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Barkham Newsletter

Issue 126 Winter 2018

from the Barkham Village Residents Association

<http://www.barkham.org.uk>

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Please help to support your local Barkham community by becoming the new editor of this newsletter – see page 9 – **don't wait for someone else to volunteer!**



Carols in the Park

Friday 14 December 7pm

The Junipers



Family Skittles Evening Saturday 23 March
– see all Social Events details on page 12

Local Plan Update and the continuing development threat to Barkham – pages 4-6

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Chairman's Report

Our Chairman since the start of the year, Richard Roberts, is recovering after surgery and a period in hospital. Our best wishes go out to Richard and we hope he continues to make progress to full fitness. However, Richard has decided that he needs to focus his energies on his recovery so at the recent AGM he stepped down and I was elected as Chairman. Richard will however remain on the BVRA committee.

In that last newsletter we communicated that Stewart Richardson was stepping down as Editor

of the Barkham Newsletter. After 12 successful years, this is his last edition. Having spent some time with Stewart going over the work he does I can fully appreciate his knowledge, diligence and pride in the final product. We continue to seek someone who can take over as the Newsletter Editor and take the publication forward into the future. There is scope for new ideas and I know that Stewart will provide initial guidance and advice. If any of you have ideas about what new subjects we should include, (in addition to the current content), please drop me an email.

We are also still looking for a Membership Secretary to take over from Jim Butler. This is a key role within the BVRA and I am sure that there are energetic and well organised people in Barkham community who would be great in this role!

On the social front the Barn Dance was a lively and well attended event. Thanks as always

for those of you that attended this. As usual, we will be holding our "Carols in the Park" in December (see front cover and Social page). This is a great community event where you can all join in so let's see if we can make this one of the best attended!

With the continued housing development within Barkham the Neighbourhood Watch continues to be active and essential in ensuring that new developments do not sneak in unnoticed. Many thanks to those of you who have highlighted activities that may result in new developments. Please continue to let the BVRA know if you see or hear something that the Development Watch should become involved in. Stewart Richardson will continue to coordinate Development Watch activities after he has retired as Editor of this Barkham Newsletter.

Alan Dixon
BVRA Chairman



Editorial

Welcome to the winter edition of the Barkham Newsletter!

As I announced in the previous newsletter I am stepping down as editor after 12 years and 50 editions. I have greatly enjoyed my time as editor (and indeed the 6 years as Membership Secretary before that) but feel it is time to "retire" and let someone else take over. I will continue to coordinate the Development Watch email alerts (to which over 900 residents subscribe and to support the BVRA where I can in other ways, such as the social activities.

However, we now urgently need a new editor!

Please seriously consider coming forward to take on this key role for the community.

I will be happy to discuss the details of what is involved and the scope of the role is summarised on page 9. We have a group of regular contributors (many of which have articles in this edition) and some occasional ones, so the new editor will take over a smooth-running operation on which they can build and add their own ideas if they so wish.

Please don't wait for someone else to come forward – those of you with any experience of voluntary roles will know this never works!

On to the contents of this edition of the newsletter....

There is a continuing (never-ending!) threat of even more development in Barkham, in excess of that already announced on such major sites as the garrison (now "Arborfield Green", even though much of it is in Barkham). We want all residents to be aware of the potential scale of these developments and the related issues and to stimulate discussion and participation where appropriate. Laurence Heath (Barkham Parish Council) and John Kaiser (Wokingham Borough Council) discuss the issues in detail on pages 4-6. The proposed site of 1000 houses at Barkham Square is a particular concern but very recently diggers have been sighted clearing parts of The Coombes on plots that have recently been sold. This has been reported to WBC who have visited the site and advised owners of the regulations pertaining to the Coombes, including any Tree Protection Orders. WBC say they will continue to monitor the situation and take further action where appropriate. To keep up to date on such threats and to advise of us of any untoward activities, join the over 900 residents already subscribed to alerts via the BVRA Development Watch email list at barkham.org.uk.

The quiz this time is on "Ireland" and I will continue to set a quiz in each edition if so desired by the new editor.

As this is the last edition of the year, I want to thank everyone who has contributed articles in 2018.

We continue to cover the activities of Barkham Parish Council but unfortunately this year they

decided not to give us a grant. As a result, we have made a loss on the year (we plan to break even) and have had to use some of our "fighting fund" financial reserves. Given our continuing contribution to the local community, we hope that the parish council will return to awarding us a grant in 2019. As a reminder, we were the sole means of regular written communication with Barkham residents for 30 years!

I also want to thank the advertisers who give us an important source of revenue to offset against our costs. I hope they get some return from their investment!

As always, I'd like to thank Bob Bishop for his continuing work as the "publisher", Steve Young as the "wholesaler" who packages up the copies and to all the 30+ distributors without whom the newsletters would never reach the streets of Barkham.

Finally, may I send the BVRA's best wishes to all residents for Christmas and the New Year!

Stewart Richardson
Editor

The Quiz

As the hot political topic in the news as I write is how to solve the Irish border issue at B****t (you probably don't want to hear that word again!), the theme for the quiz this time is Ireland (or more specifically the island of Ireland).

1. Which English World Cup winner managed the Republic of Ireland football team from 1986-96?
2. Sir George Ivan Morrison is better known as whom?
3. What is the claim to fame of Carrauntoohil?
4. Which Dublin-born author wrote "Man and Superman"?
5. What is the name of the stadium that is the home of the Gaelic Athletic Association and is the third largest stadium in Europe?
6. In what year did the Republic of Ireland join the EEC (as it was then)?
7. What is the name of the Belfast shipyard where the Titanic was built?
8. Which Irish poet won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1995?
9. What kind of structure is Carrick-a-Rede?
10. ...and finally, which prestigious international competition did the Republic of Ireland win for 3 successive years in 1992-4 and 7 times in all?



<https://bit.ly/2sHtWsm> but we have extracted the local area in the map opposite. The Submitted Sites are shown shaded. It is worth checking the map on the WBC website as it may be updated from time to time. In the worst-case scenario, Barkham could be part of a massive urban sprawl stretching from Wokingham to Arborfield, up the A327 towards Shinfield and along the south side of the Loddon to Sindlesham.

Local Plan Update consultation

WBC is launching a consultation about the Local Plan Update which started on 12 November and will run until 15 February 2019. (See also comments by John Kaiser on page 6)

It is essential residents respond to this consultation, to make sure the community is heard. I am sure that the BVRA will provide guidance in due course through the Development Watch bulletins. Issues to emphasise are not just the numbers of houses and infrastructure (or the lack of it) but also the green gaps that separate Barkham from our neighbours to north, south, east and west.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Arborfield and Barkham Neighbourhood Plan has now been submitted to WBC. One of the main objectives of the plan is to ensure that the green spaces around the various settlements including Barkham, Arborfield Green and Arborfield Cross are retained. It will be interesting to see if WBC attempt to amend the plan to protect their own designs for increased housing.

The Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Analysis indicated

that the additional housing units required in Arborfield and Barkham between 2011 and 2036 is 899. This is a half of the 1,800 already committed up to 2026 at Arborfield Green. This means that any additional housing that WBC imposes on us would be to accommodate an influx of people from elsewhere, whether from neighbouring authorities, London or further afield.

Engagement with politicians

In the last Newsletter, I mentioned that BPC had written to Brandon Lewis, Conservative Party Chairman, and other politicians to highlight the extent that excessive development is politically toxic in the Wokingham area. The BPC letter pointed out that the petition, which exceeded 4,000 signatures, as a clear demonstration of local feeling.

Eventually we received a reply from an anonymous civil servant in the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. This letter epitomised the muddle which seems to exist in that department with the civil servants out of touch with the real world. The letter was factually incorrect, claiming that Wokingham Borough Council does not have an up to date local plan – there is the Core Strategy (adopted 2010) and Managing Development Delivery (adopted 2014), both of which were examined by Planning Inspectors and which are supposed to run until 2026.

A further letter has been sent, to outline these deficiencies, but I am not holding my breath for the reply!

Barkham Square petition and the council debate

You will recall that the petition required Wokingham Borough Council to debate the proposals for excessive development in the area including proposals for more than 1,000 houses at Barkham Square and other unsuitable locations in the area. The debate has now been scheduled for 22 November, after I have written these words but before you are likely to read them. However, those residents who asked to be kept updated will have received an email advising you of the date. My comments, inevitably, have to be speculative and I do not even know yet what will be the precise motion to be debated. If

the Council have any sense, they will agree that it is essential to up their effort to lobby government. Developers have been extremely effective lobbying government to protect their interests, local authorities must do the same.

The Ministry must recognise that housing policy has become a numbers game which helps developers, so much so that one executive of a building company has recently walked away with a bonus of £75 million! It is well known that a local authority's decision to allocate land for development can raise the value of land twentyfold or more. This uplift in value should be spent on infrastructure for the community, not luxury yachts for developers.

Wokingham, as a relatively small authority is perpetually the victim of unrealistic housing targets. We can all see that the town has been changed out of all recognition, with only the A329(M) separating it from Bracknell. Meanwhile the real housing problems remain unresolved: the people living in crumbling tower blocks and decaying Victorian terraces in London, the foreign workers living in garden sheds in Slough, young people unable to afford their own housing. Four bed detached houses in greenfield locations do not resolve these problems.

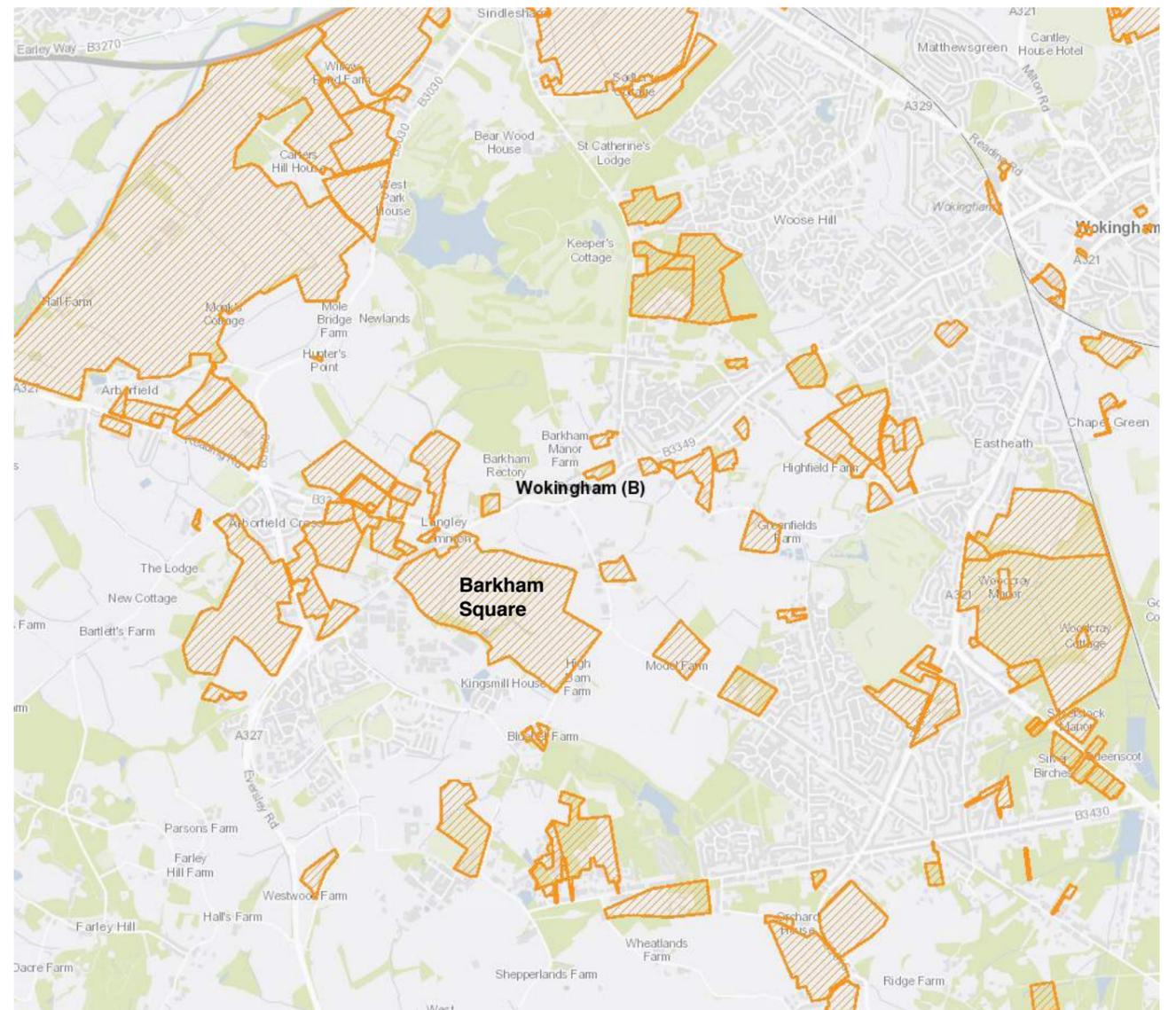
Laurence Heath
Chair of Planning Committee
Barkham Parish Council

In the previous edition of the BVRA Newsletter, I wrote about three topics: the Barkham Square petition, the Neighbourhood Plan and the attempt by Barkham Parish Council (BPC) to engage with politicians. Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) are now trying to kick start the Local Plan Update, which will have a bearing on all three of these items.

Local Plan Update

The Local Plan Update started in 2015. Progress stalled for a variety of reasons, but not before three large sites were identified, one of which was Barkham Square, for a so-called master planning exercise. WBC are looking to allocate land for an additional 7,000 homes for the period up to 2036 to meet anticipated government targets. This is over and above the existing commitment for 13,500 in the period up to 2026.

The call for sites, meanwhile, has remained open, so that there are now more than 260 sites put forward by developers across the whole borough. WBC are at pains to stress that no decisions have been made, but there is a great danger that once sites are proposed, their backers will not easily take no for an answer. The latest interactive map is on the WBC website Local Plan Update page





More Money for care

In October the Health and Social Care Secretary announced £240 million for the social care system over winter, giving councils a significant boost to prevent people from going into hospital unnecessarily and getting them home as soon as they are ready. This funding will ease pressure on the health system and follows the announcement of £145 million to improve emergency care within the NHS this winter. What this means to Wokingham is an additional funding of £401,589.

The money will pay for home care packages to help patients get out of hospital quicker, reablement packages to help patients carry out everyday tasks and regain mobility and confidence, and home adaptations.

The cost of Health and Social care continues to raise in the borough due to additional demographics pressures and winter see this demand increase, so any additional funding is to be welcomed.

Next Steps Towards Additional Development in Borough

It is important all residents should engage in the next steps towards new development across the bor-

ough, and to this end the council has set up an engagement package for residents, so the council can consult with all those who could be affected.

This is particularly important as the government requires the council to identify land for enough homes to meet the Government's requirements, which is likely to be around an additional 7,000 new homes between 2026 and 2036 (the total number of homes to be provided will vary because the methodology the Government requires local authorities to use depends on population predictions that can change).

The council needs to plan for this now because we are told by central government without an up-to-date local plan, there will be no real protection against speculative planning applications being submitted for inappropriate development without the necessary infrastructure.

The council is set to consider how best to explain to residents why the council must plan for new homes in the borough and how you can get involved in planning for them.

The engagement proposals were agreed by the council executive and a public consultation was launched in November to seek people's view on where and how the homes required should be provided. The proposals are:

- An online consultation launched in mid-November and run until mid-February to seek people's views on how we plan for housing and new jobs
- A guide to the Local Plan Update which will be sent to

all homes in the borough to explain what it involves and how people can take part in the consultation

- A series of drop-in events to be held across the borough with officers and councillors in attendance to answer questions about the additional homes

This is all driven by the local plan update and will set out where the homes are built and what schools, roads, health, sports and leisure facilities are needed to avoid the overwhelming of existing services and facilities in the years up to 2036.

We already have large areas of local congestion in the borough, which we are trying urgently to address, and we are talking about a lot of homes.

The Government sets the method that councils must use to work out how many homes we must accommodate – there appears, so far, no choice – and the number is likely to be somewhere around additional 7,000 homes in the years 2026 to 2036.

The council will use every opportunity to explore ways to robustly challenge these numbers especially with considerable falling demand already experienced and further expected with Brexit.

The Season to be Merry

We are now in the run up to the Christmas period with all the fun and enjoyment this brings for people and their families, the down side is the roads will become busy and the weather will no doubt deliver a few surprises.

Every year the council has to plan for salting roads, dealing with fallen trees and if necessary clearing snow, generally keeping the borough moving and making sure the roads are as safe as possible, the delivery of these necessary services are annually reviewed and meetings are held throughout the year with service providers such as Fire and rescue service, road contractors and the police so when called upon, everybody is as prepared as possible to deal with any adverse conditions.

I would like to wish everybody a merry Christmas and a happy new year and remember if you need any help or have any questions about the borough council please do not hesitate to contact me.

John Kaiser
Borough Councillor
Barkham Ward and
Mayor for Wokingham Borough
Email: john.kaiser@wokingham.gov.uk
Telephone: 0118 9762116
Mobile 0771 419 2352

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

BVRA members are reminded that membership records are maintained on a personal computer. In relation to this newsletter, details recorded are addresses and payment records only. The information is used solely for BVRA purposes, and any member is free to see his/her details by contacting the Membership Secretary. More information can be found on the BVRA website barkham.org.uk.



At our meeting in September we were entertained by Jane Sampson who spoke on "Training with Russian cosmonauts, and a zero gravity flight". She included video of her moving around weightless in a large Russian stripped out aeroplane during hyperbolic flight. Health and safety seemed to be in short supply as the parachute that she had been given needed three people to fit it to her and then they took them off and strung them along the inside of the plane on a wire during the flight. Thank heavens there was no emergency requiring them!

The speaker in October was Dr Barbara Hatley who spoke on "The Changi Red Cross Quilt". She explained that the women at the prison in Singapore used the squares of fabric to communicate with their men in a separate closed block.

In early October 16 people enjoyed a beautiful walk in the Henley/Shiplake area. The weather was wonderful and the 5.2 miles walk was broken half way by a pub lunch (see photo below). Later in the month we visited Wokingham Theatre for a performance of Sense and Sensibility.

Our November speaker was Geoff Lunn talking about "The seasons" and on December 5th we will be holding our Christmas party. The food is always good and we play games.

On January 2nd I will be running a card making workshop where everyone makes and takes home a greeting card.

We meet at Barkham Village Hall on the first Wednesday evening of the month at 7.45pm. Visitors are welcome so if you are new to the area why not come along and meet us for an evening and then see if you would like to join.

Pam Edwards

For more information please contact our Chairperson Pauline on 0118 979 1714.





News from Your Parish Council

Sam Hosgood Sporting Endeavour Fund

This fund was set up by Sam Hosgood in order to help young people who are passionate about their sport and compete at County level. We were delighted to present 2 awards at the October meeting of the Council.

Ali Castle, aged 14 is a talented swimmer, who this year has competed at the Berks and South Bucks County Championships, and the East Regional Championships, narrowly missing out on a bronze medal and qualification for National Championships. She trains 14 hours a week over 6 days on top of her school work.

Ewan Castle aged 17 is a rugby player. He has just started his

second year of the AASE programme (Achieving Academic and Sporting Excellence) at Henley College in affiliation with the premiership club Wasps. This is an elite sportsman programme run in conjunction with all premiership clubs alongside selected educational institutions. This means that along with his A-level studies he also has a timetabled 12 hours of rugby / gym training during the college week. He also continues to play for the Berkshire u18's county team and for his childhood club Bracknell RFC.

Precept

The Parish Council will shortly be setting its precept which is collected as part of your Council Tax, based on the band of your property. Wokingham Borough Council collects the precept from the residents on its behalf and pays to the Parish Council annually in three instalments. Grants are given to local charities who support our residents such as Keep Mobile, Citizens Advice Bureau, Wokingham Job Support Agency, The Coombes C. of E. School to pay for the running costs of the swimming pool, St. James Church to keep the graveyard in a tidy condition, the Village Hall which pays for the mowing of the

grass, this lovely area is a huge attraction for hirers of the hall which hosts many events during the year, plus others. During the year the Parish Council has sponsored the purchase of a new kissing gate to be placed on the Barkham Way footpath, which was purchased and installed by the Loddon Valley Ramblers Association.

The Parish Council is not authorised to make the big decisions such as planning and road maintenances, but it does have an important role ensuring that the views of the parish are represented to WBC. Therefore, we budget for seeking guidance from professionals where needed, plus we hold a healthy planning reserve fund as a fighting fund should it ever be required.

Vacancy for Councillors

We have two vacancies for a parish councillor to join the Team as we meet the challenges of a rapidly changing local Environment.

Barkham covers an area from its boundaries in Barkham Road, Barkham Ride, and Bearwood Road to its Southern boundaries in Arborfield Green (the majority of which is in Barkham), Park Lane, and towards the end of Langley Common Road and School Road. From established communities in Elizabeth Park, rural and semi-rural areas and the new community developing at Arborfield Green, the Parish faces many opportunities and challenges. The Council has been heavily involved in commenting and consulting on new development as well as challenging new proposals like the potential 1000 houses at Barkham Square.

Parish Councils are beginning to benefit from the Community



New Barkham Newsletter Editor required – please help!

The Barkham Newsletter was started in 1987 and has been produced regularly ever since. The current editor (since 2006) is stepping down at the end of 2018 (after this winter edition) so **this is a further appeal to Barkham residents for someone to come forward to take on the role.** For information, previous newsletters (number 100 onwards) can be viewed on the BVRA website barkham.org.uk.

It is published 4 times per year - Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter. For each edition, the main tasks for the editor are:

- Receive articles via email, edit as necessary (usually not much required as the contributors are aware of the required format)
- Layout the articles with the "publisher" who has drives the publishing software
- Proof read and email to the printing company

Please contact the BVRA Chairman (see below) or me to discuss the role and hopefully volunteer!

Stewart Richardson
newsletter@barkham.org.uk

Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which will provide funds to help enhance facilities for residents. There is also a Neighbourhood Plan in prospect.

This means we need as broad a spread of councillors as possible as we work with residents on the future of the area. Existing councillors live across the Parish.

To find out more, contact our Parish Clerk and arrange to come along to one of the monthly meetings.

History Books

The "Barkham A History" book can be obtained from the Clerk at £8.50 each or from Henry Street Garden Centre. These will make ideal Christmas presents for anyone who is new to the area and does not already own one.

BVRA 2018/19 GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman: Alan Dixon
chairman@barkham.org.uk
977 1813

Secretary: Pam Edwards
secretary@barkham.org.uk
977 6623

Treasurer: Ian Overton
treasurer@barkham.org.uk
973 4806

Social: (contact) Gill Powell
social@barkham.org.uk
978 3373

Membership: vacant
membership@barkham.org.uk

Newsletter: vacant
newsletter@barkham.org.uk

Web Site: Dave Clements
989 2198
webmaster@barkham.org.uk

Development Watch:
Stewart Richardson
979 1914
development@barkham.org.uk

Advertising and Newsletter Contributions

Newsletter articles / contributions for the Spring edition should be in by 22 February 2019. It helps if these can be submitted in electronic form by email to newsletter@barkham.org.uk.

For trade adverts, contact Ian Overton by email to treasurer@barkham.org.uk, or call 973 4806. We offer three landscape sizes, 64mm x 54mm at £22, 124mm x 105mm at £52 and 190x130mm at £100, for 4 quarterly insertions.

Distribution of the next issue will take place in early March.

Arborfield Local History Society

For those who are not aware of us, we have been active for more than 15 years and have a very active research group who investigate our local history. This is largely documented on our website at www.arborfieldhistory.org.uk, well worth a look on these dark winter evenings. At the same time, we have monthly meetings, usually held at the Arborfield Village Hall on the first Monday of each month, interspersed with visits to historically places of interest.

In recent months, we visited the Reading Museum and the Abbey Ruins. We managed some 20 people, including a number of guests. Our member, Linda Fothergill was on hand at the Museum to point us to items of interest and she produced a printed guide for our assistance. Then on to The Forbury Gardens for some quick refreshment and then on to a fascinating tour of the ruins, ably guided by John and Lindsay Mullaney. Most of us were unaware of the size of the site and we were even able to see the northern boundary remains, accessed via the Priest's kitchen at the rear of St. James's Church! We finished with tea and biscuits in the church. I heartily recommend a visit if you have an hour or two to spare.

Our October meeting saw the return of Trevor Ottelwski who presented "The Lost Buildings of Wokingham". It was intriguing to learn of the numerous buildings in and around the town that are no longer. With the present drive to modernise and replace, who knows what will remain of our heritage in the future. Trevor is a fount of knowledge on all things

Wokingham and has over the past couple of years conducted three walking tours of parts of the town centre.

In November, we had a talk by Martin Andrews on the pioneer photographer, Henry Fox Talbot and the Reading Establishment. Unfortunately, a computer glitch meant that he was unable to display his presentation on the main screen, so we all gathered around his laptop. Very intimate! None of us were aware of the Reading involvement in the early development of photography and that some of his early premises remain in the town.

On December 3rd, we have our "Antiques Road Show", presented by John Ebdon. Members and guests are invited to bring along their heirlooms for John to appraise. We suggest a couple of items per person. John advises that he has only very limited knowledge of books, paintings and jewellery and ivory items are not acceptable. His areas of expertise are China, Glass, Wood and Silver together with Copper and other metallic items. Before examining your items, he will give a general talk on antique buying and collection. So why not dust off those items that have been languishing in your attics or wardrobes for years.

On January 8th, we have our annual dinner when we return to the Mill House at Swallowfield, the venue for last year's event. We have been able to maintain the cost at £29.50, inclusive of wine and service.

Tickets will be on sale at the December meeting or via our Treasurer, Ian Potts (ianwpotts@gmail.com).

We are presently looking at our meeting schedule for the next year and we are open to suggestions and requests for speakers, topics and trips. As ever, our meetings are held on Monday evenings in the Village Hall, starting at 7:45 pm. All are welcome and we charge a nominal £2-00 per event for non-members and guests.

As with most similar local groups, we are struggling to maintain our membership and we would dearly like to attract new members. We are concerned for the future, particularly as our Treasurer, Ian Potts and I are planning to stand down next spring and there are no obvious replacements lined up. It should also be noted that we have managed without a chairman for the last couple of years.

On that note, please let me wish you a happy Christmas and New Year.

Ray Hill,
Programme Secretary
0118-9760784
rayhill@aol.com

The BVRA needs a new Membership Secretary!

Duties are to:

- Maintain a membership register, recording payments and changes.
- Print rounds for distributors - 4 times per annum
- Cover for distributors on holiday.

Over the whole year, it takes less than 30 hours to the entire job.

Please contact our Chairman, Alan Dixon (details on page 9), if you are interested in helping the BVRA by taking on this role or would like more details.



You may remember that I told you last edition that we were looking for a new Chief Executive. Well, we managed to find one, who starts with us in December, just in time for me to retire at the end of the year. His name is Jake Morrison and comes to us from Citizens Advice Southport.

Other news is that central government have awarded funding to Citizens Advice to support Universal Credit claimants. Some of that money will be coming our way, early next year, in Wokingham to help us to provide independent and impartial support to those who need help making a Universal Credit claim. It definitely is not delivering Universal Credit on behalf of Department for Work and Pensions.

We'll be helping people make sure they can complete their claim and are ready for their first payment.

We absolutely won't be making or contributing to decisions on claims. This is in the same way we help people now to make claims for benefits like PIP or Housing Benefit. We will not share any information with the DWP which could lead to someone's benefit being sanctioned. As always, we'll continue to help people challenge decisions and will keep providing confidential, independent and impartial advice to anyone who comes to us.

Nothing in the grant agreement we have with the DWP prevents us from continuing to raise our evidence publicly about Universal Credit. Being able to use our evidence in this way is one of the great strengths of Citizens Advice.

If you have something you would like to talk to us about you can either phone us on 0300 330 1189

(calls cost the same as a local call would from whatever you use to call us) or you can also email us with problem issues from our website (www.citizensadvice-wokingham.org.uk) or on public@citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk or drop in to one of our offices:

WOKINGHAM
2nd floor, Waterford House,
Erfstadt Court RG40 1AP
public@citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk
www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk

Hours:
Mon - Thu: 9.00am - 3.00pm
Fri: 9.00am - 1.00pm

Telephone: 0300 330 1189



Social Matters

As I write this lovely Indian Summer we all experienced in September and October is sadly no more. The clocks have gone back and we now have darker evenings and the prospect of some frosty mornings - what a thought! But we still have social events to look forward to, and of course, Christmas !

The Barn Dance has taken place since the last Newsletter, and was held on September 22nd. This was a very successful and enjoyable evening with 33 dancers keeping in step, well most of the time, under the guidance of caller Alan Dyer and his Alderbricklam Band.

The hot dogs and accompaniments were a hit too during the break, and the last Dance, the 'Swiss Roll ' I think it is called, was great fun and led by one of the band members where the trick is not to let go of hands! The annual Quiz will have taken place on November 24th, so a report on this will appear in the next newsletter.

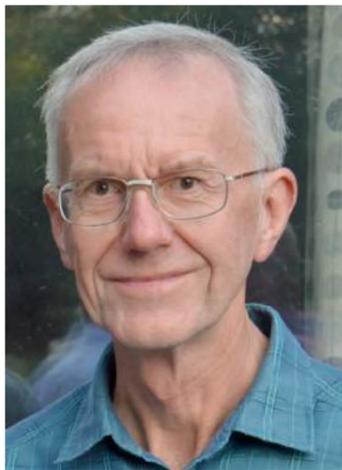
Our next event is the 'Family Carols in the Park' on Friday December 14th, starting at 7pm at the junction of the Woodlands and the Junipers. This is a free event, so please bring your

torches and singing voices - carol sheets will be provided. Once again 'Breakaway Brass' will be providing the music, and there will be a bucket collection for the musicians as they very kindly and freely give up their time. On arrival at the park there will more singing, and mulled wine and mince pies and warm non-alcoholic drinks will be provided too. So do come along and bring the children and grandchildren, wrap up warm and enjoy this lovely start to the festive season. Future events and dates have already been planned and booked. The first event is the 'Family Skittles ' evening on Saturday March 23rd in the Village Hall, 7.00 for 7.30, and supper will be provided. As usual there will be a bar and a raffle. Tickets are £10 and £5 for primary school-aged children, and these can be obtained from Gill Powell, preferably by emailing social@barkham.org.uk or by telephone 978 3373. This is always a fun event, so put the date in your new diaries. As usual the Children's 'Easter Egg Hunt' will take place at 3pm on Easter Sunday, April 21st at the Junipers Park. This event is very popular and a reminder will appear in the Spring Newsletter. Do look out for the posters around the village advertising the events too.

I hope to see many of you at our planned events, but until then thank you for supporting the BVRA - the committee put on the events for your enjoyment and they are always fun! I now would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.

Shirley Warner
Social Committee Member





Alan's Patch

The butternut squash crop was exceptional. When I came to put them in store last week there were 33, see photo. The wire basket is a relic from my childhood. My father was a farmer and he used to grow potatoes. At harvest time he used a machine to dig them out and it left them on the surface. I used to get roped into the team of perhaps a dozen that picked the potatoes and put them into these baskets – a back breaking job. I wanted to be the one to drive the tractor, much easier work. Boy was I glad when he found potatoes were uneconomic and stopped growing them! Despite those memories I kept one basket when he retired and I still find it useful occasionally. Not a hint of rust on it after 50+ years.

Moving onto the downs then.....

Whilst the new potatoes were absolutely fine, the main crop was light owing to the dry weather. We will have to buy potatoes for about half the winter. For me it's a price worth paying for the glorious weather but one can't help wondering about the increasing effects of global warming.

The most serious problem for me this year is that while there was a fantastic crop of apples there was a lot of damage. The birds are a problem so I intend to protect them with netting more effectively next year. The other main pest is insects, mostly codling moths, which tunnel into the young apples. The apples look pretty normal on the outside until you bite into them.....! Clearly I need to do more to protect them.

In the greenhouse, tomatoes, lettuce, beetroot and cucumbers have done very well indeed however I made a mistake with

the aubergine and they didn't perform well.

Herbs love hot dry weather so we had a great crop of parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme plus basil, oregano, coriander, chives, purslane and of course mint.

There was no need to mow the field this autumn, the dry summer saw to that, so it's had just one cut in June this year. Yesterday, in anticipation of the coming autumn leaf fall, I went to dig out the leaf cage and transfer the contents of rotted leaves (leaf mould) into one of the compost heaps for storage but found that much of it had dried out and the leaves had not decomposed – another consequence of the long dry summer. They will have to stay in there for another year to rot. I hope there will be enough space for this year's crop of leaves.

My other photograph (below) was taken in the village, but do you know where? The location is given with the Quiz Answers on page 23.



Arborfield Gardening Association



Hello Everyone !

We were very pleased to welcome Paul Patton at our September meeting, who spoke to us about "Autumn Aspirations". Paul describes himself as a Plant Pathologist, Writer and Broadcaster. He can also be heard on 'Dig It' and he gives talks on a wide variety of gardening topics. His beautiful Autumn slides and tips for the season were followed by a quiz – with some delightful prizes!

The annual Inter-societies' Quiz, this year, organised by Yately and District Gardening Society (last year's winners), was held in the vast new restaurant at Henry Street, also in September. Henry Street provided wine, orange juice, tea and coffee and all clubs contributed to the raffle, which raised £100 for Greenfingers, Henry Street's pet charity, which creates magical gardens for children's hospices. Results were very close, Wokingham Horticultural Association scraping in first by only one point and they will be organising next year's event.

Several of our members attended the Arborfield Village Hall Show in September as well. Although intended only as a marketing event, nevertheless £200 was raised towards the AVH funds. Of particular interest to AGA was the gardening section, but contributions were also made to the Cookery Section, Craft, Art and even Photography.

There was no AGA meeting in the Village Hall in October, as many of us enjoyed a lovely night at the 3 Societies' Social, where we

came second in a very close Table Competition, concentrated on the topic for the evening, which was the Suffragettes. We also had a Famous Women Quiz to answer – I think I recognised one of them!

Hopefully you will have noticed many gardens in Arborfield bedecked in red, white and blue flowers, as our tribute this special year to support the Royal British Legion (RBL) in their Centenary of Armistice event to remember those who gave their lives 100 years ago, so that we can live free.

Geoff Lunn was our November speaker. Geoff is a wonderful "amateur" photographer, specialising in Natural History. Not only does Geoff show amazing slides of birds and other wildlife and stunning scenery, but these are sometimes accompanied by beautiful music and charming bird song. His life-history has the excitement of a novel cum travelogue:

Geoff grew up and spent his childhood in the woodland area between Seale and Sands and could roam freely, and safely, around Crooksbury, Waverley, Moor Park and Cutmill Common. The local sand pits were his playground.

He was apprenticed at the Aldershot and District Traction Company, until call-up time came for National Service. He decided to sign on in the R.A.F. for five years and spent half that time in Singapore and Malaya, visiting Japan, Borneo, Philippines, Hong Kong, Australia, Aden and Kenya. A spell as a civilian at the R.E.M.E. in Aldershot was followed by two years in Turkey as a motor mechanic attached to the British Embassy.

With his wife Patsy and son Jerry, he came home from Turkey in 1977 and returning to his roots, making their home in The Sands, opposite the Barley Mow. It was like going back to his childhood, where he could once again wander the areas where his father used to take him poaching, but this time armed with a camera, not a gun!

He was offered early retirement from Thames Water in 1989, where he had worked for ten years, which gave him the opportunity to pursue his hobby of wildlife photography, much to our delight this evening, when he spoke about "My Friend Jane", who created and ran Elstead Wildlife Rescue Centre.

There will not be a meeting in the Village Hall in December, instead we will be celebrating Christmas at the Bull Restaurant in Arborfield, and the next meeting in the Village Hall will be on 24th January, when Alan Goold will tell us "What's New" in the garden.

February's meeting on the 28th will include our exciting AGM !

I would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all, on behalf of the Arborfield Gardening Association, a wonderful Christmas!



Catherine Breen, Chair
catherinebreen@ymail.com



Christmas 2018 at St James' Barkham

Carols by Candlelight

7pm Sunday 16 Dec

Family Carols

4pm Christmas Eve

Midnight Carols

11.30pm Christmas Eve

Christmas Day Service

10am Tuesday 25 Dec

'Good news' for me?

As you make your preparations for Christmas how about adding this item to your to-do list: 'Remember why we are celebrating'?

The first announcement of the birth of Jesus came direct from a messenger from heaven, who said it was 'Good news of great joy for all the people'. Yet many of us aren't clear on how it could be relevant to anyone (let alone everyone!) or how Jesus can be good news for people like us today.

Well, our aim in our Christmas services, as we sing the familiar carols and hear the accounts from the gospels, is to help everyone, young and old, to see these famous events with fresh eyes and to hear why this could still

be the best news any of us have ever heard.

Family Carols on Christmas Eve is designed with children especially in mind. Carols by Candlelight is a more traditional and is followed by mulled wine and mince pies. Midnight Carols provides a quieter opportunity for reflection before the big day and ends just after midnight; and Christmas Day is a family service for all ages. Why not join us? We don't take a collection (we're not after your money!), we'd simply like to invite you to join us as we celebrate the momentous good news of Christmas once again.

Julian Bidgood
Minister of Barkham

www.abch.org.uk



St Eligius Community Church, Arborfield Green Autumn Concert

Thomas Balch (Violin), Natalie Bechmann (Cello), both final year students at the Royal Northern College on Music, and Fiona Bechmann (Piano) (pictured) gave an excellent Lunch-time Concert at St Eligius Community Church on Thursday, 1 November 2018.

The programme consisted of JS Bach's masterpiece, Cello Suite No 4 in Eb major, BWV 1010, Aram Khachaturian's fascinating composition Chant-Poème, Mendelssohn's brilliant and emotive Piano Trio No. 2 in C minor, Op. 66, and the well-known, haunting Farewell to Stromness by Peter Maxwell-Davies. They were performed with all the energy, colour, emotion, delicacy and great technical skill, required by these



pieces! The audience of about 100 people expressed its appreciation with tumultuous applause!

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Next Concert

Starting at 12.30 pm

Thursday, 7 February
2019

Nathan Winters
Clarinet

Ross Winters
Piano

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St Eligius Community Church

To book your Lunch, please, contact Rita Le Var
(Tel. 01252 372320, E-mail: rita_le_var@ntlworld.com)

St Eligius Community Church, Tope Road, Arborfield Green,
Reading, Berkshire RG2 9NB

CROWTHORNE Symphony ORCHESTRA



All the family are welcome on Saturday December 15th at our traditional Christmas Concert in the beautiful setting of St John's Church, Crowthorne for a magical winter afternoon of seasonal music and carols. Now something of a local tradition, we'll be playing some firm favourites including (of course!) Sleigh Ride, along with some new arrangements of Christmas music, and we'll be inviting you to join in the carols, as always. Some of the younger audience members might get the chance to try their hand at conducting – always a highlight! The concert starts at 4.30, and there's tea and cakes to enjoy in the interval.

You can book online via the orchestra website and tickets are also available at Decor Interiors, Crowthorne High Street and the Information Centre, Wokingham Town Hall. They cost £10 in advance (£12 on the door) for adults, and all children under 16 are free.

Another date for your diary is our Spring Concert on Saturday 30th March at The Old Gym, Wellington College, Crowthorne. The programme of well-known British music will include Elgar's ever popular "Enigma Variations", "The Lark Ascending" by Vaughan Williams and lots more.

The orchestra welcomes new members, subject to vacancies - if you are interested and are a competent player, even if you have taken a break from playing, please get in touch. Our regular membership is over sixty players and we have a reputation as a friendly bunch with members of all ages. Weekly rehearsals are on Mondays in term time from 7.45-10pm at Oaklands Junior School, Butler Road, Crowthorne. Our website has up to date information on concerts, rehearsals, workshops and more: www.crowthorneorchestra.com

Chris Gadsby

Ancient Woods

Hundreds of ancient woods will be saved from heavy-handed development after the government awarded England's most precious trees and woodland equal status with listed buildings, scheduled monuments and World Heritage Sites. This is an amazing win for tree-lovers everywhere and comes after an unstinting 20-year campaign by the Woodland Trust and thousands of its members and supporters.

Details on the HS2 Phase 2b route are now available and it looks horrifying for ancient woodland. At least 19 ancient woods could be lost.

Bee Predator

The National Bee Unit has confirmed sightings of Asian hornet (*Vespa velutina*), a predator of insects, including honeybees, in Lancashire, Hull, Cornwall, Surrey and Hampshire – rather close! Inspectors are monitoring areas up to a 2km radius around each sighting and destroying any individuals and nests found. E-mail possible sightings, ideally with a picture, to: alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk.

NB: Of 26 bumblebee species recorded in Britain in the 1930s, two have gone and eight have seen large declines.

Ladybirds 'infected with STIs' are swarming into Britain's homes, experts warn.

The invasion has been compared to a Biblical plague !!

Swarms of an invasive species of ladybird are flocking into British gardens and even into our houses – and they're carrying an STD. (Obviously, the Laboulbeniales fungal disease is only a problem for other ladybirds, not for human beings.) Scientists have warned that the bugs – Harlequin ladybirds – are recognisable by their black wings, and carry a fungal infection transmitted by sex, (as do some native species of ladybird).

Experts from the UK Ladybird Survey have seen Harlequin ladybirds infected with the fungus in London and Oxford and are asking for the public to report sightings.

Wokingham Choral Society

Family Christmas Carol Concert

Saturday 15th December, 2018

At 6.00pm at All Saints' Church, Wokingham, RG40 1UE

Seasonal refreshments available from 5.15pm

Tickets: £10, £5 students & under 18s – visit our website for details

www.wokingham-choral-society.org.uk – Registered Charity No. 274853

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This invitation is aimed at older people on their own but people in need, of all ages, are also warmly welcome.

If you would like to donate a Christmas present for an older person on their own, we would be so grateful! We are also keen to hear from anyone who may be able to help with transport on Christmas Day. Details on our website.

Please contact: Office: 0118 979 8019 or Ros and Ralph Hardy 0118 978 1480 email: RandRHardy@hotmail.co.uk

www.linkvisiting.org

If you are on your own this Christmas, or would struggle to give yourself a festive meal, the Link Visiting Scheme invites you to enjoy Christmas Lunch with them. Sit down and enjoy a traditional lunch with all the trimmings cooked by a local chef. Transport can be arranged to the venue which is in Wokingham Borough.



YOU'RE INVITED TO A
CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH
WITH THE LINK VISITING SCHEME

On Christmas Day, we're working with a local Chef to provide a delicious Christmas lunch to residents of the Borough who will be alone.

The Link Visiting Scheme aims to make Christmas Day a happy, memorable day for those otherwise on their own or struggling to provide a Christmas meal. Our Chef will serve a traditional turkey lunch with all the trimmings. Transport can be provided.

Contact Ros and Ralph Hardy on: 0118 978 1480 or email: RandRHardy@hotmail.co.uk. We look forward to hearing from you!

CHARITY NO: 1139248 www.LINKVISITING.ORG

Welcome to Mid Berks Ramblers Association! (MBRA)

Mid Berks is a friendly walking group and we enjoy the fresh air and countryside in congenial company. Our group is one of several that make up the Berkshire area of the National Ramblers Association. We offer a range of walks on Sundays and Thursdays of 3 to 15 miles within a 20 mile radius of Reading - the shorter walks are generally taken at a much slower pace. We arrange walking holidays in locations further afield and enjoy social events to celebrate the changing year.

The National Ramblers Association is a charity consisting of people and groups who come together to both enjoy walking and other outdoor pursuits. Our goal is to protect and expand the infrastructure and places people go walking, for them to enjoy the sense of freedom and benefits that come from being outdoors on foot. For those people not currently walking, but who are considering improving their health and well-being through physical activity, Ramblers is an essential helper. Throughout Britain we provide and support a range of [projects](#). In England we partner with Macmillan Cancer Support as the National Centre for the [Walking for Health](#) programme.

Many of you already enjoy the benefits of the Health Walks – for free! So why should you pay to join the Ramblers? Membership costs from £23 per year, but what do we do with this money?

All Health Walk schemes across England are supported by the National Rambling Association,

providing free promotion, advice and tools to help raise awareness of Walking for Health amongst policy-makers, funders and partners as well as potential walkers.

We have a range of national and regional media spokespeople across the country who can speak about walking related topics; from recreation and health, to access, rights of way and countryside issues.

We have dramatically increased the ability of the public to access the countryside: Over the last sixty years the Ramblers have played a pivotal role helping secure the footpath network in England and Wales. We literally helped put your rights of way on the map as well as championing long distance routes like the [National Trails](#).

The Ramblers was instrumental to the introduction of [National Parks and National Trails](#) including the creation of the Pennine Way back in 1965 and more recently the South Downs National Park in 2009.

The year 2000 saw one of the biggest milestones in [Ramblers history](#) with the passing of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, where we gained access to 865,000 hectares of land in England and Wales giving walkers the '[right to roam](#)' in open countryside where the public can walk without depending on a footpath.

This was followed three years later by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 giving Scotland the most progressive access in Europe by granting statutory access rights over most areas of land and water in Scotland

In 2009, after many years of campaigning led by the Ramblers, the public won the right to walk along the [entire coast of England](#) through the creation of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009, which will give access to some of the wildest and most dramatic landscapes in England.

In 2011, thanks in part to work by [Ramblers Cymru](#), Wales became the first country in the world to have a path around its entire coastline.

All these activities have a cost implication and Ramblers membership is the best way to support the work we do for all walkers across Britain.

Our success comes through our ability to work alongside other recreational users of the countryside. We also work with the broader outdoors community including those companies and communities that rely on walking for their economic well-being.

We continue to look after the network. By law, The National Ramblers Association in England and Wales needs to be consulted on changes to paths and our volunteers inspect thousands of miles of paths each year. Eighty of our volunteer teams work with local authorities doing hands on maintenance and improvement work, for example, putting in new gates and making sure paths don't become overgrown.

We also protect the places people go walking. We believe in protecting people's ability to enjoy the intrinsic values of nature and so we will defend the countryside and urban green spaces. To avoid unnecessary duplication of effort with other charities we mainly do

this through effective participation in wider coalitions and by work within local communities to avoid particular development, such as providing expert feedback in the Local Plans process operated by District Councils – thereby helping to fashion urban development to safeguard footpath access to the countryside.

Our other role as a charity is to give current and potential walkers a helping hand.

We enable and organise [group walks](#) led by walk leaders across Britain. Each year 300,000 people take part in Ramblers organised walks alone. Our members can join a walk anywhere in the country and new walkers are always welcome.

For those people who walk informally or by themselves we offer information, support and opportunities including [high quality routes](#).

If you would like to join us on a walk then please look at our walks programme at <http://mbra.org.uk/>. There is no need to join the association initially and there will be a warm welcome for you.

Hope to see you soon!

Catherine Breen
Committee Member, MBRA



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Alan's Patch location answer (see page 14): Along one of the footpaths in the Coombes, grid ref SU777674

10. The Eurovision Song Contest
Antrim (very hairy!)

9. A rope bridge to an island
Seamus Heaney

8. Harland and Wolff

7. 1973 (as did the UK)

6. Croke Park

5. George Bernard Shaw

4. The highest mountain on the island of Ireland

3. Van Morrison

2. Jack Charlton

Quiz answers

Barkham Village Hall

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If you are a group who needs somewhere to meet on a regular basis why not use your local village hall, we have plenty of tables and chairs and spacious car park and grounds for use during the summer. We offer very competitive rates for regular users.

Further information can be obtained from the parish council web site with photographs of the hall plus a calendar with availability. Please contact Judith Neuhofer on 979 0296 or email judith.neuhofer@btinternet.com

Barkham Diary

05/12/18	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7.45pm
11/12/18	Barkham Parish Council	BVH	8.00pm
11/12/18	Dinton Pastures Walkers Group	BVH	7.30pm
12/12/18	Bonsai Club	BVH	7.30pm
14/12/18	BVRA Carols in the Park	Junipers	7.00pm
02/01/19	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7.45pm
08/01/19	Barkham Parish Council	BVH	8.00pm
08/01/19	Dinton Pastures Walkers Group	BVH	7.30pm
09/01/19	Bonsai Club	BVH	7.30pm
22/01/19	Parish Council Planning Review	BVH	7.30pm
28/01/19	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	7.30pm
06/02/19	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7.45pm
12/02/19	Barkham Parish Council	BVH	8.00pm
12/02/19	Dinton Pastures Walkers Group	BVH	7.30pm
13/02/19	Bonsai Club	BVH	7.30pm
22/02/19	Copy deadline for Spring Newsletter		
25/02/19	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	7.30pm
26/02/19	Parish Council Planning Review	BVH	7.30pm
06/03/19	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7.45pm
12/03/19	Barkham Parish Council	BVH	8.00pm
12/03/19	Dinton Pastures Walkers Group	BVH	7.30pm
13/03/19	Bonsai Club	BVH	7.30pm
23/03/19	BVRA Skittles	BVH	7 for 7.30 pm
25/03/19	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	7.30pm
26/03/19	Parish Council Planning Review	BVH	7.30pm
21/04/19	BVRA Easter Egg Hunt	Junipers	3pm
Weekly Events			
Mondays	Pilates Class	BVH	11.30am
Mondays	Dog Training	BVH	6.30pm
Tues-Fri	Barkham Pre-School	BVH	9.00am
Thursdays	Pilates Class	BVH	6.15pm

AVH is Arborfield Village Hall BVH is Barkham Village Hall
CRH is California Ratepayers Hall

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Arborfield Green Leisure Centre, R62 9NN	: Wednesdays	7:30-8:30pm
Woodford Park Leisure Centre, R65 4LY	: Fridays	6:30-8:00pm
Arborfield Green Leisure Centre, R62 9NN	: Saturdays	11:30-12:30noon



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