

FEBRUARY 2026

ISSUE 279

breeze

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In 2025, Get Ready for an Effortless Eyewear Experience!

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If you're searching for eyewear from an optical practice that strives to be the area's best, then after reading this article you will have found it. Choosing an optician and choosing new glasses can be challenging, especially when you're looking for one proven to provide top-notch eye care and advice and innovative frames and lenses.

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If you're looking for something different from what you find on the high street, the frames at John Flynn Opticians are for you. Here you'll discover a new world of eyewear and choose a pair of glasses from a selection you won't see elsewhere, ones which are often handmade from the highest quality materials - individual glasses that you'll love wearing.

Get Help Choosing Glasses

Choosing glasses can feel like you're trying to find a needle in a haystack. There is an effective way to select the right glasses rather than just trying on frames at random. So, if you don't know what suits you; if you can't find glasses that fit you or look good; if you go from optician to optician searching for, but never seeing anything you feel good about wearing, or simply 'they all look the same' we can help!

Eye Examinations with Dr. Janjua

Your eye examination with Dr. Janjua will last around 40 minutes. The reason we allow a longer time for your appointment is not just about the technical bits of doing an eye exam. The extra time that Dr. Janjua spends with you means we can give you better advice and recommendations.

Advanced Eye Exams With Dr. Janjua

During an Advanced Eye Examination, Dr Janjua will make a very thorough assessment



Showing how Dry AMD can progress



Dry AMD treatment session

of your eyes. This examination includes Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT), using our Heidelberg Spectralis which is hospital-grade equipment to assess, measure, and record tiny details of your retinas.

Dry Age-Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) - TREATMENT!

As we age, our sight tends to become less clear, and some of us will develop what is known as "Dry Age-related Macular Degeneration". When this happens, the central area of our vision darkens and becomes blurred, making it difficult to see detail, and preventing activities such as driving, reading, watching TV, using computers, tablets, and so on. Even recognising faces can prove difficult.

Dry Eyes Treatment

If your eyes feel dry, irritated, or painful for most or all the time, you probably suffer from Dry Eye Disease (DED), especially if you continually feel "there's something in my eye". Having researched dry eye syndrome while gaining his doctorate, Dr Janjua has been treating patients for this condition since 2023. The treatment is known as Intense Pulsating Light® (IPL) and Low-Level Light Therapy® (LLLT), also known as Photobiomodulation (PBM). We combine IPL and LLLT with the complimentary steaming, cleaning, and massaging of your lids and glands as part of a comprehensive treatment protocol.

"The results seemed good looking at the scan."
Mrs C

"Positive experience, quick and easily administered and non intrusive. The 'drusen' effect seems to be less than previously experienced and would recommend."
Mrs H

"Very positive, noticeable difference in macula, would recommend to prevent sight deterioration."
Dr P

"Improvement in both eyes." Mrs B

"Clearer vision noticed immediately upon driving, would recommend."
Mr W

"Good experience, the letters were much clearer at the end of the sessions."
Mrs S

"I can now read the letters in the eye test more easily. I would recommend because it slows the progress of dry macular, prevention is better than cure."
Mrs A

"After the first session white window frames seemed brighter. I can see more clearly all round, my eyes feel more relaxed and normal."
Mrs W

"I can read for longer without blurred vision and headaches."
Mrs M

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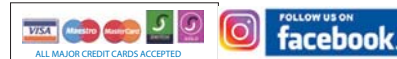
Please note: We believe all information given, was correct at the time of going to press.

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Meet the Friends of Bramcote Ridge, a group of conservation volunteers, established in 1999. Dedicated to the protection, conservation and improvement of Bramcote Ridge.

Bramcote Ridge is an area of twelve hectares comprising two local Nature Reserves of mixed, mature woodland, scrub and semi-improved grassland and mixed hedgerow on the green open space between Thoresby Road and The Priory Island in Bramcote, part of a green corridor which runs from Wollaton Park to Bramcote Hills Park.

The site also has areas of gorse, broom, heathland and some interesting outcrops of sandstone rock. The Ridge is criss-crossed with footpaths (some shown on 19th century maps), there are open spaces for play, meadow grassland and woodland. The Alexandrina plantation has a circular path suitable for wheelchair users. The Sandy Lane site also has access for wheelchair users and one main path suitable for wheelchair users. Both reserves have benches for people to sit and enjoy the views.

"We work closely with Broxtowe BC, the landowners. We carry out monthly work sessions on the Ridge throughout the year. Our activities are guided by our Management plan, involving planting and general maintenance across the whole Ridge. We have recently introduced bat boxes based on a survey carried out by a local bat group.

We also keep areas cleared for butterflies as well as planting trees and bulbs to enhance the area. Recently we have cleared a rough area of land off Thoresby Road and created a community orchard of mixed apple, plum and pear trees.

More than twenty bird boxes are maintained across both sites. Membership costs £5 per year and we are seeking more members to help with the work. Working parties meet at the top of Sandy Lane at 10.30 on the first Sunday in each month with a variety of tools provided. There is no obligation to come to all working sessions, just a few each year would really help."

More information can be seen on their website bramcote-ridge.org.uk and they are happy to reply to any emails sent to friends@bramcote-ridge.org.uk



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Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, the county's largest locally based environmental charity, is passionate about creating a healthy natural world which benefits us all but recognises it can't do this on its own.

The Wilder Nottinghamshire Awards were created to celebrate the contribution people, communities and organisations are making across the county – and the 2025 winners have now been announced.

Speaking about Wilder Nottinghamshire 2025 Awards, the Trust's Head of People and Nature Liz Fleuty said: "By celebrating local activity we hope to encourage and inspire more people than ever before to take action – whether by making space for nature or speaking up for nature's recovery in their community."

2025 WILDER NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AWARD WINNERS

Wilder Community Award - Recognising the efforts of groups making a difference for nature in the local community.

Nottingham Refugee Forum Grassroots Community Garden – this garden has an outstanding impact on biodiversity and social inclusion. Once an overgrown space behind the Forum building it has been lovingly reclaimed by volunteers, many with lived experience of forced migration.

Vale of Belvoir Swift Project – responding to the dramatic decline in swift populations, this project is having a major impact by taking local action within the local villages.

Friends of the Hook – involved in securing Local Nature Reserve designation for this much-loved space for nature in West Bridgford.

Beeston Wildlife Group – supporting numerous local initiatives making space for nature, and providing a wide range of opportunities for the community to connect with and learn more about nature, the group work tirelessly across Beeston and truly make a difference – from ongoing maintenance of the Attenborough Nature Reserve wildlife garden to supporting St John's Church to gain "Eco Church" bronze status, and many other achievements in between!

Wilder Champion Award - Recognising the impact of individuals making a difference for nature in their community.

Liz Morley – as wilding campus manager at Nottingham College, Liz has transformed the college estate over the past year.

Dr Stephen Walker – as Chair of Friends of Moor Pond Wood, Dr Walker has played an instrumental role in the conservation and management of this vital greenspace for many years.

Andy Callow – as Chair of Nottingham Organic Gardeners, Andy brings people together to build communities across the city, with a focus on supporting urban ecosystems & wildlife.

Glynda Preston - Glynda is the unsung hero of conservation and community in the Nottingham city area.

Other Awards - Wilder Schools Award - Recognising the contribution of schools to making space for nature and developing young nature champions was won by Bluecoat Beechdale Academy.

Wilder Business Award - Recognising the contribution of businesses - large and small - to protecting and restoring nature within their communities. Awarded to **Nottingham College**.

Wilder Organisation Award - Recognising how not-for-profit organisations are making a difference for people and wildlife within their communities

GrowNotts CiC – from bee posts, bulb plant-ups and planters in the city to "Wild about Sneinton", GrowNotts blend creativity, community and ecology to make the city greener and better.

Stonebridge City Farm & Gardens – this three-acre site is a much-loved slice of countryside right in the heart of Nottingham city centre. As a free to enter green space, they offer a place where local families can connect with nature and put nature at the heart of everything they do.

Sherwood Forest Trust - the only charity dedicated to protecting and restoring Sherwood Forest.

Liz added: "The diversity of nominations from across the county demonstrates the many different ways that individuals, communities, businesses and organisations across the county are playing their part in nature's recovery and we hope to hear about even more wonderful people and projects next year."

To find out more and get involved visit:
www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org



Pictured above Friends of the Hook



Pictured above Andy Callow, Chair of Nottingham Organic Gardens



Dr Stephen Walker pictured above in the white shirt, chair of Friends of Moor Pond Wood.



Pictured above winners, Sherwood Forest Trust

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After the success of last month's workshop local expert Lindsey from Interior Collabs is now offering **Discovery Design Workshops - interior design made simple. A fantastic opportunity for anyone looking to unlock the secrets to a beautifully co-ordinated home.**

Join Lindsey as she shares the secret to great designs...

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED HOW INTERIOR DESIGNERS MAKE DECISIONS - AND WHY THEIR PROJECTS SEEM TO WORK EFFORTLESSLY?

Design isn't about having better taste. It's about having a process. One of the first questions designers ask isn't "What colour should this be?" but "How should this space feel to live in?" Calm or energising. Grounded or light. Social or restorative. The problem is that most people are then left to translate that feeling into real decisions with no framework to guide them. That's where doubt creeps in — resulting either in costly mistakes, or in no action at all, as uncertainty about where to start keeps projects permanently on hold.

Interior design feels overwhelming, not because people lack style, but because they're expected to make confident choices without a way to test them. Paint charts, Pinterest boards and social media feeds encourage snap decisions in isolation, rather than helping us understand how colour, layout and materials actually behave together in a real home.

That gap is exactly why **Design Discovery Workshops™** were created. Rather than presenting finished schemes or "right answers", the workshops teach how designers actually think, how they move from an intended feeling to clear, practical decisions - by slowing down, comparing options, reading context and refining ideas before committing. It's the difference between guessing and knowing why something works.

"Interior design feels overwhelming not because people lack taste, but because they're expected to make confident choices without a way to test them."

Each workshop focuses on a different aspect of interior design, but all are hands-on and built around the same designer-led process. You'll work with real materials and guided exercises that reveal why certain combinations feel balanced, and why others never quite sit right. You won't leave with a perfect room - you'll leave with a repeatable way of making decisions that works in your own home, again and again.

Once you understand the process, design stops feeling intimidating. Colours make sense next to flooring. Layouts respond to how rooms are actually used. Style comes together through editing, not impulse.

For anyone who enjoys learning - and wants to feel confident making decisions in their own home - understanding the designer's process is the most valuable tool of all, whether working with a designer or independently.

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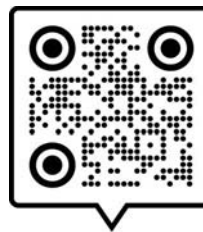
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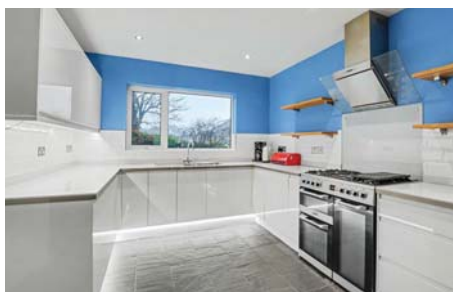
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Located on the sought-after Troutbeck Crescent, this delightful detached house offers a perfect blend of comfort and space for family living.

With four well-proportioned bedrooms, this property is ideal for those seeking a home that accommodates both relaxation and practicality.

The inviting reception rooms provide ample space for entertaining guests or enjoying quiet family evenings. Each room is filled with natural light, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere throughout the home. The layout is thoughtfully designed, ensuring that every corner of the house is both functional and inviting.

The property boasts two bathrooms, which is a significant advantage for busy households, allowing for convenience and privacy. Whether you are preparing for the day ahead or unwinding after a long day, these well-appointed bathrooms cater to your needs.

Outside, the property features parking and a garage, providing ease and accessibility. The surrounding area of Troutbeck Crescent is known for its friendly community and proximity to local amenities, making it a desirable location for families and professionals alike.

This detached house is not just a property; it is a place where memories can be made. With its spacious interiors and prime location, it presents an excellent opportunity for those looking to settle in a welcoming neighbourhood. Do not miss the chance to make this lovely house your new home.

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In a testament to their musical talents, three Scouts and a leader from the 2nd Bramcote Scout Troop were honored to be part of The National Scout and Guide Concert Band, which took to the stage at the prestigious Nottingham Albert Hall last year.

This esteemed ensemble, comprising members from all corners of the UK, brings together young musicians from the scouting movement, all under the age of 25. Following an intense week of rehearsals, the band and orchestra delivered a truly breathtaking performance, showcasing a diverse range of popular and classical pieces over the course of three mesmerizing hours. The result was a musical extravaganza that was a true delight to behold, and a shining example of the exceptional talents and dedication of these young musicians. The involvement of the 2nd Bramcote Scout Troop members in this prestigious event was a source of great pride for the troop, and a wonderful opportunity for them to share their passion for music with a wider audience.

The photo shows Alfie Wright, percussion, Neil Wright, conductor, Alex Welfare and Leo Piggott, both alto saxophone.

The band is hosted by the Birmingham Scout County, each year in conjunction with The National Scout and Guide Symphony Orchestra. A full week of intense practice and rehearsal takes place in the Old Swinford Hospital School in Stourbridge. Practice is in smaller instrument groups and then with the complete band.

Tutors and conductors of the Orchestra and Concert Band are professional musicians and are admired for their friendly and helpful interaction with the Scouts and Guides. As well as the demanding practice sessions, the Scouts and Guides get time off for Scouting activities which might include archery, rock climbing and canoeing.

The NSGCB was reformed in its current format in 2016, since then its conductor has been Neil Wright, who combines his NSGCB duties with a full-time role as a music teacher at Trinity School, Nottingham, bandmaster of the Stapleford Salvation Army Band and a Scout Leader at 2nd Bramcote. Initially the band's membership was 35, but since then, numbers have grown to 90 members on last year's course when membership of the NSGSO and NSGCB increased to record numbers, with over 170 musicians across the two groups.

After individual performances by the Concert Band and the Symphony Orchestra the culmination of both concerts, saw the two ensembles combine with 201 musicians on stage to play classical pieces such as Holst's Jupiter, The Bringer of Jollity, and John Williams's Olympic Theme and Fanfare, followed on a lighter note by New York, New York by John Kander and Pirates of the Caribbean by Klaus Badelt (arr Ted Ricketts).



2nd Bramcote were represented as members of the Concert Band by (left to right) Alfie Wright percussion, Neil Wright Conductor, Alex Welfare tenor saxophone and Leo Piggott tenor saxophone. Neil Wright, a Scout Leader at 2nd Bramcote, has been conductor of The National Scout and Guide Concert Band since its inception in 2015.

Neil Wright said 'It is a privilege to lead and conduct the band each year and see the progress from the start to the end of the week. It's always wonderful working with the youngsters and experiencing the joy that both music and scouting in general brings to these young people's lives.'

Alfie Wright, said 'I love this week each year - I've been for four years now. I really like the high standards of music that we play and perform, but also the socialising with people from all over the UK. The highlight of my week is the ceilidh, but I love everything we do. I would really encourage other scouts and guides to get involved.'

Alex Welfare said "It was my first time this year, which I really enjoyed, my saxophone playing improved and I made lots of new friends. I would recommend it to other scouts and guides and I'm looking forward to taking part again next year."

Leo Piggott said "Going into NSGCB at first was daunting, all day rehearsals and two big concerts at the end of the week I thought was a difficult ask but as the week went on I was proved wrong, it was a joy! Whilst playing all day for a week was challenging at times, everyone embraced the challenge and I felt that the friendships I made helped me to improve day by day and instead of the concerts being a nerve-racking task it felt easy knowing everyone was in the same position, and we bonded together to make great music. It is great to be among like-minded people who love playing music and being in scouts/guides. If I was offered to do it again, I would say YES 100%"

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Farnsfield Cricket Club hosted a “She Plays Cricket” seminar in Nottingham. The event proved to be an outstanding success with participants attending from all parts of the East Midlands.

Farnsfield Cricket Club would especially like to thank the guest presenters - Blaze player, Marie Kelly, Gemma Barton from Attenborough CC, coach Joe Ashdown, Leigh Burns from Lacuna Sports, Jemima Dalton from East Midlands Women's Cricket League, Amanda Bacon from Liverpool Cricket Club and international cricket scorer Jane Hough for their valuable inputs and whose wide knowledge and experience of women's cricket was apparent for all to see. It was a rare treat to get such esteemed presenters involved at a single event such as the “She Plays Cricket” Seminar.

All those attending found it particularly beneficial as well as challenging and thought provoking. Many ideas, experiences and ambitions were exchanged by those present. The Seminar provided a golden opportunity for clubs to share the issues involved in running a Women's and Girls' Cricket section and everyone had something to take back to their clubs. It is hoped that such networking will enhance the provision of Women's and Girls' Cricket in the region and encourage and enable more women and girls to take up the game of cricket at whatever level is most appropriate to the individual. It was tremendous to see so many so enthusiastic about developing and enhancing women's cricket.

The “She Plays Cricket” Seminar

was the culmination of what has been an outstanding season for Farnsfield Cricket Club. The 1st XI not only finished Runners Up in the Bassetlaw and District Cricket League Championship Division (for the 4th year running) but also were winners of the Mellen Cup T20 Competition 2025. This entitled them to enter the Northern regional legs of the ECB Vitality T20 Plate Competition as representatives of the Bassetlaw and District Cricket League. Progressing through the rounds they beat Sprotborough CC (Yorkshire), Preston CC (Lancs) and played Morpeth CC (Northumbria and North Tyneside) in the final. In a very exciting final, Farnsfield CC beat Morpeth CC to become 2025 ECB Vitality T20 Plate Northern Champions.

All other sections of Farnsfield CC achieved success this year, the 2nd XI consolidated their new position in a higher division having been promoted last year and the 3rd XI finished third in their higher division following promotion last year. The Junior Section, as always, were very competitive most notably the Under 10 team won their league. The Women's and Girls' Section, in only their third year and first playing Super 8 Hardball, finished runners up in their hardball division. The softball team also competed commendably finishing mid table and having given many novices to the game their first experience of competitive cricket.

Follow Farnsfield Cricket Club's social media platforms or visit their website for further details about future events. Farnsfield Cricket Club, as with all cricket clubs, are always on the lookout for new female players, officials or volunteers.

If you are interested, please contact Farnsfield Cricket Club on enquiries@farnsfieldcricketclub.co.uk



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The organisers of Beeston Film Festival are gearing up for this year's edition, taking place from April 23th–26th 2026 at the ARC Cinema, promising four days of bold, diverse and inspiring independent cinema from around the world.

Breeze Finds out whats in store...

The 2026 festival has seen an extraordinary level of interest from filmmakers, with a total of 1,005 short films submitted from across the globe. Each entry was carefully considered by our dedicated and tireless review team, who collectively logged an impressive 3,631 reviews. After months of viewing and discussion, 96 exceptional films have been selected to form this year's official programme.

These films will be presented across seven main categories: Sci-Fi, Pride, East Midlands, Women's Voices, Non-Fiction, Drama UK, and Drama International. Together, these strands celebrate a wide range of voices, perspectives and storytelling styles, from locally made gems in the East Midlands to powerful international filmmaking. The festival will also feature variety screenings across the genres of comedy, horror, animation and crime. Whether you're looking for something thought-provoking, thrilling, humorous or visually inventive, there will be something to enjoy on the big screen.

"We have also welcomed the first two interns for the year. Both are marketing and branding students who will be working closely with us to support and grow our social media presence. They will play a key role in sharing festival news, highlights and behind-the-scenes content, helping us connect with filmmakers and audiences alike."

With an outstanding international selection, a passionate review team, wonderful sponsors, and an expanding creative community, Beeston Film Festival 2026 is set to be a vibrant celebration of short film and independent storytelling. "We look forward to welcoming you to the ARC Cinema in April for four unforgettable days of cinema."

Look out for a special edition of Breeze Magazine celebrating this fabulous event in our area!



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Gardening experts from GardeningExpress.co.uk have shared seven tasks that will benefit the garden once it comes alive in a few months.

Gardening jobs to do now for a beautiful spring garden

Keen gardeners are being reminded of the winter jobs they can get stuck into now for a lush, healthy garden in spring.

Throughout winter much of the garden is dormant and gardening tasks tend to slow down, but there are still several jobs green-fingered Brits can tackle to ensure they have a beautiful and bustling spring garden.

While many plants struggle in harsh winter conditions, some seeds can be sown at this time of year.

Most should be started in a greenhouse, where they can be established in a controlled environment.

Seeds and bulbs suitable for outdoor sowing during winter should only be planted when

there is no risk of frost.

When there is no frost it's also a good time to clear debris to help prevent disease, as freezing temperatures can damage lawns if walked over by snapping the blades.

Other jobs, such as taking care of the soil and repairing bare patches of lawn will help improve soil structure and encourage healthy growth in spring.

Chris Bonnett, founder of GardeningExpress said: "During this time of the year garden jobs tend to be more limited, which can be a bit frustrating if you're a keen gardener, but there are still a few things you can get stuck into to ensure a thriving spring garden.

"As long as there isn't frost or a waterlogged lawn, you can start on a few tasks, whether it's sowing your first seeds and planting bulbs or tidying up and repairing the lawn. Even small jobs like mulching or feeding the birds can make a big difference and help your garden come alive when spring arrives."

Seven gardening jobs for winter:

Sowing seeds

It's best to wait until February before sowing any seeds, although some eager gardeners may choose to start in January. During winter,

most seeds should be sown in a greenhouse or heated propagator, as the protected and slightly milder environment provides the best conditions for germination. If there is no frost in the ground, a few crops can be sown outdoors, including green beans, onions and hardy flowers like coneflowers, sweet peas and hellebores.

Plant spring bulbs

As long as there is no frost in the ground, planting spring-flowering bulbs will create a beautiful display of seasonal flowers once winter is over. You can also create bulb lasagnes, using bulbs that flower at different times, to ensure your garden stays full of colour for months to come.

Winter soil care

Feeding your soil organic matter like manure or compost during winter allows it to break down gradually, improving soil structure and releasing nutrients that will be available when growth begins again in spring. Mulching plants is another effective way to enrich the soil while also helping to insulate it. Materials like wood chips or fallen leaves help to retain warmth and protect plant roots from frost.

Continued.....



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Tidy up debris

Debris like fallen leaves and twigs that have blown on the lawn can cause bacteria to grow by preventing daylight from reaching the lawn and creating a dark, damp environment that is perfect for harbouring disease. When there is no frost, make sure to pick up and remove debris to ensure your lawn's health is up to scratch come spring.

Repairing bare patches of lawn

Once your lawn is clear of debris and there is no frost, you can begin filling in bare patches that have been damaged to encourage healthy growth. The soil temperature should ideally be no lower than 5°C before overseeding bare areas of grass, and once seeded, the area should be kept moist to help the seeds germinate and establish a lush spring lawn.

Supporting birds

During the winter months, birds are often searching for food when many plants have lost their flowers and berries. It's important to support them and help them survive the winter so they can enter the breeding season in good condition. Incorporating evergreen berry producing shrubs into the garden is a great way to attract and support birds, and you can also provide seeds and fresh water daily to ensure they are well cared for.

Tool maintenance

When gardening jobs slow down, keeping your tools clean and sharp for spring pruning will be time well spent, and you'll thank yourself later when you don't have to replace worn out tools or clean them up during the busy gardening season.

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Every Thursday evening, the halls of Chilwell School in Nottingham fill with rich harmonies, laughter, and the unmistakable sound of voices blending as one. This is GEM Connection, a ladies' barbershop chorus with over 27 years of musical history, achievement, and shared passion.

What Is Barbershop?

Barbershop singing is a style of a cappella, four-part vocal harmony that originated in the late 1800s, when groups would gather informally to sing together. A barbershop chorus or quartet follows a specific structure: the Lead sings the melody, the Tenor harmonises above, the Bass provides the foundation, and the Baritone completes the chords, moving above and below the melody.

When these close harmonies align perfectly, they can produce a phenomenon known as a "ringing chord" — an overtone so clear it sounds as if a fifth voice has joined in. While technical accuracy is important, barbershop is also about storytelling, emotional connection, and entertaining performance, often enhanced by movement or choreography.

The GEM Story

Founded nearly three decades ago, GEM Connection has grown into one of the UK's most respected ladies' barbershop choruses. They consistently rank in the top 10 nationally within the Ladies Association of British Barbershop Singers (LABBS). Their achievements include silver and bronze medals at national competitions and an international silver medal won in Spain.

GEM's musical journey has taken them far beyond Nottingham. The chorus has performed internationally in countries including Germany, Holland, Italy, and the United States, sharing their distinctive sound with audiences across the globe.

Despite these accolades, what members value most is the simple joy of singing together. Their repertoire is wide-ranging, extending far beyond traditional barbershop. Audiences may hear arrangements of pop, folk, hymns, and musical theatre, with songs by artists such as Fleetwood Mac, Queen, and Enya, alongside stage favourites from

Cabaret and Calamity Jane. Whether competing, performing at community events, fundraising concerts, or singing informally in local venues, GEM brings warmth, humour, and musical variety wherever they appear.

Who Are GEM?

GEM Connection is made up of women from a wide range of backgrounds, professions, and generations. Members travel from across the Greater East Midlands — reflected in the chorus's name — to rehearse and perform together. What unites them is a shared love of music, performance, and connection.

Rehearsals are about far more than learning notes. They are spaces of encouragement, teamwork, and personal growth. New members are welcomed through a structured audition process that includes mentoring and vocal support, helping singers develop both confidence and skill. The atmosphere is friendly and inclusive, allowing individuals to thrive musically and socially.

More Than Music: The Benefits of Singing

GEM Connection strongly believes in the power of singing to enhance wellbeing, and research supports this view. Singing releases endorphins and serotonin, helping to reduce stress, anxiety, and low mood. It promotes a sense of belonging, boosts confidence, and lowers levels of cortisol, the body's primary stress hormone. Some studies even suggest that group singing can strengthen the immune system.

For GEM's members, these benefits are evident every week. Singing together builds friendships, nurtures mental wellbeing, and creates a strong sense of community — both within the chorus and with audiences who experience their performances.

Join the Chorus

GEM Connection meets every Thursday evening from 7:15pm to 9:45pm at Chilwell Secondary School in Nottingham. Visitors are always welcome to come along, listen, and experience barbershop singing firsthand — no prior experience required.

As GEM Connection often says, it's not just about singing together. It's about connection, performance, and creating something truly uplifting.

Please visit their web site: www.gemconnection.org to find out how to register and more about GEM.



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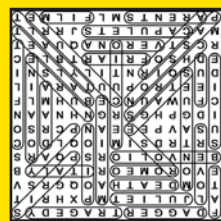
Across

1. Breakfast food (6)
4. Reverie (5)
8. Finished (5)
9. Crack (7)
10. Farm vehicle (7)
11. Genuine (4)
12. Confer (3)
14. Nothing (4)
15. Test (4)
18. Current (3)
21. Tone (4)
23. Sea creature (7)
25. Brutal, inhuman (7)
26. Goodbye (5)
27. Odour (5)
28. Digestive protein (6)

Down

1. Compose (6)
2. Transmit (7)
3. Mathematical process (8)
4. Profound (4)
5. Banishment (5)
6. Passively (6)
7. Neck warmer (5)
13. Bind (8)
16. Exaggerate (7)
17. Ancient Egyptian god (6)
19. The earth (5)
20. Shrewd (6)
22. One of the senses (5)
24. Present (4)

SOLUTIONS:



Romeo & Juliet Wordsearch

- | | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|---------|
| Actor | Capulets | Culture | Drama |
| Film | Juliet | Mercutio | Parents |
| Play | Rosaline | Suicide | Verona |
| Ballet | Chorus | Dagger | Fate |
| Friar | Lovers | Montagues | Paris |
| Poison | Rose | Tragedy | Feud |
| Benvolio | Conflict | Death | Passion |
| Italy | Marriage | Nurse | |
| Romeo | Stage | Tybal | |

Across

4. Will someone buy you a big box of these? (10)
7. You buy them in bunches for Valentine's Day (7)



Down

1. It's a shape associated with Valentine's Day (5)
2. Be my _____ (9)
3. He might put a card through your letterbox (7)
4. You might want to send one (4)
5. The Roman god of love who carries a bow and arrow. (5)
6. Pucker up for a ____ (4)

...and for everyone who doesn't like February the 14th. Can you work out our coded message?

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P
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Crossword Answers

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breeze what's on

Beeston Wildlife Group - A group of enthusiasts affiliated to Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust who aim to engage others in the whole wildlife experience by providing access to a range of walks and talks. **February talk: Britain's Best Wildlife with Nick Martin.**

Monday February 23rd 2026 at 7.30pm.

Badgers, bluebells, eagles, hedgehogs - Britain has a wealth of wildlife. Nick's stunning images and commentary highlight his favourite twenty plants, animals and birds... come and see what will top his charts.

£4 Adults. Children free. Trent Vale Infant School, Trent Rd, Beeston Rylands, NG9 1LP. If you would like to find out more information or speak to someone about the group please contact Nigel Slater on 0115 916 6518 or visit www.beestonwildlifegroup.org

The February meeting of the **Wollaton Natural History Society** will take place on **Wednesday, 18th February 2026.** The Talk is entitled 'The Long Wild Journey Down Under' by Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS DPAGB FBPE EFIAP an award-winning Leicestershire based wildlife photographer, who will present his talk on one of his trips to Australia.

We meet at St. Leonard's Community Centre, Bramcote Lane, Wollaton. NG8 2ND (opposite the library) **7.15pm. for 7.30pm. Free to members, visitors welcome £3 on the door.**

For more information visit the website, www.spanglefish.com/WollatonNaturalHistory Find them on Facebook or telephone Chairman Nigel Downes on 0115 944 4671.

Beeston & District Civic Society are hosting a Charity Quiz Night 7pm on Saturday March 7th at Royal British Legion Beeston NG9 1EL.

Teams of up to 6 people, £4 per person (Civic Society members £2). All welcome for a fun social evening with a raffle, prizes, nibbles, a bar and of course, a great Quiz! Booking essential. Tickets beestoncivicsociety.org.uk/Quiz

breeze spotlight

ON LOCAL BUSINESS

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"Little Voices, the much-loved UK-wide performing arts school, has launched in Toton - bringing exciting new opportunities in drama, singing, and confidence-building for local children. These small classes (no more than eight children per group) are designed for ages 4 - 18 and provide a warm, supportive space for young people to grow in confidence, make friends, and develop communication skills - all while working towards accredited LAMDA qualifications in Musical Theatre, Drama, Acting and Communication.

Leading the new centre is Sammi Panesar-Vale, an experienced drama teacher and former Vice Principal with a passion for helping children find their voice, both on and off the stage. "Little Voices is about so much more than performing,"

Sammi says. "It's not about creating future stars - it's about helping children feel good about who they are, build lifelong communication skills, and have fun doing it. I feel strongly that education should foster confidence and an enjoyment of learning, as well as transferable life skills such as teamwork, communication and leadership. And that's exactly what I want our classes to instil - a space where children feel seen, heard and valued. Of course, they'll also develop strong performing skills, but those are really just the icing on the cake."

With holiday workshops running throughout the school holidays, a new centre launched in Kegworth and Toton, an after-school club running at Foxbridge Primary School in Castle Donington, Long Whaddon C of E Primary School, Rushcliffe Spencer Academy and plans to open in other nearby schools, it's an exciting time for children in the local community.

Little Voices classes currently run every Thursday at the Greenwood Community Centre in Toton and free trial lessons are available. Numbers are limited and places must be pre-booked. **For more information, contact Sammi at 07449990116/nl@littlevoices.org.uk or visit: <https://littlevoices.org.uk/nottingham-loughborough/>**

Do you have an event or information about your local Charity group? Why not send your details in to Breeze and share with our readers?

Send to:

info@breeze-magazine.co.uk

Or would you like a 'Spotlight' on your business?
Email: sales@breeze-magazine.co.uk

*Please note that subject to space, Breeze magazine has the right to alter or change your entry accordingly. Send in any images as jpgs. You must have the ownership and copyright of any images you provide. Breeze will not accept any liability for images published without relevant permissions.



An Evening with Devon Malcolm OBE.

Christ Church Methodist in Long Eaton are holding a special fund-raising evening with proceeds going towards the redevelopment of our church premises into a flexible, welcoming space available for use by the whole local community. We are looking to upgrade our building to make it more environmentally friendly and as we seek to become a vital

community asset for our local area.

Devon was a fast bowler for both Derbyshire and England who claimed more than 1000 wickets during his career. He made more than 50 appearances for England with best bowling figures of 9 for 57 coming in the famous "You guys are history" spell against South Africa at the Oval in 1994. Since retiring he has been an international match referee and was recently appointed as an OBE for services to cricket and promoting diversity in the sport, recognizing his impactful career and ongoing work with the ECB as their Black Communities Liaison Officer.

Come and be treated to some amazing stories, memorable moments and perhaps even some revelations as Devon recounts his time with Derbyshire and England. There will also be a raffle on the night with some fantastic prizes along with a fully stocked bar. This is a must-not miss opportunity for any cricket supporter to experience with one of England's legends of the game.

The event will be held on Saturday 7th March 2026 at the Soldiers & Sailors Club, 421 Tamworth Road, Long Eaton at 7.30pm. There is plenty of free parking at the club and also at Long Eaton Station just a short walk away. Tickets cost just £15 and are available from the venue or online at <https://ticketbo.co.uk/christchurch-long-eaton/an-evening-with-devon-malcolm>

Spotted Dog Art Group

is made up of members from all walks of life. "We welcome beginners, hobbyists and professionals alike. Whatever your experience of art is, you are welcome." Workshops are from 10.00am to 4.00pm at Bramcote Memorial Hall.

FEBRUARY WORKSHOP: Saturday 21st February

"Mixed Media Portrait Paintings with some collage, drawing abstract mono printing" with Doreen Hunt.

For more details and to book: Please contact:

Janet Waters ~ email: janetwaters32@gmail.com.

Membership fee is £20 per year. If you are interested in joining please contact: Gwynneth Johnson Email: gwnneth2023@yahoo.com.

www.spotteddogartgroup.co.uk. Facebook: SD Art Group Nottingham

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IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND THE COURSE OR WISH TO CONTRIBUTE ANY FURTHER TO THESE TWO EXCEPTIONAL CAUSES YOU CAN VISIT THE LINK BELOW TO DONATE. ALL DONATIONS ARE GRATEFULLY APPRECIATED.

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