

Parish Community Letter - June 2026

We welcome members of the parish to contribute and write our Parish Community Letter. **Thank you to Roz Forsyth for taking the time to write for this month's edition.**

50 years of Farnham Brass Band and Wrecclesham – retiring band secretary, Roz Forsyth, explores the connections, then and now...

Farnham Brass Band is an established town band – we have been going strong for fifty years! To celebrate our anniversary, we gave a concert in Weydon School's beautiful Medici Theatre last October and Wrecclesham residents came out in force to share in this joyful occasion. Usually we would have been seen and heard at Wrecclesham Fete, but we still hope to lead Farnham Carnival on June 27th this year and look forward to playing in Wrecclesham again in the future.

We have players from Farnham and from villages round about; indeed part of our mission as a registered charity has been to support other charities in the area. We have played at care homes in villages around Guildford, Alton and Farnham, at Christmas we play in Guildford Cathedral for Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice and at The Meadows in Sandhurst for Step by Step, a young people's charity.



A 19th Century Wrecclesham Band, supported by Church and Military, in front of The Village Institute

Wrecclesham itself has a particular connection with Farnham Brass Band. Fifty years ago our first bandroom was the Wrecclesham Community Hall and many of us have fond memories of the Colbran family, Pat and George (RIP 2017) whose son, Martin, was one of the first members of the band and conducted us recently at Binsted Fete, reappearing at the anniversary concert to conduct the march 'Slaidburn'. Incidentally, George, who accompanied services at St Martin's on the

Green, built those very useful cupboards in the Leverton Hall and Pat taught at Rowledge Primary School.

In Rev Jacqueline's time, St Peter's Church certainly encouraged us to spread the joy of music and brass playing in particular to young people. A couple of years ago we gave a Christmas concert in church where we shared the stage with a vivacious choir from St Peter's School.

Our Training Band now meets for ten weeks a term in The Leverton Hall under the baton of Gareth, a former military trombonist. We currently number a flute, an oboe, several cornets, a trumpet, a trombone, a baritone horn and a tuba among our mixed-instrument group, but don't worry, Farnham Brass Band itself will continue to restrict itself to brass and percussion. Please email me, Roz Forsyth, if you are interested in attending Training Band on Fridays after school farnhambrassband@aol.com. We ask £3 a session, £30 a term, towards the cost of hall rental and there is a lovely, relaxed atmosphere.

We are absolutely delighted that Farnham Brass Band itself has several younger players at the moment. Our drummer and our Principal cornet left last Summer to study Music at university, but we have other young players whose parents encourage them to play by supporting them with lifts to rehearsals and engagements, even making tea and cake for us all!



On 6th September last year Farnham Heritage Open Day visits included The Rural Life Centre in Tilford and Farnham Brass Band took the 4 o'clock train from Reeds Road to join in the fun! Incidentally, we now practise at The Tilford Institute on Monday evenings, but in the early days the band used the Old Schoolroom.

Our activities are not limited to the Farnham area, though. Years ago Farnham Brass Band travelled to Switzerland to play, and until last year we played at

Cowdray Park at the International Polo Festival. We have also played on Brighton Bandstand. A few of us spend a week in August at Wessex Band Summer School in Sturminster Newton; with 5 full days playing, and a concert on the Saturday, it is very good value, because meals are prepared by volunteers and we sleep under canvas on a school field! We are led by players from the great Brass Bands from the North, and receive instrumental teaching daily in small groups. We would encourage readers to come along to the Training Band and see if there is a way for you to enjoy this fantastic hobby.
