



**BVRA**

# Barkham Newsletter

£1, free to Members

Issue 139 Spring 2022

from the Barkham Village Residents Association

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

Twitter: @BarkhamVRA Facebook: <http://gid.uk/BVRAF>

## EASTER EGG HUNT

**3pm April 17th**

**The Junipers Park**

Details on page 10



**Saturday 7th May 2022**

**7:00pm—10:00pm**

**Barkham Village Hall**

**Supper Included**

**Tickets available from**

**Gill Powell Tel 9783373**

**[social@barkham.org.uk](mailto:social@barkham.org.uk)**

**LIVE  
BAND**

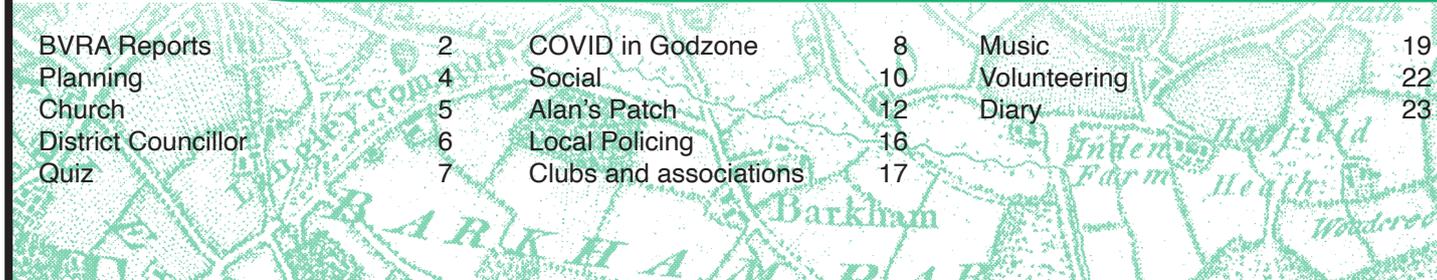
**Adult £10, Children 16 and under £5**

**LICENCED BAR & RAFFLE**



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## A view from the Chair

I am delighted to have been elected to the role of Chair of the BVRA and am looking forward to meeting many Barkham residents at our full program of social events in 2022! With the Queen's Platinum Jubilee event at the Village Hall in June as well, 2022 looks like it will be full of positive celebrations. Let's all join in and celebrate our Community.

My first official engagement was to deliver the BVRA donation to Wokingham Foodbank. £150 was raised through the campaign to encourage Direct Debit payment of subscriptions and from events. I met with Annette Medhurst, manager of the foodbank, just after they had moved into new premises in town, part of the Charity and Community Hub in Waterford House, along with Citizens Advice and other groups.

Annette was very grateful for the donation from Barkham residents as they regularly need to buy food and essential household items to fill stock shortages. She also explained that the Foodbank supports families across the whole of the Borough, including Barkham.

Given the current price rises across the board, every contribution was vital.

The General Committee met in January, my first as Chair. I am pleased to say that the financial position remains sound and the other members of the committee are on top of their responsibilities, and I thank them for being very helpful and guiding me through.

One priority is to fill the current vacancy of Secretary, which arose with the resignation of Richard Roberts, to whom I would like to pay tribute for a valuable contribution over the years, many thanks.

I should also like to thank Alan Dixon for his diligent leadership and contribution as Chairman, leaving the BVRA in a good place with healthy membership and sound finances. I, and all of the committee wish Alan and Richard good fortune in their future ventures.

Another priority is to establish a dialogue with Barkham Parish Council. It is important to ensure that the views and concerns of Barkham Residents are heard,

and our collective voice is particularly valuable, so please let me know your views. As you know BVRA Development Watch keeps an eye on the plethora of developments around and about our neighbourhood and your feedback to us is important too.

Finally, I urge you to support the upcoming social events and encourage friends and neighbours to come along too, to enjoy coming together through the BVRA and building our own Barkham community even better in 2022.

David Edwards  
chairman@barkham.org.uk



## Secretary – Role Vacant

The BVRA General Committee is seeking a volunteer to join the committee as Secretary of the BVRA to help keep the committee meetings running smoothly and to ensure proper governance of the association.

This is an important and necessary role as defined in the constitution and involves working closely with the Chair, organising four committee meetings and the Annual General Meeting each

year, ensuring the timely preparation and circulation of reports by the committee members, keeping minutes, and managing the log of decisions and actions.

The duties are not onerous, with around 5 – 8 hours per month equivalent. Some meetings are held at the Barkham Village Hall, others in private homes or virtually as required in the evenings and typically last 1½ to 2 hours. Ongoing business if the Commit-

tee is managed by email circulation and telephone discussion.

This is a good opportunity to join a thriving committee, which is part of the thriving community of Barkham and to help both to prosper further.

Please contact David Edwards, BVRA Chair, to discuss your interest in the role and for more information.  
[chairman@barkham.org.uk](mailto:chairman@barkham.org.uk)

## BVRA 2021/22 GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman: David Edwards 978 1456  
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## Editorial

Spring will soon be upon us and it is wonderful to see the snowdrops and crocus' starting to appear. I hope you all managed to stay well and enjoy Christmas and New Year. I am really pleased to announce the winner of the festive hamper was Ben Walden and here you can see him receiving it full of goodies.



## Advertising and Newsletter Contributions

Newsletter articles / contributions for the Summer edition should be in by 13 May 2022. It helps if these can be submitted in electronic form by email to [newsletter@barkham.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@barkham.org.uk).

For trade adverts, please email [treasurer@barkham.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@barkham.org.uk), or call 977 1831. 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 June.

The social diary is getting busy too with lots of events getting planned for the coming months, do take a look at the diary on the inside back page for details of the groups meeting up.

I am sad to announce that I will soon be moving on, I have really enjoyed being involved in the local community of Barkham and have met some lovely people. So if you are interested in the editor role and fancy being part of the committee, please do contact me and I can let you know what duties it involves.

## Newsletter Editor Role becoming Vacant

Unfortunately, our Newsletter Editor and committee member has (sadly for us) decided to move out of the area in the coming weeks and so we are seeking a volunteer to come on board and take up the challenge of producing our quarterly newsletter.

The newsletter is key to communicating with the residents of Barkham and essential for promoting the community events organized by the Social Committee.

The Editor has end to end responsibility for producing each newsletter; calling for contributions, editing copy and photographs, deciding on general layout and style, liaising with a graphic designer to sequence the articles and produce the print ready document then passing to our printer so that the newsletter is available for our distribution network.

Please contact [newsletter@barkham.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@barkham.org.uk) to discuss your interest in the role and for more information.



## Planning

Since the last edition, the Local Plan Update Revised Growth Strategy has been published and a public consultation held, which closed on Mon 24 Jan 2022. Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) went to great lengths to urge people to respond to the consultation by distributing flyers to every household across the Borough. Despite this, we have heard that some residents were deterred from responding because of the need to sign on to access the questionnaire, difficulty in locating the copious supporting documentation and a 'here we go again' sentiment.

We understand that feedback from the consultation is not expected until later in the summer. The centrepiece for the earlier consultation early in 2020 was the proposed garden settlement in Grazeley but redefinition of the zoning around AWE Burghfield meant this could not be achieved. The revised plan sets out how the new build housing required by 2037/38 will now be delivered by focusing on:

- Continuing to build out the original four Strategic Development Locations (SDL) with some additional housing.
- Establishing a fifth SDL at Hall Farm, Arborfield – although provision has been made to build 4,500 dwellings at this

- Developing a number of smaller sites.

It is not possible to delve into all aspects of the revised plan in this short article but there are a couple of topics very relevant to Barkham that we can squeeze in.

Barkham has not come through this process unscathed but many locations opposed in the past such as Barkham Square, School Road and Edneys Hill have not been included in the updated plan. This is good news and reflects a degree of load sharing of new housing across the Borough.

At a time when some parishes are arguing to relocate housing allocations, it is worth commenting on recent articles in the local press that distort the load sharing picture when put into a Barkham context. These suggest that Barkham is receiving only 19 new dwellings under the revised strategy.

The original 2010 – 2026 Core Plan allocated 1,800 dwellings to Barkham as part of the Arborfield Garrison SDL with another 1,700 just over the parish boundaries. Since then, the following have been added:

- The 19 dwellings referred to above.
- 140 dwellings on Reading FC Training Ground now included in the Arborfield Garrison SDL for which outline planning permission has already been approved.
- 270 dwellings at Rooks Nest Farm which, although attributed to Finchampstead, will actually lie in Barkham.

These extra 429 new builds plus the original 1,800 give a total of 2,229 homes which represents a significant overall loading in the parish. The resulting increase in traffic will also add further to the congestion of the residential roads that feed into the area.

This leads into the second topic because, regardless of how much time and money are spent in developing a local plan, it is completely wasted if the plan is not implemented or allowed to be executed as intended.

Some time ago we talked about the rolling 5 Year Land Supply (5YLS) test and it is worth recapping on the main points. Despite what the name implies, this is NOT a measure of the land available for development which is allocated by the Local Planning Authority via the Local Plan. In PRACTICE, it is a measure of whether houses are being built at the required constant annual rate which is largely controlled by the Developers throughout the planning cycle. If the housing market slows, then developers will inevitably slow the rate of build and, when this happens, planning inspectors can approve other sites for development that are not included in the Local Plan. This does not necessarily lead to an increase in the immediate supply of homes but does result in more land being made available for housing in the future.

This makes a mockery of any attempt to plan sensibly, especially with respect to developing the all-important infrastructure. Apart from ensuring the appropriate infrastructure is provided in the most cost-effective way, it takes time to deliver. This can impact the rate of build at the *cont ...*



## 'What has made you feel most loved in your life so far?'

A few years ago, I had the privilege of visiting a school in the West Country to give some talks to anyone who was interested in finding out more about Christianity. It was amazing how many were. Every evening 80 or so pupils and staff came along to listen. A startling reminder that interest in religion might not be dying out quite as quickly as we're sometimes told it is!

One lunchtime, I roamed the Dining Hall asking some of the pupils that opening question - 'What has made you feel most loved in your life so far?' Some of their answers – once they were happy to open up - were just lovely.

'My mum making me hot chocolate when I can't sleep at 3am – even though she's got to get up at seven' – said one.

'Dad giving up something important he needed to do when he heard I was going to be around for the weekend' – replied another.

'My boyfriend turning down a really good party just so he can come and see me at the weekend' – answered a third.

And I still remember the room going very quiet when I quoted some of those answers in my talk that evening. But no wonder. After all - it's a glorious thing to know there's someone, somewhere, who really loves us – isn't it? How we long to know there's someone who loves us enough to give things up for us, if that's what we need!

Which makes these words, written by the Apostle John, late on in the Bible, just wonderful:

'This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.' (1 John 4:10)

We may not feel much love for God. In fact, if we're honest, we might not even love him at all. But how does he feel about us? He loves us very much indeed.

Really? How do we know? Because of what he's given up for us. God says that, in his love, he has given his Son to be the 'sacrifice for our sins'. It's what we remember particularly at Easter – especially on Good Friday.

Of course, there's real darkness at the cross, as we see how little we naturally love God, and the full extent of our opposition to him. But there's such glory too, as – at exactly the same time - we see the full extent of his love for us. How wonderful that God the Father was prepared to send his Son to pay the price that our failure to love God deserves. How extraordinary that Jesus – God the Son – was prepared willingly to give himself in our place like that.

Some of us may hesitate to describe ourselves as 'loved'. But God says we really are.

Please join us at Barkham Church on any Sunday in the run up to Easter – and beyond – as together we think more about these things. And please do check the church website for details of our Good Friday service too. We'd love to see you there!

David Horrocks

*Planning continued...* start of the project which is not allowed for by the current rules, even though the required number of dwellings will be achieved in the end. Moreover, Wokingham has in recent years delivered more houses ahead of plan but, under the current rules, these will not be taken into account when the Local Plan Update comes into effect and the numbers are reset.

It was good to see in another – and more pleasing – press report that the WBC Executive has recently written to the Minister of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities drawing attention to the flaws of the current system and recommending that the 5YLS parameter be scrapped.

Bringing these two strands together – if there are further

changes to the draft LPU then more houses may be allocated to Barkham and unless WBC has greater control of housing delivery then more houses could also come to Barkham by default.

If you have comments about anything written here then please e-mail to [clerk@barkham-parish-council.org.uk](mailto:clerk@barkham-parish-council.org.uk).



## Councils budget 2022/23

This year's proposed budget is as you would expect is cautious, and I am pleased to say the council will not be cutting any services. We have tried to either keep fees and charges to a minimum or where possible, like car parking charges, not increased them to help the borough's economy recover. We will also prioritise social housing and look to deliver more homes at social rents, as even affordable housing is out of the reach for many in our borough who are on low incomes.

This year Council tax rise is expected to be 1.99%, plus a social care precept levy of 1% of which must be spent on adult care. The council does not take any decisions to raise council tax lightly but with inflation running at well over 5%, which the council is not immune to, it's been a difficult decision this year, especially as we are aware of the rising costs of living. This past 2 years has been tough for everyone, and the Covid-19 pandemic has affected us all, with the impact being felt far and wide.

Wokingham Borough Council has ploughed additional money in to support the community during the pandemic from supplying much needed Personal Protective Equipment and support to care homes, schools, and social care as

well as support to the voluntary and community organisations. It also helped to administer much needed grants and discounts to businesses and residents on behalf of the government, of over £70m, in addition to the Government furlough scheme which has paid tens of millions of pounds direct to residents.

The impact of the pandemic is still being felt but Wokingham Borough Council remains in a good place financially this is despite facing future uncertainty in terms of government funding and proposed adult social care reforms. Wokingham Borough Council is set to agree a robust and balanced budget for 2022/23 from a position of relative strength even despite being the lowest funded unitary authority in England. Sound finances must underpin everything the council does for residents, this is despite not getting the level of support, due to the level to the relative prosperity in the borough, that other authorities enjoy. That said our strong reserves and successful financial planning has meant we've been able to support the community through Covid-19. We also have ambitions to invest to improve our services, meet the needs of the most vulnerable and invest significantly in our community.

Covid has seen an increase in the number of local people struggling with making ends meet or, in some cases, at risk of homelessness, that is why the council will be prioritising the investment in social housing.

The budget must involve the council reducing its costs to be more efficient offsetting inflation. Something it has a track record of, having in the past six years reduced costs by almost £30mil-

lion. Despite these efficiency measures, the authority continues to face a number of ongoing challenges. Nevertheless, the councils focus is investing in its priorities, which are to offer value for money and continue to deliver high quality services to all its residents but to do this we must remain solvent.

## Local Plan update

The Government, along with all major political parties is committed to mass housing development across the country. Labour 250,000 Liberal Democrats 380,000 and Conservative 200,000 (1m over 5 years) homes per year and the target of 800 homes to be built per year in Wokingham Borough by 2038. This is less than 200 more homes per year than what has been required in the past. Our current Local Plan can meet some of these additional homes, but we need a new Local Plan that plans for an additional 6,000 new homes. We have no choice but to meet that target and there is no possibility of doing so without building on green space. We would very much like to build all the new homes on previously developed (brownfield) land but there is simply not enough of that available in the borough.

To meet the imposed housing target, the council is legally required to produce something called a Local Plan – a complex set of documents that, among other things, sets out where homes can be built and more importantly, where they cannot. If we refuse to produce one or try to produce one that does not meet the Government's target, the Government will produce one for the borough and impose it upon us – and it will include the same or even more housing development. Worse than this,

there would also be a gap when we have only our old Local Plan in place, and that means we would lose the ability to protect any of our green spaces because even if the council refuses planning permission, developers would no doubt win at appeal overturning the council's decision.

Wokingham is a great place to live but this attraction brings its own problems, as developers have their eyes on almost all green space in the borough and know they can sell every home they build. The farmland and other green spaces in the borough is almost certainly "optioned" to a housing developer, meaning the developer has made a deal with the landowner to buy the land, who are in most cases are keen to sell because of the huge monetary gains, should they get permission to build on it. These developers would be rubbing their hands with glee if we delay or discard our draft Local Plan as it would leave so much more of our countryside open to potential development. Should this happen, we will have the prospect of no green space in the borough.

John Kaiser  
Councillor for Barkham,  
Deputy leader  
Executive Member for  
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Wokingham Borough Council  
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Telephone: 07714192352

## The Quiz

A simple theme this time – the answer to each question is one (or more) UK Cities. 10 questions, 18 cities!

1. The cathedral of this city houses the largest Mappa Mundi known to exist and also a copy of the Magna Carta.
2. The Elizabethan series of Blackadder featured a terrifying "baby eating" bishop played by Ronald Lacey. Of which 2 English cities was he the bishop?
3. 3 answers for this question. Which are the northernmost, westernmost and southernmost UK cities?
4. In which city did Two-tone music originate in the late 1970s, featuring bands such as The Specials?
5. The oldest city in Wales also achieved temporary (perhaps lasting) fame from the Fiddlers Dram song about having a lovely time on a day trip
6. Which Yorkshire city was the birthplace of Alan Bennett? For 2 bonus points, at which college at which university did he graduate with a first-class degree in history (2 more cities here)?
7. Which city's (stunning) cathedral is known as the "Ship of the Fens"?
8. Which city on the north bank of the Firth of Tay has 2 professional football clubs?
9. Which 2 cities sit within the boundaries of Greater London?
10. There are 3 "saintly" cities in the UK. Name all 3.

Answers on page 23

## Where in Barkham?

Answer on page 23



## Covid in Godzone

New Zealanders have called their homeland 'Godzone' for more than 100 years, which is where our son and daughter-in-law migrated to in 2011 and gave birth to our grandson, Jack, in 2015. Jen and I were enjoying our annual trip to New Zealand in March 2019 when the lockdown came.

Cases of Covid-19 had emerged in New Zealand and some restrictions had been implemented; for example, in restaurants, only one household bubble per table, tables to be separated and serviced by a single server. On 23<sup>rd</sup> March we were enjoying an al-fresco meal in a restaurant when suddenly, everybody's mobiles sounded with a 'presidential alert' advising everyone that a strict lockdown would be imposed from midnight on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>. The Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, made a televised address which included memorable phrases like "we only have 109 cases, but so did Italy once", "wherever you sleep on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> is where you sleep for the next month" and "team of five million". All non-essential travel was banned; at-risk people were to shield themselves. Our flights, both internal and international were cancelled. We were stuck in New Zealand!

We had a couple of days to prepare. We bought some warmer clothes, stocked up with food supplies and toilet rolls (of course!) then made our way to our holiday home (pictured). Due to our age, we were classed as vulnerable and could not go out at all apart from local exercise. We are blessed with lovely neighbours. The couple on one side came round with some warm clothes (autumn was drawing in). Our other neighbour offered to buy us groceries when she did her grocery run. Eventu-

ally, we did manage to get home deliveries from one of the major supermarket chains.

Then we got into a set of routines. We had a daily on-line zoom session with our grandson. This included playing snakes and ladders on a home-made board we created. We had weekly zoom sessions with friends and family back in the U.K. Jen and I started a daily exercise routine – I would bike a local circular route for an hour or so and Jen would go for a serious walk. As we were living near a large beach (pictured) away from a major urban area it was easy to maintain social distancing. Board games and jigsaw puzzles kept us amused. A few D.I.Y. projects and tinkering with push bikes soaked up even more time. Throughout the winter there were very few wet or cold days, so we often went for a longer walk along the beach. Someone in New Zealand had the bright idea of encouraging people to place a teddy bear in their windows so that whilst families were out walking, they could look for them.

Meanwhile Covid-19 cases in New Zealand dwindled away and very few deaths occurred. Jacinda announced a move to a lower alert level on 27<sup>th</sup> April. This meant, shops (with social distancing) could re-open and takeaway food and drinks were possible. With no new cases, a move to Level 2 (with very few restrictions) followed on 13<sup>th</sup> May. Finally, on the 8<sup>th</sup> June the entire country moved to Level 1 (hardly any restrictions). At last, we could be reunited with our family in New Zealand. Effectively, this meant life pretty much as normal apart from wearing masks on public transport. Naturally, around this time we looked at the option of returning to the U.K. to

try and catch some of the U.K. summer. We had postponed our trip back home about 4 times by this stage. However, we studied how the U.K. response to the Covid-19 outbreak was being handled and were not too keen to be back. So, we stayed and had a winter-time holiday to the South Island with the family (pictured) and we decided we might as well stay in New Zealand and spend another summer there. So, we had a few side trips; to the East Cape, South Island and a two-week summer holiday with our son, daughter-in-law and grandson. Summer rolled into autumn, then into winter. The situation in the U.K. had improved markedly. So, in June 2021 we eventually said 'au revoir' to our NZ friends and family and returned to the U.K. Our short trip had turned into 18 months!

Jim and Jenny Butler

Do you enjoy getting out and about in your local neighbourhood and meeting new neighbours?

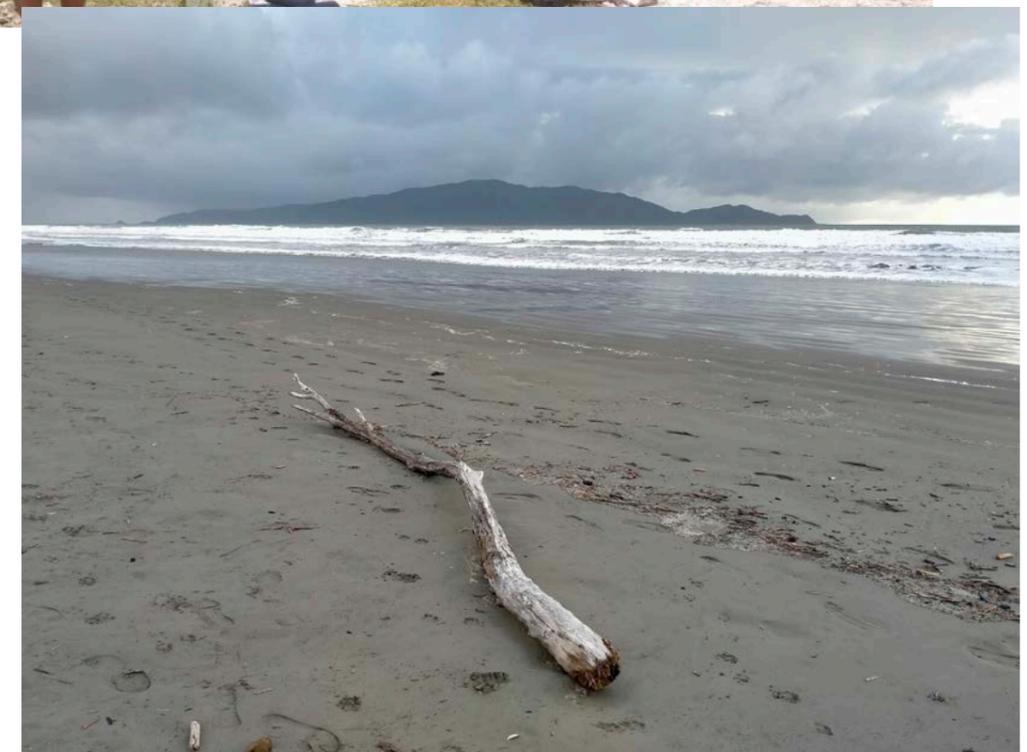
Enjoy walking in the fresh air – with or without a dog?

Enjoy being part of your local community?

### Become a BVRA distributor

The BVRA newsletter is a key source of information, activities and news about our community and is distributed to residents quarterly by "distributors" who live in the local area. We now have an opportunity for a new distributor for a round in Langley Common Road commencing in the Summer. It should take no more than an hour each quarter.

If you are interested in this role or would like further information, please contact Bev Dipper via [membership@barkham.org.uk](mailto:membership@barkham.org.uk)





## Social Matters

As I write this report Christmas '21 and the New Year '22 have both come and gone and it's hard to believe that it's now nearly mid-February. In our part of the country, although we have had some cold frosty mornings, we really haven't experienced the usual snowy weather we would expect during the winter months. Signs that Spring is not far away are all around with the display of snowdrops and some daffodils just bursting into flower. Let's hope we don't have a late Winter shock! A new variant of the virus, Omicron, is still doing the rounds, but in the main we have been able to carry on with our lives in a fairly 'normal' way. At the end of 2021 the BVRA social committee was able to put on 2 events - the first of these was the Annual Quiz on November 27th. This was a great fun event and so well attended, and this time there was a new quizmaster, Steve Richardson, assisted by his wife, Jan, and a new winning team this year too - Short Planks - who enjoyed winning their coveted shield. Please do read Bev Dipper's excellent separate report in this Newsletter which includes a wonderful collection of photos, with captions, taken during the evening.

The second event was the Annual Carols in the Park held at the Junipers on December 17th. It was a fine, dry evening though a bit chilly but more than 100 people including families turned up to enjoy the singing of Carols accompanied by the Breakaway Brass Band. After starting off at the junction with the Woodlands, carollers gradually made their way to the Junipers Park where they then enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies, and the children had blackcurrant drinks. It was so good to see so many enjoying the start of the Festive Season and coming together in the community. A bucket collection was made for the band who very kindly give their time to play for us each year.

So this brings us to 2022 and this year's events. Due to the Omicron variant of the virus, the committee chose to delay the Barn Dance until it was safer for people to mix, so it has been rescheduled to SATURDAY 7TH MAY @ 7.00 at the Village Hall. There will be a 'live band with a caller', a supper is provided and a licensed bar. Tickets will be available nearer the time from Gill Powell, preferably by email - [social@barkham.org.uk](mailto:social@barkham.org.uk) or telephone on 0118 9783373. Look out for the posters around the village, and please put the new date in your diaries. This is always a fun event even if a little energetic!

The Annual Children's Easter Egg Hunt is planned to take place at the Junipers Park on Easter Sunday, April 17th, at 3pm. Entrance on the day is £1 for the children, and while they are busy hunting for tokens to exchange for small eggs, the adults will be able to buy raffle tickets for the Giant Egg and other chocolate prizes. There will be a separate token hunting area

for 5 year olds and under. This is usually quite a speedy event as the tokens are found reasonably quickly, but if the weather is warm and sunny, as it has been on many occasions, families tend to stay on in the park and enjoy the rest of the afternoon. This event has not taken place for the last 2 years because of the Covid so I'm sure the youngsters will be keen to take part again - let's hope for good weather!

Other events have been planned and the Hall booked for the rest of the year.

- Family Skittles on 24th September
- Quiz on 19th November
- Carols in the Park on 16th December

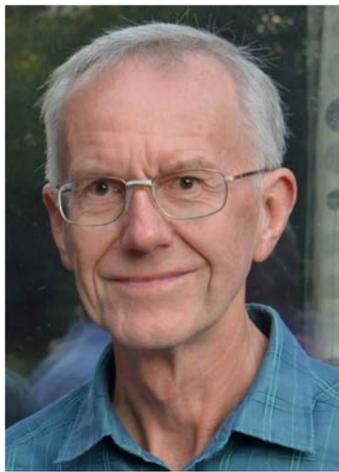
More details will appear in future newsletters but make a note of the dates so as not to miss out on the fun events.

In addition to the BVRA events we hope to be joining in with the Barkham Parish Council and the Village Hall to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee during the special June holiday this year. Further details will be advertised as soon as plans have been finalised, so keep a look out for posters etc.

I hope to see many of you at these events supporting your local Barkham Residents Association enjoying the fun. In the meantime, we have Spring to look forward to, and warmer days.

Shirley Warner  
Social Committee Member





### Alan's Patch

So far, we are experiencing another benign Winter, not as cold as last year, yet! Just as well with fuel prices as they are!

From the work point of view, it's a quiet time in the garden. Last year I had the major project of replacing my raised beds in the vegetable patch. They have been a great success. Splitting them to have twice as many smaller ones works well for me allowing me to separate the different plants better. I have no such major project this Winter.

I have winter-washed the fruit trees to deter overwintering bugs, organically of course! I have also pruned the apple and pear trees and checked the ties on the cordons. I added wood chippings to subdue the weeds in the ornamental grasses which are waiting to burst into life in a few weeks. At least that's what I'm hoping!

Back in December I completed the annual routine of completely emptying the greenhouse and washing it inside and out. It's a wet and dirty task but my pressure washer made it easier this year! I then fumigated it to get rid of any bugs hibernating inside.

The greenhouse is now back in action. Last week I set up the electric propagator and lights, and sowed my first seeds – tomatoes, aubergine, chillies and bell peppers.



This is the time of year to decide what I want to grow this coming season and ordering seeds. I don't need to buy any peas and bean seeds as I save the seeds from last year. This means they are at least twenty generations old! I work out into which bed they will grow, using my rotation method to avoid plants being grown in the same place too frequently.

The November sowing of broad beans have not been challenged by the weather and in the next week or so I will sow the second batch.

I've been growing Jerusalem artichoke for the past couple of years and I have to admit that I'm not

a huge fan of them! I'll probably grow a few this season in case I am inspired by some new recipe I find.

For the past couple of years, I have been growing a few obscure potato varieties, including the tasty French variety 'Ratte'. Last

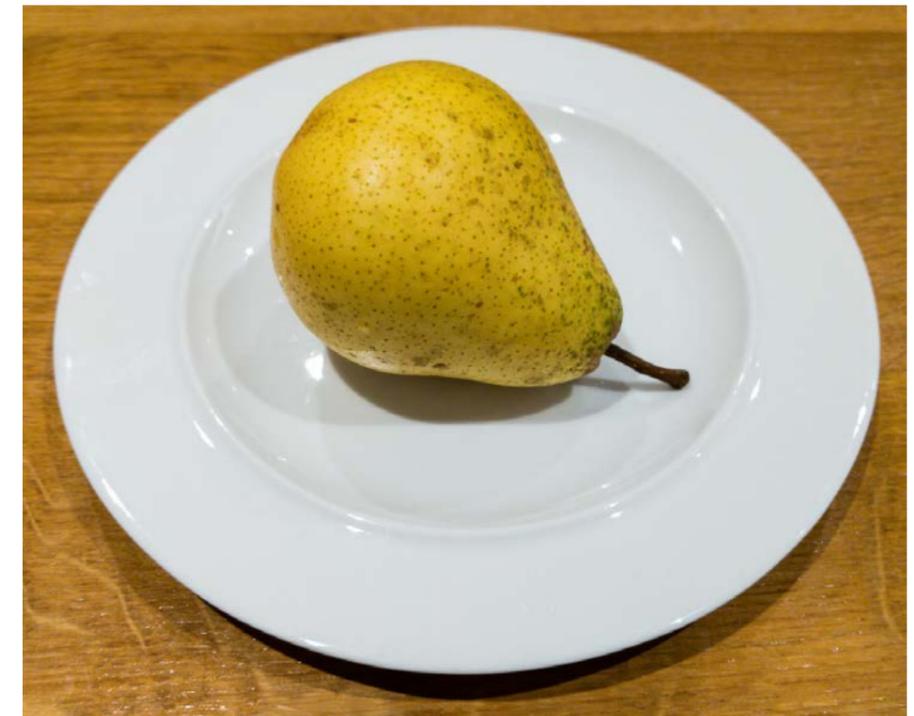
year I tried 'Pink fir apple' potato. As you can see it's a very strange shape, far too fiddly to peel so I've been cooking them as if new potatoes, slicing them into chunks first. I find them very tasty! Another potato experiment I made in the Autumn was to plant a few potatoes in a spare bed, so I've been eating new potatoes, even now! With the winter being mild they haven't frozen in the ground.

The (perpetual) spinach is in good condition owing to the weather and still in the garden to be harvested, as and when required, are carrots, parsnips, Jerusalem artichokes, beetroot, cabbage, leeks and Swiss chard, as well as the perennial herbs. In store I have potatoes, butternut squash

and shallots, but the apples and pears have gone. I don't get huge quantities of pears but they are very tasty and in the case of the tastiest of them all, Doyenne du Comice, it's very photogenic!

In the kitchen I have jars of Cannellini and Borlotti beans which I use in casseroles. Finally in the freezer I have gooseberries and damsons plus frozen compotes of rhubarb, blackberries and raspberries along with processed tomatoes, which I use in casseroles, soups etc. I've processed some of the squashes into soups too. I will do the same with surplus carrots, parsnips and leeks shortly.

I've been doing a bit more photography recently. I've been doing some portraiture and covered



the dress rehearsals for a local pantomime. "Oh yes I have!" Here is another sunset from my

garden and here is the GB rowing team practising on the Thames by Temple Island near Henley early one frosty morning.





# Queens Platinum Jubilee Event

Barkham Parish Council and Barkham Village Residents Association are planning a

**Family Fun Day**

**On Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June**

**at Barkham Village Hall**

(times to be confirmed)

Are you interested in volunteering to help organise the day?

Are you interested in having a stall at the event?

If so, please contact Ellen Tims, Clerk to Barkham Parish Council at

[clerk@barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk) or 0118 976 2089 for more information



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# Barkham Village Hall Charity



Barkham Village Hall is a Charity and a facility for use by the local community. It has two rooms, one large and one small, plus a well-equipped kitchen, and outside a patio and large grassed area, and large Car Park, for the use of the Hall users, so is suitable for wide variety of groups, meetings and functions.

The Village Hall is well utilised and regular users are:

Art Club – Band Practice - Bonsai club – Brownies - Church Youth Club & Sunday School – Dog Training - Karate - Ladies Group - Pilates - Pre-School - Rainbows - U3A Group – Walking Group. In addition, it is available for private functions such as Children's Parties and Weddings.

## Volunteers Needed

We need **Help** from community minded Volunteers to join the Village Hall Management Committee who hold bi-monthly meetings.

## Areas where Help Is needed

- Practical help with maintenance of the Hall, e.g., painting and other small projects.
- Management of one-off major projects e.g., Replacing Hall windows, new Patio area etc.
- Occasional emergency cleaning and tidying of Hall, Field area and Car Park (We

have professional cleaners twice a week, but some users are not as tidy as they should be).

- Care of the Kitchen and equipment, Stove, Fridge, Pans, Crockery, Cutlery etc.

Please note that without more volunteers to help with the running of the Village Hall, it will not be there for you to use for your children's parties and social gatherings etc. It is a great asset to the village, to be used and enjoyed by all. We want to keep it so, with a small contribution of your time we can all benefit

**Please respond to:**  
**Derek Oxbrough, Vice Chairman**  
[doxbrough@hotmail.com](mailto:doxbrough@hotmail.com)  
**Tel: 01189760578**

## New Chairperson

**Required for**

**Barkham Village Hall Charity**

**We hold bi-monthly meetings and the position would require approximately 3 hours a week of general supervision of projects and other affairs**

**Contact: Derek Oxbrough**

[doxbrough@hotmail.com](mailto:doxbrough@hotmail.com)

**Tel: 01189760578**

Spring into action and protect your shed, garage and garden buildings from theft.

The 15-20 minutes you spend on the school run or popping out to the shops is all a thief needs to break-in to your property.

The top five items stolen from sheds are:

1. **Bikes**
2. **Mowers**
3. **Sports equipment**
4. **Power tools**
5. **Garden tools**

Please consider these crime prevention tips to protect your shed, garage and garden buildings this Spring:

- Never leave doors unlocked when you are not around
- If you have a detached garage in a block, consider fitting additional security locks to the door to reduce the risk of offenders prising it open
- Check whether your home insurance covers the contents from theft
- Remove valuable equipment like laptops from outbuildings used as offices
- Use strong padlocks on doors with no exposed screws and pay attention to hinges, which can be easily removed
- Consider securing windows with wire mesh or grills
- Alarm it - there are systems on

the market for all budgets

- Security mark and register tools and other items so they can be identified at [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com)
- Lock your tools inside a locker or box or secure them with a chain
- Secure bikes to the ground or a lockable stand and drape an old sheet or blanket over them to keep them covered from view
- Consider installing CCTV (closed circuit television). Some systems can be accessed remotely via the internet or smart phone. Ensure you check privacy laws when installing CCTV systems
- Thorny or prickly plants can be a deterrent in strategic positions, such as underneath windows or below walls and fences
- Ensure hedges and shrubs are trimmed back to prevent areas intruders could hide or observe you. Crunchy gravel is also good for paths or areas around outbuildings

Please contact us if you have any information relating to crime, suspicious vehicles or activity in your neighbourhood. Report online at [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk), call 101 or in an emergency 999. Alternatively, call Crimestoppers anonymously on free phone 0800 555 111.

Receive free crime and information updates by registering for Thames Valley Alerts at [www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk](http://www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk) Consider joining a local Neighbourhood Watch scheme - visit [www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk) for more information.

You can contact your local neighbourhood team via: [Wokingham-NHPT@thamesvalley.police.uk](mailto:Wokingham-NHPT@thamesvalley.police.uk) - please note this address cannot be used to report crimes or for any urgent matters.

Follow us on social media to find out what your local policing teams are up to - Facebook: TVP Bracknell & Wokingham / Twitter: @TVP\_Wokingham



I'm pleased to say that since my last report the Ladies have been able to meet each month at the Village Hall, and although the virus is still with us we have followed the guidelines to keep us safe, and carried on doing things as 'normally' as possible.

We had our usual Christmas Party on December 1st with a wonderful spread of delicious food, both savoury and desserts. This was all provided by the Ladies, and Judith's Mulled Wine went down well too! There was lots of chat and the 'secret Santa' added to the fun and we all went home with a gift.

In January our speaker was Pam Stubbs, one of our members, and a lady we all knew as she had some time ago been the postmistress at the Barkham Road post office. She gave an account of the computer finance software problem which had taken place within the post office IT system, and which became a scandal. Her account was a very personal one as she had sadly been a victim herself. The enquiries are still going on and so many past postmasters and postmistresses have still not had closure on the dreadful situation.

Pam brought with her the book that has been written - The Great Post Office Scandal - It is riveting to read!

Our February meeting was our AGM and silent auction, when we reviewed the past year and revealed plans for the next year, and raised a few funds for the Club with the auction. Our Programme Secretary, Jenny, has managed to book some great speakers with a range of very interesting subjects, and has also slotted in other events for the rest of the year, such as a Games Evening with fish and chips, and our annual BBQ.

For the March meeting we are inviting our menfolk and friends for the evening, and the speaker will be Chris Rhodes. His talk is on 'Plastic Pollution/Sustaining the Future - a topic so very important to every one of us at the moment!

Future topics include life as an actor, Henry Street Garden Centre, the Royal Albert Hall, and Volunteering in Nepal.

In the Spring, possibly from April, one of our ladies will be resuming her programme of 'walks with lunch' which take place on different days each month to a variety of local venues.

We always welcome new members, so if you are thinking of joining us then please contact me, Shirley, on 01189789124 or email me at [shirleyannwarner@gmail.com](mailto:shirleyannwarner@gmail.com) for more information. We meet at Barkham Village Hall on the 1st Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm when we have a social time, have speakers and do a variety of things. So if you are new to the area, it is a lovely way to make new friends and join in the local community.

Shirley Warner  
Chairperson

## FARLEY HILL BOWLS CLUB NEWS

Victory Hall, Church Road, Farley Hill RG7 1TR,  
(Approximately two miles from Arborfield Cross)

We will be starting to bowl outdoors again at the end of April and will always warmly welcome new members. The club mainly plays friendly matches against other clubs on Saturday and Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings.

Anyone who would just like to try their skill at Outdoor Bowling can come along to one of our two Open Days on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> May between 2.30 and 5.30pm. Bowls will be available for your use but please note that only flat-soled shoes or trainers can be worn on the Green.

For more information please visit our website - [www.farleyhillbowlsclub.org.uk](http://www.farleyhillbowlsclub.org.uk) or contact Club Secretary Bill Dowling on 01344 772130 or at [secretary@farleyhillbowlsclub.org.uk](mailto:secretary@farleyhillbowlsclub.org.uk)

## Finchampstead Flower Club (FFC)

FFC continue to meet in California Hall at 8pm on the fourth Monday of each month. In December we held a workshop for members, making festive topiary trees. Some of the members replaced oasis with an orange, providing a more sustainable arrangement and a festive scent, to the room.

Our February meeting is the AGM, but we will be back to demonstrations and workshops in March. Please phone the chair, Lis Barrett, 01189892092 if you would like to attend at any time; your first visit is free.

You can follow our activities on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Finchampstead-Flower-Club-2011434195620803/>



**Wokingham Choral Society** 70th Anniversary Season  
**Spring Concert**  
**Fauré: Requiem**  
**Vaughan Williams: Five Mystical Songs**  
**Bernstein: Chichester Psalms**

*wcs*

**19th March 2022 7.30pm**  
**Saint Paul's Church, Wokingham**

**Conductor James Morley Potter**  
**Organist Benedict Lewis-Smith**

Tickets: £12.50 (£5 for students and under 18s)  
available in Wokingham from:  
Information Centre, Town Hall  
Newbury Building Society  
Jay Design & Print  
online at:  
<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/wokingham-choral-society>  
Also available from choir members  
or via email: [tickets@wokingham-choral-society.org.uk](mailto:tickets@wokingham-choral-society.org.uk)

[www.wokingham-choral-society.org.uk](http://www.wokingham-choral-society.org.uk)  
registered charity 274853

# involve

MAKING A DIFFERENCE LOCALLY  
IN BRACKNELL FOREST & WOKINGHAM BOROUGH

**Charities, community groups:** do you need extra help now we're coming out of the pandemic? Your group has done so much to support your local community and maybe now you need some assistance. If you're part of a local group in Wokingham Borough or Bracknell Forest, you can get free help with funding, recruiting volunteers, growth of your group and recruiting new Committee Members or trustees. We also run a wide range of training in both areas, suitable for your volunteers and employees.

invOLve Community Services are there for any not-for-personal-profit organisation that needs those sorts of support. Contact us without obligation via 01344 304 404, [reception@involve.community](mailto:reception@involve.community) or look at <https://involve.community/>

In November, it was wonderful to hold our first concert since the beginning of the Covid pandemic – we had waited 2 years for this, like so many other groups. Our soloists in the Autumn Concert at the Old Gym had also been waiting since March 2020 to play the Brahms Double Concerto with us, and their performance didn't disappoint. It was a bitterly cold evening, and we had to keep the hall well ventilated throughout the evening, so many of the audience were wrapped up in extra layers to keep warm. Molly Cockburn, our violin soloist, commented afterwards that she was so cold that she wasn't sure if her fingers were even on the right strings. You certainly wouldn't have guessed, and she and her fellow soloist Michael Atkinson on cello, gave a memorable performance of the concerto, to which the audience responded with rapturous applause. The two then gave a beautiful rendering of "Send in the clowns" as a tribute to Stephen Sondheim who had passed away the day before.

Our Christmas Concert was well supported at the usual venue of St John's Church. Though

shorter than usual, to keep Covid risks to a minimum, we all enjoyed getting into the festive spirit with some seasonal favourites and carols, and it was good to see many children in the audience, as this is an ideal opportunity for the younger ones to experience the thrill of watching and hearing an orchestra playing in a relaxed atmosphere.

This year the orchestra will be celebrating its 30th birthday. Starting from humble roots as an evening class at South Hill Park Arts Centre, it first became a small chamber orchestra. Over the years the membership increased under several different conductors, and especially under the baton of Robert Roscoe, our Musical Director since 2007, the quality of music-making has been transformed. With a regular membership at rehearsals of about 60 players, drawn from a wide area, we are proud to call ourselves a 'symphony orchestra' and the music we play these days is a challenge we all relish, with concerts usually attracting a near capacity audience. The problem these days (and of course exacerbated by the Covid situation) is fitting the orchestra onto the stage, as with the addition of many regular 'guest' players, the number playing in concerts is often 70-80 musicians.

Our Spring Concert is on Saturday 26th March 2022 at 7.30pm at The Old Gym, Wellington College, and it will be a Festival Programme to celebrate the orchestra's 30 years, with the return of soloist Elizaveta Tyun who has thrilled us with her performances of the Britten, Tchaikovsky and Brahms Violin Concertos. For our March concert she will be playing the popular Bruch Violin Concerto; Elizaveta is a favourite with our audiences and tickets will be in high demand. The programme also includes Shostakovich 'Festival Overture', Chabrier 'España', Rimsky-Korsakov 'Capriccio Espagnole' and Arturo Márquez 'Danzón No 2'. Tickets are available on-line via the orchestra's website.

In addition to our regular programme of 3 main concerts a year at Wellington College, circumstances permitting, the orchestra also holds an annual String Workshop in May (open to all competent players, not just orchestra members) to explore the wonderful string repertoire. This year the provisional date for the workshop is Saturday 7th May and more details will be available on our website.

The orchestra welcomes new members, subject to vacancies - if you are interested, please get in touch especially if you are a string player. 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. Go to our website for more information on concerts, rehearsals, workshops and more: [www.crowthorneorchestra.com](http://www.crowthorneorchestra.com)

Chris Gadsby



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 [www.trinityband.co.uk](http://www.trinityband.co.uk)  



### Volunteer

We have now resumed our core service of matching children with volunteers at mainstream leisure activities and are in the process of planning our next Volunteer Induction Training.

Do you want to help children with additional needs and disabilities in your local community? Make a difference to a child's life by volunteering with us and helping our children to be included and make friends.

### Volunteer Your Time

Everyone has their own reasons for wanting to donate their time. It could be to give back to the local community, gain valuable experience, learn new skills or the desire to make a difference to a child's life. Whatever your motivation, you will be part of a friendly team, you will make a difference and have fun at the same time!

We'd love to hear from you! Here are the ways you can contact us:

Opening times: Monday -Thursday 9am-5pm and Friday 9am-4.30pm.

**Telephone:** 0118 969 6369

**Email:** [info@me2club.org.uk](mailto:info@me2club.org.uk)

**Address:** Me2 Club, Unit 9, Indigo House, Fishponds Road, Wokingham, RG41 2GY

Go to our website to start your volunteer application form. [www.me2club.org.uk](http://www.me2club.org.uk)

*The Quiz - Answers*

1. Hereford
2. Bath & Wells
3. Inverness, Londonderry/Derry, Truro.
4. Coventry
5. Bangor
6. Leeds, Exeter College Oxford
7. Ely
8. Dundee
9. City of London and City of Westminster
10. St Albans, St Davids and St Asaph

Where in Barkham?  
On the footpath beyond the church and adjacent to where the new solar farm is going to be!

# Barkham Diary

02/03/22	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7.30pm
08/03/22	Barkham Parish Council	BVH	8.00pm
09/03/22	Bonsai Club	BVH	7.30pm
22/03/22	Parish Council Planning Review	BVH	7.30pm
28/03/22	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	8.00pm
06/04/22	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7.30pm
12/04/22	Barkham Parish Council	BVH	8.00pm
13/04/22	Bonsai Club	BVH	7.30pm
17/04/22	BVRA Easter Egg Hunt	Junipers	3pm
25/04/22	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	8.00pm
26/04/22	Parish Council Planning Review	BVH	7.30pm
04/05/22	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7.30pm
07/05/22	BVRA Barn Dance	BVH	7.00pm
10/05/22	Barkham Parish Council	BVH	8.00pm
11/05/22	Bonsai Club	BVH	7.30pm
13/05/22	Copy deadline for Summer Newsletter		
23/05/22	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	8.00pm
24/05/22	Parish Council Planning Review	BVH	7.30pm
01/06/22	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7.30pm
04/06/22	Queens Platinum Jubilee event	BVH	tbc
08/06/22	Bonsai Club	BVH	7.30pm
14/06/22	Barkham Parish Council	BVH	8.00pm
24/06/22	BVRA Skittles	BVH	7.00pm
10/11/22	BVRA AGM	BVH	8.00pm
19/11/22	BVRA Quiz Night	BVH	7.30pm
16/12/22	BVRA Carols in the Park	Junipers	7.00pm
<b>Weekly Events</b>			
Mondays	Pilates Class	BVH	11.30am
Mondays	Dog Training	BVH	6.30pm
Tuesdays	Dinton walking group	Dinton	10.00am
Tues-Fri	Barkham Pre-School	BVH	9.00am
Thursdays	Pilates Class	BVH	6.15pm

BVH is Barkham Village Hall  
CRH is California Ratepayers Hall  
AVH is Arborfield Village Hall  
FMH is Finchampstead Memorial Hall



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**Collect from our dairy**  
If you would like to collect your cheeses directly from our dairy please contact us at [info@twohootscheese.co.uk](mailto:info@twohootscheese.co.uk) to arrange payment and collection.  
Social distancing will be upheld during collections.

### Barkham web site

I hope you like our website [www.barkham.org.uk](http://www.barkham.org.uk)

We are constantly looking for ways to improve it and would welcome your suggestions.

### More photos please!

We are always in need of attractive images of the Barkham area for both the web site and newsletter, so if you have some interesting photos and would like to share them please get in touch.

Dave Clements  
[webmaster@barkham.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@barkham.org.uk)



The home of live music in Wokingham



Wokingham Music Club brings great music to Wokingham every month. Some dates include:

- Women in Rock - 25th March 2022
- Martin Turner ex Wishbone Ash - 1st April 2022
- Logicaltramp – The Spirit of Supertramp - 15th April 2022

Tickets are now on sale for all confirmed dates, a full list can be found on our website [www.wokinghammusicclub.co.uk](http://www.wokinghammusicclub.co.uk) To sign up for our newsletter just drop a line to [info@wokinghammusicclub.co.uk](mailto:info@wokinghammusicclub.co.uk). Tickets for shows can be booked at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/wokinghammusicclub](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/wokinghammusicclub)

**Venues:** The Whitty Theatre, Emmbrook Sports & Social, The Royal British Legion Club, Winnersh.

*Vicky's Bodyworks* present

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*The Tree Company Others Look Up To*

The BVRA has recently updated its privacy policy to ensure compliance with GDPR. You can review this at the bottom of the home page on the website. As part of this for those members who have provided their email address please be advised that it will only be used for BVRA communications of interest or to receipt your annual subscription.

You can amend your mailing preferences or opt out any time by clicking on the link at the bottom of any of our emails or emailing [webmaster@barkham.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@barkham.org.uk)

The views expressed in this newsletter, unless signed by a BVRA committee member, are not necessarily those of the Barkham Village Residents Association  
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