

## THE SAINTS COMMUNITY PROJECT

The Saints Community Project at Brackley Town Football Club has become a cherished hub for elderly Brackley residents, offering warmth, companionship, and a true sense of belonging. Held every Wednesday, this much-loved initiative was launched by Kim Grantham in 2015, beginning as a 'Day at the Seaside' event. From those humble beginnings, it has grown into a vibrant weekly gathering, where attendees can enjoy unlimited tea and coffee (with cake!) and a subsidised home-cooked lunch, all provided by a dedicated team of volunteers.

The project offers a safe and welcoming space for individuals to reconnect with their community, build friendships, and regain confidence. Regular attendees often describe it as a highlight of their week, where they can take part in bingo, quizzes, craft activities, and themed event days. The project is entirely volunteer-led, apart from some professional catering support, and is driven by the belief that no one in Brackley should feel alone.

Over time, the initiative has evolved to meet the changing needs of its members. Chair-based exercise sessions and healthy living talks encourage physical well-being, while strong ties with the local policing team provide additional reassurance. Officers frequently visit

to offer crime prevention advice and personal safety tips, ensuring that members feel supported both inside and outside the group.

One of the most treasured aspects of the Saints Community Project is the way it brings people together to celebrate special occasions. Christmas, Easter, and Valentine's Day are marked with special lunches and thoughtful gift distributions, often made possible by local businesses and volunteers. During the colder months, initiatives like the Brackley Elves ensure that isolated residents receive food hampers, warm clothing, and handwritten messages from local schoolchildren.

The project remains an integral part of community life, offering a place where laughter is shared, friendships are formed, and support is always available. Through the dedication of volunteers and the generosity of the Brackley community, the Saints Community Project continues to make a lasting impact on the lives of those who need it most.



## HEDGEHOG RESCUERS URGENTLY NEEDED

Local charity, Brackley Hogwatch, was founded in 2011 by the late Andrew Jackson (1969-2023). From that time forward he devoted his life to rescuing ill and orphaned hedgehogs with the aim of conserving the local hedgehog population in Brackley and the surrounding five-mile radius. He dedicated his time to saving over 1000 hedgehogs. Andrew was knowledgeable and passionate about preventing their extinction.

Andrew was affectionately known as The Hedgehog Man by the children of Brackley due to his educational visits to local schools. He provided guidance on what actions to take when encountering a hedgehog out in

the day. The phrase "A hedgehog out in the day is not OK" became their mantra, significantly contributing to the rescue and care of numerous ill hedgehogs.

Andrew had been experiencing health issues for some time, and he passed away in September 2023 at home, doing what he loved, caring for hedgehogs. Since then, the trustees and volunteers have been continuing his work but are actively seeking additional volunteers to join their local network of hedgehog rescuers. Prospective rescuers will need to have ample free time, a suitable space to keep hedgehogs (such as a converted shed or garage), and the ability to drive (to finders, vets, courses, etc.). They must be prepared to medicate ill hedgehogs and attend a training course at The Vale Wildlife Hospital which Brackley Hogwatch will sponsor. Hogwatch will also assist with funding for food and medicines. Existing rescuers will also be on-hand to offer advice, guidance and support. Previous animal care experience is beneficial but not essential; an interest in hedgehogs is desirable.



If you are interested in learning more about becoming a rescuer and contributing to the conservation of these remarkable creatures, please contact us on 07528 119416.

**TOWN TALK – Brackley community quarterly publication Autumn 2025**