



MEMBERSHIP subscriptions for 2024 are now due, see Page 3



**Parish Councils
buy
The Coombes!
Pages 4 & 10**

**Special:
Mrs Stubbs vs
the Post Office
on Page 14**

Easter Egg Hunt Sunday 31st March

**3pm at The Junipers, Elizabeth Park
Tickets £1 per child
Raffle for the large egg £1**



Skittles Evening

**Saturday 27th April
7:00pm for 7:30 - 10:30pm
in Barkham Village Hall
Supper Included
Tickets available from Gill Powell
Email: social@barkham.org.uk
or Tel 9783373**

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Editorial

By the time this issue hits the streets then we will be into Spring. The snowdrops and crocuses are out and some tell me that they have seen daffodils.

The most important news is that Barkham and Arborfield Parish Councils have jointly purchased a large section of the Coombes woodland. This secures the future, in perpetuity, of this land in which we so much enjoy walking. On behalf the BVRA I would like to thank the two Councils for making this happen. There are articles by Barkham Parish Council on Page 4 and in *Wild about the Coombes* we hear the background, on Page 10.

The BVRA was founded in 1987 in the wake of a group of local residents defending a planning application to build on much of the Coombes. This group went on to form the BVRA and that is why planning and development remain key drivers for the continuing existence of the BVRA.

Another hot topic is the Post Office Scandal. One of our residents was a victim and on page 14 we hear the story of Pam Stubbs in *Mrs Stubbs vs the Post Office*.

In the previous issue, we announced

some changes to membership subscriptions and distribution of this newsletter. See the article opposite for the full details.

It is great to see the village pub *The Bull at Barkham* back in operation. I've enjoyed a few meals there since it opened in December and the staff are very friendly.

Email Updates

We send occasional 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 use the link below

<https://barkham.org.uk/index.php/barkham/keep-in-touch-with-bvra>



Annual Village Litter Pick!

We all hate to see litter in our village. It's one of the frustrating sights we see. And it's all so unnecessary! You can help us by joining in the annual litter pick organised by the Parish Council.

This year it will take place on Sunday 24th March between 10am - 12pm. Meet at Barkham Village Hall where you will be assigned an area and given litter pickers and bin bags. We would appreciate any volunteers who join us. Refreshments will be provided. I do hope you will be able to come along and help us.

DevWatch

Since our last update, life has been quiet on the planning front with little progress being seen on the current applications in progress. Please read the Barkham Parish Council article on Page 6 for more details.

Just one new application has appeared – for three new houses adjacent to Barkham Manor. A DevWatch alert was issued in January asking residents to oppose the plan. It differs very little from the application submitted in 2020 that was rejected by WBC and the subsequent appeal dismissed by the planning inspectorate.

Like BPC, the BVRA are frustrated that the local plan update is further delayed. With a full election for Wokingham Council being held in May we have to speculate that the delay is to avoid publishing bad news before then!

Help Needed!

We still need someone to take on the role of DevWatch co-ordinator. Could you spare 2-3 hours a month to help with this important service? For more details, please contact development@barkham.org.uk

New Look!

I want to make some changes to the look of this Newsletter and so I am looking for someone to help with the redesign. If you have graphic design or artistic skills then I'd like to hear from you. This would be a short project to help establish the new design and would not need ongoing involvement. If you think you might be able to help then please contact

newsletter@barkham.org.uk

BVRA 2024 Membership

Firstly, a huge thank you to all those residents who have already paid their fees for 2024 either by Direct Debit or Bank Transfer.

As was announced in the Winter 2023 issue of this Newsletter it is "all change" for membership fees and their collection this year. As a reminder, the main changes are that we have reluctantly had to increase the membership fee to £3 per year - still excellent value I'm sure you would agree.

Distributors will no longer be collecting cash at the door, however there are still three ways to make your payment. They are:

1. By Direct Debit: these can be set up by following the link below

<https://barkham.org.uk/bvra/bvra-membership>



All direct debits are fully covered under the UK Direct Debit scheme. For added reassurance, we have taken over 1300 direct debits in the five years since we offered this payment method without a single issue.

2. By Bank Transfer: you may already have received an email with the necessary information. If not, please email us at membership@barkham.org.uk with your name and address. We will reply with our bank details and your individual reference details to ensure your payment is credited to your membership.
3. If you would still like to pay by cash, this can be accommodated. Please contact us at membership@barkham.org.uk to be given your unique reference, unless you have already received it recently in an email from us, and then drop off your payment at one of our collection points around the village.

Please pay promptly as, from this year, only households who have paid their membership will receive the next three issues.

If you have any queries about membership please do not hesitate to contact us at membership@barkham.org.uk.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our team of distributors who continue to deliver your newsletter to your door. We welcome some new distributors to the team this year, but we are always looking for new volunteers. If you would like to join the team, please do not hesitate to contact us, as above.

Thank You
Louise and the Membership Team

St James' Church Easter Story Trail



Join us for an afternoon of fun on Good Friday (Fri 29th March), with a walk through the Coombes to discover the Easter Story, with refreshments and activities back at the Junipers where you can pick up some more Easter goodies!

The trail will start from the playing field and play area in The Junipers, RG41 4UX, please collect your answer sheets between 2-2:30pm.

If you plan to take the longer route (around 1 hr), it would be helpful to download the *what3words* app in advance as this will help you locate the next egg on the trail.

There will be 2 routes:

- A longer route heading into and around the Coombes and back out onto Barkham Road before heading to the playing field for refreshments
- The shorter 1.5km route will be focused in the wooded area next to The Junipers Play Park, with light refreshments available at the start point

When you've walked the trail, don't forget to head back to the start to collect your Easter goodies! There will be no cost for any part of the afternoon.

If you do need to drive to the trail, bear in mind there are only a few spaces available in The Junipers, so please park considerately and make use of additional space in The Woodlands before walking to the start.

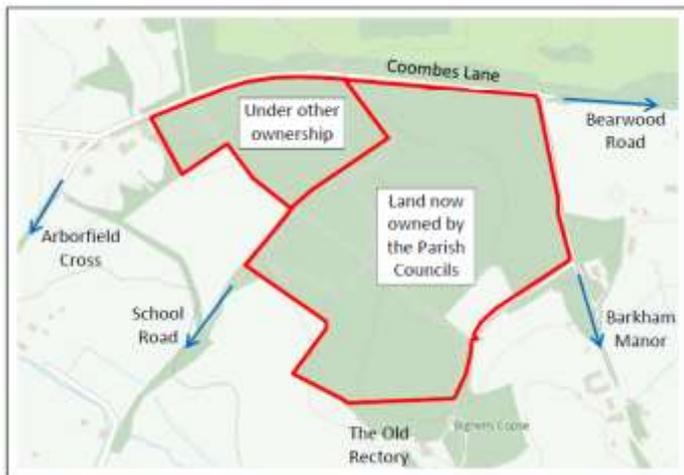


Purchase of the Coombes

Barkham Parish Council is pleased to inform residents that it, in conjunction with Arborfield Parish Council, has purchased 60 Acres of The Coombes Woodland to preserve the woodland for community enjoyment and education.

The two councils have purchased, using the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)*, 60 acres of The Coombes ancient woodland that sits along the boundary between the two parishes. The Councils will ensure that The Coombes remains open to the public to enjoy and will enable the parishes to take further steps to improve bio-diversity in the area.

The Coombes woodland is a rare area of ancient woodland in Wokingham Borough and has been enjoyed by local residents for many years. The Councils plan to ensure this enjoyment for residents remains in perpetuity.



The newly acquired woodland is a vital hub for biodiversity in the area. Recognizing the importance of woodland habitats in supporting diverse ecosystems, the Councils are committed to preserving this natural treasure for the enjoyment of current and future generations of residents and to enhancing the area by working with ecology and woodland conservation organisations to ensure the health of the woodland for years to come.

The parish councils have set up the Coombes Woodland Committee (CWC), to manage the woodlands for the councils. The committee will be

responsible for developing and executing a management plan for the Woodlands.

The Councils also intend to use the woodland for educational purposes and will be seeking opportunities with local schools, Scouts and Guides to enable them to use this important resource as part of their curriculum delivery. There has already been interest from a company who specialise in ecology, arboriculture and landscape architecture, to use the woodlands to train its new starters (predominantly university graduates) on different habitats, on which to build their knowledge base. This is currently being considered by the committee.

To actively involve the community in the preservation and enhancement of the woodland, the councils are excited to announce plans for the establishment of a volunteer group. Residents will have the opportunity to contribute to the maintenance, improvement, and protection of the woodland through hands-on involvement.

The CWC are just starting this project and are currently looking at how the volunteer group will operate, and are in the process of establishing all the required policies and risk assessments. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact the Parish Clerk to register your interest.

A planning application (Application number 233100) has been submitted to WBC for works that need to be undertaken on some of the trees for safety reasons, and the council is awaiting a decision before the works can be undertaken. The works required will take into account the nesting season, and will be planned so that disturbance to the birds and wildlife will be minimised. Some of the works are planned to take place prior to the nesting season in March, once permission has been granted. All works will be carried out by a qualified and insured company, and will be in accordance with the current British Standard 3998 'Tree Work Recommendations'.

If residents walking in The Coombes notice any problems with any of the trees, land or anti-social behaviour, please report them to the Parish Clerk.

For further information or to register your interest to become a volunteer, please contact:

Ellen Tims

Clerk to Barkham Parish Council

0118 976 2089

Clerk@barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk

* CIL are funds received by the PC from developers, which the councils have to spend on infrastructure projects for the benefit of local residents.



St James' Barkham

one? Is there really anything that can give us hope on into eternity too?

Those who gathered in Heidelberg nearly 500 years ago expressed their answer to that question beautifully:

‘What is your only comfort in life and death?

That I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ.’

What a relief to know a hope and comfort that depends, not on me, or anyone or anything else, but on someone like Jesus. He knows the worst things about us, still loves us so much, and - as we remember again this Easter - has conquered death in his resurrection by opening a way through into the glory of life with God beyond.

It was such a privilege, in the weeks before they died, to see those two now dearly-departed church members both so full of hope in the One they knew had done that for them.

Then (just four days ago, as I write), about 450 of us gathered at Bohunt School for a joint service to mark Piers Bickersteth's retirement as Rector of our family of churches. It's a big change; Piers and his wife Carolyn have been here for 25 years. We're very thankful to them both for all the ways that they've served our villages and churches, and above all for how they have pointed us to Jesus and that hope He says we can have in Him.

(And so we begin the process, with the Diocese, of looking for Piers' successor. We'll keep you posted...)

We'd love you to join us, this Easter, as we think more about the hope that Jesus says is found in Him. Maybe you're not remotely persuaded by these things? Maybe they just sound too good to be true? Why not come and at least consider it, though? We'll be having a joint Good Friday service at 10am at Arborfield Church and then will be at Barkham Church as usual at 10am and 6pm on Easter Sunday. You'd be very warmly welcome at any or all of these.

David Horrocks



Farewell...

I've been around long enough to know that local churches definitely go through seasons. It does feel as if we've been in a season of farewells at Barkham Church.

We've recently had the funerals of two dearly-loved older members of the church family who sadly died within a day of each other just before Christmas. We miss them lots and I still find myself half-expecting to see them both coming through the door a few minutes before the service on Sundays (they were both always very good at turning up on time!) It was a real privilege to gather with their families and other friends and to give thanks for two people who, in so many ways, lived so well in the service of others.

‘What is our hope in life and death?’ begins one of the songs we've started singing on Sundays. It's a new-ish song, but based on old words that were put together in the 16th Century in the lovely town of Heidelberg in Germany.

‘What is our hope in life and death?’ It's a good question. After all, nothing focuses the mind and exposes shaky foundations quite as starkly as funerals do. Where can we find hope in a world that is as full of injustice (‘Mr Bates’, anyone?), tension and fear as this



See Page 3 for details



Update from Barkham Parish Council

Planning Round-up

Snippets regarding the Local Plan Update (LPU) continue to drip through but with no real indication of what is being planned.

The overarching planning document is the National Planning Policies Framework (NPPF) with which local planning policies and the LPU must comply. A draft revised version was submitted for public consultation at the beginning of 2023 with the final version expected Spring 2023, then Nov 2023 and it finally scraped through at the end of the year.

This version gave little comfort with respect to the unacceptable position in Wokingham of having a long out-of-date Local Plan and a significant overbuild of dwellings in recent years – a situation that arises because the Developers dictate the rate of build and not the Council. The expectation that the NPPF would allow this excess build - some 2000 homes across the Borough – to be counted towards future housing needs did not materialise.

One reason offered by the WBC Executive to justify delaying the next version of the LPU was that they were waiting for clarification as to what the NPPF would contain. We hear that the LPU will now be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee but probably not until Jun 2024. How convenient, as this means any difficult decisions will not become apparent until after the Local Elections in May 2024.

Meanwhile, numerous development projects are at various stages of the planning process within Barkham or just on the parish boundaries – Edneys Hill (40 dwellings) has been refused but could be appealed, Blagrove Meadows (350 dwellings) has been brought forward again, land off Langley Common Road (40 dwellings) has been submitted, land west of Limmerhill Road (up to 60 dwellings) has been submitted and there is another proposal to build on land east of Barkham

Manor (3 dwellings) which is a particularly sensitive area of countryside. Barkham Square (500 – 700 dwellings) is never far out of mind and there are several other projects in Arborfield and Finchampstead.

How many times has it been written in articles like this over the years that the best way to avoid opportunistic development is to have an up-to-date Local Plan which WBC has been working on since 2016? The NPPF was published mid Dec 2023 yet the LPU will not be published until Jun 2024. Will other factors emerge to delay it further until after the General Election which pundits suggest could be in Oct/Nov 2024?

It must be left to the reader to decide why the LPU is taking so long and at such cost.

Purchase of The Coombes Woodlands

Barkham Parish Council in conjunction with Arborfield and Newland Parish Council have completed the purchase on 60 acres of The Coombes Woodland. Please see Page 4 for more information.

Barkham & fly-tipping

It hardly needs saying that fly-tipping is one of the fastest ways of trashing a locality, it's a palace for vermin, dangerous liquids can drain into water courses, glass, lensing the sun's rays, is a fire risk, and, most



importantly, if a place looks like a tip people treat it as a tip. See Commonfield Lane as evidence.

Wokingham Brough Council (WBC) are doing sterling work combating this detestable practice, with prompt pickups and other measures.

But there is always room for improvement, for example, see the article in the local paper regarding the introduction of AI for automatic detection of Vehicle registration numbers. Barkham Parish Council are considering financing WBC for additional measures to

be taken in our parish as we have particular tipping hot spots.

This would not increase your rates as the moneys would come from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocated to Barkham Parish for the new builds here.

You yourself can help, if you see a fly-tip please take a photo of it and post it (with location details) to the Clerk of the parish (For Barkham that's Clerk@barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk). Alternatively report it yourself to via <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling/waste-collection/fly-tipping>

ADVICE ON REPORTING FLY TIPPING TO WOKINGHAM BROUGH COUNCIL

We all know and experience the increase of fly-tipping throughout the borough. All reports are gratefully received and acted upon swiftly. The Anti-Social-Behaviour team do a great job, but by necessity, rely on instances of fly-tipping being reported.

Here are just a few handy tips to help you report an instance of fly-tipping:

There is no direct link from Wokingham Borough's website home page to the fly-tip section. To navigate from the home page you go via:

- **Rubbish and recycling | Wokingham**
- **Waste collection (wokingham.gov.uk)**
- **Fly-tipping**

On reaching the Reporting page, you're shown a map of the Borough but no instructions on what to do next. Even clicking on the '+' (Zoom) button no further instructions come up. If you click on the map itself, it does zoom in with a pop-up saying: 'To report a problem please zoom in'. You have to continue to zoom in, by clicking on the map again, until the message changes to: 'To report a problem please click on the map', only then, with one last click, do you get a dialog box displayed with which you can enter the details.

It helps the Anti-Social-Behaviour team immensely if you can be as precise as possible on giving the location of the incident. This is the location of the fly-tip not the location of your home. The most useful way is to give the 'What-3-Words' location of the fly-tip, if you have the app. Google Maps can give you a latitude and longitude, but W3W is preferred.

We (Barkham Parish Council) hope this helps.



Parish Councillor Vacancies

The Parish Council is the first tier of Local Government representing the local community, delivering services to meet local needs wherever possible, and improving quality of life and community well-being. Barkham Parish Council still has some vacancies for Councillors to join the Council. The councillors for Barkham Parish Council are:

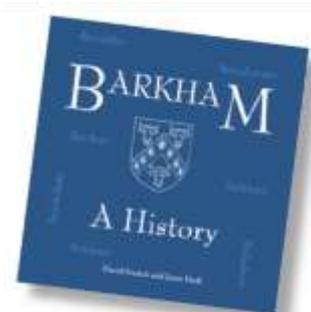
- **Pam Stubbs**
- **Graeme Dexter**
- **Chris Heyliger**
- **Allan Wrobel**
- **Mike Barker**
- **Amit Sheth**
- **George Edgecombe**

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

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 or phone 0118 976 2089.

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.



Update from Borough Councillor - Ian Pittock



This is my final article before the May elections at which time I will be standing down, being unable to commit to potentially a further 4 years and to pursue other matters that were delayed by Covid and its aftermath. It seems appropriate to cover what I have been working on with WBC, Barkham PC and others by way of a heads up to residents and whomsoever the three councillors will be covering the new Barkham and Arborfield Ward; depending upon the votes each receives they will sit for 2, 3 or 4 years – I wish them well.

HIGHWAYS

The 30mph speed limit is to be moved north up Bearwood Road to Highland Avenue.

School Road was closed following a consultation but one which does not seem to have directly involved Barkham PC. I have asked the Executive Member to review the closure in 2024. The junction with Langley Common Road may be improved using paint to change the alignment.

Although some have been fixed, it is proving difficult to fix some of the streetlights along Sheerlands Road that are not working due to cabling problems. It is a matter that involves WBC Highways, Crest, Carla and the utilities.

It is not possible to widen the footway along Langley Common Road. Barkham PC data shows that speed averages are about 33mph so it should be possible to reduce the legal speed limit to 30mph, Barkham PC and I are keen whilst WBC Highways and the Police are not. Biggs Lane to Park Lane. Both ends

are already covered by 30mph speed limits, that for Biggs Lane is to be moved south beyond Commonfield Lane. Given the new estate at Coronation Field on the old Reading FC training ground, I have requested that the entire gap between these two roads is made 30mph.

Crest funded a light-controlled crossing at the horses roundabout on Biggs Lane. This allows residents to cross between the two parts of Princess Marina drive and will provide a safe route to the district centre. Discussions are proceeding about a light-controlled crossing at Hazebrouk for Finchampstead children using the California greenway to safely cross Biggs Lane to Bohunt, hopefully Finchampstead PC will fund this. A light-controlled crossing is planned at Waterman's Close, probably funded by WBC.

Following public demand, I have made the case in Council for a light-controlled crossing to be installed roughly where the temporary crossing was until early 2023 for children to cross to Farley Hill Primary School. This has been accepted but will probably need to be funded by Barkham PC.

A number of solutions were considered for Commonfield Lane, such as widening it (no land available) or making it one way (upsets 50% of residents at different times of the day). The preferred solution is to improve the passing places by building five proper road structures. This should occur in the autumn after completion of works at California Crossroads.

ENVIRONMENT

The internal single barrier at Rook Nest Country Park is to be improved since it currently allows free running dogs to access the car park from the park. Mortimers Farm and Brook Farm are being closed with the land used to extend the country park across to Barkham Road/Edneys Hill. This land, Rooks Nest Farm and other land is also intended to provide a greenway from Doles Lane to Biggs Lane accessible by cycle to Bohunt.

Coombes Lane is a Byway Open To All Traffic (BOAT) and as such it is used by numerous vehicles. A new surface was laid last year and it is already suffering. It is questionable whether this really needs to be a through 'road', it is accessible at both ends for those who live there and stopping through traffic would stop damage.

Given the delays in funding a swimming pool at Arborfield Green, the general economic situation and no land having been kept back from the AG development, it is now unlikely that a pool will be built in that location. It may be built at another nearby development using land and funding from house building there. I have suggested that this be co-located with a commercial data centre where the heat generated can be used to heat the pool via heat exchanger and the cold air returned to cool the data centre so reducing running costs.

PLANNING & CREST/CARLA

The Community Liaison Group has started meeting; this is designed to keep residents informed on progress with building out of Arborfield Green (Crest marketing name) and Finchwood Park (Carla marketing name) and to address issues arising. The Sainsburys' planning application is being considered, if passed I would expect it to be open in autumn 2025. The revised planning application for the sports and other green areas of AG is being considered. Some discussions have taken place to clarify the purpose of the playing fields, these are for local residents and should be open for September 2025; WBC will retain control. The planning application for the new community centre is being considered along with discussions with potential occupiers which may include part of WBC being located here. Discussions have been held with a potential publican but there is no sign yet of a planning application. The new primary school planned for Finchwood has no planned date yet given that Farley Hill PS is still expanding to about three times its original capacity and there is a downturn in the number of children on the horizon.

The Local Plan Update was delayed due to a revised National Planning Policy Framework that was

promised by Whitehall for spring 2023 but was only released the week before Christmas. It was promised this would take into account the existing over provision of houses in Wokingham Borough, but in the end did not and therefore we have to ignore those houses in planning how many more are to be built. The revised NPPF is resulting in some extra work being needed on the LPU which already is much improved on that of two years ago. The revised LPU is now planned to go to full Council for approval in June this year; this is more than a little disappointing since residents should have been able to take discussions on this into account as part of the May elections (thanks Whitehall). Once the LPU has agreed it will then go to a government inspector at which point it will be taken into consideration when developers make ad-hoc applications to build houses.

ROOKS NEST FARM

The two new SEND schools are to be built in 2026, a request has been made to the DfE for WBC to build these since this would allow for much more local control of the build traffic off Barkham Ride. Survey work for the Solar Farm is underway and building should commence in 2025 with connection now contracted for August 2026. Planting of screen vegetation is underway. The Covid Memorial Wood should start planting this year and is likely to be extended to provide further screening of the solar farm. Thoughts are being given to building an allotment behind the few houses lining Barkham Ride.

OTHER

After much effort funding has been provided by WBC and BET to allow expansion of Year 7 and for the building of the new 6th form wing which should open in September 2026.

A review of polling stations has resulted in all Barkham parish residents continuing to need to vote at Barkham Village Hall. The desire is to allow those living in Arborfield Green area and Langley Common Road to vote at the AG Community Centre, only those in Finchwood will do so for the present. To make this change a review of parish boundaries is needed with, I hope, a rationalisation that puts all of

Arborfield Green, Finchwood and Coronation Fields into Barkham. A review is being considered for later in 2024.

Finally, I continue to serve until May, thereafter I wish all residents of Barkham Parish the very best for the future.



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

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

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

- Ensure your home, shed, garage and other garden buildings are secure and never leave doors or windows unlocked when you are not around
- Alarm it - there are systems on the market for all budgets and ensure existing alarms are serviced and maintained
- Consider installing CCTV (closed circuit television). Some systems can be accessed remotely via the internet or smart phone. Ensure you check privacy laws when installing CCTV systems
- Check whether your home insurance covers the contents of your home, garage, shed and other garden buildings from theft
- Security mark and register your possessions so they can be identified at www.immobilise.com
- Remove valuable equipment

like laptops from outbuildings used as offices when you are not in attendance

- Use strong padlocks on doors with no exposed screws and pay attention to hinges, which can be easily removed
- Lock your tools inside a locker or box or secure them with a chain
- Secure bikes to the ground or a lockable stand and drape an old sheet or blanket over them to keep them covered from view
- Secure access to the back garden. Are your gates and fences maintained?
- Thorny or prickly plants can be a deterrent in strategic positions, such as underneath windows or below walls and fences
- Ensure hedges and shrubs are trimmed back to prevent areas intruders could hide or observe you. Crunchy gravel is also good for paths or areas around outbuildings
- If you have a detached garage in a block, consider fitting additional security locks to the door to reduce the risk of offenders prising it open
- Receive free crime and information updates by registering for Thames Valley Alerts at www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk
- Consider joining a local Neighbourhood Watch scheme - visit www.ourwatch.org.uk for more information.

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

You can contact your local neighbourhood policing team via: WokinghamNHPT@thamesvalley.police.uk - please note this address cannot be used to report crimes or for any urgent matters. Follow us on social media to find out what your local policing teams are up to - Facebook: TVP Bracknell & Wokingham / Twitter: @TVP_Wokingham

Wild About the Coombes

I am so happy! In November, Barkham and Arborfield's Parish Councils finally became the joint legal owners of the largest part of the Coombes woodland. It took almost a year but it was well worth waiting for.

My biggest fear was that the land would be bought by land-lotters, as they are colloquially known. This had happened to 16 acres of the Coombes in 2018, damaging the natural environment and spoiling its amenity value for the general public. The idea that the remaining 60 acres might go the same way didn't bear thinking about.

Land-lotting is where an area of land is bought, typically for a moderate price driven by restrictions on how it may be used. It is then divided into small plots, each of which is resold to individuals, often without declaring the limitations on its use, and thereby achieving a higher price per acre. The land-lotter makes a profit. Everybody else is likely to be disappointed in some way and left to pick up the pieces.

The company that bought the 16 acres in 2018 divided it into 20 separate plots, labelled A to T on the sales map in figure 2. Plot T was differently coloured, suggesting that it was an access road to serve plots J to S, while plots A to S were sold, mainly at auction, 2 or 3 at a time, between the summers of 2018 and 2019. Figure 3 is an extract from one of the auction brochures showing computer generated houses in woodland, further implying that the plots could be built on. I attended that auction and when the three lots came under the hammer in November 2018, that picture was projected on a large screen above the auctioneer.

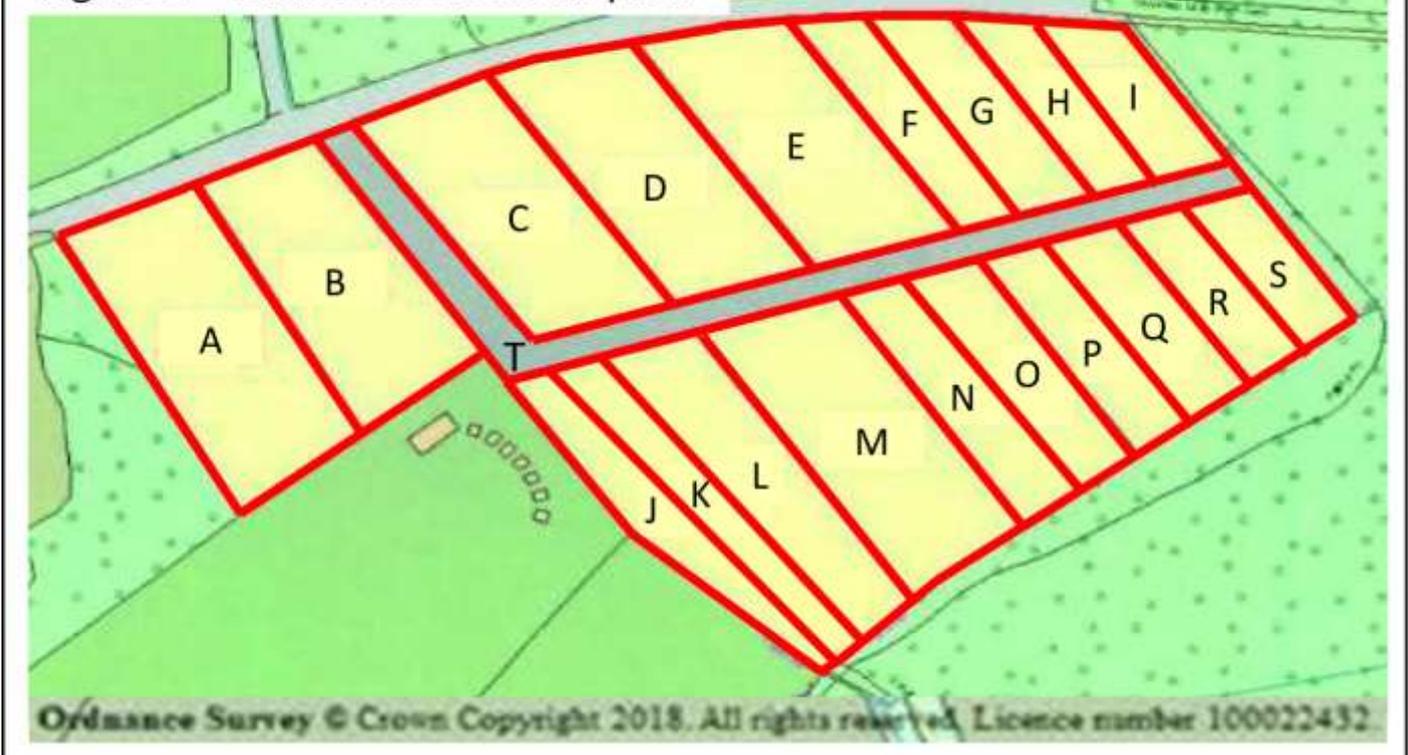
When bidding made little progress, the auctioneer commented that the price seemed very low and wondered why there wasn't more interest. At that point, people who had attended for other lots, and wouldn't have done their homework for these, joined in the bidding. They were lured into paying well over the odds for land on which development was highly unlikely ever to be permitted.

Figure 1 – The Coombes Woodland



Figure 1 shows the 2 areas.

Figure 2 – Division into 20 sub-plots



So far, our local authority has had to deal with about 40 planning applications from, and enforcement actions against, buyers of some of these smaller plots. Twenty of these led to appeals, consuming huge amounts of Planning Department resources to defend. Inevitably, the wildlife habitat has been adversely affected in the process.

The land-lotters dissolved their company in 2020 and took their profit, probably to repeat the process elsewhere through another temporary company.

The people who went on to sell the larger part of the Coombes to the Parish Councils were not the ones who had sold the other part to land-lotters. Indeed, they had been good enough to allow the local community access to their land for well over 40 years.

That freedom to roam the Coombes, enjoyed by so many, may have been lost, had the Parish Councils not stepped in to buy it. They found the prospect of the Coombes becoming closed to the public, and the potential damage inflicted on such a mature woodland, its natural wildlife habitat, rich biodiversity and carbon capturing potential, deeply unpalatable.

Public bodies with woodlands have a statutory duty to conserve and enhance their biodiversity, and they need to be able to demonstrate their compliance.

I am so grateful that they undertook the huge amount of work necessary to enable them, ultimately, to succeed in buying the woodland.

Joe Wild

The Quiz

Each answer in this issue's quiz contains a family relationship.

1. On which Dire Straits album does 'Money for Nothing' appear?
2. By what name is Daccaena trifasciata also known?
3. In which 1970 film did Sarah Miles play the character in the title role?
4. What relation sounds like a biscuit and a French city?
5. By what name is Rafael Nadal's first tennis coach affectionately known?
6. By what name is a person who is a target for insults or criticism known?
7. Elvis Presley starred in a 1964 film. What was it called?
8. Which track on the Rolling Stones' Sticky Fingers album contains strong references to drugs?
9. Which character in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales was married five times?
10. What relationship does ex-footballer Frank Lampard have to Harry Redknapp?

Where in Barkham?

Here is another photograph taken from a location that can easily be seen from the road.
Answer on Page 22



description:
Each plot represents the opportunity to acquire a useful and manageable parcel of land lying off the south side of Ellis's Hill, close to Ellis's Hill farm and farm shop. The plots are offered on an unconditional basis freehold and may have potential for a number of uses. Purchasers are deemed to rely on their own enquiries with regard to planning however these details show some indicative images provided by the seller of a development of these and adjoining plots. Buyers may wish to use these images to take forward planning enquiries.

Lot	Plot	Acreage
83	Plot RTA	0.97 acres
84	Plot R3	0.58 acres
85	Plot R4	0.62 acres

note:
Plans showing exact plot location with dimensions are available from the auctioneers or can be downloaded from the Legal pack.

to view:
By application to the site during daylight hours. Please see important advice for viewers on page 16 of the catalogue.

Figure 3 – Extract from the November 2018 Auction catalogue

Indicative CGI only



BVRA Social Events

It's Newsletter time again and now 2024! As I write this in February we are having an unusually mild spell after enduring cold and frosty mornings and several severe storms already this year. Spring is approaching though, as the bulbs are emerging and snowdrops flowering; so good things to look forward to.

We have only one event to report on this time - the 'Carols in the Park' on the 15th of December at the Junipers Park. Over 100 people attended, with families and many children too, which was so good to see. They all sang favourite carols accompanied by the Breakaway Brass Band, who once again gave up their free time to play for us. After starting at the Woodlands, we worked our way up the Junipers, stopping at several places, to finish at the hammerhead. At the end everyone was treated to mulled wine or soft drinks and mince pies. It was a fine dry evening if a bit chilly, perfect for this celebration of our community festive spirit in the run up to Christmas.

A closing bucket collection was made for the Band as a 'thank you', and special thanks also go to the BVRA team of helpers, and Dave, who kindly offered the use of his house and kitchen nearby again for us to make the mulled wine.

At the end, Allan Wrobel (pictured), one of our parish councillors, took the loud hailer to announce that that the local Parish Councils were in the process of the buying the Coombes. A final cheering end to the evening! More about this on Page 4 and 10.

Events have been planned and booked for the rest of the year; the first is the annual children's *Easter Egg Hunt* on 31st March, Easter Sunday. This will take place at 3pm at the Junipers Park. Entrance is £1 per child, and





Another fine January sunset in Barkham! Not been many such evenings this winter.

Alan's Patch

while the children are busy searching for tokens, the adults will be able to buy raffle ticket for the Giant Egg and other chocolate prizes.

There will be a separate area for the very young children (under 5s) to look for tokens, away from the general area for the older children.

PLEASE NOTE - please bring cash for this event.

Other events planned for the year are:

- Family Skittles on April 27th
- Distributors' BBQ on August 17th
- Quiz on October 5th
- Carols in the Park on December 13th

The Family Skittles with a Supper and a licenced bar will take place at the Village Hall on April 27th at 7.00 for 7.30pm. Tickets for this can be obtained from Gill Powell, preferably by email at social@barkham.org.uk or by telephone on 0118 9783373.

Details of the supper provided and the cost are yet to be confirmed. Please check nearer the time on the BVRA website, and look out for the posters around the village. Please put this date in your diaries - it is always fun and quite a competitive event for all ages!

I hope to see as many of you as possible at these events, it's a great way of meeting people, especially if you are new to the area, and a good way to support your local Residents' Association.

Shirley Warner
Social Committee Member

Not a lot to report at this time of year. The winter has been wet and windy and briefly cold. No problem filling the irrigation tanks in readiness for the drought next summer!

All the winter jobs have been done - washing and fumigating the greenhouse, adding wood chippings to subdue the weeds under the fruit bushes and trees, along the paths between the beds of the vegetable patch and in between the ornamental grasses.

Of last year's crops, I'm still eating spinach, red cabbage, carrots, parsnips and leeks, plus, stored in the shed, potatoes and butternut squash.

In the greenhouse, seedlings of tomatoes, peppers, chillis and aubergine sown in the propagator have surfaced.

My autumn sown broad beans have survived so far although looking a bit sad just now! Yesterday I noticed signs of the rhubarb coming into life again.

The first sign of spring, snowdrops and crocuses, are flowering, telling us that spring is around the corner.

Below is the menacing Big Bad Wolf from the pantomime that I photographed a few weeks ago!



Mrs Stubbs vs the Post Office



I expect many of you will have seen the highly acclaimed four part ITV television drama documentary, *Mr Bates vs the Post Office*. Some of you will be aware that one of our residents, Pam Stubbs, the chair of our Parish Council, was one of the victims of this scandal and appears in the programme. Here is Pam's story.

Our introduction to Barkham began in February 1987, when Martin and I came to view and then subsequently buy Barkham Post Office. Martin had taken early retirement from The Bank of England in Southampton and I had decided to give up full time teaching, and we set out on our new path way along with three of our children.

We had decided that the Post Office was the perfect choice for us, Martin could make good use of his financial skills and I would run the shop. We started our new careers at 5 a.m. the day after we moved in and did not stop to take breath; Martin marking up newspaper deliveries and I started filling rolls and sandwiches to sell in the shop.

We loved our jobs, living above the

shop and getting to know all of our customers, particularly those living on the new Elizabeth Park behind the shop. Martin really enjoyed the Post Office although he found it difficult to fit in the tiny space which was the Post Office! I had taken over the computer system which controlled the shop sales and then when a simple computer system was introduced to the Post Office I had to take over the input for that as well. My husband really did not like computers but our joint effort worked well, as all P.O. transactions came with paper receipts and he was easily able to keep on top of the accounting.

Sadly, Martin developed cancer during his time in the post office. He had heard of the new Horizon System which was going to be introduced and his advice to me was that I should continue moving to the back of the queue so that any bugs would be cleared out before it got to us. Martin's health declined rapidly and he passed away on 3rd August 1999, I took over his role on 4th August.

The house we had shared was, by this time very dilapidated and, despite all our efforts, was close to collapse. I had promised to keep the Post Office, and after many Planning applications I was eventually granted permission to rebuild the premises, with the shop, Post Office and an attached house in 2009. As such, I had to move out and I bought a semi-derelict bungalow, renovated it and moved in.

Whilst the site was being rebuilt, the Post Office was moved into a Portacabin, with as much of the shop as we could squeeze in. It was cosy but this was when my problems really started. The Post

Office had promised help for us moving out of the old shop but no-one turned up. How many residents remember me carrying coins and notes out of the old shop, surrounded by a bodyguard of builders, until it could be locked into the safe (lovingly called The Tin Can).

From that day, every Balance I performed, showed a shortage and I rang the Help Line to report the problems I was having. The Balance never agreed, the Help Line was never available on the one day that I needed it. When I did get a response, it was a different one each time. I was promised that my problem was being investigated, but never received any update. The December Balance was even worse and then followed by the coldest and whitest period we had experienced for years. All offices were closing early and I had already been given permission to close for two days before Christmas as my daughter was getting married. With Christmas and New Year, the office was only open for two weeks. When I came to Balance on 6th January, I was horrified to find a shortage of over £9,000.00. This meant that I had apparently 'lost' in excess of £12,000. I completely freaked out and spent hours on the telephone to every helpline available to me, including my line manager.

I got no help from anyone in the Post Office, I decided that if I was going to try and find out what had happened since we had moved into the portacabin, that I would have to get paper evidence of every transaction performed in the office from moving day. I printed till rolls with every transaction from as far back as the computer would allow. The floor was about two feet deep in

till rolls by the time I got to January 2010, they were all packed into dustbin bags to take home. I continued to ring the Help Lines and spoke to one person who said that if I declared that these losses were IN DISPUTE that Post Office could not force me to repay until they had investigated. So, I did. Every time there was a shortage I rang, reported it and declared that it was in dispute. I told my Line Manager, that I believed these losses were down to the Horizon System. His reply was "Many people have said that but nobody has been able to prove it." After all these calls I was almost on first name terms with the help line staff. At times my debt reached in excess of £40,000, although it did drop again after some money was discovered in a suspense account.

By this stage I had decided that I would no longer sign my Trading Statements as I did not believe they were correct. I had another phone call with my line manager, when he appeared to decide that I was liable for prosecution. I told him that if he really believed that I had stolen this money, that he should send the Police around to arrest me and that I would see him in court with all my evidence. He never mentioned prosecution again but he also never said that they would not prosecute, so I was left in limbo. I continued in this situation for the next six months, waiting for the knock on the door, which would be a Post Office investigator, demanding entry to search my house. The Post Office, I had discovered, conducted their own prosecutions. I was never more grateful to have my big, white guard dog whilst in the bungalow on my own. I spent too many nights waking up terrified several times a night after hearing a slight sound outside.

I had several visits from Auditors

and was gratified to find that they could not persuade my system to work accurately for them either. They both had to admit that my figures seemed to point towards a Horizon fault, although no-one admitted as much. I decided that I no longer wished to work for Post Office, but was informed that I could not sell my Brand New Office, unless I handed in my notice first. This I did, but then the Post Office chose the only person they would accept as a buyer. They did not tell me this beforehand. I only found out when the other prospective buyers rang to tell me. At the end I received a surprise Audit which was announced as a Closing Audit as the Auditor walked through the door. My Line Manager obviously forgot to mention this during our one hour phone call the previous evening.

I then joined the JFSA organisation started by Alan Bates and joined the Mediation Scheme which was a complete waste of time, except for the fact that Post Office sent me a small mountain of disclosure paperwork which showed that Horizon was accessed out of hours and which should never have been sent to me at all without being read by someone in their office. It proved very useful during the High Court Litigation trials.

I am so grateful for the help and support I have received during the very difficult period whilst this was taking place. I wish to thank Sir John Redwood, our MP, for all his efforts on my behalf during the years that this fiasco has been dragging on. He has sent many letters and has raised issues in Parliament, but it has become obvious that those who have been in charge of "Britain's Most

Trusted Brand" have learned nothing; if Nick Read's performance at the Government inquiry is anything to judge by.

The saddest part of this whole affair is that it has taken a Television drama to actually galvanise the public conscience and encourage them to look at the treatment forced on the Post Office agents who have lost everything that they have spent their entire lives working for and yet, still the Post Office top managers are sitting in judgement attempting to stop them from receiving repayment of the money which was stolen from them unjustly. What price the Proceeds of Crime Laws?

It was privilege and a joy to be part of the ITV television drama. I still maintain that Lesley Nichol played me better than I ever would have! I watched the pre-screening of the Drama and found myself joining many others in tears. I have heard from so many residents who found the play too difficult to watch. This is a true story and deserves to be watched by everyone so that it cannot be forgotten too easily.

Pam Stubbs

The Secret Life of a Sigh

I do it a lot. We've dashed out of the door after doing my best to chivvy everyone along while retaining some form of sanity – we should be leaving at 11, yet it's 11.20. And now, finally, we're all in the car. Out comes a big sigh. We're leaving, at last, relax and drive.

It can feel good to sigh, like a moment of recovery or letting go. But you already know this. What's less obvious is that we can take advantage of this automatic mechanism for relief at any time.

Of course, breathing is entirely automatic – and thank goodness for that. Every breath we take is accompanied by an orchestration of energy and relaxation, like the accelerator and brake in a car. The accelerator increases energy, and the brake allows relaxation. An in-breath comes with a slight energy boost - to fuel the work the body needs to distribute the oxygen - and an out-breath comes with a relaxation of the system.

The sympathetic and parasympathetic branches of the autonomic nervous system drive this gentle energy boost and relaxation process. Although we don't need to know how it works, I think it's helpful to appreciate that it's a deliberate and identifiable feature of our amazing bodies.

When we sigh, we take in some extra breath and let it out, often through pursed lips, which helps to slow down the out-breath's speed. Linking that with our accelerator and brake analogy, it's like we're boosting the energy by taking in more breath and then prolonging the relaxation process by slowing the out-breath.

We've all received or given the advice to take a few breaths.

Slightly better advice might be to take a few sighs. For most of us, it's an easy and incredibly effective way to calm or relax a busy, anxious, or stressed mind and body.

We can also take advantage of this mechanism, applying the brake for a bit longer, more deliberately. Try this:

- Sit on a chair where you can be comfortable and upright, so your abdomen is free to move.
- Take an in-breath through your nose for about 2-3 seconds, allowing your relaxed abdomen to expand slightly.
- Gently switch to breathe out through pursed lips, as if you were breathing out through a straw, controlling the breath so it's smooth and lasts for longer than the in-breath, say 4-8 seconds - so you need to have breathed in enough to enable this longer out-breath.
- Then, when your body triggers the next in-breath (there's no need to force it), repeat.

Try 10-15 breaths, feeling free to experiment with the length of the breaths until you find a relaxing rate. The summary guidance is:

- Keep it smooth and allow yourself to relax.
- The out-breath should be longer than the in-breath, more brake than accelerator.
- Don't force the breath or strain, neither of which is relaxing.
- If you start to feel dizzy, you might be taking too much control - let your body trigger the next in-breath when it's ready.

You can repeat this more than 10-15 times if you like. You might spend five minutes doing it every day, closing your eyes or looking out into the garden. Though it doesn't have to be a formal practice, you can take a few relaxing breaths at any time when you're out and about or mid-task. Or, of course, just allow a sigh to come, welcoming the body's intuition and helping you to let go.

Mark Quirk MSc,
Healthspan coach
www.PrimaryPrevention.co.uk





BARKHAM VILLAGE
RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 1989

ISSUE 7

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As this is the first edition of the newsletter for 1989...

IN LIVING MEMORY

The third in a series of articles consisting of recollections of Barkham. This information was supplied by Bert Woolford and David Robins.

California County Park was opened to the public and named by two brothers in the mid 1930's. It had a very good sand track for speedway motorbike racing which was held alternate Sundays. Bert does not remember how much it cost, he says he usually got in under the hedge. There was also a dance hall, reputed to be the best in the South, an entertainment centre, a small railway for rides around the park and a zoo. David Robins can remember there was a bear that stood as high as him. There were also goldfish in the lake. The dance hall burnt down but the smaller building that stood beside it was still there until very recently.

It is my sad to see the membership of changes to the composition of the committee. Richard and Suresh Malhotra both tendered their resignations due to business commitment were founder members Association. Richard was Chairman of the Planning Sub-Committee since the Association's conception, worked relentlessly on all planning matters within the village. His greatest achievement was the withdrawal of the appeal for The Coombes development. Suresh started with the Association as Treasurer, but in the latter part of 1988, was appointed Social Secretary, and has undertaken the setting-up

of the coming year's... to both Suresh for guidance and the... since the... for their... rt. I am... to... Edwards Treasurer... s joined... cial... them... les.

are... tion... ken... and... at... Tuesday... This is an

ideal opportunity to cement the already good relationship which exists between the Association and Parish Council.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership continues to grow at a steady pace. There are now over 330 households registered as BVRA members. There is one small problem - we are still a little short of renewal subscriptions from members who joined last year. If you have not paid, please save us the trouble of chasing you. All we need is your £1 and name on a scrap of paper. You can give this to your area distributor or to any Committee member you see or live near. Thanks for your help.

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

This newsletter is only being distributed to registered members. We are, however, including those who have not paid in 1989 subs yet - just once! Next time round I'll miss out if you haven't paid!

IT BREATHE AGAIN

remember how the threatened to... es in the woods...istine and Pam...er, were...ring how they could save the wood when Phil, the wise old owl had overheard their conversation and offered to help.

Finchampstead Flower Club

Finchampstead Flower Club membership is expanding and we look forward to welcoming even more people in 2024. We will host eight demonstrators and three workshops, as well as holding a variety of social events, during the year.

In January, Morgan Douglas-Nuth, an internationally recognised florist, entertained us with his stories whilst producing fabulous arrangements. February will be our AGM and 25th March will be a members' workshop but we then hope to welcome guests throughout the remainder of the year.

Jackie Page will demonstrate on 22nd April. Please phone the chair, Lis Barrett, 0118 989 2092 if you would like further information or turn up 7.30pm for 8pm at California Hall. £6 entry to include refreshments. Optional raffle for demonstrator's arrangements. Please bring cash.

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



involve
MAKING A DIFFERENCE LOCALLY
IN BRACKNELL FOREST & WOKINGHAM BOROUGH

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

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



I'm pleased to report that we Ladies are still meeting each month at the Village Hall, enjoying Speaker Evenings, and other events and supper some months. In December we had our Christmas Party with a wonderful selection of buffet food provided by the Ladies, and mulled wine and Christmas music too. There was a 'secret Santa', so we all went home with a Christmas gift.



During the evening we said 'goodbye' to one of our members, Liz, who was moving to Worcestershire the following week. We all wished her and her husband well for the move to a new home and area, and said how much we would miss her.

Another of our Ladies, Angela, was celebrating her special 90th birthday in December too, and we presented her with a card and a new Hellebore shrub. We all know how much she enjoys her wonderful garden, and what a keen gardener she is too!

We also presented Jenny with a card and gift voucher to thank her for the 12 years as our Programme Secretary. She opened this at Christmas, and we heard from her to thank us and to say she will look forward to spending it at John Lewis when she returns from New Zealand in early May!

We thanked Diane too, as she has kindly volunteered to be our new Programme Secretary, and has already booked events and speakers for the whole year.

This brought us to the new Year and 2024, when our first event was a lunch at Bearwood Lakes Golf Course on January 17th, and 16 of us tucked into a lovely two course lunch overlooking the golf course. In fact we all



enjoyed it so much that we all said we would like to do the same again next year! So that would be January sorted!

Our AGM and Silent Auction will be on February 7th, when we review the past year, discuss the forthcoming year, and pay our subs. The Silent Auction will hopefully raise some funds for the Club, and maybe some Ladies will go home with a special bargain!

We look forward to another interesting year of speakers arranged by Diane which include a visit from the Wokingham Mayor, advisors from the Citizens Advice Bureau, a musical evening, and a lady who has a 'spooky ghost story' to tell! Our annual BBQ will be in August, and we hope to resume our monthly walks in April.

We meet every first Wednesday of the month at the Village Hall, starting at 7.45pm. We warmly welcome new members, especially if you are new to the area. For more information please contact Shirley Warner shirleyannwarner@gmail.com 0118 9789124.

CROWTHORNE Symphony ORCHESTRA

We are really looking forward to our **Spring Concert** on **Saturday 23rd March 7.30pm** at **All Saints Church, Wokingham**, which will feature **Elizaveta Tyun** as our soloist in **Beethoven's Violin Concerto**. Eliza is a wonderfully talented musician and deservedly very popular with our audiences. She has played with us on several occasions and her performances have always been rapturously received by the audience so we are delighted that she will be playing with us again. We recommend you get your tickets early to avoid disappointment. **Tickets** are available via the link on our website at £15 and as usual **18s and under are free**.



It was fantastic to have a capacity audience at our first concert in All Saints in November, and to hear positive comments about the concert and the move to the new venue - people really enjoyed the music and the extra space. Of course, there were some teething issues (it's quite a task to get a 65-piece orchestra and a piano settled into a new space) and we welcomed feedback from the audience on things we could improve. These mostly focused on the queue to check in, and the visibility of the orchestra, especially the strings at floor level, and we hope to address both by turning the layout 180° for the March concert with the orchestra at the chancel end, and repositioning check-in desks and bars. We are also investing in more staging to raise the players.

Alongside the Beethoven concerto, the March programme includes music inspired by art – **Vaughan Williams' "Job, a Masque for Dancing"** was originally a ballet inspired by Blake's illustrations for the Book of Job. **Ruth Gipps' "Knight in Armour"** is a tone poem based on the story in Rembrandt's painting "The Young Warrior" and gained acclaim when it was

conducted by Henry Wood at the Last Night of the Proms in 1942. Both works are seldom performed and will be a rare treat for audience and orchestra.

'Job' is considered by many to be one of Ralph Vaughan Williams' greatest achievements – Holst described it as a masterpiece. The work was written between 1927 and 1930 and is scored for a large orchestra – too large for the 'theatre pit' when used for a ballet performance, so Constance Lambert later arranged it for a small orchestra when the ballet was eventually produced in 1931. It is important in the history of British ballet, being the first ballet to be produced by an entirely British team. The piece is divided into 9 scenes based on the Old Testament 'Book of Job', full of imaginative music inspired by William Blake's illustrations of Job's story, which comprise of a set of watercolours and some later engravings. Job's story had a big influence on Blake's writings and art as he felt parallels in his own life, spent impoverished and unrecognised. RVW's music is full of dramatic contrasts capturing the conflict between good and evil – powerful and majestic music when related to God, whilst scenes depicting Satan and the trials endured by Job are quite violent and dissonant. It will be exciting getting to know this music, and we hope you will enjoy listening to it.

Do sign up for the orchestra's **eNewsletter** if you don't already receive it, as you will find more about the orchestra, concert programmes and workshops, as well as any special offers on tickets.

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

Chris Gadsby



Wokingham Choral Society will be performing our Spring Concert on Saturday March 23rd in the Great Hall, Reading University, at 7.30 p.m. It will be our first-ever performance of three works, of which the centrepiece will be Duruflé's plangent *Requiem*. This moving piece, reminiscent of Faure's beautiful and consolatory *Requiem*, is accompanied by Mendelssohn's *Hear My Prayer* (O for the Wings of a Dove) and a poignant twentieth-century work, *Lo, the Full, Final Sacrifice*, by the English composer, Gerald Finzi. In addition, the Chameleon Arts Orchestra will perform Elgar's much-loved *Serenade for Strings*, so we would love to welcome you for a full and varied evening of wonderful music.

Full details can be found on our website, www.wokingham-choral-society.org.uk, where there are also details of how to contact our Membership Secretary if you are interested in joining our friendly choir for the Summer Term - new members always welcome!

WOKINGHAM CHORAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

Duruflé: *Requiem*

Finzi: *Lo, The Full, Final Sacrifice*

Mendelssohn: *Hear my Prayer*

Elgar: *Serenade for Strings*

Conductor George De Voil
Organist Iestyn Evans
Soprano Charlotte Bowden
Chameleon Arts Orchestra

The Great Hall
University of Reading
London Road Campus
RG1 5AQ

23rd March 2024
7.30pm

Tickets £17.50
£5 for students and under 18s
Available in Wokingham from:
Information Centre, Town Hall
Newbury Building Society
Jay Design & Print

Order online at
ticketsource.co.uk/wokingham-choral-society
or via email:
tickets@wokingham-choral-society.org.uk
also available from choir members
or at the door

www.wokingham-choral-society.org.uk
registered charity 274853

Are you interested in making a difference? School governors required

Do you have good business skills? Do you have knowledge of HR, IT development, education expertise, premises management or marketing? If so, being a Trust appointed governor at The Coombes CfE Primary School could be just the role for you.

Having recently celebrated it's 150th Year Anniversary, The Coombes School is situated in a beautiful setting at the heart of Arborfield Village. The school has seen a number of changes over the past few years which enables us to offer a new broad, inclusive and ambitious curriculum. We have unique facilities including a swimming pool, numerous ponds and woodlands, and an array of extra-curricular opportunities. We are very proud to serve our community and warmly welcome families of all faiths, backgrounds and circumstance.

If you are over 18 and would like to learn more about the role please visit our website: www.thecoombes.com or contact the Clerk to Governors clerktogovernors@coombes.wokingham.sch.uk

BVRA Admin Page



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Louise Goldring
 Membership
membership@barkham.org.uk



Shirley Warner
 Social Team
 Liaises with Barkham Village Hall

Newsletter 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 by the deadlines shown below.

Issue	Deadline	Distribution
Spring	9 th February	early March
Summer	10 th May	early June
Autumn	9 th August	early September
Winter	8 th November	early December

These are the second Fridays in February, May, August and November.

Advertising

The newsletter is produced quarterly. The Spring issue is sent to 800+ households in Barkham, and the other three 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. The prices are shown below and cover a whole year's advertising in our four issues.

Format	Advert size	Internal Pages	Back Page
Credit Card	60 x 50	£20.00	£30.00
Quarter Page	124 x 104	£50.00	£75.00
Half Page	190 x 130	£100.00	£150.00
Full Page	190 x 270	£200.00	£300.00

Please contact the Newsletter Editor to discuss your needs and supply your copy to newsletter@barkham.org.uk by the deadlines above.

Quiz Answers

1. Brothers in Arms
2. Mother-in-law's tongue
3. Ryan's Daughter
4. Niece
5. Uncle Tom
6. Aunt Sally
7. Kissin' Cousins
8. Sister Morphine
9. The Wife of Bath
10. Nephew

Where in Barkham?

Walking along the right-hand side of Bearwood Road towards Winnersh you will find it between Sandy Lane and Highlands Avenue.

BVRA Online

www.barkham.org.uk

Keep in touch - sign up

Direct Debit Set-up

 Group 

Useful Contacts

Barkham Parish Council

clerk@barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk

Bearwood Primary School

<https://www.bearwood-pri.wokingham.sch.uk/web/>

The Coombes CE Primary School

<https://www.thecoombes.com>

The Bull at Barkham

0118 304 2029

<https://bullatbarkham.com/>

St James Church, Barkham

<https://www.abch.org.uk>

Finchampstead Flower Club

<https://bbandoflowers.org.uk/clubs/finchampstead/>

Dinton Walking Group

dintonwalkinggro@yahoo.co.uk

Groups with Events

at Barkham Village Hall

Barkham Village Hall Bookings

<http://hallbookingonline.com/barkham>

Art Class

Kay Young 978 5177

Barkham Ladies Social Club

Shirley Warner 978 9124

Barkham Pre-School

Preschoolbarkham.net

preschoolbarkham@gmail.com

Bonsai Club

www.berkshirebonsai.co.uk

Dog Training

Lesley Slade 07885 899073

Martial Arts Class

Combat Academy UK

Andy Holmes 07783 206737

[https://facebook.com/](https://facebook.com/CombatAcademyUKBarkham)

[CombatAcademyUKBarkham](https://facebook.com/CombatAcademyUKBarkham)

Pilates Class

Vicky's Pilates 07729 783240

BARKHAM DIARY

BVRA Events

27/04/24	BVRA Skittles	BVH	7:00pm
10/05/24	Copy deadline for Summer Newsletter		
05/10/24	BVRA Quiz Night	BVH	7:30pm
13/12/24	BVRA Carols in the Park	Junipers	7:00pm

Monthly Events

06/03/24	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7:30pm
12/03/24	Barkham Parish Council	AGCC	7:30pm
13/03/24	Bonsai Club	BVH	7:30pm
25/03/24	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	8:00pm
03/04/24	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7:30pm
09/04/24	Barkham Parish Council	AGCC	7:30pm
10/04/24	Bonsai Club	BVH	7:30pm
22/04/24	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	8:00pm
01/05/24	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7:30pm
08/05/24	Bonsai Club	BVH	7:30pm
14/05/24	Barkham Parish Council	AGCC	7:30pm
27/05/24	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	8:00pm
05/06/24	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	7:30pm

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	Martial Arts Class	BVH	7:30pm

Special Events

23/03/24	Crowthorne Symphony Orchestra - Page 20 Spring Concert at 7.30pm All Saints Church Wokingham
23/03/24	Wokingham Choral Society Spring Concert - Page 21

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

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