the meadows. We're a friendly bunch and you don't need any special expertise or tools. Do join if you can, even if it's only on an occasional basis. Depending on the weather, work parties are usually held every couple of weeks.

- In March, we're planning to meet on Friday 6th & Friday 20th (10:00-13:00)
- In April, we're planning an 'Easter Social' on Good Friday 3rd (10:00-13:00) As the Easter event will be in the school holidays, children of all ages will be welcome, with the emphasis being simply to have fun outside in nature.
- Email [BNF@binstedparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:BNF@binstedparishcouncil.org.uk) if you plan to join, to help us plan and so we can send you information about parking or wet-weather arrangements.

### **Or are you interested in joining our team of volunteer wildlife recorders?**

As our goal is to increase both the diversity and abundance of flora and fauna at Blacknest Fields, we need to have a good understanding of the species present. Local naturalists and modern recording 'apps' have enabled us to build up a good basic understanding of the site - so far, we've recorded 628 species, 45 of which are considered rare. It's an exceptional site for butterflies, with 31 species recorded.

- As well as regular butterfly and bee monitoring, we aim to fill information gaps about under-recorded species (for example, small mammals, spiders, beetles).
- Email [BNF@binstedparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:BNF@binstedparishcouncil.org.uk) for more details if you're interested.

### **To find out more about Blacknest Fields...**

- Blacknest Fields' 2025 Annual Report has just been published on the webpage <https://binstedparishcouncil.org.uk/parish-council/blacknest-fields>. The Report contains some stunning nature photos, so do take a look ...
- The webpage also has maps showing how to find the site and other details.
- Keep updated by following Blacknest Fields Community page on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/491868806032065/>



**Annual Parish Meeting at the Wickham Institute  
Save the Date - Evening of Weds 20<sup>th</sup> May**

**An opportunity to find out what's been happening across the parish and plans for the future. There will be guest speakers, with food and refreshments provided. More details to be provided nearer the time.**



**BINSTED COFFEE SHOP**

**@ THE WICKHAM INSTITUTE**

**(Church Street, Binsted GU34 4NX)**



**WEDNESDAYS 10am – 12noon (during term-time)**

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# Sudoku Games

## Sudoku game EASY

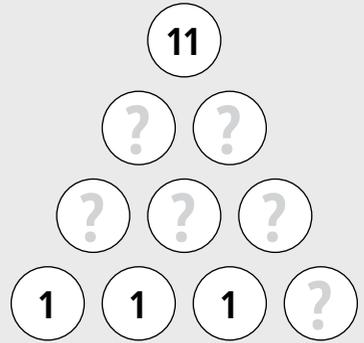
3		2					8	9
	6	8		5	2	7	3	4
		9						
4					7			
	8	3	2		1	5	9	
			5					2
						2		
2	1	4	7	8		3	5	
5	3					9		8

All you need to do is to fill in all of the squares in the puzzle so that each column of 9, each row of 9 and each 3 x 3 square includes every number from 1-9.

**No prizes** – just a huge amount of satisfaction!

### Number Pyramid

What are the missing numbers?



## Sudoku game MEDIUM

	3	5	6	7				
4			8	2	9	5		
	8			3		6		
	2			5	8		7	
8			2	6				5
3		1	7				2	
	4		9				7	
		2	4	8	7			6
			5	2	4	9		

## Sudoku game HARD

5			8			2		
		7	5		2	8		1
		2	9				4	
	2	4				3		8
			3	2	4			
3		6				4	7	
	9				6	7		
7		3	2		8	9		
	6			9				5

Sudoku game answers shall be in the next edition of the Bentley & Binsted Parish Magazine



**Bentley**  
PARISH COUNCIL

# Future housing development in Bentley

Bentley Parish Council and A31 Alliance see a major threat to our communities

**East Hants District Council (EHDC) plans to publish a new Local Plan in July 2026, that includes sites for up to 12,000 new houses along the A31 (over the next 18 years) - from Bentley to Ropley - with up to 900 new houses in Bentley**

## The consequences

- Loss of our Jane Austen countryside and rural identity
- Urban sprawl/ribbon development along the A31 corridor
- Unsustainable additional pressure on current infrastructure (eg. roads, lanes, schools, surgeries, sewage plants etc)
- Damage to the environment, rivers, loss of bio-diversity
- Planning blight for the next 20 years

**We believe this plan to be flawed, certainly undemocratic and probably illegal.**

## It should be challenged

*Please read this leaflet and, if you share our concerns, take action as outlined inside*



**FIND OUT MORE**  
Scan the QR code for Bentley Parish Website

## How has this happened?

- EHDC has a statutory duty to consult when it creates a Local Plan. It started in 2018 - its most recent version under Regulation 18 was published in early 2024
- In late 2024 the new government **doubled** EHDC's housing targets from 10,000 to **20,000 over the next 18 years**
- EHDC geographically has **57% of its area in South Downs National Park (SDNP)** where it does not control planning. Special protections prevent development in a **further 13%**
- Sites for >75% of the new housing will therefore need to be allocated in only **30% of the EHDC area**
- In October 2025, EHDC quietly published its **Land Availability Assessment (LAA)** which includes **274** potential sites outside the SDNP for **15,000 new houses, including 12,000 along the A31 corridor (900 in Bentley) - this is roughly equal to the bare minimum housing target EHDC has to meet**
- These sites have been chosen based on their **"availability"**, not their "suitability" or "sustainability". They include 155 sites (for 8,000 houses) which have **never been consulted on** before, nor has the need for additional support infrastructure, nor the likely environmental harm.

**EHDC is not choosing to consult its residents again under Regulation 18 of the Local Plan process (when it has to listen and respond).**

Instead, it is moving to Regulation 19 on the final draft of the plan, when public comments are merely passed to the inspector tasked with the final examination.

This is fundamentally flawed, certainly undemocratic and probably illegal.

**Major housing development threat in Bentley of new 900 houses**



Scan the QR code to view PDF  
**Call to action for residents**



Scan the QR code to view PDF  
**Bentley housing threat (presentation)**

## Local government reform is coming soon

- **EHDC is to be abolished in April 2028**
- Planning responsibilities will be assumed by a new unitary authority (UA) in April 2028 covering north and/or mid Hampshire (with >500,000 residents)
- The new UA will have the power to identify sustainable development and the necessary support infrastructure across a much larger area, without the major practical land constraints within EHDC
- The new UA should also have **>5 years of housing land supply (EHDC only has 2.9 years)** which will enable it to fight unwanted speculative development in the future.

## We call on EHDC:

- To rerun a Regulation 18 consultation because of huge changes to housing targets, proposed sites and infrastructure planning, plus likely environmental harm
- To minimise the number of irreversibly allocated sites/new houses in any EHDC produced adopted Local Plan
- To recognise, in that plan, the new UA taking over from 2028 will be creating its own plan (by latest 2033) with far greater geographical scope for sustainable development in the longer term and will have a >5 year housing land supply to fight unwanted speculative development.

## How can Bentley residents challenge EHDC

- Go to the Bentley Parish Council website, learn more and see the call to action: <https://bentleyparishcouncil.gov.uk>
- Go to A31A website and **sign the save Jane Austen country petition** (already signed by 23,500): <https://savejaneaustencountry.org>

### • **Write/email to EHDC:**

District councillors  
(local ward and leader):

[david.ashcroft@easthants.gov.uk](mailto:david.ashcroft@easthants.gov.uk)

[phillip.davies@easthants.gov.uk](mailto:phillip.davies@easthants.gov.uk)

[richard.millard@easthants.gov.uk](mailto:richard.millard@easthants.gov.uk)

Copy to local Hampshire county  
councillor and local MP:

[mark.kemp-gee@hants.gov.uk](mailto:mark.kemp-gee@hants.gov.uk)

[damian.hinds.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:damian.hinds.mp@parliament.uk)

- **Points to make regarding EHDC emerging Local Plan:**

- EHDC should consult again at Regulation 18 given the huge changes in housing targets and potential sites since early 2024
- What (and where) are the supporting infrastructure plans for the new sites
  - transport, education, health, sewage, water etc?
- How will the natural environment (e.g. rivers) be protected?
- How do these plans deliver “sustainable” development?
- The move directly to Regulation 19 (where EHDC does not have to listen to residents) would be profoundly undemocratic
- EHDC should aim to minimise the number of sites/housing which will be “allocated” (irreversibly) in any new adopted plan, when EHDC is shortly to be abolished (in 2028) and replaced by a much bigger, more strategic unitary authority in north and/or mid Hampshire with much greater planning scope for sustainable development and the necessary infrastructure
- Residents along the A31 corridor do not want their communities changed forever by a legacy EHDC adopted plan which delivers ribbon development/urban sprawl and loss of rural identity
- As EHDC tax payers (and your electors) we need to be properly consulted, to have our say and be listened to...



**Spread the word to friends/neighbours**



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**Comment**



**Share**





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www.wickhaminstitute.co.uk



## *The Wickham Institute 100+ Club*

As promised, listed below are the lucky winners of the February 2026 draws:

### February 2026

1<sup>st</sup> prize Sue Clarke

2<sup>nd</sup> prize David Leonard

3<sup>rd</sup> prize Jean Vasher

Details of the March 2026 draw will appear in the next magazine.

Remember each number only costs £12 (£1 per month) and you have three chances to win each month!

50% of the monthly purchase price of each number goes in prizes and 50% to the running costs of The Wickham Institute. The more people that participate in the 100+ club, the more money that is paid out in monthly prizes.

If you would like to participate an application form can be obtained from Andrew Croom-Johnson on 01420 23157 or email a request to Andrew at

[treasurer@wickhaminstitute.co.uk](mailto:treasurer@wickhaminstitute.co.uk)

## Sudoku February Answers

Sudoku EASY

3	5	2	4	7	6	1	8	9
1	6	8	9	5	2	7	3	4
7	4	9	8	1	3	6	2	5
4	2	5	6	9	7	8	1	3
6	8	3	2	4	1	5	9	7
9	7	1	5	3	8	4	6	2
8	9	7	3	6	5	2	4	1
2	1	4	7	8	9	3	5	6
5	3	6	1	2	4	9	7	8

Sudoku MEDIUM

9	4	7	8	6	1	2	5	3
2	1	8	4	5	3	6	7	9
5	6	3	7	9	2	8	1	4
1	9	4	2	7	6	3	8	5
7	8	2	3	4	5	9	6	1
6	3	5	9	1	8	4	2	7
3	5	6	1	2	4	7	9	8
4	7	1	6	8	9	5	3	2
8	2	9	5	3	7	1	4	6

Sudoku HARD

6	8	2	7	5	1	9	4	3
1	3	7	6	9	4	8	5	2
4	5	9	8	2	3	6	1	7
8	7	5	1	6	9	2	3	4
9	4	6	3	7	2	5	8	1
2	1	3	4	8	5	7	9	6
5	2	4	9	3	6	1	7	8
3	6	8	5	1	7	4	2	9
7	9	1	2	4	8	3	6	5

# CURTIS MUSEUM & ALLEN GALLERY

(01420 82802)

## OPENING TIMES

Tuesday to Sunday

Curtis 10am – 4.30pm. Allen 10.30 – 4pm

[www.hampshireculture.org.uk/curtis-museum](http://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/curtis-museum)

[www.hampshireculture.org.uk/allen-gallery](http://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/allen-gallery)

## CURTIS MUSEUM 2026

Upcoming events for March.

**Object of the Month:** While the Allen Gallery is closed for refurbishment, the Curtis Museum will showcase each month a highlight from the ceramics collection in the Hampshire Cultural Trust stores. Throughout March, the Museum will display a coronation mug designed by Dame Laura Knight. The artist also painted key scenes recording moments from early 20th century life, such as women workers during WW2.

In celebration of **International Women's Day** (Sunday 8th March), there will be a trail through the Museum - **Women in Art & History** - find the hidden heroines of Alton and Hampshire's history and discover their connections with the Curtis Museum & Allen Gallery collections.

This trail will be running throughout March, Women's History Month.

**Natural History** in the Curtis Museum.

Do you know the difference between a stoat and a weasel? Which owl is this?

Visitors (not only the younger ones) are often interested in the Museum's extensive collection of local flora and fauna. They will now be able to identify the creatures on display more easily. A small team of volunteers and staff have prepared illustrated guides for each case. These "keys" hang beside the cases. Although some items are

obviously old, taxidermy having largely gone out of fashion, appropriate labelling/identification was long overdue. We are grateful to various specialists in their field and assistance from Alton Natural History Society. *(PS it's a long-eared owl, and the stoat is larger than the weasel and has a black tail-tip. Come and see.)*



## Talks - Change of Venue

The Friends of the Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery have a full programme of talks during 2026. Friends talks will be held in **Room 7 of the Alton Community Centre, Amery Street, Alton GU34 1HN**. Alton Community Centre is located on one side of the car park in Amery Street (sat nav GU34 1HN). <https://www.altoncomcen.org.uk>,

telephone number 01420 85057.

The March talk will be given by **Tim Craven**, local representative of BAFM - the British Association of Friends of Museums. It is entitled **Capture the Castle - The Story of Castles through Artist' Eyes**.

Thursday 12th March Doors open 7pm for 7.30. FREE, donations welcomed.

---

# How You Know

By [Joe Mills](#)

*How do you know if it's love?* she asks, and I think if you have to ask, it's not, but I know this won't help. I want to say you're too young to worry about it, as if she has questions about Medicare or social security, but this won't help either. "You'll just know" is a lie, and one truth, "when you still want to be with them the next morning," would involve too many follow-up questions. The difficulty with love, I want to say, is sometimes you only know afterwards that it's arrived or left. Love is the elephant and we

are the blind mice unable to understand the whole. I want to say love is this desire to help even when I know I can't, just as I couldn't explain electricity, stars, the color of the sky, baldness, tornadoes, fingernails, coconuts, or the other things she has asked about over the years, all those phenomena whose daily existence seems miraculous. Instead I shake my head. *I don't even know how to match my socks. Go ask your mother. She laughs and says, I did. Mom told me to come and ask you.*

“

**WHAT COUNTS IN LIFE IS NOT THE MERE FACT THAT WE HAVE LIVED. IT IS WHAT DIFFERENCE WE HAVE MADE TO THE LIVES OF OTHERS THAT WILL DETERMINE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LIFE WE LEAD.**

”

– NELSON MANDELA

## *Bentley Boardgame Club*

# A Warm Welcome to All



**Tucked away in the heart of the village, the Bentley Boardgame Club has quietly grown into one of Bentley's most welcoming monthly gatherings. Meeting on the last Wednesday of each month at The Star Inn from 7pm to 10pm, it offers a relaxed mid week escape filled with games, laughter, and good company. For many, it has become a small but cherished highlight in the village calendar, a chance to unwind and enjoy something a little different.**

The club began in the simplest way, a love of board games and a curiosity about whether anyone else nearby felt the same. What started as a small idea, a table, a few games, and an open invitation, quickly found its audience. These days, there's a steady turnout each month, and the atmosphere has stayed friendly and informal, making it easy for newcomers to feel at home the moment they arrive. People often comment on how refreshing it is to walk into a room where they instantly feel included, even if they've never played a board game before.

Game nights are all about variety and shared enjoyment. Over time, the group has built up an ever growing collection of games, ranging from quick, easy favourites to deeper strategy challenges that spark lively discussion around the table. There is always something new to try, and no two evenings ever feel quite the same. Members especially enjoy it when someone brings along a personal favourite, as it is often how the club discovers its next hit. It's not unusual for a game brought in "just to try" to become a regular feature at future meet ups.

One of the club's strengths is its welcoming approach. You don't need any experience, and you certainly don't have to think of yourself as a "serious" gamer. Rules are explained with patience, teams form naturally, and the focus stays firmly on having fun rather than winning. There's a gentle, easy rhythm to the evening, with people drifting between games, chatting between rounds, and sharing



recommendations for what to play next. It's as much a social evening as it is a gaming one, and that balance is a big part of its charm.

The Star Inn provides the perfect backdrop, offering a cosy space, a welcoming atmosphere, and refreshments close at hand. The familiar setting helps everyone relax, and the friendly staff often take an interest in what's being played. Whether you stay for the full three hours or simply drop in for a game or two, you will always be met with a warm hello and a seat at the table. Many regulars say they look forward to the chance to switch off from the week, enjoy a drink, and spend time with people they might not otherwise have met.

The Bentley Boardgame Club shows that community doesn't need to be complicated. Sometimes all it takes is a shared table, a few games, and people willing to give something new a try. For anyone in the village looking to unwind, meet new people, and

enjoy a bit of friendly competition, the last Wednesday of the month at The Star Inn is well worth marking on the calendar. It's a simple idea that has grown into something genuinely special, and there's always room for a few more players.

For more details, feel free to contact Ed on 07432 784505.



# Froyle Gardening Club

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If you have any queries please ask at  
[info@froylegardeningclub.co.uk](mailto:info@froylegardeningclub.co.uk)

Schedules & entry forms will also  
be available at the Froyle village hall  
Friday Meeting Place.

More Info on our website [froylegardeningclub.co.uk](http://froylegardeningclub.co.uk) or  
email us at [info@froylegardeningclub.co.uk](mailto:info@froylegardeningclub.co.uk)

**Charity No 237289**

# The Bentley Trust Fund



**Many of you may know someone who needs some help. By contacting, or suggesting they contact, The Bentley Trust Fund you may well be able to help them in a very practical way. The Bentley Trust Fund was set up many years ago to assist the residents of Bentley, its purpose being to provide financial help to people and families living in our village.**

The Bentley Trust Fund has some funds available to help any resident of Bentley, of any age, who has an immediate need of modest financial assistance, for example:-

- the purchase of school uniforms, school trips
- the purchase of household items  
*i.e., cookers, fridges, carpets*

If you, or someone you know, could benefit from the involvement of the Trust, please contact Sue Davies in complete confidence on 01420 23535 or [sue.davies26@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sue.davies26@hotmail.co.uk)

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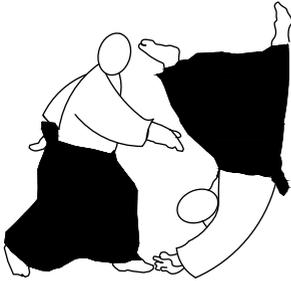
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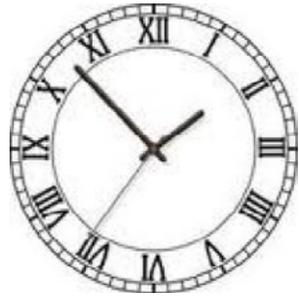
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## THE WICKHAM INSTITUTE (Binsted Village Hall)



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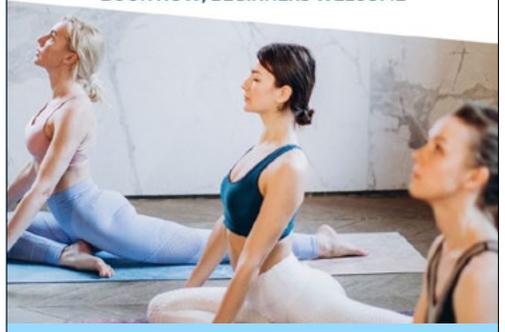
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**Badminton Club:** Martin Fox 07710 035913  
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### **District Council**

Phillip Davies  
Email [phillip.davies@easthants.gov.uk](mailto:phillip.davies@easthants.gov.uk)

### **Parish Council**

Chairman: Mr John Fuller 07768 558751  
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### **Bentley School**

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### **Childcare**

Dottie Tots: Karen 07387 576 307

### **Fête Committee**

Chairman: Hugh Chissell, Greystones, Bentley  
01420 23117

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Contact: Pamela Green-Wright 07720 633 943

**Phoenix Group:** Linda Fuller 07891 825410  
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### **Bentley Rec Ground**

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### **Binsted School**

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### **Tennis and Croquet Club Chairman:**

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### **Binsted Cricket Club**

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**11am** Oakhanger Holy Communion  
**6pm** Bentley Praise

**8th March**    **8am** Binsted Holy Communion (BCP)  
**9:30am** Bentley Morning Worship & Children's Church  
**11am** Froyle Holy Communion  
**6pm** Kingsley Praise

**15th March**    **9:30am** Froyle Morning Worship & Messy Church  
*Mother's Day*  
**11am** Kingsley Holy Communion

**22nd March**    **9:30am** Bentley Holy Communion & Children's Church  
**11am** Binsted Morning Worship  
**6:30pm** Froyle Evensong

**29th March**    **11am** Benefice Service at Binsted  
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