



in touch



St Mary's Church, East Ilsley

Image colourised by Jim Bradshaw

Hi friend

You would be forgiven for thinking that we have flipped the view of the church in the [modern view](#). The answer is straightforward - there are roads on all four sides of the church but the view from the side where the original image was taken is now obscured by trees.

There's a collective sigh of relief and satisfaction at a job well done by the volunteers who spent months planning and executing our 50th Anniversary Conference that took

place yesterday. We really must take a moment to acknowledge that effort and offer a huge vote of thanks to everybody involved - too many to name. We hope those of you who attended enjoyed it as much as we did.

NEWS



We have a new logo!

Those of you who were present at the 50th Anniversary Conference yesterday (07 June) saw the unveiling of our new logo.

We thought our Golden Jubilee was an appropriate occasion to update our logo. Our aim was to preserve our brand identity that includes the Uffington White Horse and make more of the fact that we represent the Royal County of Berkshire, by adding a bit of bling! After all, there is only one Royal County in England, and only one that boasts a [thousand-year-old Norman Castle that is the seat of the monarchy.](#)

We hope you like the new version. The Society's Marketing and Communications team wrote the design brief and the daughter of one of our trustees, who is a graphic designer, very generously donated her time to realise the design. **A big vote of thanks to Nicole Chappell.**

The new design will start to appear gradually as we reprint depleted stationery stocks and you'll see it first in easy-to-change places such as the website and the next editions of these newsletters.



Changes to lift access to The Centre

We have been advised by our landlords that from Monday 09 Jun 2025, for fire safety reasons, lift access will only now go to the first floor in Reading Central Library, which means that visitors will now be required to walk the remaining flight to our Centre on the second floor.

We apologise for any inconvenience but unfortunately it is out of our control.

If this restricts your ability to access the Centre, please contact us on 0118 950 9553 and we will endeavour to assist you in another way.

This will thankfully be a relatively short term inconvenience because plans for the move to a new location, prompted by the closing of the library, are proceeding well. Look out for further news in the coming months.



Exchange journals

We have some more for you.

- Bradford FHS
- Cheshire FHS
- International Society for British Genealogy and Family History
- Richmond - Tweed FHS Ballina NSW – Australia

- Shropshire FHS
- St Louis GS - USA
- Suffolk FHS

[View on website](#) - login required

Membership renewal tips

First, please note, friend, that this message is NOT a notice that your membership needs to be renewed. Members who joined before 01 Jul 2020, your renewal will be in the next few weeks. If you joined after that date your renewal will be the anniversary of your joining date.

When it's time for you to renew you will get an email from our membership system.

The purpose of this news item is to address some feedback from members who have auto-renewed since we introduced the option in January. These comments refer only to auto-renewal (our preferred payment method).

Comment: I don't want to use auto-renewal because I don't want to make extra work for my family when I pass.

We understand your concern. Having dealt with this situation for my parents, I can tell you that one of the first things your family will do is inform your bank and card issuers. They will place a hold on all direct debits for non-essentials and cancel your cards. Thus, we wouldn't be able to claim a payment even if your family hasn't informed us of the situation.

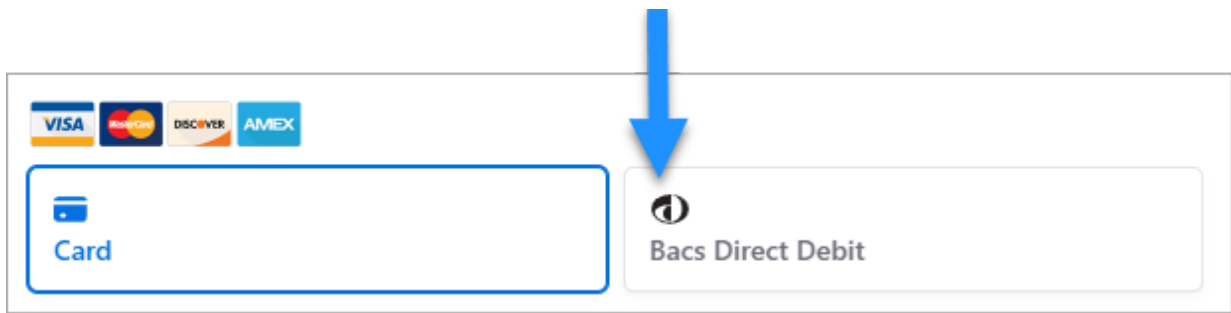
Comment: I would prefer not to receive a prorated refund for my existing membership year, and keep my existing renewal date.

That would have been our preference too but we are constrained by the membership software we use. So if your current membership year still has a few weeks to go when you switch to auto-renewal we have to refund the unexpired portion of last year's fee and change your renewal date. The cost of customising the software would be prohibitive for an organisation of our size.

The good news is, it's a one time thing. Once your renewal date is reset, it will be honoured in subsequent years.

Comment: I couldn't see the option to sign up for Direct Debit

It will only appear if you select the auto-renewal option and are in the UK. If both are true, when you scroll down to the payment section you need to click this option:

A screenshot of a payment method selection interface. At the top, there are logos for VISA, Mastercard, DISCOVER, and AMEX. Below these, there are two main selection boxes. The left box is labeled 'Card' and has a blue border. The right box is labeled 'Bacs Direct Debit' and has a grey border. A large blue arrow points down towards the 'Bacs Direct Debit' box.

VISA Mastercard DISCOVER AMEX

Card

Bacs Direct Debit

For a comprehensive FAQ on auto-renewal please click [here](#)

Berkshire Family Historian

*The quarterly journal of the
Berkshire Family History Society*



Members articles

The publication of the June edition of the Berkshire Family Historian is the cue for us to publish online, the members' articles from the same month last year so you can have a refresher - or perhaps you missed them last time. The articles are:

[A Family Scandal and a Book That Had to be Written](#)

Barbara Cole tells us of the origin of her book

[Newbury's Cunning Woman: Was She Newbury's Last Witch?](#)

Judith Thomas puts a spotlight on a Newbury character

[US Social Security Number Application Forms \(SS-5\)](#)

Leigh Dworkin demonstrates what can be found in these under-used US documents

EVENTS



If these walls could talk

Wed 11 Jun 14:00 - 16:00

West Berkshire Museum

In this Newbury Branch talk Eric traces one East Ilsley house's past—revealing links to temperance, a Ripper case inspector, and a child migrant who wasn't truly an orphan.

[Find out more](#)



Drop In Advice Session

Thu 12 Jun 14:00 - 17:00

Bracknell Library

Bring your questions, problems and 'brick walls' ... and get some new ideas and advice from members of the Society. For ALL family historians.

[Find out more](#)



The History of Reading's Cinemas

Thu 12 Jun 14:00 - 15:30

The Centre

David Cliffe tells the story of Reading's cinemas, from early travelling shows to today's multiplexes. This is a talk which is sure to bring back many memories.



Drovers' Roads in Oxfordshire and Beyond

Mon 16 Jun 19:30 - 21:30

Long Furlong Community Centre

Discover the drovers' wild journeys from Wales to London via Oxfordshire, dodging tolls and dangers. Tim Healey explores their paths, lives and impact on Abingdon.

[Find out more and book](#)



Stories near your feet in Reading Old Cemetery

Fri 20 Jun 14:45 - 16:30

New Priestwood Community Centre

Join Bracknell Branch to explore the stories behind Reading Old Cemetery's graves - grand Victorian monuments to hidden histories, in this revealing talk from Prof Yota Dimitriadi.

[Find out more](#)



Drop In Advice Session

Tue 24 Jun 14:00 - 16:30

Wokingham Library

Bring your questions, problems and 'brick walls' ... and get some new ideas and advice from members of the

[Find out more](#)



Annual General Meeting 2025

Mon 23 Jun 19:30 - 21:00

Online

All members are invited to the 50th AGM of Berkshire FHS—a chance to celebrate 50 years of family history and learn about future plans.

Please book early.

[Find out more and book](#)



Marlow Town Walk.

Tue 24 June 14:00 - 15:30

Meeting place advised on booking

Explore Marlow's highlights with guide Geoff Wood, including various royals, writers, knights, and curiosities, plus

Berkshire Family History Society. For
ALL family historians.

[Find out more](#)

historic sights, the weir, and a golden
postbox, all feature on this walk.

[Find out more and book](#)

That was just a small selection from our extensive programme



Events often sell out - book early to avoid disappointment

What's happening in your branch?

[Abingdon](#)

[Bracknell](#)

[Computer](#)

[Newbury](#)

[Reading](#)

[Windsor](#)

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