October 2026

BRENTHAM NEWS

Residents on Fowlers Walk gathered in their allotments to watch August's partial solar eclipse, as the Moon passed in front of the Sun.



Photograph by Tamara Colton



Photograph by Teresa Mazur

Chair's introduction

Since becoming Chair of the Brentham Society, I have realised just how much the advice line (advice@brentham.com) is used. We should all be grateful to the small band of volunteers who run it, delivering help on all aspects of Brentham - especially conservation. They help to avoid wasted time and money on doomed applications for planning permission, while providing detailed help on the design of such things as window frames.

Unsurprisingly we have seen a number of enquiries about EV charging points. As with many enquiries, it is worth checking the Brentham website before emailing the advice line – it contains advice sheets on a variety of topics, including charging points.

Another hot topic has been the gating of twittens.

A 'twitten' is a narrow path between walls or hedges. In Brentham, it's the name traditionally used for the paths behind the houses.

They are there, of course, to provide access between the front of the house and the back, without actually going through the house. Originally used for delivering coal and collecting rubbish, they are now increasingly seen as a threat to security, and a large number have been gated.

Originally they, as well as the houses, were owned by Ealing Tenants Ltd which also maintained them. When the houses were sold, the twittens were also sold - usually, but not always, to the owners of the houses on either side. Importantly, the other houses with access to a twitten still retain a right of access. If you are thinking of gating a twitten, do read the advice sheet on the topic.

We deliver the Brentham News to every house on the estate, and we hope you enjoy reading it. Please join the Brentham Society if you haven't already – it's easy, just see the back page. If there are topics you would like us to cover, email Jacqueline, our editor, at editor@brentham.com.

Clive

Clive Evans
Chair, Brentham Society

Brentham Society, registered charity no. 1079724

A DESIGN THAT STILL SHAPES HOW WE LIVE

BRENTHAM 125 YEARS GARDEN SUBURB

We live in a conservation area with an Article 4 Direction. At times these restrictions are infuriating because they can scupper our dreams for our homes. However, restrictions on development not only protect the architecture but also conserve an environment which, it turns out, is good for us. If you look at some of the things that contribute to wellbeing, Brentham offers many of them.



Colourful front doors and gardens are part of Brentham's character
Photograph by David Lomas

Our green spaces allow us to connect with nature and provide an important haven for wildlife. We can explore them on foot using streets, paths, twittens, greens and fields, according to our abilities and inclinations. We can find truly wild places here, in our midst. Seasonal changes allow us to appreciate the moment whilst offering continuous entertainment. Sturdy shoes may be required for sodden winter clay!

Connection with people is critical to our wellbeing. The estate was deliberately set out to encourage a sense of community. Hedges were originally kept low, while houses were set around greens or turned towards their neighbours in a nod to conviviality. At a recent street and garden party, new arrivals commented that it was the "village feel" that attracted them to Brentham; other neighbours concurred. They were further delighted to find neighbours helpful and welcoming. The combination of thoughtful architecture and good neighbours helps our community continue to thrive, even in difficult times.

We enjoy community events throughout the year, some organised by the Society, some by others. They give us the opportunity to come together, get to know each other, enjoy our pleasant estate and raise funds for good causes in our community and beyond.

Brentham needs looking after too, and this brings residents together. Street signs are being maintained by local volunteers as time and resources allow. The recently planted tree beds have been described as "absolutely beautiful and welcoming". There is never a shortage of work to do.

We are also lucky to live in a community with many gifted artists, gardeners and people willing to share their skills. There are art classes, leisure activities and sports facilities within or close to the estate. Many of us have gardens to tend, offering opportunities to learn, create and exercise. Our local garden group is generous in sharing its collective expertise, and this summer has provided much reassurance to novice gardeners that the gardens will recover from several months of drought.

125 years on, Brentham still offers much of what its designers set out to create - green space, neighbourliness and a strong sense of community.

The designers and architects of Brentham Garden Suburb knew a thing or two about unliveable neighbourhoods - their first-hand experience was of high-density Victorian urban housing. They deliberately designed an estate that would help neighbours live harmoniously with nature and with each other.

125 years on, it is now our turn to look after it, so that we can hand it down to future generations as an example of good urban living.

Elly Castellano

CELEBRATING

BRENTHAM'S HELLEBORES

Do you have hellebores in your garden? Their flowers can provide lovely colour early in the year and are an excellent source of nectar for the first bumblebees.

Growing hellebores



Hellebores come in a wide range of colours and forms

The hellebore hybrids which are most widely grown are undemanding evergreen perennial plants that come in single and double flower forms, in a variety of colours - white and cream, pink, dark red and purple.

Hellebores prefer to grow in moist shade, but once established in a border, can be fairly tolerant of drought - I have some which have survived the recent hot summer with just occasional watering. They appreciate mulch in the autumn. In early spring, before flowers appear, you can tidy up the plants by removing old leaves.



Hellebore seedling

An easy way to increase your stock of hellebores is to look out for seedlings, which you can identify by the distinctive leaf shape. Mature hellebores don't like to be moved, but small seedlings can be dug up, perhaps kept in a pot for a while to allow the roots to develop, then planted in the desired position.



Enjoying hellebores indoors

Hellebore blooms work well as cut flowers, and last a surprisingly long time.

The RHS recommends picking them when the seed pods are just starting to form, and searing the bottom inch of the cut stem in hot water to seal it.

As the flowers of many hellebores nod downwards, putting a vase of them at eye level is a good way to admire them.

Last winter, Gabrielle Fernandes (Brentham Gardening Group) brought some of the hellebores from her garden indoors, creating this beautiful display.

Other varieties to look out for



Helleborus foetidus growing wild in the Chilterns



Helleborus niger, the Christmas rose

Helleborus foetidus is a UK native that grows in woodland and has rounded green flowers. Its common name is the stinking hellebore, but the smell is only noticeable if you crush a leaf!

Helleborus niger is known as the Christmas rose, though its white flowers don't normally appear until January.

Margaret Barfield, Brentham Gardening Group

Community Spotlight

JANE NEVILLE

A Life Across Continents

At the age of 94, Jane Neville can look back on a career spent in the service of others. Born in 1932, she spent much of her working life in Africa, working with people affected by leprosy in the local population. Her pioneering work was recognised in 1978 with the award of an MBE for services to leprosy control in Ethiopia.

Jane has lived in Brunner Road since 2002 and is a familiar face at St Barnabas, but much of her working life was spent thousands of miles from Brentham.

Her adventure began in 1955 when, at the age of 23, she qualified as an occupational therapist and worked first in Oxford, then the Midlands. She takes up her story:

After I qualified, much of my work was with people who'd been injured in the war or who had industrial injuries. For some it meant being unable to use their hands to grip properly. So, I designed activities for them, such as leatherwork, basketry, woodturning and carpentry to help them cope with their disability and become more independent. And when I went to Africa, I was able to apply my training to the needs of people with leprosy.



The tell-tale signs of leprosy



Photograph by Andy Golding

My first posting was to Uganda in 1958 when I was 26 years old. I felt that it was a calling from God. And through the Church Mission Society I joined a team at a leprosy centre, run by a doctor who needed help with his patients. The first thing I did was to learn the local language; there was no language school, so I was taught by a nurse who looked after children. We'd sit together, I'd point at something and she'd tell me what the word was in her language.

I knew that living out there would be a challenge; yet I had no idea of what it was going to be like for me, quite isolated and 30 miles from the nearest town. I lived in a small house, with no running water; there was a 1,000-gallon tank which filled with the rains but, when it was empty, water had to be brought in by truck in cans from about a mile away. However, I did have electricity which was wired up just before I arrived.

The centre comprised a small expatriate staff and some Ugandans - just eight of us in all - and we used to go out and examine new patients. Some would have a pale patch on their skin, while others had lost feeling in their hands or feet. I noticed that patients with a slight disability were often inactive, so I devised activities for them, initially using clay. But I soon realised that those who had lost sensation could not feel the friction, which could cause wounds. We changed course, making protective shoes for farmers and hand protection for women cooking.

When I first arrived in Uganda, I was able to cope emotionally because it was something new and exciting. However, at festival time, such as Christmas and Easter, I became very homesick.

I'd been working in Uganda for five years when I was headhunted by a medic who wanted someone to set up an international training centre, outside Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. I spent nine months in a language school to get to grips with the local language, Amharic, which was quite unlike anything that I'd come across, for it had its own alphabet. Not many of the Ethiopian staff spoke English, so I needed to know the language to be able to function. There were cultural differences to learn as well; I recall having a group of patients that I wanted to teach how to work safely outdoors.



Jane with the MBE she received for services to leprosy control in Ethiopia

We were doing some gardening and at the end of the session they downed tools and asked me where their wages were. I hadn't realised that in their culture people who worked expected payment, and I very nearly had a strike on my hands.

I took a degree course in the United States which qualified me to become a trainer, and when I returned to Ethiopia I was able to assist the director of the centre and to start teaching the teachers, thereby passing on what I had learnt about disability prevention to trainees who came to the centre, as well as those from other parts of the world.

I was in Ethiopia for 12 years, leaving in 1978. The memories I have are of the country's depth of culture, of its arts and of its language and proverbs – all providing a key to understanding its people. I particularly recall one proverb that goes: "Slowly by slowly the egg on its legs will go." It's a proverb that recommends patience!

Looking back over my time in Africa, I consider that what I received was more than what I gave. While I made life easier for people with leprosy, what I got in return was a knowledge and understanding of the riches to be found in people who have a different language and culture from ours.

When I came back to England, I was recruited by the Leprosy Mission in London to train trainers in India, where I went twice a year for five years. I retired in 1992 and have lived on the Brentham Estate since 2002. Before I lived here, I was in a ground floor maisonette in Sandall Close but I'd always wanted to live in a house. I looked at some houses in Neville Road but eventually chose the one in Brunner Road in which I've lived for over 20 years.

It's been a great find with lovely front and back gardens, which suit me as I'm a keen gardener and appreciate the way gardens are valued on the estate. But what I also love is the strong community spirit that exists here. You feel it when you walk down Pitshanger Lane and are able to stop to talk to people. And some of the shopkeepers soon get to know you so well that they can often tell what you want to buy as soon as, or even before, you go in.

Last but not least, living here means so much to me because I'm just a few minutes' walk away from St Barnabas Church, which has long played a very important part in my life and continues to do so.

Mike Gandon and Jane Neville

Welcome to Brentham, Esther



Agnes and Christer with Esther

Esther Elizabeth Blindheim was born on 10 July 2026 to Agnes and Christer Blindheim.

Agnes and Chris have lived in Brentham since October 2022 and say they love being part of such a friendly community. They are now enjoying introducing Esther to the area and have been touched by how warmly she has been welcomed by neighbours.

Congratulations, Sarah and Julian

Reverend Sarah Howard-Jones of St Barnabas Church married Julian Braybrook on 19th September.

Members of the St Barnabas community joined them for the wedding Mass and reception afterwards.



Sarah and Julian outside St Barnabas

Help uncover Brentham's original fireplaces

Original Brentham fireplaces are simpler than the more elaborate tiled designs often associated with Edwardian homes.

Their cast-iron surrounds combine practical construction with restrained decorative detail. That restrained approach is consistent with Brentham's aim of providing well-designed homes without unnecessary expense.

If you have an original fire surround in your home, we would love to hear from you.

By sharing your photograph, you will help create a lasting record of one of the features that gives Brentham homes their character, show how designs varied across different streets and house types and provide a helpful reference for residents restoring their houses.

Please send photographs to fireplaces@brentham.com.



An original Brentham cast-iron fireplace, with its simple surround and distinctive floral detail.

LET BRENTHAM STREETS *Bloom*

Brentham has always been about more than individual houses and gardens. The green spaces between them, including the trees and verges along our streets, are part of what gives the suburb its character.

That makes a new resident-led tree bed planting project feel particularly at home here. The initiative, led by Tamara Colton with support from the Brentham Society, secured £500 from Ealing Council's Your Voice, Your Town community fund. The funding covered plants and materials to help residents bring neglected tree beds back to life.

The idea is simple. Residents volunteer to look after a tree bed near their home, working with neighbours to plant it and then keep it watered, weeded and cared for.

The planting day is only the start. Each bed is looked after by residents living nearby, who continue to water, weed and care for it.

The first planting showed how much difference a relatively small intervention can make. Seventeen neighbours of different ages and levels of gardening experience worked alongside one another, preparing and then planting the beds. But the project is about more than flowers. There was plenty of chat along the way, new connections were made and those involved spoke about the pleasure of doing something practical together for their street.

Other residents have since been inspired to plant tree beds near their own homes.

The team are still looking for more residents to get involved in the next round - planting a tree bed themselves or encouraging others on their street to join in. The grant paid for plants and compost, while residents provided the time and ongoing care.

As the first round of planting has shown, a cared-for tree bed does more than brighten a street. It is a small sign that the space around us belongs to all of us - and that people care about where they live.



Cosmos flowering in one of the planted tree beds on Neville Road



The planting team

Tamara Colton, Sheila Fowler, Nita Davis, Jane Taylor and Roy Manders.

Interested in getting involved? Contact tamara@brentham.com.

With thanks to Tamara Colton for information and photographs.



Neighbours taking part in the first tree bed planting.

COMING UP THIS

Autumn and Winter

IN BRENTHAM

October

Silent Disco (Brentham Club)
Saturday 24th October

Pop on your headphones and dance to hits from across the decades.

November

Fireworks Night (Brentham Club)
Saturday 7th November

Brentham's annual Fireworks Night, with music and street food.

From Darkness to Light (St Barnabas Church)
Saturday 14th November

Ealing Choral Society present an evening of choral music including Maurice Duruflé's Requiem.

Teenage Gigs (Brentham Club)
Saturday 28th November

Local bands take to the stage celebrating youth and live music.

November

Frost Fair (St Barnabas Church)
Friday 27th November

A chance to pick up some Christmas presents and support local makers and groups.

December

Questors Choir Christmas Concert (St Barnabas Church)
Saturday 5th December

A concert of Christmas music with professional brass quintet Ensemble of the Golden Bough.

Carol Singing (Brentham Society)
3rd week of December

Join neighbours for carol singing around the suburb, collecting money for a local charity.

Find full event details online:
brentham.com
brenthamclub.co.uk
barnabites.org
ealingarts.org.uk

December

ABBA Tribute (Brentham Club)
Saturday 19th December

An authentic ABBA experience with stunning harmonies, iconic costumes and all their greatest hits.

Cheese & Wine Evening (Brentham Society)
Date TBC

An evening of Ukrainian wines and cheeses, with a chance to hear a little about the country and culture.

February

Rautavaara and Bruckner (St Barnabas Church)
Saturday 6th February

West London Sinfonia perform Rautavaara: Angels and Visitations and Bruckner: Symphony No. 9.

Recently in Brentham



As part of London Open House Weekend in September, local residents led guided walks around Brentham, sharing its history, architecture and character.



Young players at the Fred Perry Tennis Trust Championship finals, held at the Brentham Club in September.
Photograph: Getty Images



Strawberry Tea
May Queen and neighbours meet up at the annual Strawberry Tea.



The Brentham Club

Sports and social activities for all

The Club offers a wide range of sports and social activities, including tennis, cricket, football, bowls, snooker, darts, bridge and social membership.

It is also a welcoming venue for celebrations of all kinds, from birthdays and Christmas parties to family gatherings, weddings and other special occasions. The Club is fully licensed to host civil ceremonies.

THE FRED PERRY CAFÉ

Monday 10-4
Tuesday and Wednesday 10-5
Thursday and Friday 9-5
Saturday and Sunday 9-2

Membership of the Brentham Society is open to residents and friends of Brentham through a £5 yearly subscription.

As a member, you're helping to protect the character of our garden suburb - not just the buildings, but the feeling of the place: the friendliness, the green spaces, the events that stitch us together, the shared history that makes Brentham unlike anywhere else.

It's easy to renew or start your membership. Simply set up a £5 standing order, with January as the payment month.

Bank details: CAF Bank
Name: Brentham Society
Sort code: 40-52-40
Account No: 00019660
Payee ref: first line of your address

Please email membership@brentham.com to confirm payment.

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If you, or someone you know, is visually impaired and would like a newsletter with a larger font, please contact Jacqueline, editor@brentham.com.

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If you are considering a sale, contact Hugh Grimshaw or Liz Cullinan to arrange an appointment to discuss how we can help with your property move.



SOLD

Brentham Garden Estate

A 3-bedroom house with plenty of Brentham character and a west-facing garden.

Quoting price £725,000