



**BARKHAM &  
ARBORFIELD GREEN**

# *Village* **INFO**

**September/October 2021**

# Contents

## Village INFO

Free to all residents in Barkham and most of Arborfield Green.

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Pam Stubbs (BPC Chairman), Mike Bundred (Editor) and Ellen Tims (Parish Clerk).

*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](http://www.barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk)

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

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**Please note the office is currently closed due to the ongoing pandemic.**

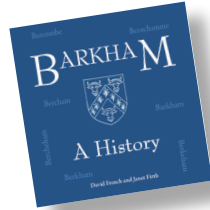
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## Highlights



## History of Barkham

Find out about the early history of the Parish



## Farley Hill Primary School

The new Farley Hill Primary School has officially opened.



## Barkham Bridge

The new bridge is improving journeys through Barkham.

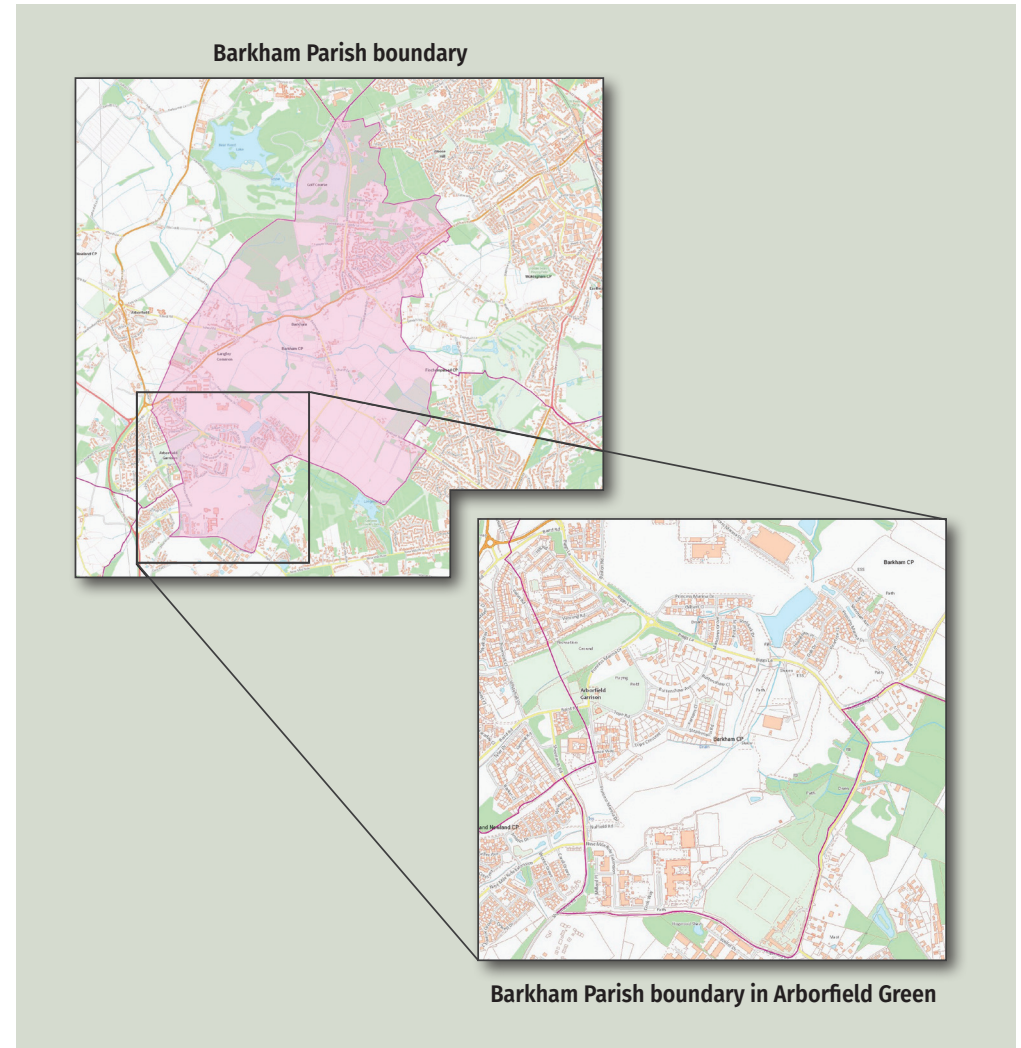


## Parish Councillor Recollections

Alan Scott tells his story of becoming a Parish Councillor

# The Parish of Barkham

Because of the naming conventions of new development being built inside the Barkham Parish boundary, it is sometimes the case that new residents are unaware that they actually live in Barkham. The map below shows the boundaries of Barkham and how they pass through and around the new developments at Arborfield Garrison.



As an example, the new Bohunt School and the recently opened Farley Hill Primary School are both within Barkham (not Arborfield) as are the residential developments north and south of Biggs Lane. This is why it has been the Barkham Speed Watch group who have been working on Biggs Lane, Langley Common Road and School Road in recent months and recording vehicle speeds which many residents have been concerned about.

# The History of Barkham

This is the second in a series of articles which will cover the history of Barkham from its Anglo-Saxon roots to the current period.

## Prehistory (c. 8,000–600 BC): the mesolithic, neolithic and Bronze Age

Barkham and the surrounding area were bound in permafrost during the last Ice Age which ended about 8,000 BC. Much of the lower area has been covered more recently by at least a metre of orange clay-silt hill wash. This means that prehistoric and early historic deposits up to about the twelfth century AD, are below the normal ploughing depth and mostly undiscovered. With deeper building development this archaeological information is lost. At the end of the last Ice Age Barkham would have been part of an inhospitable, treeless landscape, subject to permafrost and cold winds. Gradually, the climate improved and by about 7,500 BC woodland became established, resulting in dense forest dominated by birch with alder and hazel.

As the climate improved, humans began to return to southern England. They may have foraged sporadically through the woodland following the tributaries upstream from the river Loddon. A tiny worked flint point, or microlith, from Arborfield is evidence of this. It was once attached to a spear or arrow, using resin as a glue. This is tangible evidence of the skill required to survive the rigours of the time. Precious flint tools may have been carried long distances and were vital to kill wild mammals, birds and fish for food and process their remains. Early sites favoured light, sandy soils adjacent to clay and close to water, as in Barkham.

Sometimes fires from natural causes, such as lightning, made clearings in the woodland. This encouraged the growth of succulent shrubs and grass which attracted animals living in the forest. In this area red, roe and fallow deer, wild boar and birds would have been hunted, perhaps by skilled groups working together. Skins were used for tent covering, storage bags and

clothes. Wood was used for tent frames, bows, arrows, spears and perhaps boats. Wildfowl and fish, nuts, fruit, seeds, leaves and edible roots expanded the diet. All resources were used: flint pebbles, coarse sandstone, bark, branches, and bird feathers for warmth and, no doubt, decoration.

Although earlier activity by man is possible, pollen samples suggests that around 3,000–2,500 BC clearings in the woodland were very noticeable, either small ones close to Longmoor Bog, or more extensive ones further away. Pollen from weeds, including docks, indicates disturbed ground; there was also a very small amount of cereal pollen. Clearings were being created within woodland probably for hay and grazing. Cereal crops may also have been grown, albeit on a limited scale.

Farming was a process, in what is called the Neolithic Age, which took at least a thousand years to evolve. The simplest form, particularly in this area, might be the management of deer as a herd, enclosed within a fenced area. Clearance through burning trees and undergrowth may have been used, but many domesticated animals (not just pigs) prefer browsing to grazing will kill trees by debarking and efficiently keep clearings open. Once trees were felled, arable land could be cleared, in this area, by means of pieces of coarse sandstone used as bars in a simple wooden plough. Crops could then be sown.



Flint head found locally

Although still made of flint, tools changed at this time. Sickle blades were needed for harvesting; one small piece of worked flint from a blade, which may date to this period, has been found in Barkham. Axe heads were needed for felling trees; it took one full day for a man to fell a large forest oak with a flint axe head secured to a handle<sup>7</sup>.

The advent of farming caused other profound changes in lifestyle. Buildings were necessary to tend animals and guard stocks of food in winter. In this area these were most likely round houses of wooden posts and woven branches, packed with clay daub, replaced every 25 years or so and grouped together to house agricultural communities.



A typical prehistoric wooden round house

Fire became important not only for cooking but the baking of pots for food storage. These pots could be sealed with wax to deter rodents and thus were more efficient than baskets or skin bags for storing some foods. When man first found that metal could be obtained from the smelting of ores and the molten product made into tools, flint and stone tools became less vital and less skilfully made.

Following the long sequence of land clearance and crop cultivation, around 2,000 BC in the country as a whole, a period of abandonment and stagnation occurred. The pollen diagram for this area indicates that the amount of cereal pollen fell, but that this was due to the rising water table rather than inactivity by man. Damp-loving alder increased and replaced felled birch trees.

By contrast, between 1,000 and 600 BC the pollen diagram demonstrates extensive activity by man. The alder had reduced and cereal pollen had risen markedly; lime pollen had fallen as a great number of lime trees were felled in a relatively short time. All these suggest extensive arable agriculture and a change in farming practices in fields within the woodland. The incidence of microscopic charcoal had also increased, which indicates more extensive human activity. Evidence of charcoal was found at a depth of

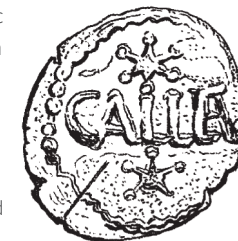
about 2 metres (6 feet) when a fencepost hole was dug at the present Barkham Manor which might indicate much earlier clearance by burning.

The presence of prehistoric pottery suggests some form of settlement close by, which in this, the Bronze Age period, was often in the form of an isolated farmstead for an extended family. Again, houses were likely to be round structures, pointed at the top, made of wooden posts interwoven with branches infilled with clay and thatched, with porches facing south-east and central hearths.

## The Iron Age (600 BC–AD 43)

From the middle of the first century BC, the inhabitants of Barkham lived within the sphere of influence of the Iron Age Atrebatian tribe. Their focal point was Calleva (Silchester) 11 miles to the west. This was an oppidum or settlement, defended by impressive earthworks, where the self-styled 'kings' of the Atrebates are thought to have lived.

Through trade and diplomatic exchange the lifestyle of such aristocrats was enhanced by imported Roman goods and luxuries. They copied Roman customs, for instance minting coins. Those stamped 'cal' or 'calle' are thought to have been minted in Calleva towards the end of the first century BC.



An Iron Age coin, a gold stater, probably minted at Calleva,



Book available from Henry Steet Garden Centre

Much of this article is extracted from **Barkham - A History**, by David French and Janet Firth, 163pp, ISBN 0-9537960-0-0, available from Henry Street Garden Centre and other retailers as well as direct from Barkham Parish Council.



Photo courtesy of Stewart Turkington, Wokingham Borough Council

## News from Wokingham Borough Council

# Official opening of new Farley Hill Primary School Buildings

**The new Farley Hill Primary School was officially opened by the Mayor of Wokingham Borough. Cllr Keith Baker MBE cut the ribbon to officially open the new school at Arborfield Green with headteacher Emma Clarke on Wednesday 22nd September 2021.**

The Mayor gave a short speech to the school's pupils and guests for the event before cutting the ribbon to declare the school open. He thanked all involved in the project for their work to complete the project in time for the start of the new school year. After, he was given a tour of the site alongside other guests before enjoying coffee and cake alongside staff.

Farley Hill Primary School was relocated from the old site in the village over the summer to the new building for the start of term, at the beginning of September. The building provides classrooms for up to 30 children, specialist areas for design and food technology, PE, and the latest digital teaching tools such as interactive screens and sound systems.

*"The new school is a triumph for all involved and I want to congratulate those who helped make it happen,"* said Cllr Keith Baker MBE, Mayor of Wokingham Borough. *"It will mean hundreds of children in our borough will have access to a fantastic education in state-of-the-art facilities."*

*"Despite challenges, including the global pandemic, school staff and partners have worked tirelessly to get it ready for pupils for the start of this term. I'm delighted to hear the pupils are already thoroughly enjoying the new buildings."*

*"We are delighted with our new building and facilities,"* said Emma Clarke, headteacher of Farley Hill Primary school. *"The children all gave the school a double thumbs up in assembly and are very happy with the new site as are the staff. It was wonderful to show all of our special guests around the school. Thank you from all at Farley Hill to everyone involved in the project."*

Construction of the new school was completed by modular specialists Reds10, with designs by HLM Architects. Moving Matters helped move the school from its old site to its new one over the summer.

The site includes the delivery of a 3G (FIFA) sports pitch alongside the school. This can be accessed by the school during the day and will be available to the wider community outside school hours. This will be run by the council's sports and leisure team.

The construction of the new school at Arborfield Green was funded through developer contributions as part of the four major new communities at Arborfield, Shinfield, and North and South Wokingham, which includes investment of £98million in new schools.

Farley Hill Primary School's new site has space to expand for more than 600 pupils as and when it is needed in the future. Land for a second primary school is also reserved within the Arborfield major development area. The opening of Farley Hill Primary School follows the opening of Bohunt secondary school in September 2016.

### **Pam Stubbs, Barkham Parish Councils Chairman shares her thoughts on Farley Hill Primary School:**

*I recently attended the Opening of the new primary school on the Arborfield Green development in Barkham Parish. It is a beautiful school with many new facilities, including enough classrooms for a three-form entry, specialist rooms and outside sports areas. What a shame the new residents in Arborfield Green cannot use it. It seems that this new School is to be a replacement for the outdated Farley Hill School, with no room for any new pupils.*

*We had been led to believe that the school was to provide for new residents and their children, but are now aware that it is actually a total replacement for Farley Hill School. New residents, living within a few yards of the school, are denied access and will have to drive to other neighbouring schools to find education. This is due to the catchment area of schools within Wokingham. The primary school catchment areas are yet to be updated so that the new addresses now occupied in Arborfield Green can be allocated to the new school.*

*Whatever happened to forward planning in the Education Department?*

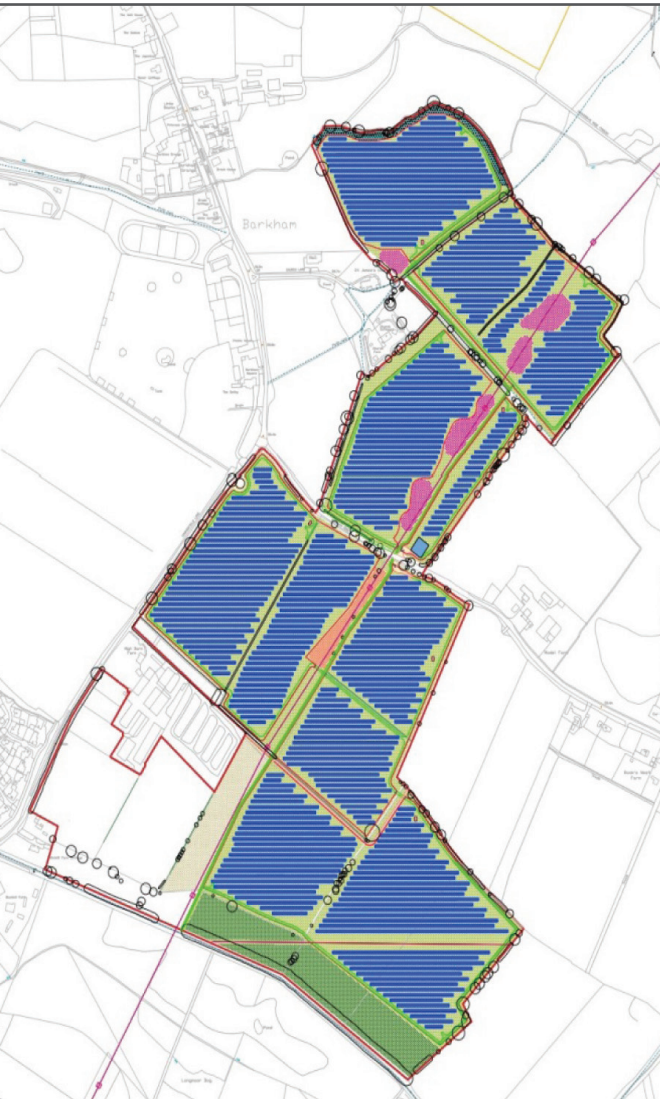
*Is it too much to expect that the Education Department, might have used some lateral thinking to accommodate the initial entry of pupils to the school, so that it can avoid the crossover in vehicle movements with parents who could walk to the new school in minutes, having to drive miles to find another school for their children? The building is in place, the rooms are in place, if a real solution can be found, then their children's first steps in education in Barkham could be happy and far less troubled.*

*BPC will continue to lobby for a change to the catchment area for the school, so that residents of the Arborfield Green development can access the school.*

# Barkham Solar Farm Update

At a Planning Committee Meeting held by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) on 08 September 2021, their full planning application number 211081 for the installation of the solar farm in Barkham was approved. The final planning application included a number of changes and improvements that BPC and residents had pushed for.

[Here is a view of the final approved site layout.](#)



## The major changes and additional information include:

- The overall size of the site remains the same as before (52Ha) but the number of solar panels has been reduced to provide a lower power output of 29.63 MWp from 67,340 panels occupying 43.56 Ha (approx. 60 football pitches).
- The planning permission allows the solar farm to be on the land for 25 years. It is still not clear as to the financial viability, although WBC have confirmed that it will be profitable, and how the costs of decommissioning have been taken into account.
- The area in the lower left of the solar farm has been put aside for the farmer's use as has the land to the south of Rooks Nest Farm which is to be retained as open field to provide grazing land for the existing cattle on the farmstead or arable farming if the tenant farmer so chooses.
- A new Greenway will be built through the site running underneath the existing power cable and connect California Ride in the south to Barkham Church north of Barkham Ride and connect into footpath 10A. This will include a safe crossing on Barkham Ride somewhere near where the existing power cables cross the road and it is hoped that this will be a Pegasus type crossing so that horse riders will be catered for.

- The initial proposed footpath which would have run behind the cottages near the church (part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument) has now been removed leaving BR11 as is.
- The screening has been improved and moved back around the church area and is now more in-line with the layout that BPC pushed for. The proposals now provide a 25m buffer between the Grade II listed Church Cottages and the solar panels.
- In terms of construction traffic using Barkham Ride, we await a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which the selected contractor will need to submit in advance of construction commencing.

## The proposed construction programme for the revised development is January - October 2022, with the Site open and operational in October 2022.

Activity	2022									
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Constructing the on-site access tracks and the temporary compound / laydown areas										
Installing security fencing										
Excavating and constructing the foundations for the the Photo-Voltaic (PV) and the Inverter/ Transformer Cabins and Control Buildings										
Installing / constructing the PV panel support structures and the Inverter / Transformer Cabins and Control Buildings										
Assembling the PV panel mounting systems										
Mounting the PV panels										
Installing the underground electrical system										
Commissioning and energising the solar farm										
Site reinstatement including undertaking any landscape enhancement measures										

BPC believes the results of the survey of residents completed in March 2021 and the feedback and comments of residents to the original planning application, that we have been able to get the original solar farm plan changed to a point where it is now more acceptable given that it cannot be stopped. The planning application, now approved, has been referred to the Secretary of State so there may be another twist in the tale before construction begins next year.

## News From Wokingham Borough Council

# Smoother Journeys through Barkham thanks to New Bridge



**The widening of Barkham Bridge is already improving journeys for residents and commuters in the area.**

**Wokingham Borough Council and its partner Balfour Beatty completed the project earlier this year, which replaced the old narrow bridge with a two-lane bridge over the brook on Barkham Road.**



The old Barkham Bridge (on the right) is now a shared use footpath

Before the changes between Barkham Street and Langley Common Road, a bottleneck existed at the old bridge but this has been removed and journeys are now smoother. The roads around the bridge have been realigned as part of the project, while there have also been improvements to drainage along Barkham Road up to the School Lane junction.

The old bridge has been converted into a shared footway/cycleway for pedestrians and cyclists to use for their journeys in the area. This links up with existing footways at either end of the project. The area around the bridge and the new road have also seen significant planting and landscaping. These improvements have been made to support new housing developments in Barkham, such as Arborfield Green.

Cllr Pauline Jorgensen, executive member for highways and transport, said: "Improvements at Barkham Bridge are proving a major benefit to anyone driving in the area. Removal of the bottleneck with the new bridge means traffic flows smoothly and helps to keep drivers moving on our roads. The benefits aren't just to those in vehicles on the road and it's been fantastic to see the new shared path for cyclists and pedestrians is being put to use by those travelling in the local area."

The project is part of the council's Major New Roads programme, the cornerstone to new infrastructure across the borough, alongside new housing. The new bridge and road changes are part of the project which will see an investment of more than £100million across the borough, including the already opened Winnersh Relief Road and Observer Way (Arborfield Cross Relief Road).

The Barkham Bridge project has been funded through developer contributions and with support from the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership. The partnership has contributed about £4.2million towards it.

Bob Beveridge, chair of Thames Valley Berkshire LEP, said: "We are delighted to see the completion of the new Barkham Bridge, which has been supported by the LEP's Local Growth Fund. The new bridge has removed a bottleneck on an increasingly important route between Shinfield and Wokingham, improved traffic flow for buses and created safer journeys for cyclists."

**For more background on the project visit the Major New Roads webpages and the Barkham Bridge project webpages.**

### Further information:

1. More from Cllr Pauline Jorgensen, executive member for highways and transport, via [pauline.jorgensen@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:pauline.jorgensen@wokingham.gov.uk)
2. Alternatively, contact the council's communications, engagement and marketing team via [CEM@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:CEM@wokingham.gov.uk)
3. Local Growth Fund - Local Enterprise Partnerships are playing a vital role in driving forward economic growth across the country, helping to build a country that works for everyone. That's why by 2021 Government will have invested over £12bn through the Local Growth Fund, allowing LEPs to use their local knowledge to get all areas of the country firing on all cylinders.



The new Barkham bridge

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# An update from Barkham Ward Councillor - John Kaiser



**The shake up at the Ministry of Housing means it's time to rewrite the planning reforms.**

**Change has come again at what used to be called**

**the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The replacement of the old Secretary of State, Robert Jenrick, with 'Mr Fixit' Michael Gove, and the pause announced to the proposed planning reforms, are greatly welcomed. They represent a real opportunity to rethink the disastrous overhaul to the planning system in favour of something fairer and more sensible.**

## What was wrong with the previous planning reforms?

In short, they took away local choice while doing nothing to increase housing supply, at the same time as continuing to concentrate new homes in the Southeast. The Leader of Wokingham Borough met Mr Jenrick several times to explain why his plans did not work. His reforms failed to identify that the problem is housebuilders get lots of planning permissions for new homes, but do not build them – otherwise known as land-banking.

They hold on to those permissions to force councils to give them even more planning approvals, on the grounds that the council doesn't have a viable number of new houses being built. Developers increase the value of land they hold, which they can sell on to make a profit, and force house prices ever higher.

Not that this is anything new. The Letwin Review in 2018 ignored the fact that developers hoarding permissions is a problem, despite Oliver Letwin visiting Wokingham and being directly told by us that this is the problem.

## So how could this be fixed?

Rather than letting housebuilders go on land-banking, the Government needs to introduce a 'use it or lose it' policy. This would require developers with planning permission to complete a development within a period set by the council, with a penalty if this doesn't happen. For example, developers could have to surrender the land to a smaller, local builder or pay a penalty to the local authority. Housebuilders would then get on with doing just that – building houses – instead of making money from restricting the supply of homes.

The Jenrick reforms also proposed to take away the power for the local community to decide on whether a development was right for an area. This would be a dangerous assault on democracy, putting the interests of businesses ahead of the needs and wants of local people.

A council should continue to focus entirely on whether an individual planning application meets local and national planning standards, with a right of appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. But the actual decision on whether to accept a development should be given to the affected local community depending on the size of the application.

This could be a local street survey for a single property, through to a borough wide survey via referendum for a large-scale development. While this could be costly, large developers could be charged

a levy as part of submitting their application to cover the cost of the referendum

And crucially, there would be no right of appeal. The verdict of the community would, and should, be final. An end to state-controlled planning in favour of local people having the say. At the same time, to boost the chances of local people signing up to a large development, there should be increased incentives: extra government subsidies for early infrastructure delivery, greater ability to use residency tests to prioritise local people for new homes, and more power for residents to shape local design standards.

Our first duty is to our communities as it is all of us who feel the strain on roads, doctors' surgeries and other services caused by too many new houses; as well as those who can't afford buy a home here.

The changes to planning we are proposing would fix the system well beyond just Wokingham. They would ensure development isn't a state-controlled monstrosity that instead allows the private sector to lead the way rather than local communities, they would ensure that the most important voice, that of local people, is the one heard the most.

We will be making our case directly to Mr Gove, and he has an open invitation to come and visit Wokingham Borough, one of the best places to live in the country.

## Councillor John Kaiser

Member for Barkham Wokingham

Borough Council

Tel: 0771 419 2352

Email: [john.kaiser@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:john.kaiser@wokingham.gov.uk)

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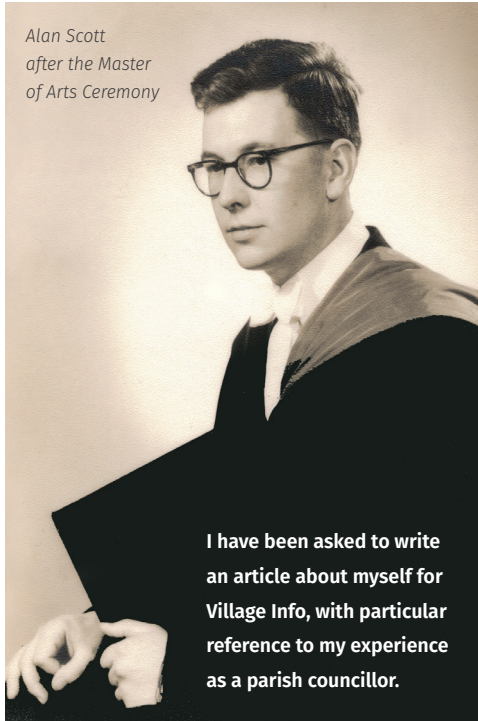
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Mr Keith Baker

# Recollections after 30 years as a Parish Councillor - Alan Scott



## Who am I?

I first came to the area in December 1950 for National Service at the Arborfield Garrison. I moved back to the area in February 1957 and have lived here ever since, apart from short breaks totalling about three years. My late wife, Irene, lived here all of her life apart from the same breaks.

My full name is Francis Alan Scott but I have always been known as Alan except during sixth form when there was another Alan in the same small group of mathematicians who didn't have a second name so I had to give way and use my first, and in college where there was another Alan Scott in my year so I became Francis or Frank.

I was born (August 1932), the middle of five children, in Dewsbury in the West Riding of Yorkshire and lived there and in the adjoining town of Ossett until I started my National Service. My secondary education (1943-50) was at the Wheelwright Grammar School for Boys, Dewsbury. There I passed the HSC examination (precursor of A levels) three times, at the ages of 15, 16 & 17 (different subjects each time), won a State Scholarship, and a place at Oxford for after National Service.

National Service (1950-52) started with basic training at Blandford and Honiton, then I came to No.5 (Radar) Training Battalion REME, Arborfield (subsequently the School of Electronic Engineering), where I took an eight month course to become a Telecommunications Mechanic (Radar), following which I became a Radar Instructor until the end of my service. I was impressed by the quality of the Army's technical training and the associated documentation. Although there was a nucleus of regular staff, most of the teaching was done by national servicemen who, like me, were trained in their first year and taught in their second. I enjoyed my time in the Army, relations between the army and the local community were very friendly, and many of us who were stationed too far away from home to travel at weekends made friends locally through St James's church (where I first met my wife) and the local youth group.

Following my national service, I went up to Oxford University (1952-55) as an undergraduate at Hertford College where I read Mathematics, BA 1955, MA 1959. My tutor was Dr W L Ferrar, the author of a number of successful mathematical textbooks.

After graduating, my first job (1955-57) was at Armstrong Siddeley Motors Ltd., Rockets Division, Ansty, Warwickshire, where I was a Technical Assistant

working principally on fluid flow measurement. During that period I attended an Engineering Conversion Course for mathematicians and physicists at Manchester College of Science and Technology (now UMIST).

I then moved to ICI Ltd (1957-1969) where I worked in several units and locations.

Paints Division, Slough. (1957-64) as a Technical Officer in the Chemical Engineering Research Group (57-58) working on paint dispersion processes, and in the Operational Research Section (58-64), working mainly on production planning and inventory control. I first started working with computers while at Paints Division and attended my first programming course in May 1958.

Plastics Division, Welwyn Garden City. (1964-65) as Section Manager in the Mathematical Models and Services Group, working mainly on capital project appraisal.

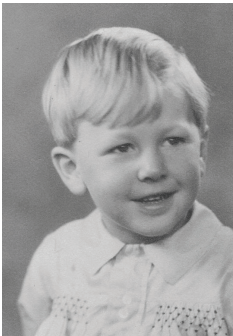
Central Instruments Research Laboratory, Pangbourne. (1965-66) in the Technical Economics Section, working on capital project appraisal and dynamic business modelling.

Central Management Services, Tees-side and Wilmslow. (1966-69) as Computers and Telecommunications Operations Manager, responsible for the operation of ICI's central computers, supporting both scientific and commercial applications and corporate projects such as Sales & Purchases Accounts and Company Pensions; and for running the company's computer based message switching system which handled all of ICI's internal and external telex traffic. At that time we lived in Macclesfield, which was a very friendly town. My wife and daughter became fond of a sheep in the adjoining field who always came to greet us when we returned home. We bought her, and brought her and two other ewes with us when we came back to Barkham. I wanted to add more ewes to match the flock size to the land we had available.

Being a Yorkshire man, I chose Mashams (pronounced Massams) which are a cross between a Teeswater tup and a Swaledale ewe and have a reputation for producing a good proportion of twin lambs. I kept sheep for about 25 years in total, my best lambing result was 14 lambs from 8 ewes on a couple of occasions but I never managed the coveted 200%.

While at ICI, I was (1964-67) a member of a small working party designing and producing a Short-term Sales Forecasting package for company use.

I moved to Oxford University (1970-1999) where I was initially responsible, as Computer Manager (70-78) and Director (78-83), for running the University's central academic computing services. Rather disappointingly, I didn't have time to do much computing myself: my time was taken up by administration, serving on external committees, and hard-nosed contractual negotiations and disputes with manufacturers (on one occasion, I achieved a settlement in equipment and price reduction estimated by the university's solicitor to be worth a million pounds). I relinquished my directorship in 1983 to become Professorial Research Fellow in Applied Computing, where I was, *inter alia*, Chairman of the Technical Sub-committee of the Telecommunications Committee, which was responsible for the university's telecommunications networks, from its formation in 1983, and later became chairman of the parent committee. I chaired several project teams, the first was responsible for the installation of the University's unified private telephone and data-communications network linking all university departments and colleges (12 telephone exchanges and ~9000 extensions, involving 12 Km of trenching and 28 Km of ducting throughout the City). Later projects were: the installation of an Optical Fibre Network linking all of the departments and colleges



Alan Scott aged 3 years 10 months



of the University; the construction and equipping of the University's Security Centre and the associated security and fire alarm network; installation of closed circuit television installations in two areas, one of which involved negotiations with the city Conservation Officer over the installation of video cameras on and adjacent to Grade One Listed buildings; and the installation of Ethernet cabling and equipment in 23 Arts departments. I was also a member of various national and regional computing committees, including Secretary (1976-8), and Chairman (1978-80), of the Inter-University Committee on Computing.

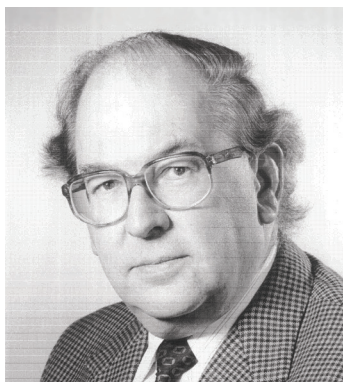
I was for many years a member of the Council (in effect board of directors) of NAG Ltd. NAG started as a collaborative venture between five universities all of which had the same model of computer and needed numerical analysis software. NAG started at Nottingham but then moved to Oxford and became part of my department. The project became so successful that other universities asked NAG to produce software for other ranges of computers, and eventually outside organisations also started to use the NAG software. NAG then became a successful limited company and now markets its software world-wide. I was closely involved in drawing up NAG's memorandum and articles of association, and in drafting the company's software rental agreement.

My university appointment was associated with a Professorial Fellowship of Corpus Christi College and I was an ex officio member of the college's governing body throughout my time at the university. Although I was not employed by the college and received no salary, I had (and still have) the right to lunch and dine at "common table" without charge. The fellows of the college cover a wide range of subjects, and lunch and dinner give a good opportunity to seek the advice of experts in other fields. I was a member of various college committees, in particular, the Estates and Finance Committee for most of my time at the College, and of the Statutes Committee from 1986-99, I also served a period as convener of the College's Computing Committee.

The college owned about 10,000 acres of farms, since that was the only way to generate an endowment income prior to the introduction of joint stock companies in the late 19th century. Much of the

farmland was endowed in 1517 by our founder, Bishop Richard Fox, who was a power in the land and served as Lord Privy seal to Henry VII. I enjoyed meeting the farmers both when we went "on progress" to some of the estates each year in a six year cycle, and at the "Rent Audit Dinner" each year just before Christmas, when the tenants came to the college for a lunch that was a relic of the days when the tenants came to pay their annual rent following the harvest. Among the college's tenants was the late Joe Henson who, some readers may remember, used to make frequent appearances on television on farming matters. He came from a theatrical family (father Leslie, aunt Gladys, and brother Nicky) and was succeeded by his son Adam who also appears regularly on television on Countryfile. Joe was a founder member of the Rare Breeds Survival Trust and set up the Cotswold Farm Park in 1971 to exhibit rare farm breeds and to help ensure their survival; the college gave its approval for him to set it up at my first meeting on the Estates and Finance Committee.

The statutory position of the Oxford colleges is somewhat strange. Although closely connected with the university, they are all legally separate entities; the statutes by which they are governed are originally laid down by the founder but can only be changed by the Queen in Council, or by University Commissioners appointed by the government from time to time. The colleges have to request the Privy Council to approve and implement any changes to the statutes



Alan Scott at age 64

they wish to see made. In my time on the Statutes Committee, I drafted all of the college's requests (and never had one rejected). I also served on a working party set up on behalf of all of the Oxford colleges to negotiate with the University Commissioners over the local form of the new disciplinary statutes being imposed on all universities and colleges by the government. The group was made up of three heads of colleges, two of whom were QCs, a fellow and lecturer in law, and myself. At the first meeting I attended, I submitted a version of the Commissioners' proposals incorporating the changes my college wished to see made, complete with explanatory footnotes. I drafted all of the working party's subsequent submissions to the commissioners which were based on that initial draft. (As I recall, we got up to version R).

Since my retirement in 1999 I am an emeritus fellow of the college.

During my long and varied career I frequently met people in other jobs, and the first impression was often that they must be frightfully clever. Over time I learned that, although this is sometimes so, for the most part there is nothing special about their expertise: they just speak another, technical, language. If you take the trouble to learn some of that language, you often realise that they are no brighter than you are yourself.

### My experiences on the Parish Council

I became a member of Barkham Parish Council (BPC) in February 1991. I have served as a member of the Planning Committee for most of my time on the council and was for a time one of the council's representatives on the Berkshire Association of Local Councils (including a spell as vice-chairman), Wokingham District Association of Local Councils, and Wokingham District Council's Parish Liaison Meeting.

It would be tedious to try to record everything that we ever did on the Parish Council, so I will concentrate on a few highlights, mostly on things I was closely

involved in since, at my age, my computer records are more reliable than my memory.

At my first council meeting, I was asked to draft a letter to the Highway Authority, then Berkshire County Council (BCC), about the traffic problems at the Bearwood Road junction. From that time onwards for over ten years, I was the only member of council to write anything longer than a single page of A4. I did not mind that, as I enjoyed the work, but as I have grown older, and as more active members have joined the council, I have been happy to let them take over the work.

When our chairman, Sam Hosgood, announced his retirement in 2004, I said that I would stay on for another year while his successor, Pam Stubbs, settled into the job, but that I then intended to retire myself. One of the other councillors said that I could not do so since I was the only member of the council who could remember what had happened more than few years back. I said that I would stay on only if others would take over the work that I had been doing, and that was agreed. Since then, I have regarded my rôle as principally an advisory one.

One thing I quickly learned was that on many matters, and in particular on highways, there are usually both advantages and disadvantages to any proposed course of action. I realised that if we were to propose a solution to a problem it could easily be shot down. Rather, we should concentrate in the first instance on highlighting the problem and expressing a willingness to discuss possible courses of action, preferably at an on-site meeting. One memorable such occasion was when we met with representatives of the Highways Department of BCC at the Bearwood Road junction where they were proposing to instal traffic lights. In brief, the meeting went along as follows. Can we have a mini-roundabout instead of traffic lights? No, the sight-lines are not long enough for the 40mph traffic on Barkham Road. Would they be OK at 30mph? Yes. Could we have a 30mph limit? Yes. Could we have another mini-roundabout at the Edney's Hill junction? Yes. Could the 30mph limit be

extended to cover the Barkham Street junction and Barkham Bridge? Yes. All of this took less than half an hour and all went ahead. I do not believe that we could ever have achieved such progress via written submissions, or at an off-site meeting. Another example of working in this way was in getting double white lines in Langley Common Road. I was authorised to handle this on behalf of BPC and met, at my gate, with one of the BCC highways officers. I was quickly able to convince him of the need and the white lines were installed shortly afterwards.

We have not, however, always been successful in highways matters, apart from our success at the Bearwood Road junction. We have found that if we ask WBC for a lower speed limit to be implemented we are told that the traffic is too fast for the proposed limit. We already know it to be fast, that is why we requested the change. The rules appear to be tantamount to saying that you cannot have a change in speed limit unless you can prove that you don't actually need one. But we also find that WBC changes speed limits without consulting us. We have asked for a 30mph limit in Langley Common Road, being principally concerned about the built up part with a double bend, only to be told that the traffic is too fast, but WBC has since implemented a 30mph limit from the Eversley Road roundabout to half way between Biggs Lane and the Film Studio entrance, a stretch with no houses and, for the most part, good forward views. When Bohunt School was opened, the part of Barkham Road between the then existing 30mph limits was changed from 40mph to 30mph as a "Safe Route to School". We asked that the remaining 40mph part of Barkham Road and Langley Common Road should also have a 30mph limit for the same reason since anyone walking to Bohunt from Barkham Road would inevitably have to travel also along those two roads. We were unsuccessful. This sort of experience was annoying, and the first thing to come to my mind was Hanlon's Razor which cautions us "Never attribute to malice that which is adequately explained by stupidity". On further consideration, I came to the more charitable conclusion that WBC might have a rational reason for its actions, though I could not (and still cannot) imagine what it might be.

I was responsible for producing the BPC's submissions to the Local Government Commission for England prior to the local government reorganisation in 1994. The government's original intention was that the county council layer of local government should be abolished and that its function should be devolved to the next layer (borough and district councils) which would then be designated as unitary authorities. In the event, Berkshire was the only county for which the Commissioners proposed that this should happen, all other county councils remained in existence. The Commissioners' initial proposals included a number of possibilities, all of which included the abolition of the county council and all of which involved splitting up Wokingham District in various ways and giving the pieces to adjoining authorities. BPC supported the district council in opposing all of these options and in the end we were successful in achieving the present six unitary authority arrangement; Wokingham had (and still has) the highest population of all of the Berkshire unitary authorities.

I was closely involved with a long running saga which started with the BCC's proposals for the Waste Local Plan (WLP). The draft plan included proposals for a Waste Transfer Station at the site of the former Poperinghe Barracks, later known as the Piggeries. BPC was generally supportive of the proposals in the Draft WLP but was strongly opposed to the proposal for the Waste Transfer Station. This issue ran for a long time involving submissions to both the County Council and to the Berkshire Waste Local Plan Inquiry 1995-6 conducted by a government appointed Inspector. The proposed Waste Transfer Station would have had a huge recycling building (3120m<sup>2</sup>, 14m high) that would have housed diesel powered crushing machinery, and included provisions for the storage of asbestos. BPC opposed this both on environmental grounds and because it would be in breach many of the provisions within the WLP itself. I attended every day of the WLP Inquiry and my "Proof of Evidence" on behalf of BPC ran to 16 A4 pages of text plus several annexes, plans, photographs and other documents. In the end, the site was excluded from the

final version of the plan and I like to think that my efforts on behalf of BPC helped in achieving that result.

In 2002, the Boundaries Committee of the Electoral Commission investigated the electoral boundaries in Wokingham. Its remit was to ensure that the number of electors per councillor was as equal as possible for all wards of the district council. Their recommendations included that part of Arborfield parish should be separately warded as the "Garrison ward" which should be regarded as part of Barkham for District election purposes. This looked fine on paper, but the map showing the Garrison Ward included what looked like vacant land but was in fact Penrose Park, then under construction; this would have added an extra 575 electors to the Barkham District Ward electorate resulting in a variance from average of +36%, and in Arborfield District Ward a variance from average of -34%. BPC had to point this out to the Committee, no-one else seemed to have noticed. I shudder to think how the next such review will deal with Arborfield Green which, despite the name, is almost entirely within Barkham.

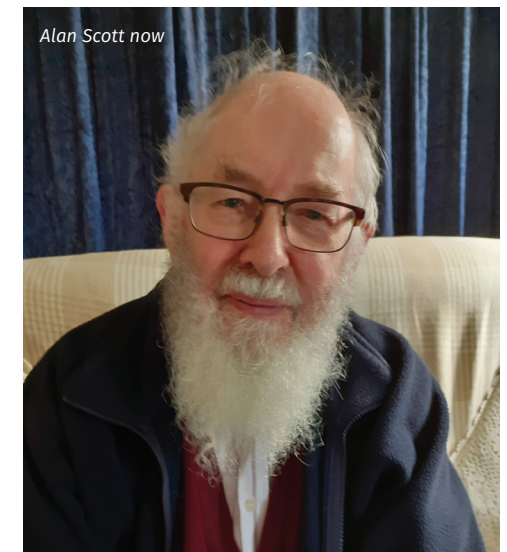
I recall that in 1992 I drafted, on behalf of BPC, our response to a consultation paper on the role of parish and town councils. That paper is not on the internet, and I cannot find a paper copy, but my draft response shows that there appear to have been suggestions to limit the role of parish councils. Our submission pointed out that the majority of parish councillors live within the community they represent, and have a strong sense of identity with the area, often through having lived there a long time. By contrast, councillors in the principal authorities frequently represent a ward which is distant from their own home. As a consequence, parish councils are in a much better position than the principal authorities to assess the likely consequences at the local level of proposed courses of action; they can also devote more time to considering those consequences than a principal authority can. We stressed the importance of parish councils providing a "second voice" which could ensure that local people's views are taken into account when the principal authorities formulate

policies and make decisions, thus helping to ensure that the principal authorities are accountable to the communities they serve.

I drafted several of BPC's responses to draft local plans. Luckily for me, in those days the Local Plan procedure was much less rigid and long winded than it is nowadays.

In 2009/10, a lot of heat was generated over the provision of a Youth shelter at the Junipers open space to be paid for from a Youth Opportunities Fund grant. There was some opposition from local residents and several meetings were held at which dire predictions were made and BPC was accused of reneging on promises which it had not made, and could not legally have made. In the end, the shelter was installed without any of the predicted consequences arising and has been trouble free ever since.

Finally, I would like to say that I have, on the whole, enjoyed my time on the Parish Council but at the age of 89 I am getting a bit tired and do not intend to stand again at the next election. I would, however, encourage younger parishioners to consider joining the council, thereby making a contribution to the community.





**Not only has this project provided a cleaner and more appropriate route, it is a good example of:**

- How it is within BPC's powers to respond to residents' concerns.
- The benefits of constructively working with neighbours and WBC.
- How to use CIL moneys.

### Pedestrian Crossing on Biggs Lane

Although provision had been made for a pedestrian crossing on Biggs Lane in the vicinity of the new Primary School in Arborfield Green, it was evident that it was not going to be in place for when the school opened for the September term.



*The temporary pedestrian crossing on Biggs Lane*

After strong lobbying by the Ward Councillor, BPC, residents and others, a temporary crossing was erected near Venning Road. Initial observations suggest this is well placed and will, hopefully, be made permanent at the earliest opportunity. Another good example of how many groups working together can bring about change.

### Other Road Safety Initiatives

With the resumption of Speed Watch activities following the pandemic, it is particularly satisfying that plans to install mounting poles for speed measuring equipment are coming to fruition. These poles are located at speed hotspots where there are no convenient lamp posts and you will see them in School Road, Barkham Street and eventually

on the lower end of Barkham Road. The work was completed by WBC contractors and BPC very much appreciates that these were funded by WBC Highways team as part of our joint efforts to make the roads in Barkham safer.

Following the new poles, several speed watch sessions have been held in the vicinity of primary schools, including one on School Road when we successfully logged within an hour more than 20 motorists travelling 36 mph and over in a 30-mph



*The new pole on School Road*

speed limit zone. Drivers logged will receive a warning letter from Thames Valley Police. This is not an enforcement exercise but is aimed at educating motorists to reduce their speeds and improve driver behaviour.

These three projects have been in the making for some time but when they come together like this, it really feels as if progress is being made.

Section S106 projects are those agreed between the Developers and the Local Planning Authorities and paid for by the Developers as a condition of the planning process. The timing of these projects is often linked to completion of a specified number of dwellings.

The Community Infrastructure Levy – CIL – is a payment levied on most new homes built in the parish to support the additional infrastructure required by the increased number of residents. As there is a Neighbourhood Plan in place for Barkham, BPC is allowed to allocate 25% of these funds.

# Footpath and Cycleway Upgrade plus Road Safety Improvements

**Progress has been made on three projects that will contribute to the safety and convenience of passing through the Parish either by road or on foot.**

## Footpath upgrade on Hazebrouck Meadows

The Section 106 Agreement for the Arborfield Green SDL included a footpath running from Finchampstead via Biggs Lane to Bohunt School. The first part of this has been completed – The California Way, which links Finchampstead to Biggs Lane - with the final section due at a later date.

To complete their journey to/from the school, children previously crossed Hazebrouck Meadows where there was an incomplete footpath and one very muddy section. This meant students would arrive at school or back at home in a very muddy state.

Barkham Parish Council (BPC), working with colleagues from Finchampstead, discussed this with the Greenways Project Manager and concluded

that the most expedient way to resolve this was to upgrade the entire length of the footpath from the school to both the northern access to Biggs Lane for those living in Arborfield Green and to the southern access for those in Finchampstead.

The work was managed by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) and was completed in time for the new term. Barkham's 50% contribution of £8,800.00 was paid using CIL funds. WBC will now follow this up by completing a traffic assessment of the two crossings on Biggs Lane at these access points to see how they can be improved.



*The extended footpath in Hazebrouck Meadows*

## YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM

Shinfield, Swallowfield, Spencers Wood,  
Riseley, Arborfield and Barkham



**Inspector**  
Alastair Lloyd



**Sergeant**  
Simon Botham



**PC**  
Richard Probert



**PC**  
Monika  
Taranczewska



**PCSO**  
Karen Bird



**PCSO**  
Vicky Lendrum



**PCSO**  
Chris Scullin



**PCSO**  
Hannah Millington

Your neighbourhood policing team are working on issues identified by the local community and the police  
To contact them call: 101  
This is a non-emergency number  
Alternatively, email them on:  
[FieldsNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:FieldsNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)

### Neighbourhood Policing

Working in partnership to make our community safer



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## Village INFO

[www.barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk) has a host of information about police, doctors 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](http://www.barkhampreschool.net)

### Barkham St James Church

[www.achurchnearyou.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com)

### BVRA residents' association

[www.barkham.org.uk](http://www.barkham.org.uk)

### Barkham Village Store

01189 799131.

[barkhamvillagestore@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:barkhamvillagestore@hotmail.co.uk)

### 1st Wokingham Beaver, Cub and Scout Group

[www.firstwokingham.org.uk](http://www.firstwokingham.org.uk)

### The Bull at Barkham

[www.thebullbarkham.com](http://www.thebullbarkham.com)

### The Coombes CE Primary School.

[www.thecoombes.com](http://www.thecoombes.com)

### Wokingham Job Support Centre

[www.wjsc.org.uk](http://www.wjsc.org.uk)

### Wokingham Citizens Advice Bureau

[www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk)

### Wokingham Cancer Care Trust

[www.wdctt.org](http://www.wdctt.org)

### Shine WBC activities for the over 50s

[www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk)

### Reach Wokingham

[www.reachwokingham.com](http://www.reachwokingham.com)

