

Ringwood & Fordingbridge NEWS

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Established 1990

Congratulations to the winners of the Ringwood Christmas Window Competition

THE overall winner was BRIGHTWATER Sales & Lettings, who beat stiff competition from over 30 local shops, businesses and community organisations with Champion Barbers Ringwood coming a very close second. Ringwood Fabrics, Queen Nails Ringwood and Martin & Co Ringwood also scored very well in the public vote coming 3rd to 5th.



Certificates were presented by the Town Mayor, Councillor Gareth DeBoos and Chair of the Events Committee, Councillor Rae Frederick.

The competition was organised by Ringwood Town Council as part of our Ringwood Winter Wonderland initiative, which aims to encourage people into Ringwood Town Centre to see the hugely popular town lights, Christmas tree and support the wonderful local shops, businesses, and community organisations. Over 1000 votes were cast in the competition. Cllr DeBoos said, “once again, the Winter Wonderland has been a huge success in supporting our High Street.

Huge congratulations to the winner but more importantly thank you to everyone who took part for their time and creativity and helping Ringwood be a Christmas destination.”

Thank you to Derek Maidment for the photos.



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NEWS

We're having a face lift!

Well not us personally.... although some may say after recent months we could both do with one! As part of the development and evolution of the Ringwood and Fordingbridge News, we have been looking at different things we could put in place. The paper has always been a much loved, unique publication so we have tried to ensure that any changes are sympathetic to its origins.

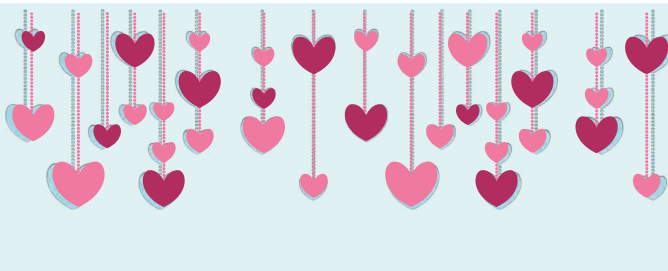
You may have noticed the change in our logo, which was designed in collaboration with Martyn Houldsworth and Matt Maclean of Digitize Marketing Ltd. From start to finish Martyn and Matt have taken the time to understand our ethos, the need for change but also the need to ensure that the history and basis of the paper remain the same. They are currently working on a new, fresh website, which we hope to be able to launch very soon. This will include making sure you have access to digital versions of the paper, ensuring you can keep up to date on the go!

Other changes include our new 'Dates for your Diary' page, which will detail local events that are happening around Ringwood and Fordingbridge, allowing you to get out and support our community.



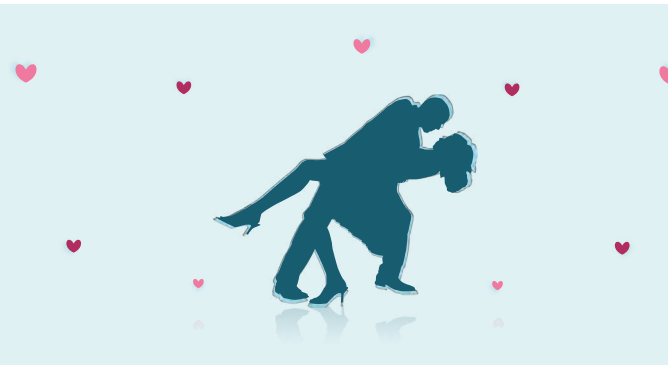
We hope you enjoy the changes as much as we've enjoyed being a part of them.

Darren and Naomi



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NEWS

Poulner Players presents *The Wizard of Oz*

POULNER Players will take its audience to a faraway land somewhere over the rainbow when it stages its sparkling production of *The Wizard of Oz* this spring half-term.

Based on L Frank Baum's timeless tale, this musical adaptation by John Kane was first performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company, and will delight fans of the 1939 film.

After a tornado strikes, Kansas orphan Dorothy is transported to the magical land of Oz, where she is pursued by a wicked witch, makes some lovable new friends, and embarks on a quest to find the mysterious wizard.

The show is directed by Becky North, who said: "The Wizard of Oz has enthralled audiences of all ages for decades. We're thrilled to perform this RSC version, which has all the songs and scenes you know and love from the movie version.

"It's ideal entertainment for the whole family, so spring half-term is the perfect time to bring this classic story to Ringwood. I hope everyone will join Dorothy on her spectacular adventure along the Yellow Brick Road, as she encounters a cast of endearing characters and learns that there's no place like home."

The show will help to support Abby's Heroes, a locally based charity which helps children and families affected by cancer.

The *Wizard of Oz* runs from 14-17 February, with shows at 7.30pm and matinee performances on Thursday 15th and Saturday 17th. It takes place at The Scout Hall, 264 Southampton Road, Ringwood, BH24 1JQ

Tickets are available from poulnerplayers.com or call 0333 666 3366 or call in Greyfriars.

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Date	H/A	Opposition	KO
Sat 27-Jan	H	Folland Sports	15:00
Sat 3-Feb	A	Aldermaston	15:00
Sat 10-Feb	H	AFC Fawley	15:00
Sat 17-Feb	H	Andover Town	15:00
Tue 20-Feb	H	Frimley Green	19:45
Sat 24-Feb	A	Ham Rec	15:00
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NEWS

The Inner Wheel Club of Fordingbridge

INNER Wheel is an international women's organisation to create friendship, service and understanding. It has clubs in over 100 countries with over 100,000 members. It was founded by Margaret Golding in Manchester in 1924.

There are 500 Clubs in Great Britain and Ireland, divided into 29 Districts and Fordingbridge belongs to District 11 and was formed in 2000.

The first meeting of Inner Wheel took place on the 10th January 1924 and this date is now known as International Inner Wheel Day.

The Inner Wheel of Fordingbridge likes to mark this day by offering gifts to the members of the Fordingbridge Day Centre (photo from 2023)



The Club meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at Avonway Community Centre at 2.30 pm where anyone would be very welcome to come along. Enquiries from Club Correspondent – thetagues@fordingbridge.com

As well as meeting socially the main objective is to support local charities through fund raising and the Club were very pleased to serve refreshments at Damerham Fair last year. Donations in 2023 went to The Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery, Two Bridges, Salisbury Hospice, Hampshire & IOW Air Ambulance, Smile Train and Water Survival boxes. Support is given throughout the year to Salisbury Women's Refuge and in November the Rotary Shoebox Appeal & at Christmas, The Danny Cracknell Appeal.

Advice Surgery

Cllr John Haywood
Cllr Peter Kelleher

Cllr James Swyer
Cllr Glenys Turner

**Poulner St John the Baptist Church Hall, Tofield Room
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NEWS

RACE and David Lloyd Ringwood Working Together on Nature Recovery



RACE and David Lloyd Ringwood Working Together on Nature Recovery

David Lloyd Ringwood and Ringwood Actions for Climate Emergency (RACE) are delighted to be working together to help nature recovery. The first phase of this partnership is the planting of 150m of hedging on Sunday 28th January from 10am to 12 noon. This hedge will include 10 species of trees designed to provide food sources for birds, habitats for insects and small mammals and over time to help with the flooding in the area.

Louise Mitchell from RACE said “As a David Lloyd member it has been a dream of mine for over 3 years to encourage a greater connection to nature for David Lloyd members and their families. I am passionate about the environment and about doing things now that will benefit future generations so I am super excited to be getting started and have lots of ideas for future partnerships and activities.”

Chris Linda, manager of David Lloyd Ringwood explained “At David Lloyd we are committed to reducing our carbon footprint, we have started to reduce our electricity and water usage and will have solar panels installed very soon. Now we want to get our members involved too and really welcome this opportunity. The whole team is looking forward to joining in with their spades at the ready.”

Louise added “Anyone who is a member at David Lloyd can

join in, either with the planting on the day or by donating, our Justgiving page explains more about the project. If you would like to donate just scan the QR code.”

Ringwood RACE against time ltd is a registered charity – charity number 1189272, more information can be found at www.raceagainstime.org.uk or email ringwoodraceagainstime@gmail.com



JOB VACANCY

Due to retirement Cracknell Timber / Hyde Country Stores are on the hunt for a new Book keeper, initially the role would be aimed at three days a week to match current job role.

In time there will scope to increase these hours as our business is growing.

The role covers a wide range & has been taken to a level where the new applicant will be able to make this role their own, the jobs main responsibilities are being competent in all aspects of book keeping, VAT input, payroll, day to day data input, producing quarterly management reports and work at a high level of confidence.

Currently the office is situated at our Timber yard in Fordingbridge but soon it will move to our premises at Hyde Country Stores SP6 2QB.

The successful applicant needs to be a team player and willing to ‘muck in’ where needed, we have a long standing team of amazing staff and we need the right person to join us.

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Fordingbridge Scout Group

On Monday the 15th January, the 1st Fordingbridge Scouts invested the members of their first Squirrels drey, welcoming them into the group where they join over 60 other young people in Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers.

Squirrels is an initiative launched by The Scouts in September 2021, for 4 to 6 year olds. The programme focuses on indoor and outdoor adventure, using game play to develop skills. Meeting weekly, Squirrels work towards the Chief Scouts Acorn Award by completing challenge awards and activity badges.

We are very proud of our newly invested Squirrels, and look forward to having lots of fun with them on their Scouting journey!

For further information on 1st Fordingbridge Scout Group and our Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers, please see our website at www.fordingbridgescouts.org.uk



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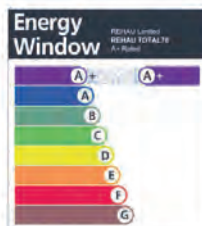
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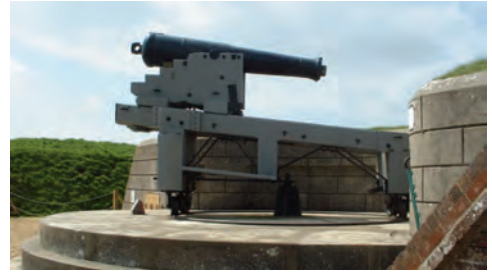
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NEWS

Controversy in defence: Fort Nelson and the Palmerston Forts

THE Palmerston Forts were built between 1865 and 1880 to protect Great Britain's major naval harbours and dockyards from offshore attack. Championed by then Prime Minister Lord Palmerston, their construction was controversial and earned the nickname 'Palmerston's Follies'.



Lewis Sharp (Secretary of the Palmerston Forts Society) will reveal the background and history of these forts and batteries when he joins Fordingbridge History Society (FHS) on Monday 12 February at 2.30pm in St Mary's Church Hall, Fordingbridge.

FHS Committee Member and talks organiser, Katie Gregory, comments, "The ring of Forts that protected Portsmouth were the first ones to be completed. Lewis's particular focus will be Fort Nelson, so named because of its proximity to Nelson's monument, and one which I'm sure many of us will have seen from onshore."

FHS Secretary, Helen Coote, adds "Fort Nelson is not only home to the Royal Armouries Museum of Artillery but also to the Palmerston Forts Society. Lewis is therefore the perfect guide to this controversial Victorian system of island fortifications.

Do join us: you'll be sure of a warm welcome and a fact-filled afternoon! Check out the FHS website (fordingbridgehistorysociety.org.uk) for further details."



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NEW INSTRUCTION

Acts 4 Sharing - Ringwood Charity



EVER wondered whether there could be a place of 'HOPE' local to this area that you could be referred to, for help with some of the basic necessities of life, maybe you or someone you know has fallen on hard times, been homeless, escaped domestic abuse, struggling with poor health, physical or mental, low income, unemployment or even escaped from a war, well there is and it's called Acts4Sharing (HOPE HQ)8

Acts 4 Sharing is a charity built around the Bible message of Acts 4 v32: "All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had."

We provide charitable services from our HQ in Parkside Industrial Estate in Ringwood and offer help to people (within a 25 mile radius of Ringwood) who often feel rejected by society to find value, self-worth and a sense of belonging, enabling them to reach their true potential. In 2023 we helped 765 people, in 378 homes and delivered approximately 28 tonnes (larger items) of donated goods.

Our volunteers are either busily sorting donations in HQ, or out in the van daily to collect and/or distribute donations of serviceable furniture, white goods, kitchenware, household linen etc. (see below for donation list) Any item must be in good clean condition; all soft furniture must have the fire safety labels; all electrical items must be in good, safe working order and be able to pass safety checks (We don't accept anything with glass). Our warehouse at Hope HQ isn't huge which means space is sometimes limited so please get in touch first to arrange a collection or drop off so we can check if we have room to take your donation.

Acts 4 Sharing work within safeguarding guidelines; all those who are helped must be referred by a recognised agency. If you or someone you know is in need of assistance please ask one of the following to get in touch with us:

- Homelessness teams
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- Foodbank
- CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau)
- Jigsaw/ Schools worker/ Teacher
- First Point
- CAP (Christians Against Poverty)
- GP
- Housing Officer
- Support/ Social Worker
- Tenancy Sustenance worker
- NHS staff



If you don't know who to ask, please get in touch with us and we will point you in the right direction.

Please contact us if you are interested in finding out more about Acts 4 Sharing or if you feel that you would like to help us as a volunteer or financially, we do rely on volunteers & donations.

For further information visit our website www.acts4sharing (donated goods) or email office@acts4sharing.org, Tel:07810 005763 (available most weekdays 9.30am–2pm).



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Mystery shopping opportunity for businesses in the New Forest

INDEPENDENT retail and hospitality businesses across the New Forest are being encouraged to take part in a mystery shopping opportunity in 2024.



The 'Shop Doctor' programme, run through New Forest District Council (NFDC), provides an opportunity for shop owners to hear feedback about their businesses and help to enhance future customer experience.

The opportunity is funded from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and participation is free of charge to qualifying New Forest businesses.

Cllr Derek Tipp, NFDC's Portfolio Holder for Economy and Planning said: "This scheme provides a unique opportunity for these businesses to receive independent feedback on their customer service and to identify areas for improvement. I encourage independent retail and hospitality businesses across the district to take up this opportunity."

In 2023, 78 businesses from Hythe, New Milton & Barton on Sea, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and New Milton took part in the programme. Participants said of their experience of the Shop Doctor programme:

"It's great to have an independent report on the shop considering we are so new."

"Very helpful for ongoing staff training, highlighting how with product knowledge and various sales techniques it all gives a better customer experience."

"The [Shop Doctor] programme highlighted some very small changes we can make to deliver a perfect service. The feedback which was very good gave us all a boost and confirmed that we do offer a very high standard of customer service."

Further information on the New Forest Shop Doctor Programme is available on the NFDC website at www.newforest.gov.uk/shopdoctor

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Date*	H/A	Opponent
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Sat 3-Feb	A	Aldermaston
Sat 10-Feb	H	AFC Fawley
Sat 17-Feb	H	Andover Town
Tue 20-Feb	H	Frimley Green
Sat 24-Feb	A	Ham Rec
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COMING SOON

We have some exciting developments coming throughout 2024, below is a taster of whats to come.

Additional Pages inc

Dates for your Diary, Jobs & Recruitment, Sport, Health & Wellbeing, Property & Puzzles.

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Have You Heard about the New Business Community In Ringwood and Fordingbridge?

WE would like to welcome all local business people to come along and join our second Networking With a Purpose community event on the 6th February 2024. The event starts at 4.30pm on the 6th February and finishes by 6.15pm. There will be refreshments and Canape's provided by South Coast Parties!

All you need to do is go to the Eventbrite website and register it is completely free.

Why should you come? To connect with like-minded local people, to grow your business potential and opportunities and to gain exposure to those within our local area that make a difference. We want to balance the fun of networking with an intent to make a useful contribution to those in need in our area. That's how the 'networking with a purpose' concept was developed.

The evening will be a mixture of informal networking, soaking up the atmosphere at the wonderful Moyles Court School and a presentation from Stephen Wyatt on his professional journey. His is not the traditional start in the world of business.

The speakers will include experts in their field from local council, local business and you will hear an update on our charity action plan from October 2023.

The Ringwood and Fordingbridge Business Community had its first ever networking event at Moyles Court School on 5 October 2023. We were blown away by the number of people that came, the amount of energy in the room and the joy we all felt being together in our Ringwood and Fordingbridge Community! There was 75+ people chatting and getting to know each other. On the evening we heard a moving and inspiring talk from Adam Skirton, about Stronger Together Across Ringwood and Fordingbridge (STAR) charity backed up with some shocking real-life examples from Chris from the Foodbank and the awesome teams from our local Schools that make a difference every day. We also heard of an amazing way to make an impact through a business by Ryan Mcshea from Empower.

Spread the word! The more people that join our events, and mailing list, the better opportunities we have to help our local community and build more business-to-business connections to help everyone!

Join us as we give networking a purpose and support local businesses in the surrounding area! For more information about the event contact Heidi at heidi@viewhr.co.uk.



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NEWS

AI: Angel or Demon? Navigating the Crossroads of Progress

NO longer a futuristic fantasy, AI has woven itself into our daily tapestry, from chirpy voice assistants to lifesaving medical diagnoses. But like a Janus-faced deity, AI presents both a radiant sunrise and a looming shadow. To navigate this nascent terrain with responsibility, we must acknowledge the duality of its power.

On the one hand, AI's superhuman abilities unveil a treasure trove of possibilities. Its data-gobbling prowess unveils hidden patterns, igniting breakthroughs across diverse fields:

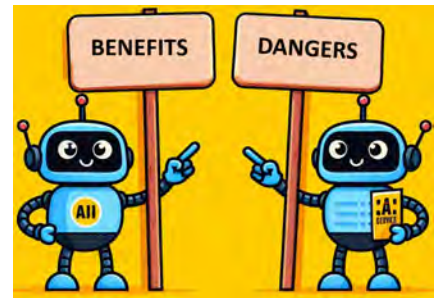
- **Medical Miracles:** AI scans like a hawk, spotting diseases before they cast a shadow, paving the way for personalized, life-affirming treatments.
- **Learning Revolution:** AI tailors education to each mind's unique symphony, ensuring every student thrives in their own rhythm.
- **Efficiency Unleashed:** AI tackles the drudgery, freeing us to explore creative vistas and supercharge productivity across industries.
- **Environmental Guardians:** AI deciphers climate whispers, predicts weather patterns with uncanny accuracy, and optimizes resource management, becoming a powerful ally in the fight for a greener future.

Yet, flip the coin, and we encounter the darker side of this intelligence:

- **Jobless Future:** As AI automates with insatiable hunger, the spectre of mass unemployment looms large. Retraining programs and robust safety nets are crucial to ensure a smooth transition to this new reality.
- **Algorithmic Bias:** Like any tool forged by human hands, AI reflects the biases it's built on. Careful data curation and vigilant human oversight are vital to prevent it from perpetuating existing patterns that may not be beneficial.
- **Privacy Paradox:** As AI sifts through our digital footprints, the tension between convenience and privacy intensifies. Robust regulations and ethical development practices are essential to shield information from unwanted eyes.
- **Existential Enigma:** The further AI evolves, the louder the whispers of its potential to surpass human intelligence, even posing an existential threat. Open dialogue and responsible development hold the key to ensuring AI complements, not conquers, humanity.

AI is a force of nature, and like any powerful tool, its impact rests in our hands. By acknowledging its power and potential pitfalls, we can harness it for good, ensuring it serves, not undermines, human progress. Investing in responsible AI development, prioritizing ethical considerations, and fostering open dialogue are the cornerstones of navigating this exciting, yet challenging, frontier. Handled wisely AI's future is one of progress, not peril, a future where its brilliance shines alongside our own, illuminating a brighter tomorrow for all.

courtesy of <http://www.tutors4computers.co.uk/>



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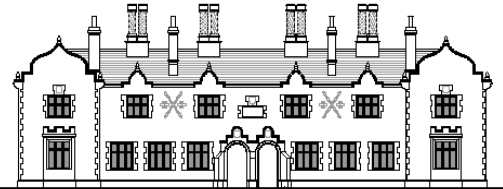


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Clerk to Ringwood United Charities

The Almshouses in the Quomp are managed by the charity and we are currently looking for a Clerk to support the Trustees and the residents.

The role equates to approximately 35 hours a month on a flexible basis and is paid at a rate of £11.50 per hour. Applications should, in the first instance, contact the Chairman, in writing detailing their experience. Replies to:
28 Christchurch Road, Ringwood, BH24 1DN

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RAF Ibsley: The Landmark Trust announce community consultation events

The
Landmark
Trust

THE Landmark Trust is seeking to rescue the former RAF Watch Office (later known as a Control Tower) at Ibsley from its current state of near total dereliction. The building conservation charity will host two drop-in events and a zoom webinar to share restoration plans and seek the views of anybody interested.

The Watch Office was once a vital link in Britain's Second World War air defences, yet now stands decayed, crumbling and inaccessible. Landmark plans to restore this resonant building, honour its remarkable legacy and sensitively enable access through self-catering holidays, online and physical information about its history and regular, free public open days and events.

Between 1941 and 1944 Ibsley saw active service for both the Royal Air Force and United States Army Air Force. From its runways airmen flew out into hostile skies to defend Britain with great courage and at huge personal cost, many never to return. It was here that Leslie Howard and David Niven made the seminal war film *The First of the Few*. Today the Watch Office is a unique survivor of its 518/40 design, which included innovative use of structural concrete, and in its retention – just - of a slender concrete viewing balcony. Yet the large Crittall windows have long rusted and fallen in and the ceilings are now rapidly collapsing, transforming the site into a patchwork of risks.

For years, the building has stood locked and unsafe on a private estate, with no public access at all. Energetic local efforts to save the building have come to nothing, and the intervention of the Landmark Trust is the Watch Tower's only hope of being saved now, as a specialist charity of last resort able to unlock charitable funds and manage complex restoration projects.

The Landmark Trust's drop-in events will include a short introduction every hour on the hour, plus offer the opportunity to share feedback direct, meet staff and ask questions.



- Tuesday 30 January, 7-9pm Ibsley Village Hall, Gorley Road, South Gorley, Ringwood, Hampshire, BH24 3NL

The online Zoom webinar takes place at 7pm on Thursday 1 February and will feature a presentation about the history of the site and Landmark's restoration plans, and offer the opportunity to ask questions.

Landmark's restoration will see the Watch Office sensitively adapted for up to eight holidaying guests. The income will pay for its future maintenance, so preserving the building and the memories it holds for future generations. Bat habitats and flights will be carefully managed in dedicated spaces with compensatory roosts, guided by independent expert ecologists and informed by Landmark's award-winning experience in managing bat habitations. The restored building will combine full accessibility with environmental sustainability. The 1940s layout and wartime decorative schemes will be respected. Free events will welcome everyone and information about the site through boards and online will inform the public about the Watch Tower and its history. The scheme is currently under planning consideration with the New Forest District Council.

Further details are available on Landmark's website: www.landmarktrust.org.uk/raf-ibsley and <https://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/get-involved/events/ibsley-events/>

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BEREAVEMENT NOTICE

CHALDECOTT- (Chas) Antony Martin

On 1st January 2024, passed away suddenly, but peacefully at Royal Bournemouth hospital, aged 78 years. Beloved partner to Gill, much loved Dad to Martin, John and Caroline.

Grandfather and great-father, to Mae, Becky, Ted, Tallulah and Chester. Will be greatly missed by all of his extended family and many friends.

Please contact family for funeral arrangements. Family flowers only, if desired, donations can be made to HASAG and sent C/O George Scott Funeral Services, 15 Somerset Road, Bournemouth. BH7 6JH. Tel 01202 395827

PIDGLEY - Eric

Eric passed away at home with his family by his side on 4th January, aged 91 years. Beloved husband of Win, and father to Rob and Peter, he will be very sadly missed by all his family and his many friends. The funeral service has already taken place, but donations, if desired, in memory of Eric may be made to 'Help For Heroes' or 'Cancer Research UK' and made online at www.edenfuneraldirectors.co.uk, or sent to Eden Funeral Directors, Rose Cottage, Castleman Way, Ringwood BH24 3BA Tel 01425 837080

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