



# Barkham Newsletter

£1, free to Members

Issue 144 Summer 2023

from the Barkham Village Residents Association

## CORONATION CELEBRATIONS



See Page 12



## SKITTLES EVENING

See Page 10



See Page 10

## EASTER EGG HUNT



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

To receive further issues this year you need to renew your membership if you have not already done so then see Page 3

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Your distributor is:



## BVRA Chat

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter.

It has been quiet on the development front. We wait to hear whether the Barkham and Arborfield Parish Councils are successful in their proposal to acquire the land in the Coombes which is currently for sale, to protect it for residents to enjoy in years to come.

Since our last Newsletter, we have held three social events - our Skittles

Evening, Easter Egg Hunt and, most excitingly, the Coronation Celebration full day event. Many thanks to Barkham Parish Council for their financial support with the latter, which included lending a broom and spade to deal with the muddy puddle on the way to the marquee and baking many cakes!

There was also a good turnout for the Parish Council's litter pick back in March. Thank you to all who volunteered and took the time to make our village tidier.

If you have not paid your annual £2 subscription yet, please pay your distributor or alternatively you can pay by direct debit.

Our Borough Councillor for many years, John Kaiser, has retired at the recent election. Thank you, John, for all your time working on behalf of Barkham residents at the Borough Council. Ian Pittock was voted in to replace him. Congratulations to Ian and good luck.

Have a wonderful summer, with much sunshine and just the right

amount of rain for our gardens to bloom. Enjoy the long summer evenings with friends, family and neighbours, and join us in the autumn for the BVRA quiz!!

Cathy Whittington  
Acting Chair

## Email Updates

We send emails to keep you informed of social and planning activity between issues of this Newsletter. If you would like to enrol to our email messaging services then [please sign up here](https://tinyurl.com/448muyu4)

<https://tinyurl.com/448muyu4>



## BVRA COMMITTEE



Vacant, currently Rotating Chair  
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**Simon Goldring**  
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**Gill Powell**  
Chair of Social Team  
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**Peter Ainscough**  
Social Team



**Jim Butler**  
Social Team



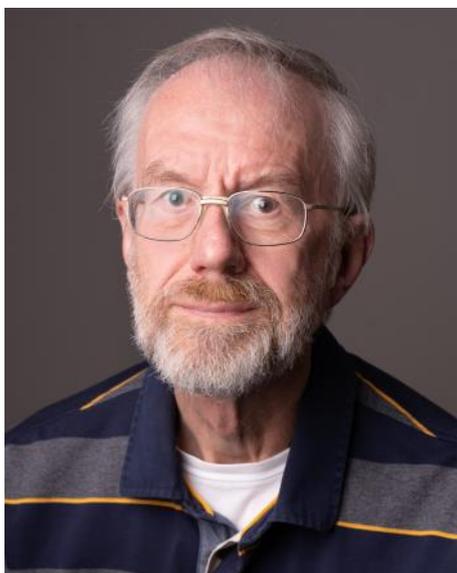
**Peter Jay**  
Social Team



**Shirley Warner**  
Social Team  
Liaises with Barkham Village Hall Committee



**Cathy Whittington**  
Social Team



## Editorial

I would like to thank John Kaiser, our retiring Borough Councillor for the Barkham Ward and for his excellent contributions published in this Newsletter over the years. His final contribution about planning is as stimulating as usual!

## Contributions

We welcome contributions to this newsletter either on a one-off basis, occasional or regular. We are keen to publicise any charity or events that may be of interest to Barkham residents. Please send them to the Newsletter Editor at [newsletter@barkham.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@barkham.org.uk) by the deadlines shown below.

Issue	Deadline	Distribution
Summer	12 <sup>th</sup> May	early June
Autumn	11 <sup>th</sup> August	early September
Winter	10 <sup>th</sup> November	early December

## Advertising

The newsletter is produced quarterly. The first two issues - Spring and Summer - are sent to 800+ households in Barkham parish, and the other two to the households who are paid-up BVRA members, which is currently 600+.

We offer four sizes of adverts all of which include membership of the BVRA. All sizes are in mm and the format is landscape apart from the full page which is portrait. The prices are shown below and cover a whole year's advertising in our four editions.

Credit Card	64 x 54	£20.00
Quarter Page	124 x 105	£50.00
Half Page	190 x 130	£100.00
Full Page	270 x 190	£200.00

Please contact the Newsletter Editor to discuss your needs and supply your copy to [newsletter@barkham.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@barkham.org.uk) by the deadlines above.

We welcome John's successor, Ian Pittock, and look forward to his contributions. See his bio on Page on 5.

In the village we have a strong group of crochet workers, known as the *Barkham Hookers*. They have been beavering away the past few months, creating decorations on post boxes around the village as their way of celebrating the Coronation. You will find a few photographs scattered through this issue. I hope you enjoy them.

In *Wild About the Coombes*, we find out about the upgrade to Coombes Lane through the Coombes, part of the Council's Greenways project, Page 15.

On Page 16 there is good advice from the Police about home security during the holiday period.

On the music scene we have two concerts, see Pages 20 & 21.

## Membership Subscriptions

Your £2 subscription is the main source of income for BVRA and helps to cover the cost of the newsletter production. If you have already paid for 2023 then we thank you for your support.

If you haven't paid, your distributor will have left an envelope asking you to enclose the £2 membership and return it to them. Alternatively, you can pay by bank transfer or direct debit.

1. Bank transfer – pay the £2 to **Barkham Village Residents Association**

Sort Code: **30 98 97**  
Account Number: **78493763**

Please ensure you quote the reference number on your payment envelope or the first line of your address, to ensure we record the payment correctly.

2. Direct Debits can be set up at <https://barkham.org.uk/bvra/bvra-membership> and we will collect the £2. All direct debits are fully protected under the UK direct debit scheme.

Please pay now to ensure you receive the newsletter for the remainder of the year. If you have any queries or want to advise us of paying by bank transfer please email [membership@barkham.org.uk](mailto:membership@barkham.org.uk)



## DevWatch Update

It continues to be quiet on the development front in the Barkham area. The only significant new application in the last three months has been a consultation for the Arborfield Green District Centre. A DevWatch alert for this was sent on 4th May. Whilst a centre for Arborfield will be a welcome addition, the proposal does include

an additional 200 dwellings.

We are still awaiting the outcome of the Edneys Hill and Blagrove Lane application. Both applications are currently being reviewed by Wokingham BC.

It is possible that planning activity may increase following the local elections in May.

Our DevWatch mailing list has over 1200 subscribers – if you would like to join, you can sign up at <https://www.barkham.org.uk/barkham/keep-in-touch-with-bvra>

If you become aware of any potential developments, we are here to help and can be contacted at [development@barkham.org.uk](mailto:development@barkham.org.uk)



### Bob Bishop End of an Era

Bob Bishop has been producing our Newsletter for well over 30 years and has continued doing so despite having left the village over ten years ago! He has taken the editor's collection of accumulated text, pictures and logos and sorted them all out into a presentable form, ready to print. There can't be many who have contributed to the BVRA over such a long period of time in a key role. Bob retired recently from this role, finishing with the Winter Issue 142. Thank you, Bob!

Bob also hosts our website and continues to do so. Once again, we are indebted to our great friend.

Thanks, Bob, and I hope to see you at the Quiz!

## BVRA Needs You! Social Team

The recent survey showed that there is great enthusiasm for the social events that we run and there were many fresh ideas for new social events. However, without additional members in the Social Team we will struggle even to stage the usual events, let alone any new ones!

Currently we have 5 members in the social team, and one of them is out of the country for four months each year. Sometimes one of us is unavailable for family or holiday reasons, so we very much need more of you to join us.

It was very satisfying to see how much those who came to the Coronation event at the Village Hall enjoyed themselves, see Pages 12&13. You can see that the work is fun and involves lots of contact with other people in Barkham. You do not have to attend every event, you are allowed time off!

If you are interested in helping out please contact us by email: [social@barkham.org](mailto:social@barkham.org)

Gill Powell

## Village Litter Pick

Organised by Barkham Parish Council, the annual Litter Pick took place in late March. Here is a photo of George Evans retrieving some beer cans from a ditch. Well done, George, and thanks to all the others who helped with the clear up!



## Thanks to the BVRA Social Team

The BVRA Social Team were very busy on Coronation weekend arranging a full day of social activities. In Barkham Village hall, a large screen was installed so we could see the action on TV. Tea, coffee and cakes were served by some of the local Girl Guides.

A large Marquee was erected on the grass outside and during the day, children's entertainers kept the children busy. Children were given crowns to decorate, with a prize for the best one!

In the evening there was a Coronation Barn dance held in the decorated Marquee, with a bar, and a delicious hog roast. Over 120 people came to the Barn Dance, with an excellent caller and lots of fun, particularly when any of us went wrong!!

All in all a really good day.

Pictured, left to right, are the members of the BVRA Social Team - Peter Jay, Cathy Whittington, Jim Butler, Shirley Warner and Gill Powell - taken as they were clearing up at the end of a VERY long day!

Part of my reason for writing this article was to thank all the team VERY much indeed for all their hard work to make our Coronation celebration day here in Barkham, so special, both on the day and for weeks beforehand.

Jenny Butler



### Ian Pittock

I have lived here for 30 years. Jane and I have an adult daughter who was state educated locally. After gaining degrees, military service and Civil Service, I became a school governor, parish councillor and then a borough councillor. I had a large part in delivering Bohunt School (with space for a 6<sup>th</sup> form). I wish to ensure the 6<sup>th</sup> form is now opened. I am against over-development and wish to ensure that what is built meets the local shortfall, especially 1, 2 and 3 bedroom houses, and is built in the right places. I also want to ensure that the District Centre, Community Centre, Sports Pavilion and other infrastructure promised for Barkham as part of the 'Arborfield' development is delivered in a more timely manner, along with some improved walking and cycling routes to connect across the parish.



## What Plant?

A new occasional feature. Do you recognise this flower? Answer on Page 23.





## An Update from Barkham Parish Council

### Parish Councillor Vacancies

After the uncontested elections on the 4<sup>th</sup> May, Barkham Parish Council still has some vacancies for Councillors to join the Council.

The councillors for Barkham Parish Council are:

**Pam Stubbs**

**Graeme Dexter**

**Chris Heyliger**

**Allan Wrobel**

**Mike Barker**

**Alan Langford**

The Ward Councillor elected for Barkham is **Cllr Ian Pittock**.

At its June meeting, the Parish Council will be co-opting 1 more councillor, which means there are still 3 vacancies remaining on the council.

Would you like to join the Parish Council and help make decisions about how the Parish is run? Please contact the Clerk for more information, email [clerk@barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk) or phone 0118 976 2089.

### Planning

At the time of writing, the Parish Council is still awaiting the decision from Wokingham Borough Council on the outcome of the two planning applications at Blagrove Meadows and Land off Edneys Hill.

The Instalcom appeal at Woodlands Farm is still to be decided by the Inspectorate.

The application for the District Centre at Arborfield Green has been submitted, and the public consultation ended on the 9<sup>th</sup> May.

A decision is now to be made by WBC whether to approve the plans.

### Annual Litter Pick

The annual litter pick took place on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2023 between 10am and 12 Noon. Volunteers met at the Barkham Village Hall, where they were assigned an area to litter pick. Upon their return they were offered a bacon butty, a selection of biscuits and cake, and a tea or coffee.

In total 50 bags of rubbish were collected plus other items such as tyres, car body parts & fly tipping. Large areas of fly tipping were reported to WBC to clear.



### Celebrations for the Coronation of King Charles

Supported by funding from the Parish Council, the BVRA Social Team organised a day of activities to celebrate the Coronation.

Starting with a live screening of the coronation, followed by entertainment throughout the day, and ending with a barn dance in the evening.

The Parish Council would like to thank the BVRA Social Committee for organising a wonderful day of

celebrations, for the coronation of King Charles.

A thank you also goes to all those who attended and made the day a great success.

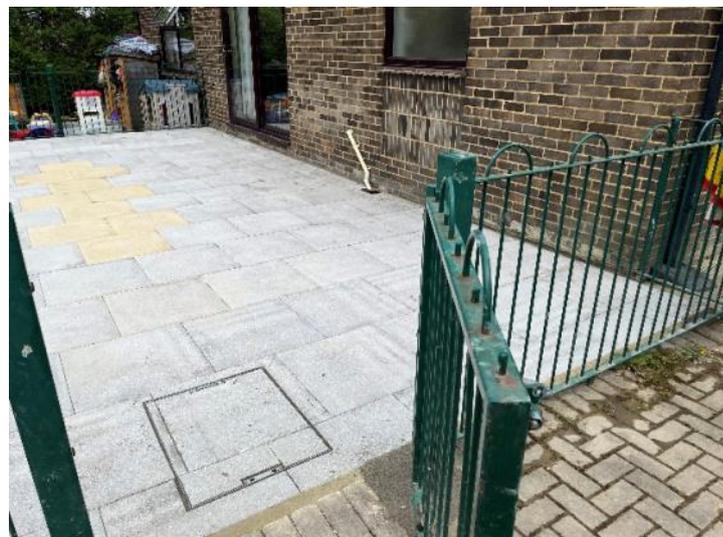
### Patio replacement at the Village Hall

The Parish Council has funded through CIL a replacement patio at the Village Hall. The patio was replaced during the Easter Holidays, and the finished result is shown in the below pictures. It even includes a hopscotch grid for children to play on!



### History Books

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





## St James' Barkham

What can a 10-14 year-old who can't face the thought of homework do on a Friday evening?

Lots of things, I'm sure. More screentime maybe! But how about giving Friday Club a go?



Friday Club is a youth club for anyone in school years 6-9. It's run by the Arborfield and Barkham Family of Churches (which also includes Christ Church, Wokingham and Church at the Green in Arborfield Green).

We meet at Barkham Village Hall, on Fridays in term-time, from 7-8:30pm.

Most weeks, 20 or so youngsters come along. About half of these come regularly to one of our churches, but several of our most enthusiastic regulars aren't churchgoers at all. We really do welcome everyone.

A typical Friday Club evening involves some free time at the beginning, with crafts, various games, or the chance just to hang around and chat with others.

Then, after a quick game, there's a short talk from the Bible, where together we think a bit about Jesus and how we might respond to who he claims to be. This is followed by a chance to grill the speaker about what they've said (and some of our speakers have had quite a grilling!)

Then we have snacks and finally a big game to end the evening.

But most terms include a couple of socials too - we have recently enjoyed trips to Wokingham Bowl, Jump-In, Dinosaur Golf, and Swinley Forest, as well as a film night and pizza and games evening too.

Our team of leaders is drawn from across the churches and all of them have been safely recruited and DBS-checked.

It's lots of fun and generally a very happy group and there's always room for more. So, if you know someone of the right age who might be interested in

coming along, please feel free to be in touch

([david.horrocks@abch.org.uk](mailto:david.horrocks@abch.org.uk) or 0118 976 0285) and I'll happily tell you more. Or else just turn up one Friday evening.

We'd love to see you then!

David Horrocks



## Barkham Pre-School needs you!

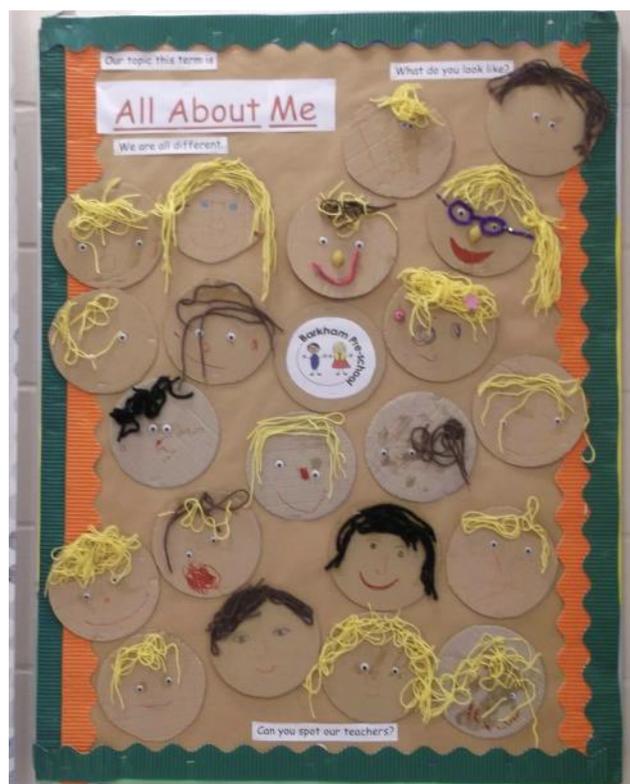
Our wonderful family-focussed Pre-School has been running for over 50 years, supporting and educating 2-5 year olds. We're a charity setting, committee-led by 5 to 10 local volunteers, who meet once every half term. The day to day running of the Pre-School is done by our fantastic Supervisor and her team. The financial, business and fundraising side is looked after by our committee.

Unfortunately our Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are leaving at the end of July, and we need to urgently fill their roles.

This is where we need your help! If you're someone who has a couple of hours a month to help us, or want to help keep our setting running, we would love to hear from you. The majority of committee tasks can be done from home, and people from all walks of life are welcome. A DBS check is required, which we will cover.

**These roles need to be filled ASAP in order to protect our Pre-School, so please do contact us if you can offer any assistance.**

To find out more, please contact our current Chair, Sarah Sowerby, at [chair.barkhampreschool@gmail.com](mailto:chair.barkhampreschool@gmail.com)



# My last article as Borough Councillor for Barkham - John Kaiser



During my time as councillor for Barkham ward. I have been at the sharp end of politics and sometimes it is easy to lose sight of the important things which in some cases can be life changing for the residents, and for this reason I have always put residents first.

Borough Councillor is a role which allows you to reflect on and appreciate all the services provided for the community by the council and allows you to support all the volunteers and many charities and organisations around the borough and help them to support residents.

It is with mixed feelings I am standing down this May after 14 years in the roll serving the community as, although challenging, especially during the two years of Covid, it is something which I will miss with its highs and lows and hopefully I will be followed by someone younger who understands the requirement of a constantly changing environment.

My wife and I have lived in the Borough for over 30 years and my three children have all been educated in the borough's schools and feel I have a debt which is impossible to repay and as such I am extremely honoured to have been chosen to serve as your councillor for so many years.

I will miss writing for the parish magazine and the BVRA Newsletter and would urge who ever becomes your councillor after the May elections to continue as they are both

an excellent way to update and reach out to residents.

Barkham has changed for many with new residents moving in, we now have two new schools one primary and probably the best secondary in the borough and I would like to think I played my part in bringing these to fruition.

The Garrison which was part of the community for over a hundred years has gone replaced by people's homes and green spaces and hopefully in the not-too-distant future a community centre and district centre to complement the leisure centre and parks and other areas of green and recreation spaces. We have also seen a major upgrade of California country park which is there for all to enjoy.

I have fought many battles against overdevelopment and won some such as Barkham square and lost others such as the old Reading training ground. I was very keen and pushed for the solar farm to protect the land owned by the council falling prey to development which would change the area for ever never to be returned to its natural habitat, as it was clear there where those eyeing it up for housing delivery. I was also instrumental in making sure the Coombes remained an ancient woodland for all to enjoy.

That said the fight goes on and while you have the fatal combination of landowners willing to sell, developers wanting to build and an insatiable demand for new housing, everyone must remain vigilant. After all, we are all residents including myself and, as such, we all have responsibility to ensure we do not just become part of greater Reading with all the additional problem which comes with living in a totally urban environment. It is important for this reason that the Council does not delay the Local plan update as failure to deliver it puts all the green spaces in the Borough at risk and is the only way to avoid Wokingham becoming an unplanned urban sprawl.

The problem is Government, along with all major political parties is

committed to mass housing development across the country. Labour 250,000 per year, Liberal Democrats 380,000 and Conservative 200,000 homes per year and the Wokingham share of this is eight hundred homes to be built per year in Wokingham Borough up to 2038.

Our current Local Plan can meet some of these additional homes but is out of date and we need a new Local Plan that plans for an additional 6,000 new homes.

Currently the Council have no choice but to meet that target and there is no possibility of doing so without building on green space. I would very much like see all the new homes built 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 required to produce a up to date Local Plan. If the Council refuses to produce one or tries to produce one that does not meet the Government's target, this and the fact the Council no longer have a five year land supply, both of which are the major consideration for government planning inspectors at appeals hearings, means where the council has refused planning permission and the applicant has appealed against the ruling they will very likely win, this will mean even more housing development.

By having a gap in the land supply and out-of-date Local Plan in place, means we have lost 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.

The developers are out in force as they know all these facts. Just look at the number of development plans. Blagrove lane 370 homes, up to eight hundred homes at Barkham square 270 at Ducks Nest Farm and 37 in a back garden development off Barkham Road, none of which appeared in the preferred sites put forward in the local plan update.

There are also many others at various stages of development.

We see a developer's consultation delivered to residents of Arborfield regarding hundreds of homes at Cross Lanes Farm in the centre of the village all of which will add to the congestion and put a strain on services. The University of Reading continue to pursue their proposals for Hall farm with up to four thousand homes, which are next to the motorway. All this does this does not bode well. Remember if the council lose at appeal, they also lose the ability to apply conditions which benefit the community.

There were over four thousand local signatures on the petition to stop Barkham Square which I presented at council in the year I was mayor which saw the site excluded from the latest update of suitable sites, but developers still press on.

Do not forget a Local Plan can establish land that cannot be built on as much as land that can.

Wokingham is a wonderful place to live but with that brings the problems of people wanting to come here to live, this coupled with developers who have their eyes on all green space in the Borough and know they can sell every home they build.

The farmland and other green spaces in the Borough are certainly "optioned" to a housing developer, meaning that the developer has made a deal with the landowner to buy the land if there is a chance of getting planning permission, who are in most cases are keen to sell because of the huge monetary gains. These developers would be rubbing their hands with glee if the Council continue to delay or discard the draft Local Plan drawn up by the last administration, as it would leave so much more of our countryside open to potential development which will be won at appeal even if the Council refuse the application. Should this happen, we will have the prospect of no green space in the borough and just become part of Greater Reading.

You cannot ignore the facts we have one the of the highest level of car ownership in the UK and much as we would like to see more action which reduces congestion for many the car is indispensable for all kinds of reasons, not least the bus companies controlled by Reading

Borough Council serving Wokingham are looking to reduce services to stem their losses. Weekly bin collections look like they are going to be scrapped and this coupled with the plans to increase car parking fees over 100% which it seems is planned to include weekends and evening which are currently free, this will risk destroying our town centres and will devastate businesses.

I passionately believe keeping the Council's finances sound should not fall on the residents of the Borough with the cost of the energy and interest rates already making it difficult for all to make ends meet.

When I was responsible for finance at the council my plan was "cut costs not services" as there are many areas where we have duplication in the Council which

could be combined and made overall more efficient, saving the necessary funds required to run the council services.

As Borough Councillor I have always carried out the role to the best of my abilities and always worked within the council to ensure the residents of Barkham were represented and their views heard, and I thank you for allowing me to represent you.

I am sure whoever follows me will be just as committed to serving the residents of Barkham.

Again, thank you for your support especially the members of the Parish Council, all of whom I will miss working with and I wish all in Barkham well for the future.

John Kaiser

## Where in Barkham?



## The Quiz

It was easy to decide on the theme of the quiz this time - coronations, of course!

1. Which king authorised the building of Westminster Abbey?
2. Where was his coronation held?
3. Who was the first king recorded as being crowned at Westminster Abbey?
4. On which date did this occur?
5. Since then, which two kings never had a coronation?
6. Who was the first king to be crowned seated in the Coronation Chair?
7. Zadok the Priest was composed by Handel for whose coronation in 1727?
8. This piece has been performed at every coronation since, however it has been adapted and is now used regularly as an anthem for which events?
9. What was the name of the archbishop who crowned Queen Elizabeth II?
10. Including King Charles III, how many monarchs have been crowned at Westminster Abbey?

*Answers on Page 23*



## Social Matters

May has arrived and the Spring flowers are just about over, but showery, chilly weather is not helping the gardeners out there, nor is it good for all the May outdoor events which have been planned. Thankfully the BVRA events we have had since the last Newsletter have been indoors or have been lucky with a dry and fine day.

The Family Skittles evening on a March 25th was well attended with over 50 people taking part and enjoying a Ploughman's Supper. It was so good to see all ages playing skittles- even the young ones play very well!

After one round there was the break for supper followed by the second round, and then the 'Killer' round when things got very competitive to produce the last person standing! And as usual the consolation for being knocked out was to have a choc ice!

This year the team winners were the 'Barack o'bowlers', and the winner of the Killer game was our very own Dave Clements, who managed to bowl and be the photographer for the evening too. Well done!

Many thanks to Cathy for doing all the scoring, and to Peter for keeping everyone on track for their turn.

The Annual Children's Easter Egg Hunt took place on 9th April in the Junipers Park as usual. Over 50 children took part on a fine, dry and sunny day, and many families gathered to watch and enjoy the event. The little under 5's had their

own area in which to look for tokens, while the older children and teenagers searched in the large space behind the play equipment.

There was a mad dash after the starting rope went down as the children frantically searched for tokens to exchange for little chocolate eggs.

While this was happening the families bought raffle tickets for the Giant Egg, the Lindt Bunnies and other prizes.

Then in a flash it all seemed to be over as the counting of tokens took place and chocolate eggs handed out!

The winner of the Giant Egg was Jacquie Bryson, who is **pictured** with a youngster who I'm sure will have enjoyed it!

Many families said what a lovely event it had been and thanked us for organising it.

For some of the children it was their first big Easter Egg Hunt I was told.

Thanks to Dave for the photographs and to Graham who ran the raffle, and to all the others who helped on the day.

The next major event was the Coronation Celebration which took place at the Village Hall and

Marquee on Saturday 6th May, the day of King Charles' Coronation. Please see the separate report of this.

Other events have been organised and the Hall booked for the rest of the year. These are:

- ◆ *Quiz Night* - 21st October
- ◆ *Carols in the Park* - 15th Dec

More details will be available in future newsletters, and posters will be put up around the Village. Please make a note of the dates so as to not miss out.

I hope to see many of you at these events supporting the local Barkham Village Residents Association. It's a great way of getting to know people especially if you are new to the area. In the meantime enjoy the Summer when it arrives!

Shirley Warner  
Social Team Member

PS. The Social Team is always looking to welcome new people to join our small team to help organise and run events - maybe to help set things up, or help with the catering for example. Please think about joining us if you can, and for more information and to leave your contact details please contact Gill Powell on : [social@barkham.org.uk](mailto:social@barkham.org.uk)





## Coronation Celebrations

Barkham celebrated the coronation with an all-day event at Barkham Village Hall. To provide more space a large marquee was set up behind the hall.

During the daytime there was a free event, mainly for the children, however there was also a large television screen in the large hall showing the coronation ceremony, mainly for the adults.

In the marquee, entertainment for the children was provided by *Fred in the Shed* and *Circus Scene* which proved very popular. In addition there were craft tables in the small hall,

The children were given crowns to decorate in the craft area, with Kitt Clarkson winning the *best crown* prize.

The 3rd Winnersh Guides provided refreshments of tea, coffee and a lovely selection of delicious cakes which they had made themselves. From the sales they were able to raise funds for their group.

In the evening there was a Royal

Barn Dance in the marquee with the Alderbricklam Band providing the live music to celebrate this landmark occasion.

Supper was a Hog Roast and salad provided by a caterer, and a bonus was that cakes, not consumed earlier in the day, were available for the dancers to tuck into! The bar, which was well stocked with wine, beers and soft drinks, proved popular.

124 people attended, including quite a few children as some families who had attended the daytime events returned as families in the evening.

One couple had travelled all the way from Southampton to join in the event after seeing a preview on the Wokingham Today's website, and another couple had brought along their Ukrainian guests, who enjoyed seeing a side of British life which was entirely new to them.

Alan Dyer, the excellent caller, did his best to keep the dancers doing the right things at the right time,

but to no avail. But that's part of the fun of a Barn Dance, it doesn't matter if it goes wrong!

The band and dancers kept going till late in the evening, and so many said how much they had enjoyed the event.

The whole day's event was made possible only with generous funding from the Barkham Parish Council (BPC) and we, the BVRA, are very grateful for their support. It was an excellent collaboration.

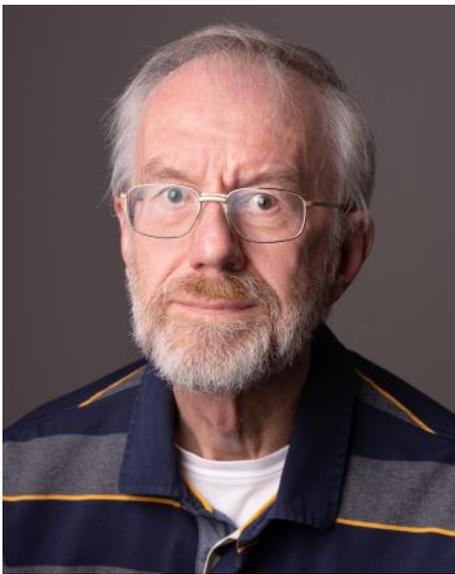
The BPC also provided a variety of bits of pieces including the bunting, thanks to Ellen at BPC.

Special thanks should go to Cathy Whittington, of the BVRA Social Team, who was the 'star' organiser. She booked all the entertainments, caterers, marquee, and much more.

It was a wonderful day, celebrating a rare occasion, attended by so many, families and children. It was a great way to foster a community spirit in the village, which is one of the core aims of the BVRA. See the website for more pictures.







## Alan's Patch

Well, my water storage tanks have been overflowing for months. Surely, we have had enough rain over the winter and spring to replenish our reservoirs after last year's drought! While on the subject of weather, during the several cold snaps during the winter my broad beans sown in the autumn perished so I had to re-sow in early February. I'm pleased to report that these are thriving. I do like the distinctive flavour of broad beans.

Spring flowers have been lovely this year. Some are a bit later than normal because it's been a bit cooler. In the photos, you will see bluebells, red and white tulips, as well as some yellow, and my solitary yellow cowslip, my favourite colour!

In the greenhouse, tomatoes, bell peppers and chillis, are doing well, however, while I was away for a few days last week, slugs devoured the cucumber seedlings. Back to square one! They've also had a go at my



aubergine plants! It's too late to re-sow them so I'll have to nurse them and hope for the best.

Sweet corn, various tender beans, butternut squash and courgettes, sown later are nearly ready to plant out. Carrots and coriander sown



directly in the soil are doing well. I am enjoying my first crop of the year - Little Gem lettuce sown in the propagator and transplanted into the soil.

Outside, parsnip seeds are not particularly reliable germinators so for many years I sow about three seeds together at the final spacing I want, about 15cm. This gives me about 18 plants for the winter. In between them I sow radish, a rapidly growing 'catch crop'. These will have been eaten long before the slow growing parsnips become large enough to interfere with the radishes. Both crops have germinated and I have thinned the parsnips to one at each station while the radish are already ready to eat.

Spinach and perpetual spinach are also growing healthily. The rhubarb is amazing, fantastic growth with it being so wet!

Over Easter my eleven-year-old grandson visited me and he helped plant the potatoes. They are growing well and my only worry at the moment is for a sharp frost.

I am delighted to see how well the asparagus is growing. Lots of thick



healthy vigorous spears. I planted these a couple of years ago and they look far more substantial than last year. Asparagus is a long-term perennial that needs 2-3 years to develop its root structure, so it is advised not to take any crop during this period. But it is very tempting....!

My stored potatoes and shallots have been consumed and I have just one butternut squash left in the garage. I really must cook it soon.

The most curious guest animal in my patch over the winter was a toad that hibernated just below the soil in the greenhouse! I could just see a bit of a hole and the occasional slight movement of the soil as it breathed. It was very lucky that I noticed it, otherwise it might not have appreciated my fork! Of course, when it got warmer it moved out.

With all this rain the grass is growing like crazy. I have a large pile of cuttings that need to be added to the compost heap. That's the next job, so if you'll excuse me.....



## Wild About the Coombes

Regular users of the Coombes will have noticed that major works have been going on along Coombes Lane, the public byway along its northern edge. This has all been to do with the Council's Greenways Programme.

Wokingham Borough Council is creating a network of generally traffic free multi-user routes connecting the various communities, employment areas and places of interest across the borough with each other. It involves eight routes, three of which affect the Coombes, the main one being route B. This runs from north Wokingham, through Woosehill, along Coombes Lane and on to Arborfield Cross.

It is said that 'where possible the greenways will have a hard, permeable surface which is accessible in all weathers and for people with mobility impairments and to those in wheelchairs. It will ensure a good surface for cycling and for other leisure and fitness pursuits such as skateboarding and rollerblading'.

Some of the public rights of way in the Coombes were closed from November to February. Fences were erected to block off some of the footpaths, reinforced with a formal Temporary Prohibition of Traffic Order defining several sections of the various rights of way along which 'No person shall proceed at

any time' for the duration of the construction.

Many truck-loads of material were brought in for the teams reworking the surface of Coombes Lane with a fleet of heavy machines. The piles of material seen behind the fence in one of the photographs were replenished several times as they were used up.

The new surface is now open for the general public to use, and it has certainly made a difference.

Initially, dog walkers were finding that the new surface tended to cake their pets' paws. They found it difficult to remove when they returned home, unlike the mud that they used to splash through. I haven't heard such complaints recently but it may still be happening. Perhaps they have got used to it or maybe they have learned to keep away from the greenway when walking their dogs.

I recall the surface of Coombes Lane being worked on before, I would guess about ten to fifteen years ago. Machinery was also brought in then to remove the deep undulations that had developed over the years, and some type of fabric was laid beneath the top layer in an attempt to stabilise the newly levelled surface. As anyone who was using the byway last year will know, the surface had deteriorated back to a series of deep potholes full of standing water and soggy mud in wet weather.

Maybe the material that has been added to the surface this time will be more effective, but I confess I have my doubts. The other photograph shows the state of the new greenway about two months after it was opened to the public. Tyre tracks can be seen with regular puddles along them. Some of these have already developed into significant patches of standing water. The occasional car driving through these will almost certainly splash out more of the wet material, deepening the potholes and creating ever increasing ridges around them to hinder drainage. It all seems rather reminiscent how the previous attempt to level Coombes Lane failed to last very long.

I hope I am simply being unduly pessimistic but I worry that the time and money invested in this project is not going to satisfy the all-weather accessibility aspirations for people with mobility impairments for very long. As for skateboarding and rollerblading... well, I would be fascinated to see someone trying either of those leisure pursuits on the greenway, even in the dry while it is new.

Joe Wild



# Don't become a Victim of Summer Burglary



## Home

- ◆ Lock front and rear doors at night and when you are out. Remember to lift the handle and double lock UPVC doors.
- ◆ Keep all valuables, house keys and car keys, out of sight and out of reach of windows and letterboxes. Double check your vehicle is locked too.
- ◆ Lock side gates to prevent access to the rear of the property.
- ◆ Move bins away from side walls and fences.
- ◆ Keep ladders and tools stored away.

## Away

- ◆ Going on holiday? Use timer switches to make your house look occupied.
- ◆ Don't advertise you are on holiday on social media – wait to upload your snaps until you get home!
- ◆ Ask a trusted friend or family member to keep an eye on your house while you are away.
- ◆ Don't leave spare keys in

obvious places such as under doormats or plant pots

## Cold Calling

This can be a cover for criminals planning serious offences such as Burglary, Car Crime or 'Bogus Official' offences where entry is gained to a home by pretending to be from a utility company, the council or care agency.

If someone does call at your door, please consider the following advice:

- ◆ Ask for ID, close the door and check it with the company using the phone number advertised in the phone book or online, as the number on an identity card could be fake. If you feel at all unsure, schedule a time for the caller to come back when a friend or relative is with you.
- ◆ Don't agree to any work or sign anything on the spot.
- ◆ Don't feel pressured to buy. It is your home and your right to say 'No'.
- ◆ Don't ever go to a bank or cash point with a trader. Legitimate traders would never do this.

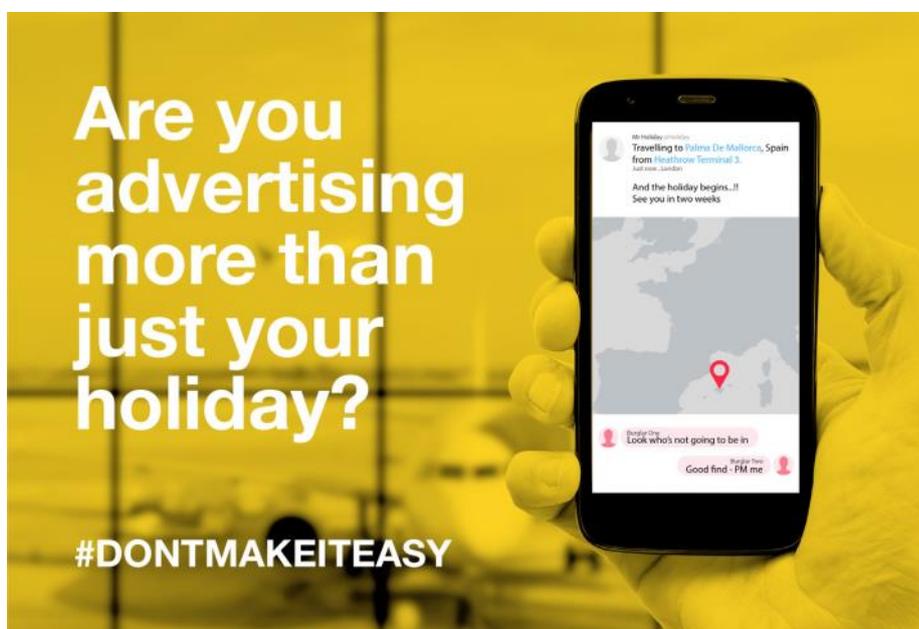
- ◆ If you suspect a crime is in progress or about to occur, please make a note of any descriptions and contact the police on 999.

If you have any information regarding crime in your neighbourhood or witness any suspicious activity, please use our online reporting form at [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk) or call 101. Alternatively, call Crimestoppers anonymously on free phone 0800 555 111.

**Facebook:** TVP Bracknell & Wokingham, **Twitter:** @TVP\_Wokingham

Register for **Thames Valley Alert** at: [www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk](http://www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk) to receive free information updates from Thames Valley Police.

**Neighbourhood Watch** is a successful crime prevention initiative. Getting together with your neighbours to take action can cut local crime. If you would like information on setting up or joining an established local scheme visit [www.ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk)



Are you advertising more than just your holiday?

#DONTMAKEITEASY

# 35 Years Ago

In this regular article from the archives of this Newsletter I have highlighted two articles in Issue 4. One is about tree preservation orders

in the Coombes during the battle to prevent a major development in the Coombes. The second article was by Christine Thomas, formerly of this Parish! She was one of the founders of the BVRA and under-

took several roles on the Committee. She related stories from two of the oldest residents of the village. This particular tale was a reminiscence of First World War times.

Alan Edwards



## BARKHAM VILLAGE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

# NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1988

ISSUE 4

### IN LIVING MEMORY

Since the first in a series of articles on Barkham researched by Christine Thomas. The following are recollections of Bert Woolford and David Robins, two of the oldest residents of our village.

you will that two BVRA have ... report in ...

representatives of Residents of ... I will ... th-

### WORLD WAR ONE

During the First World War a 1000 horses and mules a week came to Wokingham station from Ireland arriving at all hours of day and night. They were held in what used to be a coal yard, and is now the station car park. These animals were to be broken-in at the Remount Depot at what is now Arborfield Garrison before being sent out to the troops in the front lines.

### TREE PRESERVATION AT THE COOMBES

Following representations from the Residents' Association the Wokingham District Council has granted a Tree Preservation Order on the whole of the Coombes woodlands and also part of the Bearwood College grounds which adjoin Coombes Lane. This really is an encouraging boost from the Council to our fight to save the Augustinian Priory. It is available for all to enjoy, but remember this is just the beginning!

... one of ... on to the ... development.

It must, however, be remembered that we are

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- 16 JULY BARN DANCE & BARBECUE
- 26 Oct A.G.M.
- 29 Oct Fireworks Party
- Jan 88 Children's Party
- 7 Feb The Coombes Inquiry

## Finchampstead Flower Club

FFC is for people who love flowers. We meet once a month to watch a demonstrator develop arrangements or for a workshop for ourselves.

In April, Caroline Golding developed her theme with china found in her cupboard during a lockdown cleanout. We were treated to arrangements inspired by Wedgwood, Claris Cliff, bone China that travelled across the world and much more. "A rummage in the China cupboard" used interesting mechanics and spectacular flowers, whilst Caroline gave useful tips on arranging flowers. Caroline also ran a workshop in Gloucester Cathedral at the NAFAS National Show on 12 May

In May we also held our club dinner. On June 26<sup>th</sup> Stephanie Penikot will demonstrate flower arranging whilst "Working with Wood". In July Sandy Draper will be "Inspired by nature" and in August a workshop will be led by Sue Hedley.

Please phone the chair, Lis Barrett, 01189892092 if you would like to attend or just come to California Hall on the fourth Monday of the month at 7.45 for an 8pm start.

You can follow our activities at <https://bbandoflowers.org.uk/clubs/finchampstead/> or on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Finchampstead-Flower-Club-2011434195620803/>

**Kriss Turner**





Our monthly meetings are still going ahead each month, and with new members joining the group we are now quite an active group.

Since the Spring newsletter we have had a speaker in March talking about 'Folklore, Facts and Footpaths', and our Supper and Games evening in April. For this meeting as an alternative to Fish and Chips we had an 'in house' meal of Lasagne, salads and garlic bread, followed by a 'Bird Quiz'. The Ladies all said how much they had enjoyed the meal, and that the Bird Quiz was great fun!

Our Programme Secretary, Jenny, kindly presided over the May meeting as I was on holiday. She introduced the speaker, Marjie Walker, CEO of the Link Visiting Scheme who talked about how the scheme started and all the excellent work their volunteers do for the lonely, isolated and mainly elderly people in the Wokingham area. We had made a donation to them at Christmas and so she was also able to thank us in person.

Speaker meetings coming up are: in June about 'Living through the English Civil War in the Reading Area', when we invite our menfolk and friends along too, and in July about 'Canals and Narrowboats'.

Our Annual BBQ will be in August, when once again the menfolk and friends are invited, and more importantly some of the men do all the BBQing for us! We hope for good weather so that we can eat outside on the grassed area until sunset!

From September Jenny has managed to arrange for speakers, who have

visited us before, to come again - Chris Rhodes, Marcia Watson and Ailsa Claybourne, who all have some very interesting topics.

Marilyn, one of our ladies has resumed her programme of monthly walks, and although the March walk was cancelled because of very wet weather, the April visit to the Odney Club near Maidenhead (owned by the John Lewis Partnership) went ahead to view the gardens and Thames riverside walks.

The May walk is the walk cancelled in March and is to the Trilakes/Horseshoe Lakes near Yateley with afternoon tea at the café.

We meet at the Village Hall on the first Monday of the month at 7.45pm to enjoy friendship and a varied programme of events and speakers, and new members are always very welcome. So if you are new to the area or live locally and now would like to join us please contact Shirley Warner for more information on 0118 978 9124 or by email

[shirleyannwarner@gmail.com](mailto:shirleyannwarner@gmail.com)

We would look forward to seeing you.

Shirley Warner (Chairperson)



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# CROWTHORNE Symphony ORCHESTRA

Our Spring Concert was a really enjoyable event – a capacity audience in the Old Gym cheered loudly as ‘The Pines of Rome’ concluded a very successful evening and such a response from the audience can’t be bad! We hope our next offering will be just as well received – our **Summer Concert will be on Saturday July 1st at Wellington College**, and will include music by **Beethoven, Dvořák and George Lloyd**.

**Beethoven’s Overture ‘Leonore No 3’** will be well-known to many. It is rather odd that the composer wrote three versions of the overture (all called ‘Leonore’ and numbered 1 to 3) but he rejected all three as inappropriate. His only opera was eventually named Fidelio and a fourth overture with this name was the one that he finally used.

**Dvořák’s symphonic poem ‘The Golden Spinning Wheel’** was composed in 1896 and was inspired by a rather gruesome folk ballad involving jealousy, murder and worse! I leave you to investigate the

tale on Wikipedia or the like but be prepared to be shocked! Dvořák wrote a series of symphonic poems based on Czech folk legends, and although these are not his best-known works, they are an important connection to his Czech roots.

The main work in the concert is a **symphony** by a rather neglected English composer, **George Lloyd**, who lived from 1913-1998. Lloyd, born in Cornwall, was a musical prodigy, but World War II not only interrupted his career but left him with severe mental and physical injuries. He was a Bandsman with the Royal Marines, serving on board the cruiser HMS Trinidad on Arctic convoys. Many of Lloyd's shipmates were drowned in the disaster which befell the Trinidad during an engagement in 1942, and Lloyd was the last man to escape from deep in the hull of the ship where he was working. The traumatic effects of this experience remained with him for over 20 years. He eventually recovered and in later life earned the recognition

and success he deserved as a composer, conductor and recording artist. With the Royal Family currently featuring a lot in our news, it is interesting that Lloyd inscribed the score of his setting of the *Requiem Mass*, completed three weeks before he died at the age of 85, "Written in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales". His music is lyrical and romantic and the **Symphony No 5** is considered by many to one of his finest compositions.

The orchestra is proud of its friendly reputation and welcomes new members, subject to vacancies - if you are interested in joining us, please get in touch. Weekly **rehearsals** are on **Mondays in term time from 7.45-10pm at Oaklands Junior School, Butler Road, Crowthorne**.

Our website has information on concerts, tickets, rehearsals, workshops and more: [www.crowthorneorchestra.com](http://www.crowthorneorchestra.com)



# wcs

## Wokingham Choral Society

Wokingham Choral Society would like to invite you to an exciting evening of 'Favourite Opera and Musical Choruses' at 7.30 pm on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June, at All Saints Church, Wokingham.

Our Musical Director, Cathal Garvey, has previously worked with a number of opera companies, including Grange Park Opera, and brings his considerable experience to WCS in performing a range of well loved opera choruses, ranging from Purcell's haunting Dido's Lament to Verdi's Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves and his famous drinking song from La Traviata.

From a more recent era, we shall enjoy lighter music from Carousel, Oliver!, a medley of Andrew Lloyd Webber numbers, and many other well-known 'songs from the shows'.

This lively evening of popular music will be accompanied, as always, by our popular and talented accompanist, George De Voil, and enhanced by a soprano soloist.

Further details can be found at [wokingham-choral-society.org.uk](http://wokingham-choral-society.org.uk), including how to contact our Membership Secretary if you are interested in joining our welcoming and friendly choir next season, which we begin with a programme of works by Haydn and Beethoven.

WOKINGHAM CHORAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

wcs

### Summer Concert

An evening of favourite opera and musical choruses

Cathal Garvey Conductor  
George de Voil Accompanist

Tickets £15  
(£5 for students and under 18s)

17th June 7.30pm

All Saints Church  
Wiltshire Rd  
Wokingham  
RG40 1TN

Available in Wokingham from:  
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Also available:  
online: [ticketsource.co.uk/wokingham-choral-society](http://ticketsource.co.uk/wokingham-choral-society)  
order via email: [tickets@wokingham-choral-society.org.uk](mailto:tickets@wokingham-choral-society.org.uk)  
from choir members or at the door

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

registered charity 274853



## Transforming lives with friendship

The Link Visiting Scheme is a charity in Wokingham Borough dedicated to reducing loneliness by supporting people to build friendships and community connections



Visit [linkvisiting.org](http://linkvisiting.org) for more information

The Link Visiting Scheme is a local charity based in Wokingham Borough that aims to help people struggling with the serious impact of loneliness and enable them to make friends and engage again with their community.

Feeling lonely and isolated can have a negative impact on our health and can lead to low mood, stress, anxiety and a lack of confidence. The Link Visiting Scheme works with volunteers who give time to visit an older person for a couple of hours once a week or fortnight. Our aim is to improve wellbeing and have as much fun and enjoyment as possible.

'This is a fantastic scheme offering support to the local community. It offers Margaret more social activity and has enriched my life listening to her stories and being in her company. Thank you! I'm so pleased I signed up! NG'

Spending quality time with someone can be transforming and we've had the pleasure of seeing many lives improved by friendly volunteers regularly visiting someone who see very few people from week to week. We have over

400 volunteers in the Borough engaging with people and often taking them out to coffee shops or garden centres where possible.

We also have a growing program of social activities aimed at encouraging older people to venture out and meet others in a safe, friendly environment. These include regular pub lunches, friendship groups, singing, yoga, bowling, Friendship Tables in local cafes and lots more.

If you are interested in finding out more, simply go on our website and request a volunteer pack. Once you return your application form, we will get in touch to arrange a time to call or meet you and talk through the role in more detail.

We believe that no one in our community should feel forgotten or lonely. Please do reach out if you'd like to get involved.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Marjie Walker, CEO

[0118 979 8019](tel:01189798019)

[marjie@linkvisiting.org](mailto:marjie@linkvisiting.org)

<https://www.linkvisiting.org/volunteer>



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and group  
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health and  
wellbeing



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



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### BVRA Online

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Keep in touch - sign up



Direct Debit Set-up



# BARKHAM DIARY

## BVRA Events

11/08/23	Copy deadline for Autumn Newsletter		
21/10/23	BVRA Quiz Night	BVH	7:30pm
10/11/23	Copy deadline for Winter Newsletter		
23/11/23	Annual General Meeting	BVH	7:30pm
15/12/23	Carols in the Park	Junipers	7:00pm

## Monthly Events

07/06/23	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7:30pm
13/06/23	Barkham Parish Council	AGCC	7:30pm
13/06/23	Dinton Walking Group	BVH	7:45pm
14/06/23	Bonsai Club	BVH	7:30pm
26/06/23	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	8:00pm
05/07/23	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7:30pm
11/07/23	Barkham Parish Council	AGCC	7:30pm
11/07/23	Dinton Walking Group	BVH	7:45pm
12/07/23	Bonsai Club	BVH	7:30pm
24/07/23	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	8:00pm
08/08/23	Dinton Walking Group	BVH	7:45pm
09/08/23	Bonsai Club	BVH	7:30pm
06/09/23	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7:30pm
12/09/23	Barkham Parish Council	AGCC	7:30pm
12/09/23	Dinton Walking Group	BVH	7:45pm
13/09/23	Bonsai Club	BVH	7:30pm
25/09/23	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	8:00pm

## Weekly Events

Mondays	Pilates Class	BVH	10:00am
Mondays	Dog Training	BVH	6:30pm
Tuesdays	Rainbows	BVH	4:30pm
Tues-Fri	Barkham Pre-School	BVH	9:00am
Wednesdays	Art Class	BVH	7:30pm
Wednesdays	Brownies	BVH	5:30pm
Thursdays	Pilates Class	BVH	6:15pm
Thursdays	Karate	BVH	7:30pm

## Special Events

Crowthorne Symphony Orchestra - Summer Concert  
7.30pm on Saturday 1st July at The Old Gym, Wellington College

## Location Codes

AGCC	Aborfield Green Community Centre
AVH	Arborfield Village Hall
BVH	Barkham Village Hall
CRH	California Ratepayers Hall
FMH	Finchampstead Memorial Hall

Please contact the editor to add to or change this information

10.40	
9. Geoffrey Fisher	
8. Champions League football match.	
7. George II	
6. Edward II in 1308	
5. Edward V (presumed murdered in the Tower of London before he could be crowned) and Edward VIII (abdicated before his coronation to marry a divorcee, Wallis Simpson)	
4. Christmas Day, 25 <sup>th</sup> December 1066	
3. William I, William the Conqueror	
2. Winchester Cathedral	
1. Edward the Confessor	

**Quiz Answers**

On the left-hand side of Barkham Road walking towards the *Old Leathern Bottle* on the edge of the village.

**Where in Barkham?**

Horse chestnut flower, often called candles. Normally these are high in the tree and so we rarely see the de-tails of the flowers.

**Which flower?**



## Contacts

Art Class  
Kay Young 978 5177

Barkham Ladies Social Club  
Shirley Warner 978 9124

Barkham Pre-School  
preschoolbarkham@gmail.com

Bonsai Club  
www.berkshirebonsai.co.uk

Pilates Class  
Vicky's Pilates 07729 783240

Barkham Village Hall Bookings  
christine.leigh@btinternet.com

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You can amend your mailing preferences or opt out at any time by clicking on the link at the foot of any of our emails or by contacting the Webmaster, email: [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.