



Worried
about
speeding
traffic?

Join
Speedwatch

**BARKHAM &
ARBORFIELD GREEN**

Village **INFO**

August/September 2019

St. Elgius Church



UNITED KIDZ @ PLAY
 Fun, Faith & food
 First Tuesday of every month
 3.45pm - 5.30pm
 (from October 2019)

Arts and crafts, games, songs and stories followed by a hot dinner!!

Arborfield Green Community Centre
 Sheerlands Road
 RG2 9ND

www.steligiuschurch.com



**SAVE THE DATE
 EMERGENCY SERVICES DAY**

THURSDAY 31ST OCTOBER 2019, 10:00AM - 4:00PM

Arborfield Green Community Centre
 Sheerlands Road, Arborfield, RG2 9ND



Arborfield Green
 Crest



NHS HEALTH CHECK

LIVE IN WOKINGHAM? AGED 40-74?
 FIND OUT ABOUT RECEIVING A
**FREE NHS HEALTH CHECK AT ONE OF
 YOUR LOCAL LEISURE CENTRES.**

The NHS Health Check is designed to spot early signs of stroke, kidney disease, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and dementia. It can also help you reduce these risks and make sure that you stay healthy.

We offer convenient appointment times to suit you, including evenings and weekends!

To find out more, or to book your appointment, please contact:
healthchecks.wokingham@pnts.net

[www.PLACESLEISURE.ORG/WOKINGHAM](http://www.placesleisure.org/wokingham)

Places Leisure
 Wokingham Borough Council

Elmer's Birthday Parade

Grounds of St Elgius Community Church,
 Arborfield

Celebrating 30 years of the childrens' favourite


Books by author David Mckee
 Monday September 16th 2019
 10am to 12noon

**Come along to celebrate
 Elmer's 30th Birthday**

With stories, stomping rhymes and craft by the
 Wokingham Library staff and enjoy some free
 light refreshments served up by St Elgius Church.

Church address is Tope Road, Arborfield RG2 9NB

Event supported by Crest and Wokingham Borough Council Engagement Team



Contents

Village INFO

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Village INFO and the Parish web site aim to keep residents informed of issues and opportunities affecting the area.

See web site for the Council's meetings (every month except August) at the Arborfield Green Community Centre.

www.barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk

Contact Ellen Tims, Barkham Parish Clerk, for details of advertising and frequency.

Tel: 0118 9762089

Arborfield Green Community Centre, Sheerlands Road, Arborfield, RG2 9ND.

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Highlights



Consulting now on NP

The WBC consultation on the Neighbourhood

Plan (see page 10) has been widely publicised in the press and social media. Therefore many of you will have commented already.

We could not bring the distribution date forward for this issue when the consultation end date of 19 August was set. However there is time to comment up until that date.

If the Examiner agrees that the Neighbourhood Plan can go to a public referendum, then all residents (on the electoral register) in the two parishes will get a final say by voting in a referendum organised by the Borough Council, possibly in December.



Volunteers needed

The local Speedwatch initiative is having an impact on drivers, but

without more volunteers **it may fold**. If you are worried about traffic speed, read the results so far on page 8 and then volunteer!



FBC blueprint?

As we went to press, Crest Nicholson submitted a planning

application for the District Centre at Arborfield Green. First indications are that it has answered concerns about the size and positioning of the community centre. The fbc centre (seen above) between Gorse Ride South and North at Finchampstead is an ideal model for the new facility at Arborfield Green – see pages 16-17.

BARKHAM VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



BARN DANCE

Saturday 28th Sept 2019
7:00pm—10:00pm
Barkham Village Hall

LIVE BAND

Supper Included
 Tickets available from
 Gill Powell Tel 9783373

Adult £10, Children 16 and under £5

LICENCED BAR & RAFFLE



ARBORFIELD GREEN SUMMER FETE

SATURDAY 31ST AUGUST 2019, 3:00PM - 9:00PM
 Arborfield Green Community Centre, Shearlands Road, Arborfield, RG2 9ND

WE ARE LOOKING FOR

- Volunteers and stall holders
- Acoustic musicians and performers

TO GET INVOLVED, GET IN TOUCH!

Contact us
 07578 622 578
 community@arborfieldgreen.co.uk




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NEWS

Can you spare some time to help in the parish?

Barkham Parish Council welcomed Majid Alborzpour as a new councillor at the July meeting, but with existing councillors looking to retire, and existing vacancies, there is still a need for more 'volunteers'.

The council is the lowest tier of government and the most in touch with the local area. Even if you can only attend the monthly meeting, you will be making a useful input. This will help to sustain the council's credibility in dealing with Wokingham Borough Council, developers and other stakeholders.



BPC councillors (left to right) Ken Lane, vice chairman, Roger Loader, John Kaiser, ward member WBC, Majid Alborzpour, Alan Scott (seated), Graeme Dexter, Pam Stubbs, chairman, and Chris Heyliger



Pam Stubbs, chairman, greets Majid as a new councillor. Majid has lived in Barkham for 13 years with his wife Leyla and two children who go to local schools. He is managing director of a Healthcare Recruitment company based in London and commutes to Waterloo every day. He has wanted 'to do something for the community' for some time and he says he is going try and make a difference however great or small. Majid has wide range of interests including motorsport and football.

Enthusiastic councillors can get involved with planning, traffic and finance and other aspects that concern residents.

The monthly meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month (Except August) at Arborfield Green Community Centre. Please come along to find out more.

There are many challenges ahead. Besides scrutinising planning applications, the council is keeping an eye on plans for the new district centre at Arborfield Green with its shops and community centre.

Other projects include improvements to green ways and other public rights of way and the Neighbourhood Plan referendum later this year.

Not ready to be a councillor but have some spare time? The Speedwatch team needs more members.

To find out more about the council and Speedwatch, please contact the Clerk, Ellen Tims on: clerk@barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk or **0118 976 2089**. She can also put you in touch with councillors who can discuss their experiences.

NEWS

Dealing with anti social behaviour

We live in a peaceful area, so an outbreak of wanton vandalism recently in and around Arborfield Green and Barkham has been a cause for concern.

Earlier this year and culminating in July, a small group of youths vandalised cars and broke windows in unfinished houses near the Arborfield Green community centre. They also smashed windows in the cricket pavilion and damaged the Rickman Close Bus stop, while later overturning a car in Penrose Park.

At the time of writing (mid July) incidents had reduced, but there is still a need to be vigilant and to make sure the police are informed of any problems.



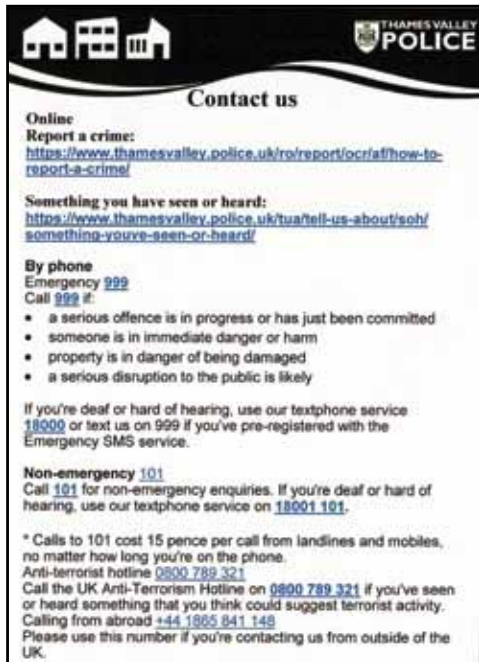
Bus stop at Rickman Close



Remnants of glass from the smashed glass at the bus stop near Rickman Close

The police, local parish councils, borough councillors, developers and others have discussed how further problems can be avoided. Improved provision for youth clubs; neighbourhood watch schemes; and notifying the police via 999 (if violence or vandalism is underway), or calling them via 101 to report an incident where the culprits have gone. The **'tell us about'** web link is even quicker - see panel opposite.

The police have limited resources, but more patrols are being made in the area. It is important that people report incidents, rather than just complaining on social media. The police need intelligence if they are to direct resources at problems.



Example of police incident report form

NEWS

Costs awarded to WBC after successful planning enforcement hearing

Wokingham Borough Council has won appeal costs from a Barkham resident who had been caught letting a barn and stables he had converted into a house, despite not having the right planning permission.

The building owned by Mark Flaherty at Coppid Hill House, Barkham Road, was granted planning permission in 2011 for use as an equestrian barn and stables, but an investigation in 2018 by the council's planning enforcement team found it being let to tenants.

A planning enforcement notice was served in November 2018 requiring that the building revert back to equestrian use and a subsequent appeal, submitted by the resident, was dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate on 21 June this year.

Councillor Wayne Smith, executive member for planning and enforcement at Wokingham Borough Council, said: "This is an example of a resident who has made a number of attempts to obtain additional housing on this land and to alter the use of the building for which he was originally granted planning permission. By going ahead without permission means he is in breach of the planning consent and we imposed a planning enforcement notice on him to return the building to its original use."

After losing his appeal, the Planning Inspectorate has ordered Mr Flaherty to remove all internal fittings and fixtures and return the building back to an equestrian barn within three months of the appeal findings. He has also been ordered to pay the council's appeal costs which have yet to be confirmed.

Combating loneliness in Wokingham

Wokingham Council has launched an Ageing Actively' campaign directed towards older members of the community to help them find opportunities for them to meet new people, learn new skills and keep active.

Willing volunteers have been trained as peer mentors to provide support and guidance for older people on a 1-to-1 basis.

Cllr Parry Batth, executive member for Environment and Leisure Services, says "Life events such as retirement, moving away from family and health issues can dramatically impact some of our residents' ability to stay connected and engaged with other people."

It is said that loneliness is growing and affects 1.2million chronically lonely older people in the UK. You can find out more by emailing sport@wokingham.gov.uk or calling (0118) 974 3728 to request an application form to join the Actively Ageing initiative.

Cycle Map

The Wokingham Cycle Map for Barkham, Crowthorne, Finchampstead and Winnersh is available in hard copy form and downloadable from:

www.myjourneywokingham.com/media/2186/wokingham-area-cycle-map-2019.pdf





The location of the speed detector is clearly marked

Speedwatch alert - volunteer to help keep our roads safe

After final training and vetting there are now three volunteers out and about in Barkham checking on speeding motorists. Offenders get a formal warning letter from the police. Residents will have seen the Speedwatch volunteers on local roads, but without more volunteers the campaign can't be sustained.

Traffic congestion and speeding are two of the top concerns expressed by residents across Barkham and Arborfield Green.

Thames Valley Police have provided training, vetting and loaned equipment for the Speedwatch team to get on the road monitoring local conditions.

New residents at Arborfield Green are concerned about Biggs Lane and drivers using Commonfield Lane as a 'rat run', while existing residents continue to point to Barkham Road and School Road as hot spots.

In May, during two, hour long sessions, the Speedwatch team found eight motorists exceeding 35 mph in Bearwood Road and in School Road, below the brow

of the hill (200 hundred yards from Langley Pond Farm on opposite side) 20 vehicles travelling towards Arborfield Cross exceeded 35 mph. Both were in 30 mph areas.

In June a further five locations were targeted. The team recorded about 24 vehicles whose owners will get warning letters.

Other sites will be targeted in the future, but only if more volunteers come forward. So if you want to keep our roads safe please join the team.



The team are clearly visible to passing motorists

Arborfield Parish Council had to curtail their programme a few years ago when they were unable to get enough volunteers. Finchampstead PC has had considerable success, both with monitoring traffic flows and speeding. They have about 12 volunteers on call at any one time.

In order to make a difference, our Speedwatch team needs to have sessions every two weeks or so. With sufficient volunteers this amounts to about 1-2 hours of time per volunteer once a fortnight.



The team get a clear indication of a car's approach speed

The Parish Council is sponsoring the Speedwatch campaign. It also has a budget to buy equipment both to log data on traffic and speeds as well as to invest in Speedwatch equipment.

Purchasing Speedwatch equipment will save time in not having to go to Thames Valley Police (TVP) to borrow their equipment which may not always be available. Also only those vetted by the TVP are allowed to operate this equipment, as it's under TVP's insurance, whereas equipment owned by BPC will be under BPC's Insurance and any local volunteers will **not** need to go through a long vetting process. That is as long as one member of the Speedwatch team is present on the session.

The goal so far has been to gain as much experience as possible before justifying the expense of any equipment. The team has been working with experienced volunteers at Finchampstead to look



The Speedwatch team in action down Bearwood Road

both at operating the Speedwatch equipment and getting traffic data on volume and average speeds.

Changing speed limits is a long process that has to be justified by actual data and not just perception of speed. The average speed on a road might not justify a change in limit, but we are all aware that it's those who have no respect for any limit that we need to target.

Being visible on the roads with **Speedwatch does make a difference.** Why not join the team and help make that difference now.

Volunteer now

You can find out more about being a Speedwatch volunteer from Ellen Tims, Parish Clerk on **0118 9762089** or email **clerk@barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk**

Report concerns

If you are aware of 'hot spot' areas for speeding please let us know. Send an email to Ellen as above.



The Speedwatch kit is effective and simple to set up

Barkham & Arborfield joint Neighbourhood Plan passes milestone

WBC consultation open till 19th August



Wokingham Borough Council executive members gave their full support to the parishes' Neighbourhood Plan and agreed to the next round of consultation at their meeting on 27 June. Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) is running the consultation which started on 8 July and runs till 19 August.

The WBC consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan is a further opportunity for residents, landowners and developers, etc, to comment on the plan before the comments and plan are passed to an independent Examiner. The Examiner will then review all the representations and decide whether any changes are required to meet national planning requirements. This means that it is still on track to be put to a referendum of all residents in the two parishes in December.

What is the Neighbourhood Plan

local people more of a say in their environment. Across the UK, many parish and town councils now have plans that address issues which can range from affordable housing to enhancing the environment.

Many residents will have participated in the previous public consultation last summer and will recall that the Neighbourhood Plan covers four themes:

- **Identity and Rural Setting**
This issue was rated highly in the Residents Survey of 2016. The Plan sets out how planning should recognise the importance of keeping separation areas between the various settlements and retaining important landscape views, preserving key natural and heritage assets such as The Coombes.

- **Thriving Communities**
The Plan aims to ensure that existing

- **Appropriate Housing**
The plan demonstrates that local needs require no more than half of what is already committed at Arborfield Green. This takes account of existing residents growing older and younger age groups wishing to remain in the area. The Plan proposes that new housing should prioritise local requirements, especially homes for young families and homes suitable for older people.
- **Getting Around**
The Plan makes clear that most of the local roads are unsuited to absorb yet more large-scale development. Further development of Greenways for non-motorised users is advocated.

These themes are overlaid with the principle of Sustainable Development. The National Planning Policy Framework proclaims this as the 'golden thread' that runs through planning. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to make this a genuine claim, recognising the challenges of climate change and creating thriving communities, rather than just accepting some of the flimsy justifications so often used in planning applications.

Changes to the Plan

As a result of the earlier consultation, there have been changes as well as adjustments made following discussions with WBC to make sure that the Plan is consistent with local and national planning policy. It has therefore become a focus of the plan to interpret national planning policy in the context of local conditions.

The updated plan has included the concept of 'Locally Valued Natural and Historic Assets'. This reflects a suggestion made by Historic England. These locations require special recognition. In the

longer term it is an aspiration for these to receive formal protection within Wokingham's Local Plan. Most important is The Coombes woodland which straddles the two parishes.

In Arborfield and Newland, 'Locally Valued Historic Assets' include Carters Hill, the Holt woodland and the historic chestnut avenue in Arborfield which connects The Old Rectory to the remains of the old church.

In Barkham, 'Locally Valued Assets' include the rhododendron avenue along Bearwood Road, the lime grove at Nashgrove Ride and the granary in Barkham Street. *Continued over...*

Please respond to the consultation

You may well be suffering from consultation overload, but, even so, it is important for the Examiner to realise the strength of local opinion. Developers will undoubtedly also have their say!

The plan aims to manage development in the area to better reflect the wishes of the community and take greater account of what makes the area special to them. The Neighbourhood Plan, if adopted, will be used to help determine planning applications within the two parishes.

So, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is keen to encourage as many residents as possible to respond to the consultation, hopefully in a positive way. You can see copies of the plan at various locations including the parish offices and online.*

Laurence Heath
Chairman of Steering Group
Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan

* see table





As well as important natural country side areas in the two parishes, the existing man-made green areas containing play areas and sports pitches are an important part of the environment as this view across the old garrison area shows

Have your say

The plan and supporting documents are being published by Wokingham Borough Council. The period started on Monday 8 July 2019 and continues to 5pm Monday 19 August 2019.

During the consultation period, the plan and supporting documents can be viewed:

On the council's website at:

www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policyinformation/neighbourhood-planning/

and at:

www.wokingham.gov.uk/consultations

Wokingham Borough Council Offices:

Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN

Arborfield & Newland Parish Council Office,
Arborfield Village Hall, Eversley Road, RG2 9PQ
(Monday to Thursday 10am to 12noon)

Barkham Parish Council Office,
Arborfield Green Community Centre,
Sheerlands Road, RG2 9ND
(Monday and Wednesday 10 am to 12 noon)

Please submit your comments via the response form at: www.wokingham.gov.uk/consultations

or: www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policyinformation/neighbourhood-planning/

Comments can also be submitted in writing by:

Email: policyandplans@wokingham.gov.uk

Post: Neighbourhood Plan consultation,
Wokingham Borough Council, Shute End,
Wokingham RG40 1WR

Neighbourhood plan timeline

- WBC consultation ends 19 August
- Results passed to Examiner
- Referendum of all Barkham and Arborfield & Newland residents December

A new team at WBC with a clear agenda and action plan

John Kaiser has always been a vocal supporter of residents in Barkham and now, as deputy leader to John Halsall, he has returned from his year as Mayor to face the challenges ahead. At a local level residents are probably not convinced that politicians have always been listening to their concerns. Last year's petition against building at Barkham Square was a wake-up call from 4000 people and one which John supported. Now he sets out the problems facing WBC and, more importantly actions to tackle them as seen by the new team.

Housing development

Locally development and its consequent congestion are without doubt the principal concern of residents. The council continues to challenge the housing numbers through the recent residents' consultation* and through negotiation with the Government.

We are determined to do all that we can to reduce housing numbers.

Housing numbers should not be set in stone and should only reflect local need and not some number dreamt up by central government

The Government is trying to impose a target of over 800 homes a year on us when the objective assessed need (OAN) is less than 600. This approach by government is unacceptable. It will do irreversible damage our environment.

If the government wish to build more homes than a local area needs, or can cope with, they should consider new towns or settlements with their own infrastructure and local services.

Traffic

Congestion is probably the highest daily burden for us all. The new roads being built should help but we must get better at controlling the epidemic of street works which have arisen.

The council is performing a review of the organisation and how it operates. We will make sure closing nearby routes when a route has to be closed, or faces a lane closure is avoided.

Effort is needed to get utilities to use verges or accessible ducts under pavements to limit future work on roads. There also needs to be better coordination and control of utility providers road works and a smarter approach to traffic lights so that, for instance, lights revert to main road priority if there is no traffic sensed on the minor roads. We also need to re-phase where junctions flow badly and more cycle lanes away from busy narrow roads. *Continued over...*

**Update: At the time of going to press some 40,000 people had taken part in the consultation!*



Awareness of the affect of building on the area and residents desire to enhance the environment have been foremost in the minds of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

We also need more car parks with longer staying time and proper provision for parking on new developments and better handling of pupil drop off and pick up at schools. This should be on school land where possible to get the cars off the highway and improve safety



Environment & Leisure

The Council will continue to improve waste collection and will look to find ways to recycle more materials through its current collection system.

We will continue to act to protect areas of natural beauty, aim to keep green gaps between settlements, and ensure sufficient tree planting to retain the heritage of what was forest land with rides through the woods and continue to enforce against those who flaunt the rules to the detriment of the environment .

Anti-social behaviour affects everyone's enjoyment of our area and the council is working with the police and local parish and town councils as well communities to ensure it is stamped out.

Unlike other boroughs, we are opening libraries and leisure centres, which has improved footfalls. Almost every week we are opening a new facility somewhere across the Borough.

Health

The Council will continue to work closely with the local NHS to ensure a good seamless service covering medical provision and general care for

the elderly, infirm and disabled. High quality medical and social care, and work with local surgeries to push for adequate and timely GP appointments.

We will also continue to design services which will allow elderly people to stay in their own homes with support. This also helps to relieve pressure on expensive hospital provision.

The Council is particularly keen to advance respite care to help relatives, and care for children with special needs. We will be pressing for more money from the government for social care, as this, if done well, relieves pressure on expensive hospital places where people do not have acute medical needs.

Climate Change - carbon neutral Wokingham by 2030

Over the last 20 years the impact of climate change on our world has changed conditions far faster than ever imagined. It may sound frightening, but the scientific evidence is that if we have not taken dramatic action within the next decade, we could face irreversible damage to the natural world and the collapse of our society.

More concerted and urgent action is needed at local, national and international level to protect our planet for future generations. As such, we will commit to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030 and report within six months as to what actions are required.

It may be vogueish and considered as jumping on the bandwagon, but the imperative of the clock ticking means that we have no option but to take on this target.

We do not start from scratch. The Council have been continually seeking to become more efficient in the use of resources including reducing the amount of energy used on our own estate. These actions will help to reduce carbon emissions, (although the council does not currently measure currently carbon emissions directly) and address climate change.

Some of the council's key actions and achievements to reduce energy usage and increase recycling are:

- Purchasing a proportion of its energy from generated renewable sources with a target of 25% renewables.
- Installing solar panels on council buildings where we can.
- Low energy lighting has been fitted in over 30% of council buildings, which has saved an estimated 11% in energy consumption. Insulation has been installed in over 20 council buildings, saving over 3% in energy consumption.
- Enabling and encouraging more sustainable travel through enhancing pedestrian, cycle and bus routes.

Bus usage in Wokingham Borough has grown by 14% between 2014/15 and 2017/18 compared to a 1% decline in the same period in the South East region. We have also developed a 'Greenway Project' which aims to deliver a sustainable transport network which provides traffic-free commuting and leisure routes connecting new Strategic Development Locations with the existing settlements.

We need to ensure that our planning policies encourage development proposals to incorporate measures to improve energy efficiency and zero carbon as part of sustainable design and construction.

We must promote the use of ultra-low emission vehicles by supporting the electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Increase recycling and reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill. And encourage the development of smart technologies to reduce energy usage

Not least we need to strive to improve quality across the borough through the Air Quality Management Plan and the Sustainable Environment Strategy 2010-2020.

The council is bidding for £500,000 of ERDF funding to invest in energy saving schemes. The project will

look at opportunities for storing energy gathered by solar panels, to use and/or sell.

The use of urban greenery in our towns and urban areas and the protection of our countryside can have remarkable positive contribution to carbon reduction. These actions are proving very popular and have the support of many residents in the borough.

As deputy leader of the council I am committed to delivering on the above commitments. At the same time I will continue to fight for the residents of Barkham as my major priority.

Thank you to all the residents for supporting me at the local elections in May which allow me another four years in which to make good on the commitments I made to you the residents.

As *Village INFO* went to press, Wokingham Borough Council took its first step towards becoming carbon neutral as it declared a **climate emergency** at the full council meeting in July. There was unanimous support for the motion, which was submitted by leader Cllr John Halsall, with the aim to reach the target by 2030.



John Kaiser

Ward member for Barkham
Deputy leader Wokingham Borough Council

*See page 11 for the latest details on the consultation

FBC role model for new community centre in Arborfield Green?

The district centre being planned for Arborfield Green, near Bohunt School and the leisure centre, will have a new community centre. The existing complex, which houses the Poperinghe Pre-School and the Barkham Parish Office at Sheerlands Road will continue until the new facility is built

Just over the parish border in Finchampstead, nestled in the middle of Gorse Ride North and South, the FBC Centre is host to some 3,500 people every week. They come for many different reasons: some for the excellent coffee shop and children's play area, some for sports, or activities like the FBC Art Club and Lighthouse, and the parent and toddler group. There is even a library and, come Sundays, the whole Centre is used for church services for all ages.

As an example of a thriving and successful community facility, FBC is a great template for the

new centre planned for Arborfield Green. FBC are also running a **'pop-up' café** every Tuesday in term time in the existing community hall (near Barkham Parish Office) to serve the local communities. So it is not surprising that Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) is in discussion with FBC as a potential candidate to run the new community centre.

Early designs for the new district centre, being developed by Crest's designers, were heavily criticised by Barkham Parish Councillors as failing to provide the right setting or size for the community facilities. These plans are still under development. New outline plans include small retail units, a pub, community facilities and a supermarket near to the open green space that ascends towards the historic, renovated stable block. (Crest Nicholson submitted a planning application as *Village INFO* went to press)

People are at the heart of the fbc community whether it is for entertainment, formal and informal group meetings, exercise and sport, or simply a chat in the coffee shop



BPC is keen to support any organisation that can offer a sustainable community centre that will meet the needs of a developing community. "FBC seems able to offer both the track record and business awareness that is needed," says Pam Stubbs, BPC chairman. "In particular their commitment to make any facility open to all irrespective of any belief, or none, is appealing."

So BPC is taking part in discussions with FBC and other partners on the way forward as plans develop. Jim Gallagher, one of FBC's trustees, warns that the success of the new centre will very much depend on design decisions made about the centre and its environment from the beginning. "This needs input from the organisation which will run the centre, or you may end up with a building unsuited to sustainable use," he says.

He says that every aspect of FBC was designed to meet the needs of the community which, in turn, ensures 'footfall'. This ranged from locating it next to a pre-school/infant school, setting a large coffee shop area in the centre of the building and having a playpark and multi-use games area at the back.

As well as the popular café, WBC library and Children's Centre, FBC has facilities for hire with daily activities running in the full size sports hall and other rooms in the building. More information can be found on www.finchampstead.com.



FBC Cafe at Arborfield Green

- Open Tuesdays 9.30 – 11.30 (term time)
- Coffee, cake and activities for children and adults
- Book club (every second Tuesday of the month)

Arborfield Green Community Centre, Sheerland Rd





Something for everyone at Arborfield Green Leisure Centre

As well as regular membership options to take advantage of the gym and sports facilities at Arborfield Green Leisure Centre, there is a wide range of activities aimed at different sectors of the community from the young to the elderly, Village INFO has been looking at the facilities.



Many of the leisure facilities owned by Wokingham Borough Council have been upgraded or in the process of being rebuilt, like the new £14 million Bulmershe Leisure Centre which has just been 'topped out'.

As with the Arborfield Green Leisure Centre, all the WBC leisure facilities are run by its partner 'Places Leisure'. The four existing sites, in addition to Arborfield Green, are at Loddon Valley, Ryeish Green, St Crispins and Carnival Pool. Membership is possible for each location or combined.

Carnival Pool will be redeveloped as part of the Wokingham town centre regeneration. The new multi-storey car park was finished a while ago, while work on the new leisure complex is expected to

start in 2020 after the new Bulmershe leisure centre opens.

Bulmershe will include a six-lane, 25m swimming pool, a teaching pool with moveable floor, a bigger gym, plus a 'live well' (long-term condition) gym, a four-court sports hall, and a studio and café. It will benefit the whole community by providing up-to-date, accessible and flexible facilities, as well as preventative health services.

Meanwhile, tucked away in the newest developed part of the parish, adjacent to Bohunt School, the Arborfield Green Leisure Centre offers gym facilities as well as a dedicated spin studio for cyclists, fitness studios and, shared with Bohunt School, access to a huge sports hall with badminton courts, 3G football pitches and courts for both tennis and netball.

It is also near to the planned neighbourhood centre which will have retail and community facilities, including a pub!

The building is a legacy from the Army and includes one of the largest climbing walls in the south.



Bohunt School uses the playing fields and sports hall in term time, so it as well to check opening times.

There isn't a swimming pool. Existing residents were promised a pool to replace the demolished army pool when permission for redeveloping the garrison was given. Apparently, there is land set aside, but watch this space.

There are various levels of membership and can be single or multi-site. Residents who are regular fitness buffs will be interested in taking up membership, but those who are less committed may well be tempted by pay-per-session opportunities for young and old alike.

Children from 8+ years can use the splendid 3G - all weather, maintenance free, pitches - for their own games from 17.30 till 19.30 on a Friday and during school holidays: Mon & Wed 13.00 - 15.00. The first hour is under 12s. The cost is £3 per session and is also available at Ryeish Green, Loddon Valley and St. Crispins.



Five to 11 year olds will soon be able to take part in 'Jump Gymnastics' using climbing frames, mats, trampolines etc. While 'Active play and bounce' for young children now has two, hour-long sessions on Saturdays price £3.50/hr for the first child, with additional children at £1.50 extra.

If you are 60+ there are drop-in gym sessions on Tues and Fridays from 11 - 14.00 pm with instructors on hand to give advice and encouragement. The cost is £3.00 per visit. Free swim sessions for the over 60s are available at Carnival Pool and Loddon Valley.

'No strings badminton' sounds like it is designed for those whose other fitness regime is the 'air guitar!' But it actually refers to social badminton sessions.

They are held on Thursdays from 19.00 - 20.30, priced £4.00 per person. Simply turn up with kit and £4.00 and you will be linked with people that match your ability.

Check out all the centres as there are different and changing activities at each of them.

Last, but not least, 'Places Leisure' has taken over free NHS Health Checks for the 40-74 year group at all sites. The free, 30 minute checkups for eligible people are carried out by specially trained team members. The NHS funded service is looking for risk of cardiovascular disease so anyone already being treated is not eligible. For session dates contact details see page 2.



How to find the centre

The Arborfield Green Leisure Centre opened last year and is easy to find. At the new roundabout for the centre on the A327, as you head towards Eversley from Arborfield, turn left and follow the Nine Mile Ride extension to Bohunt School. Or turn onto Biggs Lane at the Biggs Lane/Langley Common Road roundabout and then at the new roundabout on Biggs Lane turn right into Princess Marina Drive towards the Arborfield Green Community Centre (where the BPC is located) and then follow Signs for Bohunt School. Parking is at the side of Bohunt with Arborfield Green Leisure on your left.

The schedule for the Centre is constantly updated so please check the web site:

www.placesleisure.org

Barkham *in* business and a discount on beauty

Barkham has no high street, yet there is a surprising number of retailers and service providers both in clear view and hidden away. Starting with this issue we will be pointing out a few of them in each issue.

These will not be recommendations, more an indication of the variety on our doorsteps. The parish boundary is a bit of an artificial construct, so we will be looking at places in surrounding areas in future, but starting here in Barkham and Arborfield Green

Eating out offers huge choice in the wider area but as an 'Asset of Community Value' **The Bull** at Barkham merits a first mention. It recently achieved five star hygiene status and is well-known particularly for Thai food. The Bull itself is a listed building, with the original forge still inside.

Along Barkham Road coming from Wokingham past the **Leathern Bottel** (sorry in Evendons so more later) a narrow entrance to the right leads up to **Acorn Upholstery** and Rob Douglas, an upholsterer with magic fingers for re-covering furniture. He says all workshops look a bit unkempt and his fits the bill but the result is what matters. **CAE Autos** is just round the corner from him offering full range of car servicing and free collection and delivery from home or work (see advert page 4).



See www.acornupholsterytd.co.uk



Further up Barkham Road on the right **Kalikose** hair stylists who also offer a variety of beauty treatments and a parking area at front.

Still further along on the left, Tara Jones and her sister run the **Barkham Beauty Rooms**. Tara lives nearby and admits to reading *Village* INFO. They have been inspired to offer a 20% discount to readers showing this magazine when they book a full price treatment.

So cut, blow dried and beautiful, your journey up Barkham Road can take a right into Bearwood Road and you can find **Barkham Village Store** run by Raj. This convenience food shop and post office has been a local landmark for many years. It's the reason why Barkham Parish Council chairman, Pam Stubbs, knows so many residents as she ran the post office for years before it was rebuilt and sold on. The Village Store offers more than shopping. A defibrillator – funded by BPC – is available in case you get over-excited buying groceries and stamps.

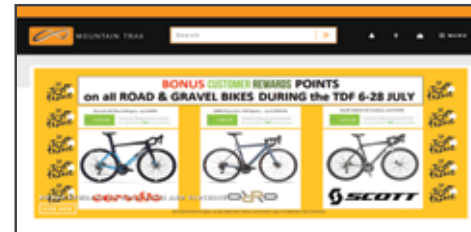
Ignoring the commercial businesses in the vicinity, there is Stuart Bond with **First Choice Fencing** opposite the Lilacs and further up Bearwood Road are **Bearwood Lakes Golf Club** and the tennis and cricket centre, and food at the Walter Arms, but they are a bit beyond our remit for this issue. But before heading back to the roundabout, **A1 Group** at Highlands Avenue has expanded vastly in recent years, offering not just car spares, but mobile loos

and more. Back at the roundabout turn right and down towards the Bull and on the left is the place for your firewood from **Alistair Nobles**.

Continuing your journey left at the Bull, you come to Barkham Street. Further down on the right, hidden away, are an upmarket kitchen showroom **exact Kitchens**, a professional bookbinding firm, and a well-known mountain bike shop, **Mountain Trax**.

It is good that some local businesses are aware of support for our young folk and exact Kitchens have allowed aspiring cooks from a local school to use advanced technology cooking equipment to get a taste of technology and creativity.

Chris at Mountain Trax has a reputation well beyond Wokingham since moving from Heathlands in 2006. In his own words he wants to offer a fun, friendly environment. While specialising in mountain bikes, servicing and the myriad of bits that go with them, he has been adding road bikes and now electric bikes to the list.



Chris says: "We offer some support to local clubs with our points system and with service support at some events." They also have some successful sponsorship partnerships with the likes of Ben Thomas, Britain no.1 Mountain Bike marathon racer. They also supported Jaco Van Gass and Stuart Croxford of KT18 along with some other sponsors to be the first disabled athletes to complete the Cape Epic (regarded as the world's largest, toughest mountain bike stage race).

By now you might be on a bike heading back towards the Bull and left along Barkham Road and Langley Common Rd towards **Staysure Tyres**, the adjacent garage, and **Coupe & Convertibles** car sales. But before going that far, have a thought for a hidden well-known business. The renowned Barkham Blue Cheese is produced at **Two Hoots Cheese** off School Rd.

Nothing to see there, but look out for the cheese from local outlets like **Barkham Village Store** as well as much further afield and in good restaurants.

Staysure Tyres supply commercial vehicles and cars and are located diagonally opposite the biggest little known business in Barkham. Despite its name, **Arborfield Studios**, is in Barkham and people on local social media regularly claim to have seen famous faces making a dash for the gates.

We have tried to prise a bit more information out of the studios, but they have almost better security than the Army which housed tanks in the workshops which are now used to build sets for international films. The studios are there for about another eight years before becoming a housing site.

Barkham doesn't end at Biggs Lane. Much of Arborfield Green is in Barkham and there are plans for retail shops and a food store as well as a pub in the district centre.

If you have a favourite business in Barkham let us know for a future issue. If you are a business tell us more and why not advertise to a growing audience of local residents.

Family run **Barkham Beauty Rooms** won the 'best beauty salon in Berkshire' Muddy Stiletto award of excellence 2017 and next year celebrates 10 years in business. Catering for women and men and those who are aged 16+ with a range of massage, facial skin care, waxing and nail treatments. Visit www.barkhambeautyrooms.co.uk to make an appointment and view treatments.



Barkham Beauty Rooms would be happy to offer readers a **20% off discount** with this article. The discount must be redeemed by **30/11/2019** and can only be used once on a full priced treatment.

Summer fruits in a traditional mess

Two recipes from Arborfield & Newland WI to try in this issue. The first is a take on traditional Eton Mess – perfect for Summer with a glass of bubbly. The second is a bit healthier and popular with children – minus alcoholic bubbly!



Eton Mess

Ingredients

- 500g strawberries
- 400ml double cream
- 4-5 meringue nests
- Ginger cordial - if wanted

Method

1. Purée 100g strawberries.
2. Whip the double cream until stiff and forming peaks.
3. Crush the meringue nests.
4. Fold the purée into the cream to give swirls of colour.
5. Fold in the crushed meringue.
6. Chop the remaining strawberries and add to the mixture.
7. Serve in a large glass bowl or in individual dishes.

Berry Mess

This is a bit healthier version of the original recipe. It is ideal for the younger members of the family or for those who wish to reduce the calories in the dish, but still keep the texture and taste of the desert.

Ingredients

- Approximately half a pack of ginger biscuits.
- 400g mixed strawberries and raspberries, roughly chopped
- 500g Greek yoghurt

Method

Roughly crush the ginger biscuits, then fold into the yoghurt along with the chopped fruit.

These deserts are best if constructed just before serving so that the meringues and biscuits are still crunchy to eat.

Enjoy either one or both during the Summer and why not experiment with different fruits and flavours?



NEWS

When summer finishes why not volunteer for a local good cause!

If you would like to volunteer but don't know what it might involve, go along to the next Volunteer Recruitment Fair on Saturday, 28 September (10am – 1pm) at Wokingham Town Hall in the Market Place.

Local voluntary groups are working with all age ranges and needs. Health benefits for volunteers are said to include a greater sense of wellbeing and happier and longer lives!

Tied up on the day? Then you can get information on volunteering via www.volunteerwokinghamborough.org.uk or email, or phone, to book an appointment to chat face-to-face at the Volunteer Centre.

Contact Christine or Helena at The Wokingham Volunteer Centre on 0118 977 0749 or email them at: volunteer@wok-vol.org.uk or visit the website: www.wokinghamvolunteercentre.org.uk or volunteering portal, www.volunteerwokinghamborough.org.uk

WBC consulting on 'Rights of Way'

Wokingham Borough Council has issued a consultation draft of its 'Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2020 – 2030'.

The Public Rights of Way network makes up 18% of the total highway network within the Borough and is used by thousands of people to get to school and work, and to enjoy the countryside.

The network consists of public footpaths, bridleways, byways and restricted byways, and forms a crucial part of a wider system which includes children's play parks, nature parks, permitted routes, cycle routes and the wider highway network.

A new plan has to be prepared every 10 years and is an opportunity to enhance the network still further.

The consultation ends on 26 September and can be accessed via 'consultations' on the WBC web site at: www.wokingham.gov.uk

Village INFO

www.barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk has a host of information about police, Drs contacts, etc under local information and directory. A few of the contacts are reproduced here. Let Ellen Tims (Parish Clerk) know if you would like a local organisation, club etc, to be highlighted here in a future issue.

Barkham Parochial Charities providing help to those in need - Malcolm Clark via Parish Clerk

Barkham Pre School
www.barkhampreschool.net

Barkham St James Church
www.achurchnearyou.com

BVRA residents' association
www.barkham.org.uk

Barkham Village Store
01189 799131. barkhamvillagestore@hotmail.co.uk

1st Wokingham Beaver, Cub and Scout Group
www.firstwokingham.org.uk

The Bull at Barkham
www.thebullbarkham.com

The Coombes CE Primary School
www.thecoombes.com

Wokingham Job Support Centre
www.wjpsc.org.uk

Wokingham Citizens Advice Bureau
www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk

Wokingham Cancer Care Trust
www.wdcct.org

Shine WBC activities for the over 50s
www.wokingham.gov.uk

Reach Wokingham
www.reachwokingham.com

Barkham in business

CAE Ltd Local family run garage, for all your motoring needs! www.cae-wokingham.co.uk

Cloud Stables Friendly livery yard. Large indoor/outdoor areas. 24hr supervision. teresa.cloud9@gmail.com

The A1 Group Car Spares, Scrap Metal, Part-worn Tyres, Loo Hire & Wet Waste services. www.a1groupuk.com



THE BEST FOR...



A1 Car Spares

We have invested in the very latest second hand car processing capabilities. Not only do we de-pollute end-of-life-vehicles (ELVs), but we also offer you second hand car spares at amazing prices. If you are looking for second hand car spares that are rare, there is a good chance that we have them!



A1 Loo Hire

We not only provide facility hire but offer an unrivalled waste disposal service which has catered for many of the UK's major outdoor events. The A1 group has delivered total waste management solutions for over 15 years and has developed A1 Loo Hire to meet significant growth in line with increasing client requirements.



A1 Wet Waste

Wokingham Wet Waste is one of the countries leading Waste Management companies in the UK, embracing new technology and the very latest equipment available in order to deliver real added value to our clients.



A1 Metal Recycling

Investment in the very latest processing capabilities has seen Wokingham Metal Recycling acquire two SEDA Fixed Station De-pollution rigs. Top prices paid for your scrap metal, scrap cars and MoT failures. We also supply high quality scrap metal at great prices.

Contact us for more information or visit Highland Avenue, Wokingham

Tel: 0118 978 5143 www.a1groupuk.com

