

TATTENHAM & PRESTON RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION MAGAZINE



WINTER 2022

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Editor's Note

Dear Reader

Welcome to the T&PR's Winter Magazine. Although we have increased our size with the help of advertising support, we still don't have enough room to include all the news we have for you. This means that some articles get left out and others are linked to our website. Where you see a QR code, if you scan this with your mobile phone you can reach the full article. My apologies for this but I hope it gets most of what we have to say in front of you, the residents of Tattenham & Preston.

I have included in full the article about our local vicar, Des Williamson, because he is an important member of our community with such an interesting life. However, some other important articles have a fuller version on the website. The stories about the new head of school at The Beacon, Banstead Common Conservators and our Community Policing Team are essential reading and I ask that you follow the links to the full versions. For those of you living in Preston, I also hope you will enjoy Sue Skelton's article about her life in the 1950/60's.

We also produce a monthly electronic newsletter, **T&PR eNEWS**, which is circulated by email on the first of each month. It is totally free and ensures you keep up to date with what is going on in Tattenham and Preston. All you need to do is subscribe via our website. You can do this by scanning this QR code or go to: <https://tandr.org.uk/e-newsletter/>

John Kemp
Editor T&P Residents Association Magazine



Scan this QR code for T&PR eNEWS:



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Hon. Sec.	Jill Bray	27 Shawley Way KT18 5PB	01737 357055
Committee	Caroline Baldock	32 Watermead KT20 5HB	01737 377525
	Bob Harper	68 Upland Way KT18 5ST	01737 211315
	Nick Harrison	105 Tattenham Crescent KT18 5NY	01737 215405
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Bob Harper	68 Upland Way KT18 5ST	bhms.harper@gmail.com	01737 211315

County & Borough Councillor

Nick Harrison 105 Tattenham Crescent KT18 5NY nicholas.harrison@surreycc.gov.uk 01737 215405

Chair's Report – December 2022

Dear Residents....

As I write, rain is lashing against the windows and, after the parched summer, we really do need this rain. But ironically, I've just heard on the radio that many still have a hosepipe ban. Is this global warming of the planet laughing at us?

The area where the flagpole has been erected at Tattenham Corner is a useful meeting spot. The old tree stump has been removed and solar bollards have been installed along with new benches. We have been waiting a number of months for new planters, but delivery keeps getting pushed back and we are now looking at mid-December. This will probably be too late to plant them up but nevertheless, when Spring comes, they can be completed making this a very pleasant area to sit.



The work on the planters by the shops at Tattenham Corner follows the normal gardening year and we have recently stripped them back and added evergreens and bedding plants for winter colour. I do hope these displays make you smile.

John Kemp, a member of the TPRA, who was instrumental in researching and arranging installation of the flagpole is talking to local schools about a competition for children to design a Tattenham and Preston flag. We wait with interest to see the designs the children produce.

Part of the Residents Association calendar has become installation of poppies to commemorate Remembrance Day. With the poppies it is a privilege to put these up on the main roads within our Borough.

Roads

Highways are an issue in Surrey but here, in Preston and Tattenhams, the roads are in reasonably good condition. This is in no small part due to Councillor Nick Harrison who records, reports and chases work up continually with Surrey Highways to ensure our roads are in the best condition they can be.

Recently Headley Grove was resurfaced and next year the huge job of resurfacing Chetwode Road is taking place as it has borne the brunt of heavy plant and machinery during the construction of Tadworth Park.

There are a number of larger road signs that are in very poor state of repair, but these have been reported and will be followed up with Surrey County Council Highways.

Parking

Reigate and Banstead Borough Council have prepared outline plans for new parking bays in Long Walk and Coxdean as currently parking is a problem and pedestrians have to navigate their way around cars some of which are parked fully on the pavement. The plans have been given the OK by Raven Housing Trust and are now with the County Council for consultation and detailed design.

Preston Park

It had been noted that some of the bins in Preston Park needed replacing and that the four large signs in that area are in very poor condition and some are almost unreadable. We have therefore put in a CIL bid in for these to be replaced to keep the place looking in good order.

Skatepark Upgrade

A major upgrade and expansion of the skatepark at Preston Park is planned for skaters and BMXers. Based on extensive consultation with youngsters in the area, it will have new facilities such as a pump track, grind ledges and rails. It will be paid for by the Preston Regeneration programme through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) levied on the new housing in Preston.

Warm Hubs

Warm Hubs are being set up locally, one is at Merland Rise Church and other venues are likely to include St Mark's Church. Nick Harrison will comment on this later in the magazine.

Subscriptions

We have a modest annual subscription of £3 per household to cover our costs such as this publication. It's voluntary but it does help us considerably. If you haven't paid this year and want to help us just transfer £3 to TPRA at Account Number: **00218075** Sort Code: **30-93-08** and quote your house/flat number and postcode as a reference.

Thank you for reading our magazine and supporting your local residents' association.

Best Wishes for Christmas

Kathryn Chattelle

Chair

Tattenham and Preston Residents Association



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An invitation from Stanley Lodge

Stanley Lodge, in Great Tattenhams comprises 34 one and two bedroomed retirement apartments. Lodge Manager, Silvena Kotcheca and Sales Executive Sally Reid welcome local residents to join them for tea or coffee, any Tuesday morning at 10.30 am.



This will provide an opportunity to meet residents who have already moved in and have a look at the properties currently for sale. For more information telephone 01372 886567.

MYTI Youth Club going for charitable status

The MYTI Club provides care for young people in the Tadworth and surrounding area through the provision of after school and school holiday youth club facilities.



MYTI operates from The Phoenix Centre, next to the Tadworth Leisure Centre. It caters for young people aged 8-15 but particularly children living in Preston.

It provides a range of activities including sport, art, IT, personal development opportunities and mental health support.

Founded in 2018 by local businessman Tony Britto, the club has around 200 children on its books and regularly has attendance of 70 per session. It has been financed mainly from Tony's resources but receives support from the YMCA, Active Surrey and from our local councillors.

But it needs to achieve charitable status to be eligible for the grants that will ensure it continues and is able to grow to meet the needs of local children.

The application is proceeding well but the Club is in urgent need of short-term funding in order to carry on its good work. If you want help, consider sponsoring Tony's haircut!

Here's a way to help the MYTI Club

Until MYTI gets its charitable status, funding is tight and to keep the Club going it needs an injection of funds.



Tony Britto, the founder of The MYTI Club has agreed to shave off all his hair to raise funds to keep MYTI going and hopes to raise £10,000. If you would like to help and see Tony hairless please visit his [gofundme page](#):



Councillor Rebecca Paul and Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner Ellie Vesey-Thompson visiting the MYTI Art Room



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New Head of School at The Beacon Responds to the School's Latest Ofsted Report

The Beacon School was inspected by Ofsted in June 2022 and received a disappointing report. Although Personal Development was rated “Good,” it was rated as “Required Improvement” for the quality of education, leadership and management and sixth-form provision and “Inadequate” for behaviour and attitudes.



The key message in the report was that whilst most pupils enjoy school, they did not feel safe at The Beacon. The report stated that there had been improvements, but that poor behaviour had become accepted with high levels of truancy, disruptions in class and fights happening around the school.

The school has responded very positively to this report and has set in place an improvement plan led by the new Head of School, James Grant Duff and The Executive Headteacher, Matt Duffield.

James joins The Beacon this term from St Andrew's Catholic School in Leatherhead where he was Deputy Head. Despite his youthful appearance he has 21 years of teaching experience.

He is facing the Ofsted report head on and has initiated a programme of “Getting Back to Basics at the Beacon.” He says, “I don't want to make any excuses for the report but accept the findings and want to move on with a programme of improvements.”

Obviously, the quality of education is important, and this year's results are showing an improvement on past examination grades including one pupil gaining a place at Oxford University. But James wants to make clear that that personal skills are also important. He believes in equipping his pupils with the life skills needed for a future successful life. These include leadership, organisational, communication and team player skills. Although there will be specific opportunities for life skills development these skills also come about from a well organised and structured school life.



James Grant Duff

Scan this QR Code for the full story



Tattenham Corner Community has been providing help and support to the area for a number of years. It started some years ago at St Mark's Church with the organisation of a live advent calendar that was shared with the community. It has also been responsible for the Summer Fairs and Christmas Markets on our village green which have raised funds to support local activities such as our food club.

Now to reflect it's wider role in the community it has changed its name to Tattenham & Preston Community Group. Same people, same good deeds, just a new name to fully reflect our area.

The life and times of Des Williamson the Minister at St Mark's Church

**From dedicated atheist to Vicar of our Parish
via undercover missions in The Soviet Union**

Des Williamson was born in Northern Ireland to a German refugee mother from Russia mother and a Northern Irish Free Presbyterian father.

Although his father was not a great Free Presbyterian himself, his family was very heavily involved in the church. Des's mother, however, had no time for religion and brought her children up as atheists despite the older ones being shipped off to Sunday school – there was no other entertainment in the countryside!



He was son number five of six boys, brought up in Lisburn in an area of mixed protestant and catholic families. His four older brothers were much older than him and he was a bit of an “afterthought.” His arrival in the world was traumatic. His mother told him later that “he was born dead” but resuscitated by the excellent midwife who accompanied the doctor at the home birth. That maybe why he has developed an interest in near death experiences.

Son number six arrived soon after to provide company for him as his other brothers were much older.

He was bright at school, passed the 11+ and went on to grammar school. After taking his A levels (two As, a B and a C) he wasn't sure what he wanted to do for a living.

His grandparents had a small farm, and he was very interested in animals, so he thought about becoming a veterinary surgeon.

But this would have meant moving to Liverpool University and in the end, he decided not to go. Instead, he planned to go to Queen's University in Belfast to study agriculture.

Again, he changed his mind and started a degree course in Physics and Maths. Yet again, he changed direction and ended up getting a degree in Biochemistry after a foray through the Chemistry department and despite Biology being his worst subject at A level.

Des says that in his early life he was not just an atheist, he was a strong advocate against any form of religion. He believed that Christians were simply people who needed a crutch in life just as confirmed alcoholics needed a drink and smokers, tobacco. He even won a sixth form debate when he spoke against the subject “Experience of God is real.”

But just before taking his A-levels he had his “Saul on the road to Damascus” experience, but rather than the one voice of Jesus, there were two voices leading to Des's conversion to Christianity.

The first was one of his older brothers, Ken. He was a heavy drinker and like Des, at the time, a card-carrying atheist. But one day he had a knock on the door from someone hoping to convert him to Christianity only to realise this person was his old Sunday School teacher from when he was a small boy. The man prayed for Ken, and he immediately gave up drink and smoking, though didn't notice he had stopped for two weeks, and became a born-again Christian.

The second was a girlfriend while Des was in the 6th form. She was an enthusiastic Christian and they had lots of philosophical debates about religion. So much so that Des got the message.

Both these people had a tremendous impact on Des's views on religion and resulted in a complete turnaround from his original thinking. Although he was studying a science subject at university, he now wanted to become a missionary.

But he didn't go to Africa. He moved to Leeds, as an informal Chaplain to students at Leeds University working for Campus Crusade for Christ, a more vocal American version of the Universities & Colleges Christian Fellowship. He spent two years in Leeds, and it was after this, in 1986, that he married Heather.

Their honeymoon was in two parts. Whilst there was a week in Cyprus, this was followed by an "undercover" operation in Russia and Ukraine. The only way to visit the Soviet Union in those days was to take an organised two-week tour. Des and Heather took two "two-week" back-to-back tours with the objective, not to see the sights, but to work with local students to promote Christianity.

They weren't caught by the KGB and upon their return moved back to Northern Ireland to take up a position at Queen's University in Belfast. He was made the Director of Campus Crusade in Northern Ireland, continuing annual trips to the USSR until winter 1990/91 when he and Heather and two small children moved back to Leningrad as a trial for long-term living there. Same objectives as before; to bring Christianity to local students. His student visa was for six months but, because his mother was seriously ill, he had to return to Northern Ireland after only four.

He left the organisation shortly afterwards due to difference in thinking about how best to do evangelism.

Now unemployed he enrolled in the local bible college to better prepare for mission whilst also studying Russian because he was keen to go back to Leningrad. He also signed up for a postgraduate course in teaching English as a foreign language at night school.



St. Mark's United Church Great Tattenhams

But instead, he ended up in Woking as a youth worker and lay preacher employed by St Mary of Bethany Church, a Church of England parish. The year was 1996 and by now he and Heather had four children. He worked there for almost eight years but then decided that he really needed to get ordained and enrolled at Trinity College, Bristol, an evangelical Anglican theological college.

He was at Trinity College from 2003 to 2005 and left fully ordained. His first parish was Portishead, just west of Bristol. He spent five years there as curate although for some of the time he was fully responsible for the parish.

He had to move on after five years and that is when the opportunity to move to Tattenham & Preston arose. The existing minister had moved on and the vacancy was being advertised. He felt that our parish looked like a challenge so decided to apply.

Whilst his application received a positive response from the congregation, he was not sure that he had sufficiently impressed the senior clergy for the job. But the locals prevailed and in 2010 Des was appointed the Vicar of St Mark's Church.

And he has been an important part of our community ever since. His four children are all grown up and Tattenham & Preston is probably the longest time he has ever stayed in one place!

Surrey County Council Update

By Nick Harrison

(Surrey County & Reigate & Banstead Borough Councillor)



“Warm Hubs”: The Council through its own buildings, and working with churches and others, is seeking to set up a network of “warm hubs.” These would be places to go for people in fuel poverty, having lowered or turned off their heating at home. Warm drinks and conversation will be available. In our area hubs will be at the Merland Rise Church on Tuesdays 10am to 6pm (except 27th December) and St Marks Church in Great Tattenhams on Fridays 11am to 3pm.

County Finances: The County Council is forecasting a deficit of up to £30 million this financial year. This gap will have to be met by contingency funds if the situation cannot be turned around.

Headley Grove: When the top section of Headley Grove was resurfaced last year, there was only sufficient budget to do part of the road. After lobbying from the Residents Association, the Council have now been back to complete the job, and also for good measure included Staithes Way at the end. This seemed an unnecessary addition as there are many highway repairs needed elsewhere - it is a road with no property front doors, and it seemed to be in good condition. The Council felt it made engineering sense to complete at the same time as Headley Grove.

Worryingly, highways maintenance costs are reported to have gone up around the country by 22%. In terms of major projects, Chetwode Road remains our highest priority for resurfacing.

“Your Fund Surrey”: This is Tim Oliver’s (Council Leader) flagship policy to borrow £100 million to provide capital funding to improve community facilities. Voluntary groups, churches etc. can bid for substantial grants to build, extend or refurbish existing buildings or other assets. Increasing sums will be paid in interest by the Council and eventually the capital will have to be repaid. Residents Association Councillors have been concerned with the cost of the scheme and also that the bulk of the money is going to the better off areas and nothing to the poorer areas - at odds with the “Levelling Up” agenda.

Although worthy, the scheme has to be paid for. In the light of serious budget and other challenges, Residents Association Councillors proposed the programme is paused, re-assessed to see how funding could go to priority areas, and potentially curtailed. At the last council debate, the Leader pulled a rabbit out of the hat, responding with a bribe granting each area £50,000 for a local project, and our challenge was lost.

There have been no bids so far in Tattenham Corner & Preston, nor anywhere in our borough north of the M25, Banstead, Tadworth, Nork etc. If community groups have ideas either to bid for the main scheme, or for the smaller allowance for a local project, please let me know.

Adult Social Care: The Government had previously committed to three massive changes: to cap care costs at a cumulative £86,000; a more generous means test increasing the money that people have in the bank before they can receive help; and a shift to a “fair” cost of care (at present self-funders pay more than local authorities, therefore subsidising the system). There was no sign of how the Government would pay for the new system, due to start next year – estimated at a total cost of £3.6 billion for the Council in Surrey alone for the first 10 years. The extra national insurance levy – now abolished - was meant to be the solution. So not surprisingly, in Jeremy Hunt’s mini budget the start date has been put back a further two years.

Home to School Transport: The Council pays for transport for children with special needs or other issues which require them to go to a school quite a distance from their homes. If there is no sensible public transport, then taxis or minibuses are laid on. The system fell apart at the beginning of the new school year, with many children even by half-term not yet given transport. Residents Association Councillors have shone the spotlight on the problem, which has been reported in the press and on TV and radio.



At the last Council meeting the Leader started his report with abject apologies, saying “we have let some people down,” and that it is “complex and difficult” to resolve. We will continue to press for more action.

Parking Enforcement and Grass Verge Cutting: Currently provided under licence by the Borough Council, these functions are being taken back next year by the County Council. Being pressed, the Councillor in charge said it is to make sure there is a “fair and consistent” service all around the county. Whether this is any better and more effective in our area is debateable. He said there would be better out-of-hours parking enforcement which could be positive; for grass cutting he mentioned “environmental improvements” (i.e. probably meaning less frequent cuts). We will see.

Do we have a new Banksy* in the area?

In the past, we have reported a number of examples of “yarn bombing” (to quote Wikipedia – “a type of graffiti or street art that employs colourful displays of knitted or crocheted yarn or fibre rather than paint or chalk”). But it is hard to keep up with the progress of the Downs Wood Yarn Bomber.

So far this year we have had a tennis ball for Wimbledon, an ice cream cornet in summer, a crown for the platinum jubilee and a ghost for Halloween. And now to commemorate Remembrance Day this insightful design. Clearly a very fast and imaginative knitter. We look forward to Christmas?

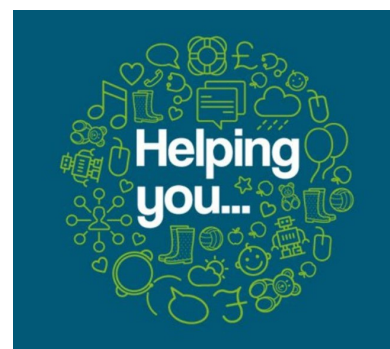
**Banksy – the pseudonym for an English-based street artist whose real name and identity remains unconfirmed and the subject of speculation. Active since the 1990's, his/her satirical street art with graffiti executed in a distinctive stencilling technique (Wikipedia).*



Support for families with children

A new information service has been set up by Surrey County Council to support all families with children and young people up to 25 years.

Their website <https://surreycc.gov.uk/fis> provides access to a host of information important to families. This includes information on a range of topics from a childcare finder to information on events, training courses and talks. From family finance to education and learning advice. In fact everything that might be helpful to families. It is well worth a look!



The Banstead Commons Conservators

and what they do for our community

The common land around our area is protected by an Act of Parliament set up in 1893. This created the Banstead Commons Conservators (BCC) tasked with protecting and maintaining the four areas of common land in the northern part of the Borough of Reigate & Banstead.

Ancient History

When the railways were first built across part of the common land in the area, a Yorkshire landowner saw an opportunity to buy up commoners' rights to the land, enclosing the area and then build on it and make a lot of money. Local residents were appalled by this behaviour and acted against the man in the Court of Chancery. This led to the Corporation of The City of London formally preserving Banstead Commons for the benefit of the people. Sadly, wealthy landowners continued to abuse the land until The Metropolitan Commons (Banstead) Supplemental Act was passed in 1893. This appointed a group of Conservators and preserved the land. But it did not provide funding for the works necessary for the Conservators to comply with the duties imposed by the act.

The Act required that eight Conservators be appointed, two by the owners of the land and six by the Parish of Banstead.

Modern History

In 1955 the local authority took over ownership of the land (at that time Banstead Urban District Council which joined with Reigate in 1974 to become The Borough of Reigate & Banstead). An agreement was put in place then that the local authority would provide a grant to fund the BCC's work.

This has continued since then with the eight conservators being appointed by the Council and the finances to cover running costs being provided by way of a Council grant.

Over the years, the Conservators have also sought funding from other sources. This has included grants from the Rural Payments Agency and Natural England. Our withdrawal from the European Union means, however, that one of these grants will be lost in 2024.

The pandemic has also put additional pressure on the conservators because visitor numbers increased resulting in more work without an appropriate increase in funding.

What The Banstead Common Conservators do

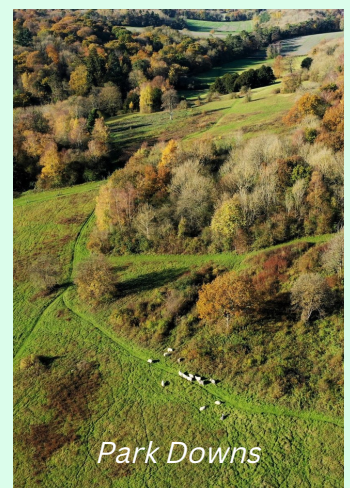
The BCC has a statutory duty to protect and maintain Banstead Commons and to ensure free access to the public on the land that it manages. Under the 1893 Act it has a responsibility to:

- Maintain and protect the integrity of the Banstead Commons
- Ensure the free, legal and safe access of all to the Commons
- Provide safe and healthy working environment for employees
- Maintain and improve the status of Sites of Special Scientific Interest



To read the full article scan this QR code with your phone or visit:

<https://tattenhamprestonresidents.org.uk/the-banstead-commons-conservators-and-what-they-do-for-our-community/>



Proposed Changes to Parking Restrictions

Every two years Surrey County Council reviews the parking restrictions in the area and puts forward recommendations for changes. Residents then have the opportunity to consider the proposals and object or make further suggestions.

These are the changes proposed for our area:

Merland Rise

Extend the existing double yellow lines on Merland Rise at the junction with Great Tattenhams up to the southern boundary of number 8 (to improve road safety, sightlines for drivers and traffic flow).

Convert the existing advisory disabled bay outside number 111 to a 6.6m long legally enforced disabled bay without time limit (to stop the bay being abused by non-blue badge holders).



Preston Manor Road / Merland Rise

Introduce double yellow lines on both sides of Preston Manor Road junction with Merland Rise up to the entrance to the football club on the northern side and the entrance to the car parking area on the southern side and up to the grass verges on either side of Merland Rise (to prevent obstructive parking and improve road safety and sightlines).

North View Crescent / Garlichill Road

Introduce double yellow lines on the northern side of North View Crescent starting from the junction with Garlichill Road up to the eastern boundary of number 58 and on the southern side of the junction (to improve sightlines for drivers, road safety and traffic flow).

Picquets Way

Outside of our area, but as this is the access to The Beacon School, of possible interest to our residents. A continuous double yellow line on the western side of Picquets Way from the junction with The Drive all the way down to the junction with Tattenham Way (to encourage parking on one side of the road only, promote road safety and improve traffic flow).

Epsom Lane North / Oatfield Road / Ashcombe Terrace

Introduce double yellow lines on both sides of Oatfield Road junction with Epsom Lane North on the western end and with Oatfield Road/Ashcombe Terrace on the eastern end (to improve road safety and sight lines for drivers).

If you have any suggestions for new parking restrictions (or reductions in restrictions), visit surrey.gov.uk and search for parking restrictions.

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Meet our Community Policing Team

The police team responsible for community engagement in Tattenham & Preston is led by Sergeant Rafa Alvarez. He has been a police officer for 13 years originally serving in Merseyside but moved down to Surrey eight years ago because he originally grew up as a child in Sutton. He now lives in Banstead.

He is supported by three PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers), Mo Langley, Chris Wright and Chris Dell and PC Neil Ware. Neil is well known in the area, you can't really miss him, and a regular visitor to the MYTI Youth Club. Neil has 24 years' service with Surrey Police and was born in Epsom. He has been responsible for community policing in our area for the past five years and is particularly interested in youth engagement.



Sgt Rafa Alvarez

The objective of the team is to adopt a proactive role to prevent crime rather than to respond to individual incidents.



Police Constable Neil Ware – Our Community Police Officer

It involves playing an active role in community activities, working with local councillors and agencies on crime prevention and generally being the local face of Surrey Police in our area.

Rafa is currently leading a proactive burglary prevention programme, Operation Candlelight. He says, "At this time of year the incidence of burglaries increases in the Banstead area. This is often an opportunistic crime because someone leaves their home unprotected, but the perpetrators are usually regular criminals making their living from this type of crime". Surrey Police are liaising with their Metropolitan colleagues to monitor the movement of known suspects, but the most important objective is to make it difficult for criminals to access homes.

To read the full article scan this QR code or visit:

<https://tandpr.org.uk/meet-our-community-policing-team>



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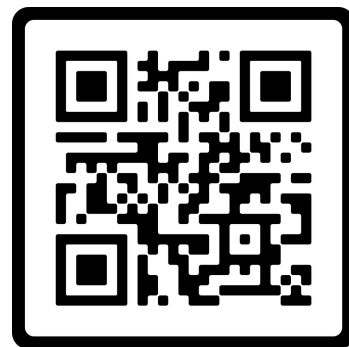


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