



SAINTS ALIVE!

*The Parish Magazine of
All Saints' Church, North Hillingdon UB10 9BT*



January 2026

£1.



**THE PARISH OF ALL SAINTS,
North Hillingdon, UB10 9BT
The Church of England
Deanery of Hillingdon & Diocese of London**

THE PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

All Saints' Church aims to be a welcoming Anglican community, a place of prayer and worship, providing a ministry to all and where people gather to share the love of Jesus Christ.

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

SAID HOLY COMMUNION **8.00 am**

HOLY COMMUNION SERVICE WITH HYMNS **10.00 am**

Followed by refreshments in the Church Hall next door, at which **all (and especially any visitors)** are very welcome.

One Sunday each month: **10.00 am**
Sung Holy Communion (*in a less formal style*)

USUAL WEEKDAY TIMES

Wednesday Said Holy Communion Service **10.00 am**
(followed by tea and cake in the Hall)

Please see the Parish Website or the weekly ***Parish Bulletin*** on the church porch notice-board for full details or telephone the Vicarage (01895 262024).

Parish Website: www.allsaINTsnorthhillingdon.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ASHillingdon

Twitter / X: [@ASHillingdon](https://twitter.com/ASHillingdon)

Enquiries concerning Baptisms, Banns, Marriages or other parish business can be made during Vestry Hour in church, which is normally on Saturdays between 10:00 and 11.00am. Please contact Rev Ulric Gerry on 01895 262024 or allsaintshillingdon@gmail.com

A VIEW FROM THE VICARAGE

Dear Saints

I'm writing this from the highlands of Scotland, which despite its tiny size, historically has been very influential in world history.



In the C16th Scotland was impoverished and backward. Enter John Knox (1514-1572), a Priest widely travelled in Europe and influenced by Reformation, and imprisoned for his beliefs.

He had a passionate conviction that God speaks through Scripture, and every person should be able to read scripture and hear God for themselves. This drove his extraordinary commitment to literacy. For him reading was not a luxury; it was a spiritual necessity. He published the first prayerbook in Gaelic in 1562 and campaigned for a school in every parish. Over the next century, Scotland went from being one of the most backward nations in Europe to the most literate nation on earth.

The Calvinist faith cultivated not only Bible reading but also habits of self-discipline and self-reflection, laying foundations for public debate, civic responsibility, and intellectual confidence. It taught that all work was a calling from God, not just Holy Orders, dignifying all labour, encouraging stewardship and excellence; the Scottish work ethic. Scotland became a nation formed by ideas about God, truth, responsibility, and vocation.

As the new printing presses churned out books, universities flourished and through the 'Scottish Enlightenment' the nation became known for its engineers, economists, philosophers, and educators who influenced the world throughout the C18th and beyond (hence Scotty as Chief Engineer in Star Trek).

Yet it was also morally intense. Life was lived '*Coram Deo*'; before the face of God. Self-examination, repentance, and discipline were taken seriously. This produced an integrity and a strong sense of responsibility but also at times suppressed joy and humanity. Over time Calvinism lost its grace and became moralistic and harsh and alienated the people (true also in the other Calvinistic nations Switzerland and The Netherlands).

Over the last century, as Scotland became secular, it has lost its educational ambitions, work ethic, institutional reputation and national confidence; educational 'PISA' scores, industry and employment have all decreased. Hopefully our 2026 World Cup participation will restore national spirits, but long lasting change, as for any nation, is only possible through a return to Christ and Christian values.



Blessings

Fr Ulric Gerry

EVENTS AT ALL SAINTS CHURCH

Wednesdays at 10:30am - Coffee, Cake and Companionship in the Hall

January

6th January at 11am - Ryefield Court Communion Service

18th January at 10am – NHWS ‘Brown Book’ Sunday

February

1st February at 10am – observing Candlemas

3rd February at 11am - Ryefield Court Communion Service

15th February at 10am – NHWS ‘Brown Book’ Sunday

18th February at 7.30pm - Ash Wednesday service

EVENTS IN HILLINGDON

Every Monday, 7-8pm – Twilight Yoga at the Battle of Britain Bunker

Friday 16th January, 10.30-11.30am – Falls Prevention Workshop at Oak Farm Library



Thursday 22nd-Saturday 24th January – ‘Argosy Players’ Mother Goose Panto at the Winston Churchill Theatre.

Friday 30th January at 2.30pm – Coffee and Crime talk with author Sophie Hannah at Manor Farm Library.

There are also various talks this month at Uxbridge Library for Holocaust Memorial Day. And some guided winter walks around the borough.

If you know of any events happening in Hillingdon next month, do let the Editor know!



St. Helen's College

Parkway, Hillingdon, Middlesex, UB10 9JX
Independent School for boys and girls aged 2 - 11



Come And See EXCELLENCE In Action

Please telephone **01895 234371** to make an appointment
www.sthelenscollege.com

Blenheim Palace Christmas Trail



On Saturday 27th December, Anna, David our son and I went to the Christmas Light Trail at Blenheim Palace - a 2 mile trail all illuminated with thousands of lights.

Blenheim Palace is in Woodstock, a village just north of Oxford and to drive there from Uxbridge takes about 90 minutes. We had to book tickets online and we chose a 7p.m. entry for £45 each and a further £10 for parking.

At the entrance to Blenheim Palace were many attractions, a wheel like the London Eye, fairground rides, a covered ice-skating rink, areas with food stalls and a large covered seating area for meals.

The weather was dry and cold, however we were well wrapped up and started our tour with mulled wine and then strolled along on the prepared pathway which was dry.

Every hundred metres there was a different colourful scene with music. Large trees were covered with thousands of lights which changed colour, and moving images were projected on some trees.

There were many light shows on the lake, a large array of fountains swayed in time with the music. Another had a large Moon with constellations mapped out in lights and white comets whizzed through this watery heaven. In one area we heard "HO-HO-HO" and on the other side of the lake were a line of trees that formed a screen across which flew a projected image of Santa with his sleigh and reindeer.

Along the trail were tunnels of different coloured lights and small Italianate buildings in which to pose for photos. Half-way round there was also a fire pit for people to warm their hands and food stalls with a seating area.

At the end of our walk, we had a large bratwurst with tea then headed home. It had been a very enjoyable experience that perhaps one Christmas you might also enjoy.

Brian Hillier

A guid New Year to ane an' a' and mony may ye see!



Although Christmas is widely celebrated now in Scotland, New Year was, and still is, a more widespread celebration. December 31st is Hogmanay, and the celebrations continue into January 1st or 2nd!

In my father's village, in the north-east of Aberdeenshire, the men were often out at sea, fishing, over Christmas, but they would usually be ashore for Hogmanay. I remember as a small child that we would run round the village, knocking on doors, and calling to the women to "gie's oor Hogmanay" – money, fruit, or sweets. It's probably unthinkable now-a-days, but back then, I was related to about half the village!

Later on, the young men would set out with a lump of coal, some black-bun or shortbread, and whisky. After midnight, they would "first foot" their neighbours. Householders would hope for a tall, dark-haired, handsome man to be the first person to set foot in the house in the New Year. It may be that a dark head was preferred, as a blond may have brought reminders of the Vikings!

The greeting above, or a variation with "*lang may yer lum reek*", brought good wishes to the household; the coal signified fuel and warmth for the year, the black bun/shortbread signified food, and a tot of whisky would be offered to the host, who would offer his guest a tot in return – hospitality to the start the New Year. At the start of the New Year, and certainly before the 6th, we would put on our Sunday-best coats, hats and scarves, and sturdy shoes, and walk behind a "pipe and drum band" (often wooden flutes, or 'fifes') to the next village. Once there, the children were given an orange. These walks are reminders of the Temperance Walks of the mid-nineteenth century.

As a young adult in Fife, the "first-footing" had turned into a series of parties around the village, well into the small hours, and my dark-haired boyfriend was very welcome!

Now, Edinburgh's Princes Street New Year's party attracts visitors from around the world, and is televised far-and-wide.

Jane Turnbull

There are many reasons to visit your local library.

At **Oak Farm Library**, on the corner of Long Lane and Sutton Court Road, their weekly activities include a popular reading group, free exercise classes for the over 65s, and 'Dementia Friends Reminiscence' sessions (Thursdays).

Ask a member of staff for more information or give them a call on **01895 556242**.

Opening times:

Mon, Thurs (late opening) 10am to 7pm
Tues, Weds, Fri 10am to 5pm
Sat 10am to 4pm
Sun CLOSED

What's on...

at Oak Farm Library

Adult Offer

IT Taster Sessions
On demand, please contact staff to book a session.

Monday	South Asian Dance Class (2nd Mon of month) 11-midday and 12-1
Tuesday	Strength and Balance Exercise Class 11:35-12:20pm and 12:20pm-13:00pm
Wednesday	Scrabble 11-1pm Knit and Crotchet Group 1-3pm
Thursday	Sit Down Exercise 11-midday and 12-1pm Dementia Friends Sessions 2-3pm Coffee Mornings 10.30-12pm (Alternate Fri) Knit and Crochet Group 11am - 1pm Men's Cancer Support Group 1-2pm (Last Friday of the month) All Male Games Group 2-3pm Women's Cancer Support Group 2-3pm (Last Friday of the month)
Friday	

For more information please speak to a member of staff or visit www.hillingdon.gov.uk/libraries.



www.hillingdon.gov.uk/libraries



All Saints Men's Shed Group



We meet on Thursday mornings between 10-12:00 hrs in the Vicarage Garden by kind permission of Ulric, weather dependent!

The club has been formed to provide a space for men, focusing on allotment type activities - three raised beds were constructed on the first meeting for growing vegetables.

Another project will be to construct a shed out of pallets to facilitate tool storage and provide shelter during bad weather - to give you a flavour of what we will be getting up to. Any pallet donations would be very welcome or transport to collect some!

Due to the weather conditions, our next committee meeting is scheduled at the Swallow Pub on the 8th Jan at 12 noon.

If you find yourself at a loose end, please join us...

Peter Turner

Save the date!



Our annual live music night is March 14th from 7.30pm.

Join Jon Fisher as Gary Barlow.

£15 a ticket.

See Lesley for more details.

Gardening in January

January can feel like the long, grey stretch between the festivities of Christmas and the first signs of spring. But the good news is this - January is *not* a dormant, colourless month. In fact, it holds a quiet kind of beauty all of its own.

Colour from Flowers: The Winter Bloomers:



Hellebores, often called Christmas or Lenten Roses, are among the most reliable sources of colour. Their elegant, nodding blooms in shades of white, plum, pink, and lime appear throughout winter and early spring, thriving even when coated with frost.

Winter-flowering pansies and violas also bring low-growing colour that lasts for months. Their cheerful faces brighten borders, pots, and window boxes, bouncing back even after a hard freeze.

For height and drama, witch hazel is a standout. Its spidery, scented blooms in fiery oranges, reds, or yellows break up the dullness of winter and glow in the low sun. Likewise, winter jasmine provides cascades of bright yellow flowers at exactly the time we need them most.

And don't overlook cyclamen, with their jewel-bright petals and marbled leaves - a perfect choice for shady spots beneath trees or shrubs.

Colour from Stems & Bark: The Structural Stars:

Dogwoods are unbeatable for winter impact. Their vivid stems in red, orange, yellow, or near-black, glow in the low winter light. Planted en masse, they transform a dull border into a striking winter feature.

Willows (*Salix*) also offer beautiful winter stems, with cultivars displaying copper, scarlet, or golden bark.

Then there are the sculptural beauties like birch with ghost-white trunks or cinnamon-barked *Prunus serrula*, whose polished bronze shine is especially striking in cold weather.

Colour from Berries & Foliage: Year-Round Interest:



Evergreen foliage and winter berries bring a richness to the garden that keeps it looking alive even on the gloomiest days.

Skimmia japonica offers glossy green leaves and deep red flower buds that persist through winter, adding long-lasting colour.

Female plants also bear clusters of

bright berries when a male pollinator is nearby.

For vibrant winter berries, holly is a classic choice, beloved for its glossy leaves and festive red fruit. Cotoneaster, pyracantha, and sorbus (rowans) also produce masses of berries that brighten borders and feed wildlife.

Evergreen foliage plants such as heucheras, with their russet, purple, lime, or silver leaves, keep containers colourful year-round. Meanwhile, carex and other evergreen grasses provide movement and soft golden or bronze tones that warm up winter spaces.

Scent in the Winter Air: The Power of Fragrance:

Colour may be the first thing we look for in January, but fragrance can be even more uplifting at this time of year.

Top of the list is *Daphne odora*, whose intensely sweet fragrance fills the air from late winter to early spring. Small clusters of pink-white flowers may look delicate, but their scent is remarkably powerful.

Sarcococca (sweet box) is another treasure. Its tiny white winter flowers produce an unexpectedly rich, honeyed perfume that drifts along paths - perfect for entrances or shady corners.

Witch hazel provides both colour and scent, with varieties offering clove-like fragrance in mid-winter. And winter honeysuckle bears creamy-white flowers with a citrusy, uplifting perfume.

Article originally written for the Fothergill's website by Anne Robinson.

Coffee Morning Christmas Party



The Wednesday Coffee Morning held its Christmas Party on December 17th, which was also our last meeting for this year.

We had around 45 people attend, bringing with them food, drink and Secret Santas.

We were entertained by the lovely Nicky Fisher who sung a

selection of Christmas and other songs, and several of our guests were up on the dance floor thoroughly enjoying themselves. Judging from the comments afterwards I think a good time was had by all and I would like to thank all of those who attend on a regular basis for their continuing support.

Although never solely set up to make money, but to try and get the community together in a warm and safe place, this year we have raised £3,500 for the church, plus another £250 which went to the charity Home Start. Also, most of our regular visitors also attended or volunteered at the Breast Cancer Afternoon Tea this Summer which raised £2,500 so very grateful indeed to everyone.

At our coffee morning on January 21st, we shall be having a company called Heart Starter pay us a visit - they will be bringing mannikins and training defibs to show us all how to use them. It would be great to have as many visitors as possible that day as we now have our own defibrillator in the hall and it would be so useful for us all to know how to use it - all very welcome.

In March we shall once again be holding one of our mornings to raise funds for Home Start, which only feels right as they use our upstairs hall offices to carry out their work for this much needed charity.

I would also like to use this chance to shout out my 'wingman' Marion Robinson whose invaluable help each week allows the coffee mornings to carry on and hopefully upwards - THANK YOU.

Lesley Thompson

Lesley's recipe of the month

Mincemeat and Marzipan Loaf cake



Ingredients:

200g self raising flour
100g cold butter, cut into cubes
85g soft brown sugar, plus 2 teaspoons for the topping
85g marzipan cut into little pieces
2 eggs
300g mincemeat

Method:

Heat the oven to 160c fan or 180c electric and line a loaf tin. Add the flour and butter to a bowl and rub until it resembles breadcrumbs. Add the sugar and marzipan to this and stir together - then add in the mincemeat and beaten eggs. Once combined, spoon into the loaf tin and sprinkle the extra sugar on the top. Cook for approximately 1 hour - test with a skewer or sharp knife. Leave to cool in the tin for 10 mins then turn onto a cooling rack and enjoy for your afternoon tea. An excellent way of using up Christmas leftovers like marzipan and mincemeat.

Boxing Day at Savill Gardens



Marion and I spent a pleasant Boxing Day at The Savill Gardens, Windsor.

The weather was perfect and there was so much colour, even in the depths of Winter. Camellias, daffodils and even a very sheltered rhododendron were all out in full bloom.

We then walked on to the Obelisk Pond with the many dog walkers all out enjoying the mild weather.

It's a place well worth a visit, whatever the season. And the café and shop are lovely too.

Linda Berry

MetEngage Update



As a member of the local MetEngage community, I receive emails of police activity in our area and here is brief account of some of their real achievements.

- Focussing on reducing anti-social behaviour in Uxbridge Town Centre after residents reported that several properties nearby were occupied by squatters. Between July–September 2025, officers

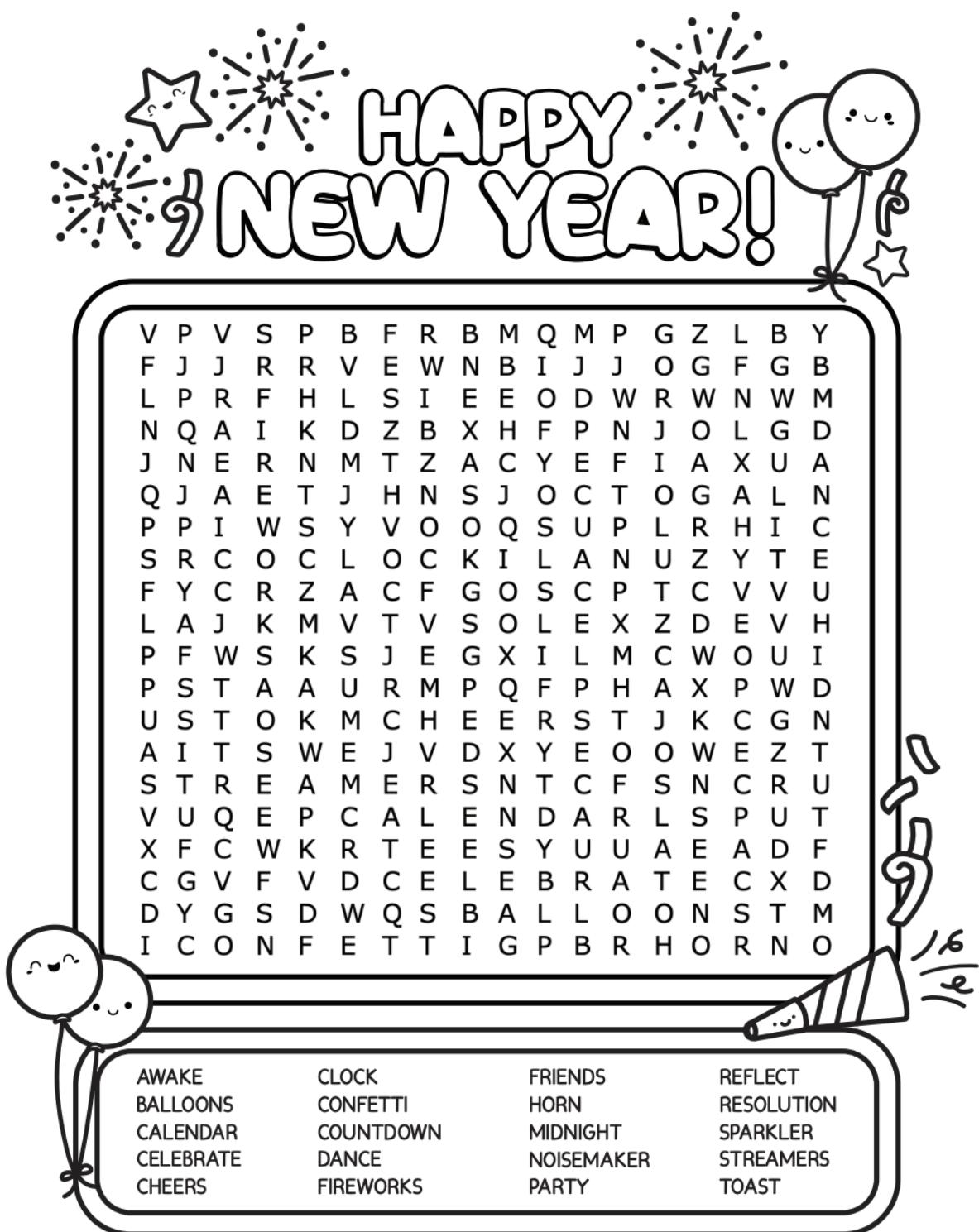
completed several search operations resulting in five properties in Uxbridge cleared of illegal occupants and secured.

- Reducing serious violence offences around Hillingdon High Street by targeting the most prolific offenders and the retail businesses used to facilitate criminal activity. Officers completed eight search warrants where 11 knives/offensive weapons were seized, residents in two addresses were evicted due to their criminal behaviour, and 12 people were charged for a range of offences including drug supply.
- Police have been working behind the scenes to try and target prolific shoplifters, in particular small groups of males who are entering convenience stores. These incidents are becoming increasingly violent. Three prolific offenders have been given Criminal Behaviour Orders which restricts how and where they can shop. Their names and their photos appear on the MetEngage website.
- Continued work around 'Project Confidence', a series of group personal safety awareness sessions for women and girls. 48 sessions have now taken place across local gyms, churches and community halls.
- Neighbourhood Officers carried out a successful speed-watch operation along Snowdon Avenue and Swakeleys Road in Ickenham, resulting in several drivers being reported for speeding and one vehicle being seized for having no insurance.
- A safety tip. If going away, use a timer to ensure some lights are on during the evening. This simple action can deter burglars who regard dark properties as an easy target

My article can only give a very small account of Police activity in our area. You will find much more interesting advice and information on their web site which is <https://www.metengage.co.uk>

Brian Hillier

Puzzle Page - Wordsearch





Providing residential, dementia and respite care our purpose-built care home in Hillingdon, Uxbridge is spacious and luxurious with several dining areas, luxury hair and nail salon, private cinema and relaxing Bistro. It's the perfect place to enjoy life and entertain friends and family.

We are focused on the happiness of each and every one of our residents and ensuring they make the most of the wonderful facilities on offer at Ryefield Court. This includes a full and varied timetable of activities for all to enjoy. Our priority is to deliver the best care possible. Tending to each individual's desires and needs and our wonderful staff are always on hand to deliver outstanding care.

To learn more about life at Ryefield Court or arrange a visit contact Tim Woolford our Customer Relations Manager

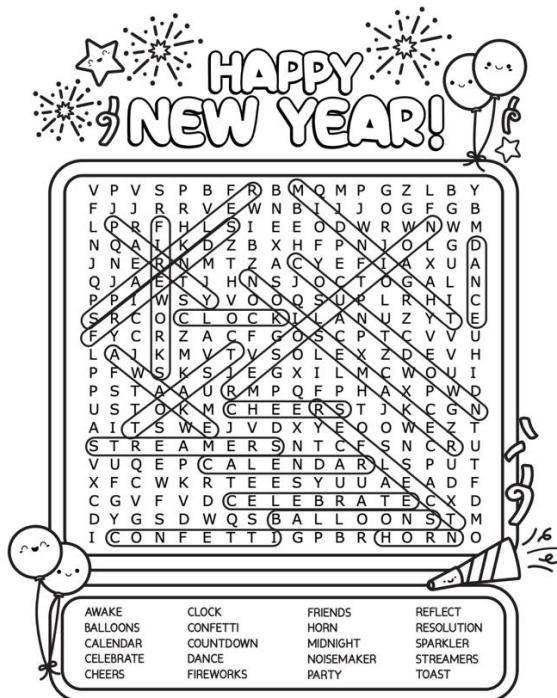
01895 707 106 tim.woolford@berkleycaregroup.co.uk



**RYEFIELD
COURT**
HILLINGDON

Ryefield Court Care Home
Ryefield Avenue
Uxbridge UB10 9DE

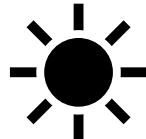
Answers



This space could be working for **your** business. Our Magazine also appears on the Parish Website – www.allsaintsnorthhillin-gdon.co.uk

For advertising rates, please contact
Rev. Ulric
ulricgerry@icloud.com

Punny Plaice



I'm reading a book about anti-gravity
and I can't put it down.

The Editorial team for Saints Alive is Anne Robinson (Editor), Jane Turnbull (Print and Distribution) and Lesley Thompson.

Articles for the February magazine need to reach us by **Sunday 1st February** at saintsalive.editor@gmail.com

Have **you** got an item to share with our readers?
We need more contributions to keep the magazine going.
Could **YOU** provide an article? Or a photo for our front cover?



HAVEN Funeral Services.

Our dedicated teams at our Acton, Hayes, Hillingdon and Northwood Hills funeral homes are committed to creating tailored funerals that reflect the unique life of your loved one. We can be contacted 24 hours a day, by telephone, and are here to discuss your needs. Or if you prefer, we can visit your home to discuss funeral arrangements.

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NORTH HILLINGDON, MIDDLESEX UB10 9BT
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Any opinions expressed in articles in *Saints Alive!* do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or of the Parochial Church Council of All Saints.

