

004 Coronavirus

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in touch

Berkshire Family History Society



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Forward

First the serious update

Coronavirus Covid-19

The escalating world-wide emergency of the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic is dominating the news currently and we wanted to update you on the society's plans.

Firstly, we are taking this situation very seriously. We are following national and local government guidelines carefully and have been adapting our plans as the situation develops. Extra steps were put into place earlier this month to try to protect members and visitors and currently, the Research Zone remains open as usual and our branch meetings, library advice sessions and events in

the Centre continue. However, in this fast-moving situation, we continue to listen to the feedback of our volunteers, speakers and attendees as well as government recommendations.

Given this weekend's announcements, it is looking increasingly likely that, as the national plans to attempt to limit the spread of this virus progress, a number of events will be cancelled or postponed until later in the year. It is also likely that the Research Zone may be temporarily closed. Should and when this occurs, we will do our utmost to give you as much notice of any cancellations on our website and via email/telephone. Please do check the website and your email before you set off to a branch meeting or event. If a ticketed event is cancelled or postponed, a full refund or the chance to transfer to the replacement event will be offered to everyone booked.

In addition, we would request that you do not attend branch meetings, events, or the Research Zone, if you have a fever, a new cough or shortness of breath; similarly if you have recently travelled from any of the 'at risk' countries, even if you have no symptoms.

We hope you and your families keep well.



H & G Simonds Brewery of Reading

Those with family interests in Simonds Brewery of Reading, or its many regional breweries and pubs and hotels across the South East of England, may be interested to know a new website celebrating the company's history has been launched. The site is not only rich with information and images of the brewery, but also sets out the history of the Simonds family, and includes many family photographs and biographies.

[Visit the Simonds family site](#)



Multiple Event Booking



You asked to be able to book multiple events in one seamless transaction, checkout and enter your payment details once. Now, you can. We've upgraded the events system to introduce a shopping basket. Pop the events into your basket and check out quickly and easily.

[View Events List](#)



My Bookings

If you need to check a booking, the event date, number and names of attendees, or want to download a copy of your invoice, log into the website and select the menu option:

What's On > My Bookings



Can we help you?

Given our demographic, we appreciate that there may be varying degrees of computer awareness among our members. That we said, we hear stories of octogenarians who are happily WhatsApping each other!

If the recent updates to the websites and our increasingly digital footprint are presenting you with technical challenges, we're happy to help.

With that in mind, we've created a new section in the Forum, dedicated to computer-related issues. We'll post topics that we think might help you and you can ask your own questions there too - remember, the only silly question is the one that doesn't get asked.

A reminder that if you need face-to-face help::

- On Tuesday evenings, the Centre is manned by volunteers with a wide range of expertise in computer and software matters.
- The Woodley Branch specialises in talks relating to online sources for family history and, if you can't make it to their meetings, they have their own forum where you can post specialist questions.

Visit the Computer Help Desk Forum

Visit the Woodley Branch Forum



What do Smith, Ellis and Hamilton* have in common?

**along with Jordan and O'Connor*

They are, respectively first, 100th and last entries in the list of **"The 199 most common surnames in Berkshire and exactly how many people have them"** published by [BerkshireLive](#)

Of course, having a common name can make researching your ancestors a problem, so making it onto this list may be more of a hindrance than a help but, admit it, aren't you just a little curious whether your name's on the list?

View the full list of names



Unusual forenames

And while we're talking about names, do you have an unusual **forename**?

If so, why not tell us about it? There's a forum topic you can add your reply to.

Tell us your unusual forename



Vale and Downland Museum has announced its newly created Research Library on the Upper Gallery is now open to the public.

During public opening times visitors can access their reference books, articles, photograph collection and map collection. Volunteers will be on hand to help guide visitors through their resources and assist with queries.

Vale and Downland Museum website



Berkshire Family History Society
for family history research - in Berkshire and beyond

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