

# The week ahead @ Saint James

“Be strong and courageous and do it!” 1 Chronicles 28:20

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Issue 141

Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	Fri 4 <sup>th</sup> Apr		Tues 22 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	Thurs 24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup> May
Easter lunch	Non-uniform day for Mountbatten hospice	Last day of Spring term	First day back after Easter break	Year 5 & 6 Easter Service at the church	SJSA – ‘Break the Rules’ Day

Collective Worship

## OUTDOOR WORSHIP

This week's theme:

**Outdoor Worship**

This week's bible story:

**God forms man  
Genesis 2:7**

### A message from the Senior Leadership team

This week, we have been making the most of the nicer Spring weather, by enjoying Collective worship outside. The children have embraced the opportunity to more actively participate in their daily act of worship by making handprints, flying kites and creating their own prayer wall. You can read all about the experiences they've enjoyed, later in this newsletter.

We've also continued to focus on 'Getting Brain fit', by following the Empowerment Approach; we've shared the latest focus, about signs and types of stress, with you this week.

### 'Battle of the books' is proving to be a popular and unique competition – it's a novel idea!

We know that there are certain times of year when some people get excited, due to the annually-returning programmes on television. It's November; time for I'm a Celebrity. The beginning of Spring; Britain's Got Talent is about to hit our screens. The leaves are starting to turn brown at the beginning of Autumn; Strictly Come Dancing must be starting.

Unfortunately, for some, it's only once a year that these competitive series hit our screens and we get to eagerly anticipate the seasonal winner. However, the children from Saint James Primary School are in luck; the hotly contested 'Battle of the Books', recurs three times during each academic year!

Whilst the popularity of the aforementioned offerings from ITV and BBC seem to split opinion, there appears to be a general consensus when it comes to Saint James' 'Battle of the Books'; everyone loves it! One of the reasons for this must be due to the collaboration needed to be the winner. Rather than the requirement to be invested in the performance of a minor celebrity, as they compete against contestants of a similar ilk, the children have become passionate about working together as a group to compete for the title of winning class.

With teams of up to 32, an age range from 5 to 11 and a focus on children's literature; the format is quite unique. Our host, Miss Achilles, led the teams through a selection of challenging questions designed to test their knowledge and comprehension. Enthusiastic and competitive, the classes gathered around their teachers to share whispered discussions about the texts they had been challenged to read over the course of the year.

Throughout the day, classes in each year team battled against each other to provide a winner for each year group, as well as an eventual Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 winner. With all classes achieving so well, the scores were very close. However, we did have a clear winner for both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Well done Germany class and Chile class who were the winners in their respective key stages.

We would like to congratulate all the children who took part in this challenge so enthusiastically, as well as to Miss Achilles for organising and hosting the competition. We look forward to the next instalment of this popular competition, in the Summer term!



## A week of outdoor worship

Now that Spring is officially here, it seemed an opportune time to take our Collective Worship outside for the week and revel in the birdsong, blossoming trees and the joys of nature at this time of year.

During the week of Collective Worship, the children learned that sometimes people choose to go outside to pray and considered why they might choose to do this. Some of their answers of: *'to feel closer to God'*, *'to have no restrictions'* and *'to enjoy the space'*, showed a good awareness of the variety and diversity of reasons.

As the children looked up to the cloud-free blue sky, they discovered that many people believe that prayers 'ascend', because they think of God being in heaven above the skies. Christians also believe that God can be everywhere and sometimes, when people pray, he uses the people around us to answer those prayers.

Although many of our prayers are silent, and we speak to God in our heads, sometimes these are also said out loud so that others can hear what we are praying for. Another way that people can learn this is through a visual cue. To illustrate this point, the children choose a piece of material on which to write their prayer and then tied it onto the blue railings that form a boundary to our playground. These then became our visible prayers.

Anyone fortunate enough to have visited Jerusalem, will likely have visited the wailing wall; all that remains from the original Jewish temple, destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. An important sight of pilgrimage to Jews and Christians; thousands of people of all faiths journey to the wall every year to visit and recite prayers. Traditionally, these prayers are written down and placed in the cracks of the wall to form a prayer wall.

With a main building that originates from the late 1960s / early 1970s, it is clear that at Saint James Primary School, we do not have any form of structure that holds the same significance as the temple mount that formed the foundation to the great temple that was visited by Jesus. However, that was no obstacle to the children of Saint James when we created our prayer wall this week; tying a multitude of fabric squares to the railings of the blue, metal gates into the playground. The structure might not have the same significance but the prayers have no less pertinence. If you have entered the main playground this week, you will have surely seen our prayers, tied to the railings and blowing gently in the breeze.

In addition to our prayer wall, the children have also discussed how God made us all uniquely individual and celebrated the fact that we are all different with our own amazing qualities and different interests. To exemplify this point, the children were challenged to find two objects of the same kind that were lying on the ground (e.g. two leaves from the same tree, two stones or two twigs). They then looked at them closely, to see what was the same about them and what was different.

After being reminded that, in the creation story it tells us how humans were formed out of the earth;

*'Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person.'* Genesis 2:7

The children took the opportunity to become closer to the earth themselves; they got muddy! Carefully placing their hands in a tray of muddy soil, the children made a handprint on a clean sheet, creating a mark that was as unique as they are. This celebration of uniqueness, containing the prints of each child in the class is a powerful visual representation for us all to see.

Finally, taking advantage of the beautiful blue skies and light wind, each class made a kite to fly; sharing prayers when the kites were flying. Some of their observations, as the kites weaved and bobbed (albeit for some, only momentarily!) in the sky included:

- 'Kites go up, as do our prayers'
- 'Kites need wind, and our prayers need the Holy Spirit'
- 'There are different kinds of kites, and different ways of praying'
- 'Kites can only go as far as their string. Prayers are unlimited!'

The children even noticed that the frame to the kite they had made was actually a wooden cross; powerful Christian imagery, with Easter soon upon us.

We would like to extend an enormous 'thank you!' to Reverend Linda for planning an resourcing such a powerful, enriching and enjoyable week of Collective Worship.





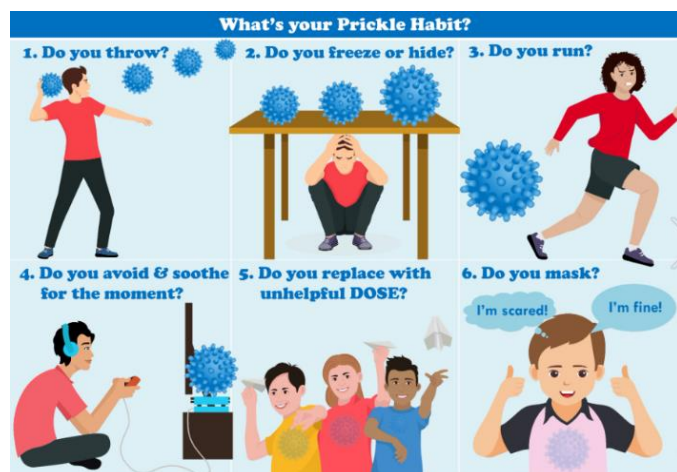
## Getting Brain Fit

### Signs of stress

#### What happens when stress becomes too much?

When things aren't quite right for us, it's easy to fall into a powerless position. This can happen when one of our 5C needs is not met that well (see the newsletter from 7.3.25 for a reminder on the 5C needs).

When we don't feel comfortable in our body; when we don't feel a good connection with the people around us; when we don't feel we count or matter as much as others; when we don't feel capable; when we believe we won't do a good job of what we're being asked to do; when we don't feel a sense of control over what is happening to us, we feel placed into a powerless position.



There are three different positions that our children might take when they are feeling powerless; the blamer, the helpless one and the fixer. When we understand and can identify when we, or others, are in these powerless positions, there are positions we can try to move into that help us to feel better and do more.

#### The blamer

The blamer is someone who judges, criticises or blames other people when things aren't how they want them to be. If a child (or adult) has slipped into a blamer position, you might hear them saying;

*'The trouble with him is...' 'She's useless', 'He's always picking on me!', 'It's their fault!'*

They might also say things like; *'If you had listened, none of this would have happened!'* *'This is rubbish!'* *'It's boring and pointless!'*

People start to blame, when things are not okay for them and they feel powerless. Being powerless doesn't discriminate by age; people of any age can find themselves in a blamer's position.

Often when a child is in a blamer position, it may be completely understandable. However, being in the blamer position doesn't solve anything for anyone.

#### The helpless one

The second powerless position is referred to as the helpless one. The helpless one feels unable to change things: they may feel hopeless or misunderstood.

Children who have slipped into a helpless position may use phrases like;

*'Poor me', 'It's useless, I give up!', 'I don't know what else to do!', 'I'm just rubbish!', 'I have to do everything round here!', 'Nobody ever helps me!', 'They're all ganging up on me!'*

People start to feel helpless when things are not okay for them: they feel powerless. Although we are specifically thinking about the children at Saint James Primary School, people of any age can find themselves in a helpless position.

#### The Fixer

The final powerless position is the fixer. The fixer is someone who jumps in to help people. Although that may sound like a good thing, it is a problem when it stops other people from feeling capable and able to sort things out by themselves. When people slip into the fixer position, you might hear them saying;

*'Don't worry, I'll handle this for you!', 'I'll do it – they'll only make a mess of it!', 'I'm so busy but I guess I'll just have to do this – no one else will bother!'; 'I'll sort it – I always do!'* *'It's safer if I do this – they'll probably forget!'* *'I'll have to help or he'll never get it finished in time!'*

People often try to fix things when they feel powerless to do anything else. When an adult takes this position, sometimes they do it because it's easier and quicker than coaching the person to manage on their own.

Someone may become a fixer because it makes them feel needed or more capable. People of any age can find themselves in a fixer position.

It is entirely possible that children (and indeed anyone) can find themselves in all three of these powerless positions. It's highly likely we've all been in at least one of them at some point – it's pretty normal! The good news is that it doesn't need to stay that way – we can help children to notice their positions and help them practise shifting into empowered positions.

#### The Empowered positions

There are three empowered positions that we can focus on moving others, and ourselves, into when we feel powerless; solution finder, coach and positive challenger or negotiator. We will always try to help children move to an empowered position, by coming from an empowered position ourselves.

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## The Solution Finder

A solution finder, or problem solver, is the opposite of feeling helpless. Solution finders look at what they would like to be different, then they work out the first small steps that are needed to get there. They look at what support they might need and ask for the help that they need.

Solution finders might find themselves using phrases such as;

*'Let me see, what is the first thing I can do to sort this?'; 'I wonder, what or who can help me solve this problem?'; 'This isn't quite right for me, so what I would like instead is'; 'I'll just keep going – one baby step at a time'; 'It's okay, it didn't work this time so I'll try something different'.*

When solution finding as adults in school, we will approach any issue calmly without showing anger; the most effective approach is showing positivity. When the issue involves the actions of another, the best way to help is to stay calm – the worst thing to do is to say something that makes them feel defensive. It might even trigger their danger brain.

Once connected, with a smile and a kind word, we will focus on solution finding. It could be that the initial solution is a temporary one, until longer term solutions can be sought at a later time. This will be a small step forward until a more permanent solution can be found.

## The Coach

The next empowered position is the coach. In most cases, we will aim to be the coach who empowers the children. This is the position we will assume in school and an approach parents may find effective to follow at home. Instead of fixing things in the short term, we will seek to enable children to do things for themselves. We will help them to work out barriers and solutions as well as the actions they need to take for themselves. Our aim is to help children to become more confident, motivated and independent. Anyone coaching, might hear themselves saying;

*'How do you think you might go about this?'; 'What are the key steps you might need to take?'; 'What could you try first?'; 'Maybe we could do this together for the first time and then you could have a go'.*

Eventually, long term solutions need to be sought and not short term fixes. Evidently, that needs coaching and not a one-off chat; It will take persistence and patience. 'If we don't follow up, we'll always be mopping up'.

When working with children to make them feel more empowered, we listen to their point of view, resisting the temptation to lecture, nag, or apportion blame. We aim to do something to keep their hands and eyes busy (like going for a walk) but leaving their brain free for problem solving.

Before raising issues, we make sure there is a strong connection and then raise them in a matter-of-fact way, all the time staying positive. We make it clear that it is important to us and that we would feel better if they could work something out, even acknowledging it might not be their priority. E.g.

*'I've noticed this has been happening quite a bit recently – what's up?'*

In effective coaching, we *really* listen to the answer, stay calm and then try to understand. We won't interrupt with our own opinions and advice or rush in with our own solutions or criticise. Instead, we will listen and push the children to think things through for themselves. In coaching mode, we show empathy for how things are for them.

After this, the next step is to help the children have a better understanding of how it is for us and others. By being the positive challenger, their needs will start to be met better.

## The challenger or negotiator

The final position is that of challenger or negotiator. Rather than just assigning blame we challenge about something we don't feel good about, we don't wag our finger. We stay calm and say how things are for us and what would be better. We aim to;

1. Give clear evidence of what we saw or heard
2. Explain our thoughts about this
3. Explain the impact on us and to others. The impact may have been practical, like something getting broken, or an impact on someone's feelings, or both.
4. Finally, we will say what we would like to be different, what would be better for us and what we would like to happen in the future

At all points we aim to stay positive and keep expectations high. No one does better from low expectations. We always profess that things need to be; *'Good for me, Good for you and Good for everyone!'*



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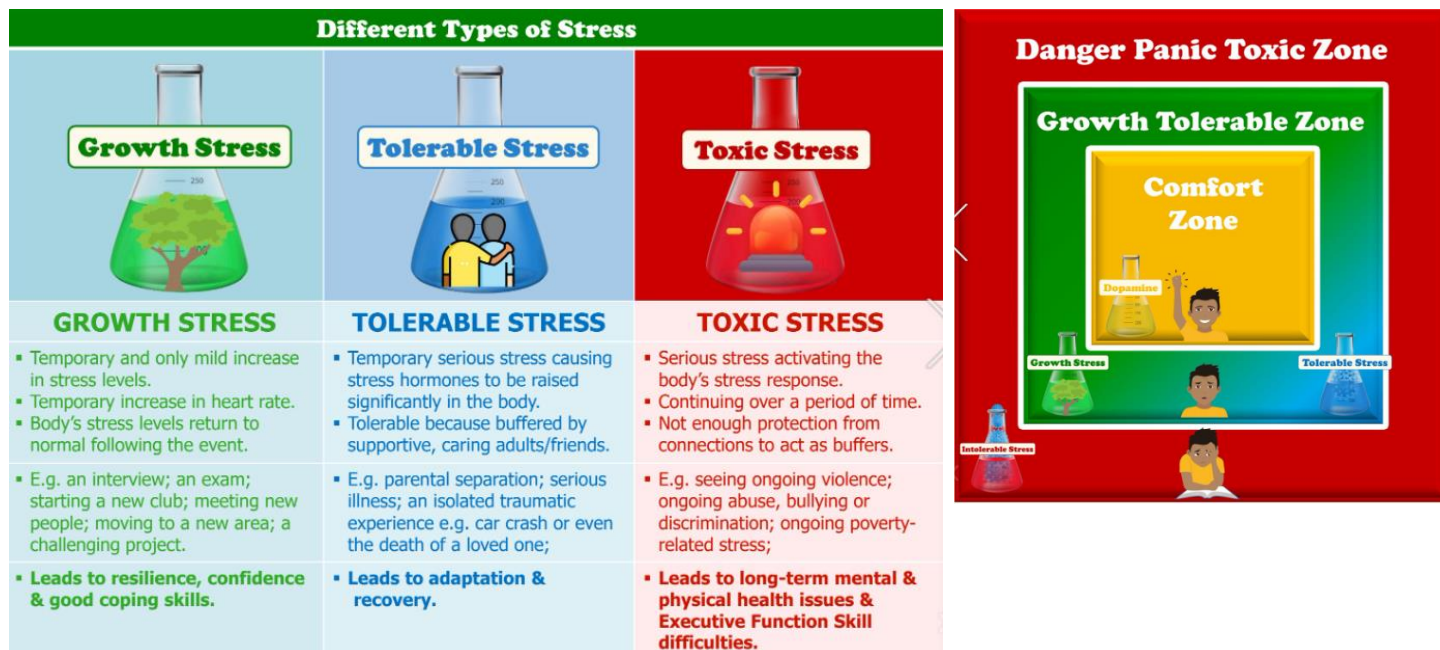
## The types of Stress

Last week we shared with you how to be at our *Brain best* and to avoid *Brain stress*. However, there are different types of stress, some of which help us to grow and develop through the challenge; we refer to this as 'growth stress'.

Sometimes we will also experience 'tolerable stress' this tends to be temporary, causing our stress hormones to be significantly raised. However, it is tolerable because it is buffered by supportive friends, family and trusted adults.

In order to gain resilience, it is important we learn how to cope with 'tolerable' and 'growth' stress. Although we may naturally wish to retreat into our 'comfort zone' where it is easy and familiar. An example of 'tolerable' or 'growth' stress might be an experience gained on one of the challenges children are set on a residential visit, such as abseiling, that might push them outside of their comfort zone.

Finally, there is 'toxic stress', this is a serious stress that no one should need to experience. 'Toxic stress' tends to be experienced over a sustained period of time and can lead to long-term mental and physical health issues. At Saint James Primary School, no child or adult should ever be exposed to any experiences that cause 'toxic stress'.



## The relay race was so foggy, the children nearly *mist* their baton exchange!

Officially the best 4 x 100m relay team of all time is the Jamaican team from the 2012 Olympics who completed the race in a phenomenal 36.84 seconds. Perhaps that should come as no surprise when the team could rely on Usain Bolt to run the final leg! However, that team can only be described as the best of all time, if the definition of 'best' is 'fastest'. If we consider the 'best' to be the team who showed the greatest teamwork, sportsmanship and determination then it could easily be one of four Saint James teams that represent the school during the event at Fair Oak Primary School, this week.

Whilst the aforementioned Jamaican team might have had the challenge of other highly competitive teams to beat, they certainly weren't faced with the same challenge as our resilient teams on Thursday: fog! At least the Jamaicans were able to see their team mates, as they raced around the track!

With boys' and girls' teams for both the upper and lower Key Stage 2 representing Saint James, no team claimed a win but all teams ran well and tried their best. We would like to extend an enormous 'thank you' to Mrs Voaden and Mrs Mostoufi for supporting us with this event.





## Imogen and Felicity have had their own bake sale – they’ve raised plenty of dough for charity



We are really proud that so many of our children aspire to be ‘agents of change’, supporting those in greater need through their charity fundraising. Some of the time this is through supporting a pre-arranged event or campaign whereas on other occasions children have used their own initiative, inspired by their own passions, to raise money and awareness for charities close to their heart. An example of this is the non-uniform day in support of Mountbatten Hospice that was initiated by two of our Year 6 children and will be happening next Friday.

This week, we have also heard about the heroic endeavours of Imogen (in Year 4) and Felicity (in Year 3). These two determined girls have worked hard to raise money for charity, acknowledging that there are a number of local organisations that would truly benefit from our support.

Beginning with a bake sale, the children planned to share the proceeds between a local food bank and animal rescue shelter. By the time they had added homemade keyrings to the mix, as well as creating a raffle and making homemade pens to sell, they had raised an impressive £389 for their chosen charities. Due to exceeding even their own expectations, the children have now decided to make another local, worthwhile cause a beneficiary of their phenomenal fundraising efforts. After seeing the destruction of a local nursery and pre-school, reduced to ashes by an arson attack, they felt they needed to support the rebuilding of this important provision for the community.

We are sure that all the charities who benefit from this epic feat of fundraising will appreciate the impressive efforts made by Imogen and Felicity. Well done girls!

### Before school expectations

With the lighter mornings, we have been informed that some of our older children are congregating at the ‘Little Gems’ Park before school. As our doors open at 8.30am and remain open until 8.55am, they are not technically arriving late for school. However, we are aware that many parents may expect their children to be coming straight to school, rather than playing unsupervised away from the school site.

In the unlikely event that there is an incident or injury, it will be much more difficult to respond if parents are expecting children to be in school and the school is expecting them still to be in the care of their parent or carer.

Although the register will not close until 8.55am, the children have early morning tasks from the moment they arrive. This usually involves consolidation of prior learning and addressing any gaps. For those children who arrive at 8.30am each day, this can equate to an additional two hours of learning a week and nearly 80 hours in one academic year!

If your child travels to school independently, or is dropped off at the park, please clarify your expectations with them of how they make their journey to school.

Whilst congregating in the park in the morning affords children no supervision, the same is also true if children arrive at school too early. As the main gates open shortly before 8.30am and classroom doors open just after, there is no supervision of children on the playground before this time. Please ensure that your child doesn’t arrive at school too early, as some children have been arriving shortly after 8am.

### Parking on site

The drive-through continues to be well-used each morning, with many parents appreciating the opportunity to use this provision. Can we please remind you that you should not be parking onsite, unless you have been allocated a parking permit for one of the disabled bays. Parents dropping and collecting from Early birds and Night Owls are allowed to park, when using this provision, but not after 8.15am. Many of our support staff, in particular, have a later start time in the morning and are struggling to find parking spaces, when parents have taken the available bays. Can we also remind you to move on swiftly, when using the drive-through, as sometimes empty parking bays can be blocked while parents wait for a significant amount of time when dropping-off.

### Summer Term Uniform Sale

After school, on Tuesday 1st April, at the far end of the hall, we will be selling preloved items of uniform. Items available will be:

Blue gingham summer dresses £1 each

Grey shorts £1 each

Logo jumpers and cardigans £2 each

This is a cash only sale.

Get your children ready for the Summer term and come and grab a bargain! All proceeds go directly back to the school to help fund SJSA projects.



## Non uniform Day for Mountbatten Hospice

Next Friday (4<sup>th</sup> April) we will be holding a non-uniform day to raise funds for Mountbatten Hospice, after the heart-felt plea from Erin and Belle, in Year 6. In response to an eloquent and passionate letter that the girls penned to Mrs Marsh, we decided to allow children to wear non-uniform to school next week in return for a £1 donation. We will message you with a link from which you can donate, during the course of next week.

Unfortunately, to ensure the Year 2 children can be kept safe and visible on their educational visit on the same day, we are asking that all children in Year 2 come to school dressed in uniform. If they wish to donate to this extremely worthwhile cause, they are still able to via the link we will distribute.



# HAF Easter 2025

Bookings are now open for  
Hampshire's Holiday Activities  
and Food schemes!

Children from Reception to Year 11 receiving  
benefits-related free school meals can access  
holiday schemes with healthy meals for free.

Scan the QR below to check if you're eligible,  
find HAF schemes running near you, and  
book your child(ren)'s place:



# HAF Easter 2025

### GCS Connect4Families

Fair Oak Infant School (SO50 7AN)  
The Pavilion On The Park (SO50 9LH)



### Globe Fit

Bursledon Infant School (SO31 8BZ)  
St James Primary School (SO30 3EG)



### JG Tennis

Boorley Green Community Centre (SO32 2RQ)



### Personal Best Education

Norwood Primary School (SO50 5JL)  
The Wildern School (SO30 4EJ)  
Wyvern School (SO50 7AN)



### Testlands Holiday Club

Hamble Sports Complex (SO31 4NE)



Please keep an eye on the FISH website as it will be  
regularly updated with available HAF schemes.



# HAF Easter 2025



### 360 Degree Sports

Places Leisure Eastleigh (SO50 9NL)



### 4Wards Multi-Activity

Wellstead School (SO30 2LE)



### Active For All

Stoneham Park Academy (SO50 9SB)

### ActiveMe 360

Barton Peveril College (SO50 5ZA)  
Toynbee School (SO53 2PL)



### Creative Kidz

Hamble Primary School (SO31 4ND)



### Computer Xplorers

Nightingale Primary School (SO50 9JW)



# A★Tale of Us★

Library Service

a brand new play for parents and their babies

## Eastleigh Library

Wednesday 23 April, 2.30pm - 3.30pm

Each ticket is for one child and one adult

Pay what you decide

Join Ivy and her little one on a funny, frank and magical journey through their first year of life together. Blending drama and multi-sensory playtime in a relaxed and beautifully designed environment, this is a celebration of the wonder, joys and challenges of becoming a new parent.



Made for  
parents with  
children aged  
0-18 months

a play by  
Sharon Hanollit



@hantslibraries

Funded by the Household Support Fund

hants.gov.uk/library