



BVRA

Barkham Newsletter

Issue 137 Autumn 2021

from the Barkham Village Residents Association

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

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

Skittles Evening



Saturday 2nd October

? ? ? ? QUIZ ? ? ? ?



QUIZ NIGHT

Saturday 27th Nov 2021

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Chairman' Chat

Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Newsletter. The Euro's (football not the song contest) had us hoping but didn't quite deliver. I think that we all knew the outcome when it went to penalties! The Olympics brightened the summer with a super Team GB performance. On that note it's great that we have a higher degree of freedom and normality than when I last wrote in the summer newsletter.

As you will see in the Social Section we have re-started the social activities and I hope that as many of you as possible will participate in these. In fact we have already had the Distributors BBQ to reward the hard work that our volunteer distributors do in delivering the newsletters and collecting subscriptions. A personal thanks from me to every one of you, the pandemic made it difficult but you all just got on with it!

We are always looking for things that we can do to help the local residents. At this moment in time we are looking at how we can provide community services.

These could be simple things to improve the local environment. Give it some thought and let me know.

On a sad note we have learnt of the sudden death of Chris Barrows, Chair of the Barkham Village Hall Management Committee. He was a proactive and energetic member of the local community. Our thoughts are with his family.

Finally, have a great Autumn, stay safe and well and sign up for some of the upcoming social activities.

chairman@barkham.org.uk

The BVRA Needs Your Support

Please help us by paying your £2 subscription by direct debit. If you haven't paid this year, your debit will be taken shortly after you sign up. If you have paid, you will not be charged twice and your debit will be used to take next year's subscription in February 2022.

To create a debit please go to:

<https://www.barkham.org.uk/bvra/bvra-membership>
where full details are available.

All debits are fully protected under the UK direct debit scheme. By setting a debit up you will be helping to ensure the future of the BVRA and also making it easier for our distributors.

The screenshot shows a form titled "Set up a Direct Debit with Barkham Village Residents Association". It includes fields for First name, Last name, Sort code, Account number, Post code, Email, and a checkbox for "More than one person is required to authorise Direct Debits". A green "Set up Direct Debit" button is at the bottom. The GoCardless logo and terms of use are visible at the bottom of the page.

Advertising and Newsletter Contributions

Newsletter articles / contributions for the Winter edition should be in by 12 November 2021. It helps if these can be submitted in electronic form by email to newsletter@barkham.org.uk.

For trade adverts, please email 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 December.



Editorial

I can't believe how quickly this year is disappearing. Spring is a distant memory and summer has been a mixed bag of very hot and very wet weather. I am unsure if I am still expecting some warm weather, or I should just write it off and look forward to the autumn colours and cosy nights in front of the fire.

If, like me you have felt out of sorts with the strangeness which has been thrust upon us over the last 18 months, you may benefit from the calming serenity of mindfulness. Take a look at our article on page 18. If you have ever thought of giving some of your time to

the community, we have some very interesting articles on various ways you can volunteer. It is acknowledged that the benefits are just as much for the giver as the receiver.

I am thrilled to announce that social events have resumed and some of the groups and societies have started to meet up face to face. We will never take this behaviour for granted again.

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

BVRA 2021/22 GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman: Alan Dixon	977 1831
	chairman@barkham.org.uk
Secretary: Richard Roberts	07785 228684
	secretary@barkham.org.uk
Treasurer: Alison Goudge	989 2287
	treasurer@barkham.org.uk
Social: (contact) Gill Powell	978 3373
	social@barkham.org.uk
Membership: Bev Dipper	07917 114643
	membership@barkham.org.uk
Newsletter: Suzanne Trigg	07411 681272
	newsletter@barkham.org.uk
Web Site: Dave Clements	989 2198
	webmaster@barkham.org.uk
Development Watch:	
	Stewart Richardson 979 1914 development@barkham.org.uk

Barkham Village Hall is situated next to St. James' church in a beautiful rural setting with spacious grounds and large car park. Perfect for weddings, christenings, meetings and parties.

The main hall can accommodate 175 guests and benefits from dimmable lighting and a fully equipped kitchen. A smaller meeting room is also available. If you are a group who need to meet regularly we have plenty of chairs and tables

We offer competitive rates for hiring both halls from as little as £24.50/hr, except Saturday after 6.00pm when the cost is £28.50/hr. All day bookings are £410.00 with the option to erect a marquee for an additional £100.00

Further information with photographs and availability calendar can be obtained from the parish council website <https://barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk/barkham-village-hall>.

To book and for any other enquires please email Judith.Neuhofer@btinternet.com.



Planning

There are two themes to comment on this time around – one relates to local planning applications which may be of concern to immediate neighbours and the other is about several strategic issues that could impact the parish on a much broader front.

It is noticeable how many planning applications are being brought forward for extensions to residential properties or conversions of garages to residential use. This is probably not surprising as after enduring long periods of lockdown at various levels, people feel they just need more space or somewhere they can work away from the kitchen table.

These developments are often quite simple but, in some cases, attention has to be paid to specific aspects of the application such as possible over-development of the site or whether a neighbour will be overlooked. It is often obvious if there are going to be problems but the Parish Council tends to wait before submitting a final response to see if neighbours raise any concerns, just in case something has been missed.

On the broader strategic front there is much going on with respect to three important areas.

Following the initial consultation relating to the **BARKHAM**

SOLAR FARM project, revised designs were uploaded earlier this month on the Wokingham Planning website under the original planning application number – 211081. These revisions, which addressed items such as unduly heavy screening, the proposed safer Greenway crossing of Barkham Ride and the impact on the heritage assets. To assist the farmers affected, some areas will be left as farmland reducing generating capacity by some 9%.

These changes have yet to be reviewed with the project team and

they will be reported in the next edition of the Barkham Parish Council magazine – Village Info.

The LPU is indeed important and long overdue as, without it, we become vulnerable to speculative developments supported by the Building Inspectorate. The potential sites are still being evaluated and it is understood that more will be known about the preferred locations later in the Autumn.

As we have discussed in previous editions, it is not sufficient just to have an updated plan but new houses have to be delivered on time and this is in the hands of the developers. We become vulnerable if building targets are missed but we are also vulnerable if targets are exceeded. Last year some 1550 new dwellings were delivered throughout WBC – almost double the annual target – at a time when only 50% of the required homes were built across the country. This could be used to justify yet more housing in the area by demonstrating that such a build rate can be supported!

A new **PLANNING BILL** is expected to be brought before the Houses of Parliament after the summer recess which could not only affect Barkham or Wokingham but huge swathes of land across the nation. Last year the Government consulted on a White Paper – Fixing our Bro-

ken Housing Market – and you may recall the furore at the time over the algorithm that greatly increased the number of houses Wokingham had to build. Fortunately, after strong representation from local councils, including Wokingham, and a group of Conservative back-benchers - Mrs Theresa May spoke out strongly - it was withdrawn.

Although it would not be appropriate to discuss the details until the Bill is actually published, it is evident it could cause a similar upheaval as it is believed it will give developers more freedom to build homes where they want against local wishes and opinion. Already, the same group of back-benchers are drawing breath and it is clear there will be plenty to write about in future editions of this article.

If you have any comments about anything written here then please e-mail to clerk@barkham-parish-council.org.uk.

Graeme Dexter



News from St James' Church

What a treat it is, to be able to gather Sunday-by-Sunday, morning and evening, and regularly to see new people coming back to join us after so many months of staying away. I hope that I will never take such a privilege for granted again!

We're nothing very special at Barkham Church: about 200 very ordinary people, of all ages and stages of life, who are joined by a desire to worship a God who has shown us extraordinary love.

I'm writing this the day after we looked at Psalm 51 together in our services. Psalm 51 is a prayer that was first prayed by King David, give-or-take 3,000 years ago. The backstory reads rather like like the plot of a thriller today. David grossly abuses his power as king to commit adultery with Bathsheba, who is the wife of Uriah, who is one of David's greatest warriors. Bathsheba falls pregnant. When David's efforts to cover up what he's done by trying to pass the baby off as Uriah's fail, he comes up with a very calculated and sadly successful scheme to have Uriah killed.

A little later, confronted by what he has done, David prays:

'Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.' (Psalm 51:1-2)

It's amazing how easy it is to start to think that being a Christian

is about being good and trying to earn God's favour through all sorts of good things we do. But David knew, and this Psalm teaches us, that this simply isn't true. Rather, being part of God's people is about humbly recognizing the mess we've made of our lives and the trouble we're naturally in, and then, like David, crying to God for mercy we simply don't deserve, mercy that, in his love and compassion, the Lord holds out to us in Jesus his Son.

That's what unites us at Barkham: rejoicing in this mercy, wanting to get to know this God better, and longing to help others come to know him too.

So far, we've taken a fairly cautious approach to emerging from lockdown, so we're still maintaining some social distancing during our services and asking people to wear face-coverings while speaking and singing too. We'll keep these things under constant review, so they may be a bit different by the time you read this. But we gather at 10am and 6pm on Sundays, to sing, read the Bible, hear it preached, pray, and enjoy getting to know one another better too. Why not come and join us one week, especially if you've only recently moved to the area? We'd love to meet you. You can find more details at www.abch.org (click on the link for Barkham Church).

Finally, on a sadder note, and on behalf of the church family, I would love to pay tribute to Chris Barrows, following the sudden news of his death at the beginning of August. Chris poured himself out in serving the people of Barkham and the surrounding area, in so many ways, not least of which was through chairing the committee at the Village Hall. He was a great friend to Barkham Church, and we loved working with him. Chris's family and friends are in our prayers in these difficult days.

David Horrocks



Covid and the financial risks

Recent news that some local authorities have had to declare bankruptcy or are struggling to make ends meet, residents are naturally concerned that Wokingham Borough council could go the same way—but the short and simple answer is no.

With other local councils getting into financial difficulties, it is important to give you the residents of Wokingham Borough, confidence that their council is in a strong position and is not at risk.

In fact, thanks to the careful budget monitoring, prudent borrowing and shrewd investments, Wokingham borough council (WBC) finances are among the soundest in the UK.

Here's how the council are safeguarding its financial future, which is the cornerstone of being able to provide great services.

Close budget monitoring (internal scrutiny):

The council regular monitor and report on expenditure throughout the year to keep a close eye on

expenditure. Last year, the budget came in slightly underspent, and we are currently on track this year.

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability (CIPFA) Resilience Toolkit:

The toolkit was issued by CIPFA in response to general concerns about local authorities' financial stability and provides a measure (a set of financial indicators) against which we can test our resilience. An independent assessment of all these indicators (by the Municipal Journal) placed WBC in the top 20 in the country overall last year and, since then, all our key indicators have got even better.

Net debt:

All local authorities have borrowed to money if they want to invest in new things such as leisure centres, regenerated towns, and new forms of clean energy, and other improvements for the community. But the key is to ensure any borrowing can be funded by the investments return and the assets produced. In WBC case, the cost of borrowing is not just off-set by the returns we are making, the Council is generating revenue that can be reinvested in services.

Strong reserves:

The recent National Audit Office report on the '*Financial sustainability of local authorities*' shows we have reserves that can cover 85% of our spending power, which is twice the national average for councils.

Auditing of accounts (external scrutiny):

the councils' external auditors have recently signed off our accounts as sound and have raised no concerns with regards to our financial soundness. They have

also specifically reported positively on our approach to commercial investments which is in stark contrast to local authorities who have had to declare bankruptcy after ignoring warning signs flagged up by their auditors.

Knowing how important services are to residents and how investing in things such as adult care, education, roads, and leisure that makes the borough a great place to live and bring up a family, not just for today but for future generations, I will continue to ensure residents money is used to maximum effect and the council continues to control costs at the same time ensuring the standard of service is maintained and improved where the opportunity presents itself.

Remember if I can be any help or answer any questions with regards the council, please do not hesitate to contact me.

John Kaiser
Councillor for Barkham
Deputy Leader
Executive member for Finance and Housing
Wokingham Borough Council
Mobile :07714192352
e-mail: john.kaiser@wokingham.gov.uk

BARKHAM VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

QUIZ?



QUIZ NIGHT

Saturday 27th Nov 2021

7:00pm for 7:30pm

Fish & Chip Supper Included

Tickets available from Gill Powell

Email: social@barkham.org.uk

or Tel 9783373

£12 per person

LICENCED BAR

So you don't need to bring a bottle!

A Day in the Life of a Volunteer Driver at Keep Mobile

Transport is taken for granted by many people with both Wokingham and Bracknell well served by bus and train routes plus of course very high car ownership. But, for many people with disabilities or who are older, transport can be a problem limiting their activity and wellbeing. For many of us it is easy to hop onto a bus or into a car, but what if that is not possible due to age or disability?

Keep Mobile was established 29 years ago and our mission is to deliver door-to-door transport using our own fleet of buses. It serves members in the Wokingham and Bracknell boroughs who are socially isolated, may have mental or physical disabilities or simply to frail with no means of transport themselves. Keep Mobile is a Community Transport Operator (CTO) and is a registered charity with the Charity Commission. It is dependent on funding from local councils and other funding bodies and donations to enable our services to local residents.

I have been a volunteer driver for Keep Mobile now for the last three years. As a driver, no single day is the same but every day is interesting and worthwhile. The ability to enable our members to get out and about, engage with the world and participate in social activities is reward in itself. The service is door-to-door so the driver will collect a member from their place of residence and escort them to their destination and if required ensure their safe return home. The range of services offered include Dial-a-Ride, Shopping Trips, Day Excursions, Out-of-Area and Group Transport. Recently during the Covid



pandemic these Keep Mobile has been offering Vaccination Runs and Personal Shopping which is still being offered.

Keep Mobile employs full time paid drivers and a contingent of volunteer drivers. All drivers are trained in-house to the MiDAS (Minibus Drivers Awareness Scheme) standards giving us knowledge and skills to safely transport our passengers and we receive regular further training on wheelchair handling and working with people with disabilities.

All the buses are accessible, meaning powered lifts at the back that can support both manual and powered wheelchairs plus a powered step.

A typical Dial-a-Ride Day will start with the driver checking the minibus, ensuring that all equipment is in place and ready for the upcoming day and review the pre-planned schedule. The minibus schedule is managed by centralised software and the minibus location, members on board, status (pickup, drop-off, running late) is monitored in real time. The driver is in constant

communication with the office via the onboard system and can update the office regarding delays or changes. Typically, with a Dial-a-Ride Day the driver will be out for the morning or full day, completing the planned and timed schedule with of course breaks for his/herself. In a Day Excursion the driver will collect all the group members, drive them to the attraction often spending time with the group or not as they choose before returning members home.

The main element of the job however is seeing that all members get from point A to point B safely. For our wheelchair users this will involve moving the wheelchair from the pickup point onto the bus, ensuring both wheelchair and user are safely restrained and comfortable and then transporting the wheelchair from the bus and into the final destination. For non-wheelchair members this will mean escorting them from and to the bus, ensuring that they are safely seated and assisting with any personal items such as shopping and bags. At all times safety is paramount and all our members and their specific needs

will be registered with us prior to travel to enable the driver to deliver the appropriate level of care and support. Over time a driver will get to know many of our passengers and it is a joy to chat to them, provide their transport and enable them to remain active in society.

Covid has presented a challenge but Keep Mobile has Covid protected our buses by installing screens between the seats, fitting hand sanitisers front and rear, fitting new air filtration systems and changing our operational processes to ensure regular testing for all our staff plus the provision of personal PPE. This has enabled the buses to keep running and provide services during the pandemic.

How can you help? Simple, come and join us and become one of our volunteer drivers or a full-time driver and of course please continue to support our funding. As a paid driver you will be asked to commit to regular days but volunteers can commit to regular days or just ad hoc.

We can be contacted on: 0345 544 0850 or visit our website at www.keepmobile.org.uk

Martin Dipper

Where in Barkham?

Where is this pylon to be found?

Answer on page 23

BARKHAM VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



Saturday 2nd October

7:00pm for 7:30pm—11:00pm

Barkham Village Hall

Ploughman's Supper Included

Tickets available from Gill Powell

Email: social@barkham.org.uk

or Tel 9783373

Adult £10, Primary School Children £5

LICENCED BAR & RAFFLE





9 of us enjoyed picnics etc on the Terrace on a fine sunny evening.

We also had the planned walk along the Greenway on May 20th when 7 of us walked from the Finchampstead Baptist Church to the California Park cafe for coffee. Sadly, work being carried out at the southern end of the lake meant we couldn't do a circular tour so we retraced our steps to the FBH cafe and had lunch.

Since the Summer Newsletter when I reported that the ongoing Covid situation meant we were still not able to do things it's now GREAT NEWS - the Ladies Group is up and running again with resumed gatherings, even if there is still a little caution with them. Our planned gathering on the Terrace at the Hall did take place on June 2nd. 12 Ladies brought their picnic chairs, picnics, drinks and nibbles, and although there were a few spots of rain to begin with, they soon passed and we all enjoyed a very pleasant evening with lots of convivial chat till the sun went down. The photo of one of our Ladies enjoying the evening, complete with a Summer drink! We repeated this on July 7th as restrictions had this stage had still not been lifted, and this time



The highlight of the Summer for us was being able to have our annual BBQ. All Covid restrictions had been lifted so we excitedly arranged this for August 4th, and with husbands and partners also included, 24 of us were able to enjoy eating outside with tables and chairs arranged on the grassy area at the rear of the hall. Drinks on the Terrace were enjoyed before tucking into an array of tasty burgers, sausages and chicken, together with a wonderful selection of salads prepared by some of our ladies. The photo shows Jim and Laurence, our two 5-star 'chefs' with the meat platters - many thanks to them for all their great cooking. We

were blessed with such lovely fine weather and stayed outside till sundown!

Now from September we plan to be back inside the Village Hall for our usual monthly meetings. And now that our Programme Secretary, Jenny, has returned with her husband from an 'enforced' long stay in New Zealand due to Covid, she is hoping to rebook the interesting speakers we had planned for 2020.



So the future looks more positive, and all being well it will be back to normal meetings and events for us - I do so hope this will happen.

If anyone is new to the area, or if you are now thinking of joining the Barkham Ladies and live locally you would be very welcome to visit and see us at one of our meetings. We meet at the Village Hall on the 1st Wednesday of the month, and do a variety of things including having some very good speakers. For more information please contact Shirley on 0118 9789124 or email me on shirleyannwarner@gmail.com

Shirley Warner
Chairperson



You've probably seen them on BBC South Today and The One Show or maybe you've read about them in The Wokingham Paper but we also wanted to give a huge shout-out to the team at Freely Fruity and highlight the wonderful work they are doing.

They have teamed up with SHARE Wokingham to help residents in the borough who may be struggling, get high quality, nutritious produce.

Freely Fruity are a group of volunteers who are growing fruit and vegetables for vulnerable people in the local community. Land has been donated and they

have already planted hundreds of donated fruit and vegetable plants.



"Food banks are brilliant, but they can only offer mostly dried or tinned foods," Co-founder, Ryan Simpson said. "Everybody deserves to eat right — that's our aim."

You can contact them via their FB page and they also have a donation page here: <https://www.paypal.com/gb/fundraiser/charity/4053442...>



Both these organisations were formed during the Covid-19 pandemic and they have now decided to team up and pool all their experience, resources and produce.

Share also have a donation page here: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/share-wokingham...>

But even though lockdown is currently being lifted they still need your help. SHARE Wokingham receives many donations from supermarkets and caterers and their current base of

Norrey's Church may no longer be available as parishioners return so COULD YOU HELP? Do you know of a central location that they could use? If so, please contact Share Wokingham via their FB page.

Any help, whether it's time, money, produce or plants would be gratefully received.

Helping those in need, lessening food waste and keeping tummies full is just the sort of thing that make us really LOVE



Social Matters

At last this Newsletter contains some GREAT NEWS ! The Social Committee, or the 'Events Team' as we are also known as have been able to plan and book social events again for the rest of this year. With Covid restrictions being lifted this has enabled us to use the Village Hall again. However, before I list the upcoming events, I am so pleased to report that on July 31st we were able to hold the Distributors' BBQ. This event is usually held annually (was cancelled last year) to say 'thank you' to all those involved in the production and delivery of the quarterly BVRA Newsletter.

A group of 45 of us, including some partners, gathered at the Village Hall, but sadly heavy rain meant we had to retire inside, while the resilient 'chefs' cooked outside with shelter from a gazebo and umbrellas! The rain delayed events a little, but the wine and beer flowed and much chatting and socialising took place before we all tucked into a spread of beef burgers, sausages, chicken and a selection of salads. Our thanks go to Cathy, Nick and Peter who did a wonderful job of cooking, and a few others who helped to cook too. I was inside out of the rain,

'Family Carols in the Park' is a great favourite and is booked for Friday December 17th, 7pm at the Junipers Park. We meet at the junction of the Woodlands and the Junipers to sing carols accompanied by the 'Breakaway Brass Band'. This is a free event and carol sheets will be provided. After singing and arrival at the

entrance to the park, mulled wine and mince pies will be available. This is a lovely way to enjoy the start of the festive season for both adults and children. A reminder will appear in the Winter Newsletter, but make a note of the date now.

Now our future events :

The Family Skittles Evening is on Saturday October 2nd at 7.00 for 7.30 at the Village Hall. A Ploughman's Supper will be provided and there is a licensed bar. Tickets can be obtained from Gill Powell by, preferably, emailing social@barkham.org.uk or by telephone on 0118 9783373. The cost is £10 for adults and £5 for primary school children . This is always a fun event so do come along.

The Annual Quiz is booked for Saturday November 27th at the Village Hall at 7.00 for 7.40pm. This includes a fish and chip supper and a licensed bar (so no need to bring your own drinks). The cost is £12 per person, and tickets again available from Gill Powell on social@barkham.org.uk or telephone 0118 9783373. Tables will be for a maximum of 6 people, so arrange your teams, or if you just turn up on the night you can join a team when you arrive. This is always great fun, and an exciting and competitive evening, so come and join in.

PS. The BVRA Social Committee is always looking to welcome new members to help organise and run events throughout the year. It's great fun and very rewarding, so if you would like to just help, or be on the committee too, please contact Gill Powell for more information and to leave your contact details on social@barkham.org.uk

Events are also being planned for 2022, including the Children's Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday, April 27th. For all the events mentioned there will be posters advertised around the village, and information on the BVRA website.

Summer has been a mixed bag this year with cold wet weather, followed by a 'heat-wave', and now, as I write this, we have cooler, unseasonably mixed weather for August. I hope we have a nice Indian Summer in September to ease us into the Autumn, but till then I hope you enjoy the rest of the holidays.

Shirley Warner
Social Committee Member



The Quiz

The theme this time is “first and last”. 10 topics, each with a “first” and “last” question so 20 questions in all.

1. Sport

- a. Who was the first Wimbledon Men’s Singles Champion in the “Open Era”?
- b. Who won the last of his 7 Formula One World Championship titles in 2005?

2. Politics

- a. Who was the first (and to date, only) Welsh UK Prime Minister?
- b. Who was the last (and again, to date, only) woman to have been UK Foreign Secretary?

3. Films

- a. Which was the first Carry On Film (1958)? Coincidentally it featured William Hartnell who would later become the first Dr Who!
- b. “Breaking Dawn – Part 2” was the fifth and final production (2012) in which series of films?

4. Books

- a. “It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife” are the first words of which classic novel?
- b. What is the title of the third and final book in The Lord of the Rings?

5. TV

- a. Ant and Dec are fixtures on our TV screens but in which TV drama did they first meet and what were their characters’ names in the series?
- b. “The Remorseful Day” was the 33rd and final episode of which TV crime drama?

6. Olympics

- a. Flora Duffy won the 2020 (in 2021) women’s triathlon, earning the first ever gold for her country. Which country?
- b. Joe Joyce won the last medal for Team GB at Rio 2016 but in which sport?

7. Music

- a. “+” was which English singer-songwriter’s debut album?
- b. The UK came last in the 2020 Eurovision Song Contest. Can you name the singer or the song?

8. Explorers

- a. Who led the expedition that was the first to reach the South Pole (1911)?
- b. What was Eugene Cernan the last man to do (to date)?

9. Famous Buildings

- a. Which was completed first – the Eiffel Tower or the rebuilt (after the fire) Houses of Parliament/Palace of Westminster?
- b. Which was completed last – the Sydney Opera House or the Royal National Theatre building on the South Bank?

10. TV history

- a. ITV launched in 1955. Which product was the first to be advertised?
- b. The BBC had a cunning (?) plan to distract from the launch of ITV by killing off a favourite Archers radio character on the same evening. What was the name of the character who “met her last”?

Answers on page 22



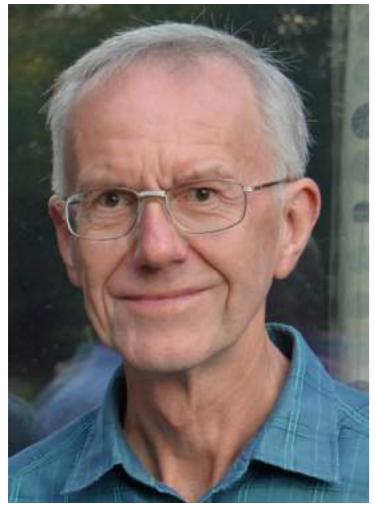
The first show of our 2021/22 season, the hilarious Mike Leigh comedy *Abigail's Party*, is now on general sale! WT will be back at full capacity, with the bar, coffee bar, ice creams and programmes open and available once more! Find out more about the show and book tickets on our website.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING AT WT?

Did you know that all of our team at WT are volunteers?

Whether that's our box office team, backstage team, or even our members behind the bar, we rely on a brilliant group of people to help make WT a great night out for our patrons!

We're always on the hunt for new volunteers – it's a great way to meet new people, support the theatre, and you'll get full training and plenty of support from our front of house team. If you're interested in getting involved, or would like to find out more, click the link below, or reach out to our team at FOH@wokinghamtheatre.org.uk



Alan's Patch

This has been the wettest summer I can remember for many years. It reminds me of my childhood when wet summers were blamed on 'atomic bomb' tests disturbing the atmosphere! Following a cold and dry Spring, it has been a very strange year for weather, but let's face it, we are getting used to unusual weather patterns! Whereas last year everything was at least two weeks ahead of schedule, this year it is two weeks behind, meaning instead of eating my first new potatoes at the beginning of June, this year it was early July. With the warm and wet weather, the biggest winner has been the weeds! My compost heap has overflowed into a second with all the weeds and grass mowings. Oddly though, you might think the slugs would have a field day, but I have been lucky and not been overly bothered by them. I know others who have had some of their crops decimated.

I am still very happy with my new raised beds. Instead of sharing one large bed between carrots and parsnips, each now has a separate bed. This means I can net the carrots to keep away the carrot root fly without affecting the parsnips which grow taller and used to be a bit inhibited by the nets. This year they are growing tall and free.

The beans have been excellent so far – broad, French, runner. Of the beans destined for storage as dry

beans the Cannellini look really good but the Barlotti beans are late and only just flowering.

Peas have been a problem. Last year a couple of pigeons discovered how tasty they were and I had to net them. These wise birds have clearly remembered and this year they have caused damage again. It is difficult to net peas because the peas attach themselves to the netting as well as the frame they are supposed to climb. This makes it difficult to harvest. Nonetheless it's worth the effort because the peas have been excellent. I must find some better way of growing and protecting them.

I am growing a few more brassicas nowadays. Cabbage and kale are growing well, although I've had a bit of slug damage. The cauliflower produced very early and I have eaten some already, not really what I intended! I have netted them very successfully and the cabbage white butterflies have been frustrated by it. Incidentally these butterflies showed up much later this year, no surprise, perhaps.



The salad bed has been pretty successful. As an experiment, I have grown celery for the first time and this is looking really good.

As I write, the courgettes are cropping well. I like their lovely yellow flowers. As you might



before trained a fan from scratch. It is really vigorous and even has a few fruits for the first time. I'm hoping a few will mature to be able to eat them.

Despite the regular attacks of sawfly the gooseberries have provided a great crop of good sized berries. The broad bean companion deterrent was not as successful as I had hoped. Perhaps I need more beans and earlier....

expect, the butternut squashes are well behind schedule but if we have a warm Autumn, I hope to reap a crop. Similarly, the sweet corn is late, so the plants are short and the cobs are small, success is in the balance.....

By contrast, I have never known rhubarb grow so well and for so long. The conditions have been perfect. I have lots processed in the freezer for winter use.

Last year I planted some strawberry plants and they have been really successful. I was lucky because it is an early variety and they benefited from a sunny spell in June and were eaten before the wet season arrived.

I am delighted with how my three-year old fan-trained nectarine is growing. I have never

other plants, mostly weeds. The tallest were the ragworts coming in at 1.7m! Yesterday evening the deer returned to inspect my work. I've not been able to see them for a while!

I've been away for a few days, so I need to go and pick the vegetables and weed my patch again!



What is your path out of COVID?

We humans are quite remarkable. Just look at our ability to adapt; there are humans everywhere, from exploring the depths of the sea, frigid ice lands, floating in space above us on the international space station, as well as here in Barkham. We adapted to our lockdown status. Even if we didn't like it, we created new ways of being within the restrictions we faced, whether because we had concerns about the health risks or to be a part of the community doing the right thing – and often both.

Our ability to adapt doesn't mean there is no discomfort in change. Despite, as it's often said, there is no constant but change; it can still be stressful. And now most of the legal restrictions have gone, we have the opportunity to move towards a new normal. But, with COVID-19 having its own adaptation processes, the Delta variant gives us good reasons to continue with Hands, Face, Space.

When will everything be back to normal?

Our new normal will presumably include COVID-19 for some time. So, how might we think about it? Is this an opportunity for positive thinking? It depends on what we mean by positive thinking! Often, positive thinking is synonymous with always seeing the very best – and sometimes that is helpful, but not always. If it means we assume we will neither contract COVID nor spread it, then the behaviour it could lead to is probably unhelpful. Or it might mean we tie our thinking to 'it will be over by Christmas!' – I'm not sure COVID has any deadlines in mind.

So what are helpful ways to think about our path out of COVID?

Perhaps simply that we will get through this. Some things might be different for a while, perhaps always, but we will keep moving forward. This, for me, is optimism and is a bit more discerning than blanket positive thinking.

Have you heard the phrase, 'often, the problem is how we're treating the problem, not the problem itself?' If we emphasise the things that we cannot control, then we unwittingly create suffering. If we place our focus on the areas we do have control and influence, then we get to recognise the action that we can take. It's clear which is the most helpful.

Is it that easy? Yes, and no. Perhaps we have faced tough circumstances; maybe we are in a high-risk category, struggled with long COVID or the loss of a family member or friend. The last thing I would suggest is ignoring or discounting our reality. Problems though, also have a way of removing perspective; they place themselves at the centre of our attention, blocking everything else out. Even in the most difficult of circumstances, being able to broaden our perspective can be helpful.

One helpful way of working with reality is mindfulness. Being able to step back when it's helpful to get perspective, or stepping-in when it's helpful, such those moments of potential joy that we so easily overlook, whether it's the comfort of a hug, observing a sunset, or the taste of our first drink of the day. I often describe it as providing ways to deal more effectively with difficult things and to fully enjoy pleasant things. If you've heard that mindfulness is just about meditation or about emptying your mind, then you've been misled.

What do you do that is helpful, enjoyable, productive, or healthy for your mind and body? Go on, list as many things as you can. If your list is short, get creative with what you could be doing or even what it's helpful to stop doing (I generally don't watch or listen to news programmes, for example).

We humans are quite remarkable, and when we focus on what we can do rather than what we can't do, life often gets so much better.

Mark Quirk



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Keep your home safe now and into the Autumn

With so many of us having been "Locked Down" in our homes, the number of house burglaries has dropped over the past year; however, thieves are still out and about, and have been taking advantage of open doors and windows or poorly secured garages and sheds.

Whether you leave your home to go to work, pop to the shops, get some exercise in the fresh air or even if you are working in your back garden, you should take steps to make your home look occupied and ensure any accessible windows (ground floor or reachable) and doors are secure.

- Keep ladders and gardening tools securely locked away. Don't leave them outside where they could be used to break into your home.
- Ensure sheds and garages are fully secured and security mark and register tools and other items you have stored there. Padlock items such as bikes, lawnmowers and even BBQs. Think about chaining items to secure shelves and installing anchor points to which motor bikes or bicycles can be padlocked.
- Cut back your shrubs and hedges to aid visibility.
- Consider a timer switch for your radio and lights.
- Service and maintain your burglar alarm.
- If you go out in the evenings don't leave your home in darkness.
- Please lock all doors and windows at night. If you have a UPVC door, remember to lift the handle and lock it with the key.
- Keep all valuables and keys, including car keys, out of sight and out of reach of windows and letterboxes. Double check your vehicle is locked and store keyless fobs in a suitable security pouch.
- Ensure side and rear gates are in good condition and locked to prevent access to the rear of the property. Move bins away from side walls and fences.

If you decide to go away, please do not advertise you are away on social media - wait until you are home to upload your holiday snaps. Please ask a trusted friend or neighbour to keep an eye on your home while you are away.

Further information and advice can be obtained from the

Thames Valley Police web site at www.thamesvalley.police.uk. If you have any information regarding burglary or anyone committing offences, please report it online at www.thamesvalley.police.uk or call 101. Alternatively, you can call Crimestoppers anonymously on free phone 0800 555 111.

Contact us

Email: You can contact your local neighbourhood team via FieldsNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk - please note this email address cannot be used to report crimes or for any urgent matters. Facebook: TVP Bracknell & Wokingham

Twitter: @TVP_Wokingham

You can receive free information updates from Thames Valley Police by registering for Thames Valley Alert at: www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk.



Wokingham Choral Society



WCS Platinum Jubilee Season

Wokingham Choral Society has been singing through the pandemic with carefully-managed rehearsals when permitted and with the help of Zoom technology during the long months of lockdown. We have missed our audience, but hope to see them again soon as we are now planning our celebration of the Society's 70th season. Our programme for this special milestone starts with a performance of Handel's much-loved 'Messiah' in November 2021, and will end on a high with Bach's magnificent B minor Mass in June 2022. In between those two musical giants, we will enjoy our annual Carol Concert and a spring concert of shorter works, including Faure's ethereal and poignant Requiem.

Our talented professionals - Musical Director James Morley Potter and accompanist Ben Lewis-Smith - will guide us through rehearsals and, at our concerts, we will also have fantastic support from professional soloists and orchestra.

If you would like to take part in this exciting programme and share the experience of making wonderful, live, classical music, then WCS would love to hear from you and, for the opportunity to sing the Hallelujah Chorus and try out the WCS choral experience, we are having an Open Rehearsal on 9th September at 7.30pm in Emmbrook Senior School hall. For more details, contact our membership officer (follow the "Join WCS" link in our website www.wokingham-choral-society.org.uk) or simply join us for the rehearsal on September 9th as we start the season. We look forward to seeing you there!

Finchampstead Flower Club

FFC have been meeting online using Zoom. Recent demonstrations have included "Go with the Flow" and "Topless in the Alps". The members have enjoyed watching the arrangements develop in front of their eyes and discussing questions related to the flowers, foliage or mechanics.

We have also visited Farley Hill Place Gardens, which open for charity, and enjoyed a tour followed by a cream tea. In August we plan to have a strawberry tea in members' gardens.

We hope to return to demonstrations on the fourth Monday of each month in California Hall from September.

If you would like to follow our activities, you can find us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/Finchampstead-Flower-Club-2011434195620803/>

or you can phone the chair, Lis Barrett, 01189892092.

We look forward to greeting new members, in the not too distant future.

Kriss Turner





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- The Quiz - answers**
1. Sport
 - a. Rod Laver
 - b. Michael Schumacher
 2. Politics
 - a. David Lloyd George
 - b. Margaret Beckett
 3. Films
 - a. Carry On Sergeant
 - b. The Twilight Saga
 4. Books
 - a. Walk down Highlands Avenue
 - b. It can be found near Foxhill.
 5. TV
 - a. Pride and Prejudice
 - b. The Return of the King
 6. Olympics
 - a. Duncan
 - b. Inspector Morse
 7. Music
 - a. Bermuda
 - b. Boxing (SuperHeavy-weight)
 8. Explorers
 - a. Roald Amundsen
 - b. Walk on the moon
 9. Famous Buildings
 - a. Houses of Parliament (1870). The Effiel Tower was opened in 1889.
 - b. National Theatre (1976) although the theatre company had been performing at the Old Vic prior to that.
 10. TV History
 - a. Gibbs SR toothpaste was opened in 1973.
 - b. Sydney Opera House was opened in 1973.

Barkham Diary

Returning soon - see the web site for events

STAY SAFE
 together we will get through this



Barkham web site

I hope you like our website
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

Where in Barkham?
 It can be found near Foxhill. Walk down Highlands Avenue and follow the path through the woods to the clearing on the way to Wooseshill.



two hoots cheese
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 Social distancing will be upheld during collections.



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Small Fakers 24th September 2021

Hank Wangford & Brad Breath 22nd October 2021

China Crisis 11th November 2021

Tickets are now on sale for all confirmed dates, a full list can be found on our website

www.wokinghammusicclub.co.uk To sign up for our newsletter just drop a line to

info@wokinghammusicclub.co.uk. Tickets for shows can be booked at

www.ticketsource.co.uk/wokinghammusicclub

If the show is cancelled your ticket monies will be refunded.

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