



£2, free to Members

Barkham Newsletter

Issue 150 Winter 2024

from the Barkham Village Residents Association



Carols in the Park

Friday 13th December

7pm at the Junipers, Elizabeth Park

Everyone welcome

Mulled wine or soft drinks and mince pies

Voluntary collection for the band



Another milestone for the BVRA

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Editorial



Despite little rain, everything has become so damp because of the relentless heavy clouds and lack of wind over the past few weeks, but at last yesterday they have moved aside to reveal blue skies and much colder weather as we now move into winter.

On 7th November we held our **Annual General Meeting**. One important change is that going forward, our financial year will run from January to December instead of October to September. The reason for this change is that it will allow us to properly account for social events within the financial year. To enable this to happen the current financial year will run for 15 months and will end in December 2025 with the next AGM being held in early 2026.

I am delighted to welcome Cathy Whittington as our new treasurer, replacing Steve Young who has moved out of the village. Cathy has long been involved in the BVRA and moves from the role of secretary.

This means we are now looking for a new secretary. If you would like to help our organisation then please contact the chairman

chairman@barkham.org.uk

We have also made some changes to how the membership and Newsletter Distribution is organised (see Membership Update on Page 5 for details) and now we are also looking

for someone to help with Membership admin. See the advert below. The minutes of the meeting will be available shortly <https://barkham.org.uk/bvra/bvra-agms>

If you are concerned about the provision of GP services in the village, and I know of plenty who are, then you should read the article by Adrian Betteridge, one of our Borough Councillors on Page 6.

The next social event is our annual *Carols in the Park* event on Friday evening 13th December. I hope you will be able to join us.

You can read about the recent Quiz night on Page 12.

On Page 14 we have the third article in our series *What you got?* about our local detectorists.

The Hookers have been busy again, decorating the post boxes for the Remembrance Sunday commemorations. You will find a few pics scattered through the magazine.

It's very disappointing the Bull has closed down again. I enjoyed my visits there and I do hope it re-opens sometime soon.

Membership Admin

Manage the membership of the Association.

Key points are:

- Maintain the contact database
- Manage the payment of subscriptions mainly through the Direct Debit scheme
- Provide distribution lists for each quarterly magazine distribution
- Attend committee meetings

If you feel you could help then please contact chairman@barkham.org.uk

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Email Updates

As well as our newsletter we are increasingly using email to keep in touch with members. It is important we are kept up to date with your details. If your details have changed or you aren't getting emails from us, use our member details form on the website <https://barkham.org.uk/member-details> to advise us.



We will confirm any request you send to us. Also to ensure you receive our emails please add barkham.org.uk to your safe senders list. If you are unsure how to do this, please email webmaster@barkham.org.uk for advice.

DevWatch Update



Much has happened in the past three months.

The long delayed - and much anticipated - draft Local Plan for Wokingham Borough for 2023-2040 has been published - and approved by the Council despite Councillors having had barely a week to consider its 1500 pages.



Whilst this has been subject of recent BVRA Planning Alerts the main impact so far as Barkham Residents are concerned are:

- The major development of the Reading University land at Halls Farm Shinfield – to be known as Loddon Valley Garden Village for 2,700 homes,
- 300 houses on the site of the Arborfield Studios on Langley Common Road as an extension of Arborfield Green,
- 600 houses planned for the back of Barkham Square also linking into

Arborfield Green.

- Traveller/Gypsy sites at Commonfield Lane and Wood Lane.

By the time this Update is published the time for making representations will have passed but BVRA will be lodging official comments including making the points that:

- much of what is proposed are new and were not subject to prior consultation,
- that it ignores the 2018 4,000 resident petition against over development in Barkham generally and, specifically, at Barkham Square, the extra traffic that will be generated on Langley Common Road and particularly on Barkham Road,
- and the importance of maintaining a separation of settlements.

We have been in close touch with Barkham Parish Council on the subject.

However, we have to be realistic. The present Government is bent on nationally increasing the number of new homes - so that the risk on appeals is that the Planning Inspectorate will be under political pressure to approve applications, with the costs of a successful appeal having to be paid by the Borough. Furthermore, if the existing plan is disrupted then Wokingham will be faced with an even higher target for the provision of new houses.

The Borough hopes to present the plan for formal approval early next year - and ideally hopes to see the Plan in place before the end of 2025.

The large development application proposed at Evendons Land and Blagrove Lane has been refused, despite the recommendation of the Planning Officers to approve it. We imagine that there must be the likelihood of an appeal, but the site is not in the proposed Local Plan.

The applications for the extension of the Leathern Bottel, on Barkham Road, and for the residential land at the rear have both been refused.

At the time of writing no decision has yet been made on the application for the residential development of land adjoining Langley Common Road adjoining the Arborfield Green roundabout nor on the more recent application to residentially develop 24 Barkham Ride with 60 homes (which is in the draft Local Plan - save that the Plan talks of 30 units) although planning consent was granted for 31 and 33 Barkham Ride for 26 and 56 residential units respectively.

BVRA has lodged objections to this - and to a more recent new application for residential development on land behind the Coombes School accessing on to School Road Arborfield. You may recall that a previous application on this site was refused and not appealed against.

Appeal decisions are awaited on the proposal to build three new detached houses adjoining Barkham Manor and also (retrospectively) on the application for consent to put in a footpath and street lighting at Highlands Avenue.

Dennis Eyriey

DevWatch Coordinator





An Update from Barkham Parish Council

Local Plan Update

WBC recently held the Regulation 19 Consultation for the local plan update. Barkham Parish Council employed a planning consultant to help them draft their response to the LPU. The response can be found on the BPC website.

Planning

The application for development of Land Adjacent to Blagrove Lane Wokingham was refused by WBC. The Council is waiting to hear of it will be taken to appeal by the applicants.

Medical Centre

BPC is delighted that Wokingham MP, Clive Jones has made improving the local NHS his top priority. The Parish Council has been made aware that Mr Jones has written to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to voice his concerns and has met with local GP's to discuss the issues they face.

The Parish Council will continue its efforts to get a new medical facility in the Arborfield Green development, as was promised at the application stage of the development.

Speed Watch

Speed Watch activities resumed in late summer, on locations for speed watch previously approved by Thames Valley Police (TVP). The Speed Watch team have carried out several speed watch sessions over the last couple months testing out a software upgrade to our Camera and hope to be able to roll this out next year to volunteers. If you are interested in participating in this important initiative please contact Ellen, the Parish Clerk, who will put you in contact with the Speed Watch Team.

You may see Speed Watch volunteers performing peak hour 'click-counts' of traffic around the Parish in support of our LPU traffic concerns together with the deployment of data loggers to measure traffic trends

outside these times.

Speed Indication Device (SID)

You will have noticed there are several Speed Indication Devices (SID's) deployed around the Parish. Most are strategically located close to the Parish boundary to help raise speed awareness. Subject to site assessments, the intention is to eventually have five SID's permanently deployed on entry to the Parish to provide early awareness that Barkham is a speed sensitive quasi-rural area. So far there are three such SID's. Two of these are operated by Solar and are located on Barkham Street and Langley Common Road and one is located on Barkham Road operated by mains power. Within the core of the Parish we will periodically rotate a battery powered SID at several known speeding locations. It is believed these are better served by moving them around, as efficacy is known to decline over time.

The Coombes Woodlands

The *Coombes Woodland Committee* has set up a new website for the Coombes Woodland. The Website address is <https://thecoombeswoodlands.com>



This website will be updated regularly with what is going on in the woodlands, and it also has a link for volunteers who would like to help manage The Coombes to sign up.

Tree works identified in the tree survey are due to take place in January 2025, so please do not be concerned if you see forestry work being undertaken. The relevant permissions for this work have been sought and have granted by WBC.

Unfortunately, the councils have had to remove the BMX track from the woodlands for health and safety reasons and due to the inappropriate location of where it was placed. The Committee hopes that residents understand the need for the track to be removed due to the liabilities on the councils. The cleared area will be re-instated as woodland, with new native trees planted in due course.

Remembrance Day Service

The Arborfield and Barkham joint Remembrance Day Service was held on Sunday 10th November, where the Parish Councils, Ward Councillors and other local groups remembered all those who gave their lives in service to the country.

Precept

The Parish Council will shortly be setting its precept which is collected as part of your Council Tax, based on the band of your property. Wokingham Borough Council collects the precept from the residents on its behalf and pays to the Parish Council annually in three instalments.

From the Precept received, grants are given to local charities who support our residents.

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

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.



BVRA Membership Update for 2025

As we approach the end of the year we are pleased to be able to tell you that membership fees for 2025 will be kept the same as 2024 at £3. The fee includes the local delivery of our quarterly Newsletter to your property by our distributors. As with this year our distributors will not be calling to collect your membership fee.

Fees can be paid by direct debit (our preferred method), bank transfer or cash / cheque delivered to one of our committee in Barkham. More details on how to set up a direct debit and the other payment methods can be found on our website at <https://barkham.org.uk/bvra/bvra-membership>.

To aid you in paying, we will be emailing members in early January. Direct debit payers will be advised when the payment will be collected. Those who paid in 2024 by another method will be provided with details on options to pay including the unique property reference to be quoted on any payment. Please ensure that membership@barkham.org.uk is on your safe senders list. Unfortunately we have approximately 40 members where we don't hold an email address. If you don't receive an email by mid-January please check your junk folder and then contact us on the above email address.

Finally, we have reorganised our committee roles a little. Simon and Louise Goldring will manage the distribution of our newsletters, liaising with our team of volunteer distributors. Dave Clements will manage membership administration on a temporary basis until an additional volunteer can be found.

If you are interested in helping in any way please contact us on the email address above.

Louise, Simon and Dave

FLO PLUMBING & HEATING
IN AND AROUND READING

BOILER SERVICING TAP REPLACEMENT LEAK REPAIRS BATHROOM INSTALLATION

Local, reliable small business. Fully insured and gas safe registered. No obligation quotes.
T: 07540 996385 E: dan@floplumbingandheating.com W: floplumbingandheating.com

The advertisement features a dark blue background with a stylized flame logo in orange and blue. Below the logo are four icons representing different services: a crossed wrench and screwdriver for boiler servicing, a tap for tap replacement, a water drop with a wrench for leak repairs, and a bathtub for bathroom installation. At the bottom right is a 'gas safe' logo. The text is in white and orange.



A GP Surgery for Our Area?

I first moved to this area in 1994, and our first child was born the following year. My wife and I were fortunate to enjoy good health, aside from the occasional sporting injury, but starting a family is one of those events which gets you a lot more interested in healthcare.

We were well supported at the time by the Army GP in Arborfield, as well as the maternity ward at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, which we chose over the Army hospital in Aldershot due to its better capability to deal with any potential emergencies – which proved a good decision in the event.

30 years later, with the Army GP long gone and many thousands of new houses in the Barkham and Arborfield Green area, getting to see a GP is not so simple. A GP surgery was considered for the development at Arborfield Green but the NHS at the time decided to share the burden of the new housing around the local area. As people will know, the surrounding surgeries in Finchampstead, Swallowfield, Shinfield and Wokingham Town are all now very busy and normally need a car or taxi journey to attend a face-to-face appointment.

GP support is one of the most



frequent things people talk about on the doorstep, and something both Arborfield and Barkham Parish Councils asked me about at our first meetings this year. When our new MP Clive Jones was elected in July, I talked with him about the issue and, spurred on by a letter from a Barkham resident, we decided to see what could be done.

There are already around 18,500 people living in the Arborfield Cross, Arborfield Green and Barkham areas without a local GP. With the further growth we are expecting, the case for a local GP surgery is clear. When our MP raised this in Parliament, the Health Minister Stephen Kinnock coined the term ‘GP Desert’ to describe such areas, and agreed it was unacceptable.

The MP and I have met with the regional NHS commissioning body, representatives of local GPs and other organisations who can help make it happen, and by the time you read this the MP will have had another meeting with the Minister. This feels possible. It’s not an easy process to create a surgery from scratch, as we have seen in Shinfield over the past few years, but there are options for how a facility, funding and staffing could be provided.

The MP is asking local people who support a GP surgery for Arborfield Green and the surrounding area to

show their support via his petition. If you would like to, you can add your name at www.wokinghamlibdems.org.uk/arborfieldgp

A GP surgery for Arborfield Green and the surrounding area would be a fantastic addition to the community, and I really hope we can make this happen.

Cllr Adrian Betteridge,

Wokingham Borough Councillor for Barkham and Arborfield

You can contact me by email at adrian.betteridge@wokingham.gov.uk or by telephone on 07985 088298

Where in Barkham?

Maybe you’ve seen this mirror on your walks but where is it?

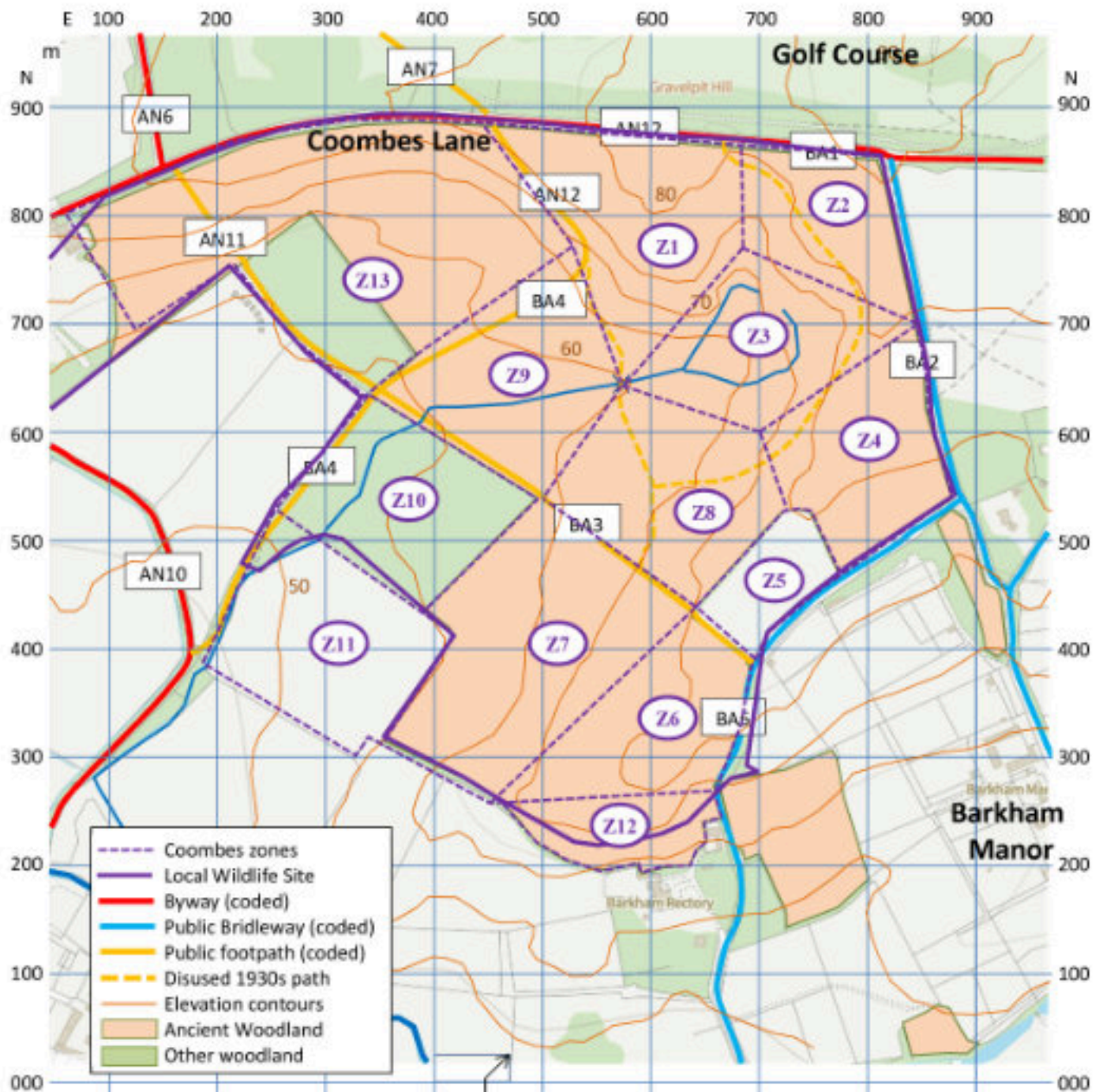
Answer on Page 17



Map of the Coombes

The Coombes Woodland Committee (CWC) have kindly provided a detailed map of the Coombes which I hope you find interesting.

For more information about the CWC go to their website at <https://thecoombeswoodlands.com>



- Z1 Coombes Lane central
- Z2 Coombes Lane / BA2 corner
- Z3 Veteran Yews, watercourse source
- Z4 BA2 / BA6 corner
- Z5 Former Scout Field
- Z6 CWC southern zone
- Z7 CWC central south of BA3
- Z8 CWC central north of BA3
- Z9 CWC east of crosspaths
- Z10 CWC non-Ancient Woodland
- Z11 Coombes Pasture
- Z12 Old Rectory Ancient Woodland
- Z13 Land-lotted zone

Grid lines are spaced at 100m intervals and marked in m from OS grid reference E477000m N167000m, or SU 770 670. Positions in the Coombes can be expressed as Eeee Nnnn, where eee is m east of easting 477000 and nnn is m north of northing 167000. For example, E470 N025 represents this position.



Make your home appear occupied this festive season!

Please don't make it easy for burglars, there are a number of free and low cost ways to make your home look occupied which could help reduce the chance of it becoming a target:

- Close your curtains and blinds
- Lock your doors and windows, if you have a UPVC door, make sure you double lock it
- Don't leave any valuables, gifts or presents on view and register them on www.immobilise.com.

com. It's free and if stolen, will allow you to tell the police, your insurer and the second-hand trade to assist in recovering your property and catching the offenders

- If you have gold or high value jewellery in your home during celebrations, please be aware this may be noticeable to criminals. Consider storing it offsite in a safety deposit box
- If you are away from home, please don't advertise this on social media
- Visit a local retailer to pick up a low cost 24-hour segment timer. The timer can be used with a lamp, radio or TV to give the impression that someone is home. (Using energy efficient light bulbs can help bring costs down)
- Make sure your post doesn't pile up
- Empty your bins regularly and don't leave any packaging in view
- Ask a neighbour to park on your drive whilst you're away
- Consider joining a local Neighbourhood Watch scheme. For more information about schemes in your area, visit www.ourwatch.org.uk

[ourwatch.org.uk](http://www.ourwatch.org.uk)

- Sign up to Thames Valley Alerts at www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk to receive free local crime alerts and crime prevention advice

- Visit www.thamesvalley.police.uk for further crime reduction advice and you can also download our Home Security Guide

Please contact us if you have any information relating to burglary in your neighbourhood. Report online or call us on 101 - always dial 999 in an emergency. Alternatively, you can contact Crimestoppers anonymously on free phone 0800 555 111.

Follow us on social media for regular crime updates and find out what your local policing teams are up to:

Facebook: TVP Bracknell & Wokingham

X: @TVP_Wokingham

THAMES VALLEY POLICE

Make your house look occupied this festive season!

- Ask a neighbour to park on your drive if you are away
- Consider using a light timer to make it look like someone is home
- Close curtains and blinds
- Hide valuables

#DontMakeItEasy

CC0/100



St James' Barkham

Christmas 2024

- **Christingle Service**
10am Sunday 8 Dec
Come and make your own Christingle as we learn about the Light of the World. Suitable for all the family. All materials are provided!
- **Carols by Candlelight**
7pm Sunday 15 Dec
A more traditional service of readings and carols with a talk on the meaning of Christmas. The service is followed by mulled wine and mince pies.
- **Family Carols**
4pm Christmas Eve
A service that is designed with children especially in mind. Look for the characters from the nativity and hear about the best Christmas present ever!
- **Midnight Carols**
11.30pm Christmas Eve
A quieter service that offers readings, carols and a short talk to help us prepare for the big day. The service ends just after midnight.
- **Christmas Day Service**
10am Wednesday 25 Dec
The perfect way to begin Christmas day (if you haven't been woken at 5am...). Join us to celebrate the joy of Christmas Day in a service suitable for all ages.

Big questions at Christmas

Many of us wrestle with questions in the run up to Christmas. Should we put up more lights this year? When should we see that part of the family? When should we buy the turkey? Do we actually like turkey anyway (We have this conversation every year and always get one). What do you buy the person who says they don't need anything? Are we really going to watch The Muppets Christmas Carol again (Of course!).

The busyness and activity of Christmas can serve as a welcome distraction from some of the bigger questions many of us carry around with us, but try to keep at arm's length. Is this world all there is? Does anything really give our lives meaning? If God is there, can he be known? More importantly, what does he think of us?

Just imagine if all the answers to these big questions were wrapped up in middle of Christmas itself. That is the claim of those who recorded the events of that extraordinary first Christmas. They announce, *good news that will cause great joy for all the people*, and that is what we are celebrating at Barkham Church once again this year. Join us to find out more at one of our Christmas services. We'd love to welcome you.

Julian Bidgood (Minister of Barkham)

www.abch.org.uk



Volunteer

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

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

Volunteer Your Time

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

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

Opening times

Monday - Thursday 9am - 5pm & Friday 9am - 4.30pm.

Telephone: 0118 969 6369

Email: info@me2club.org.uk

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

Go to our website to start your volunteer application form. www.me2club.org.uk

Wild About the Coombes

If you were going along Coombes Lane towards the end of October, you may have noticed some signs advising the public of planned maintenance work involving a mechanical digger. They were posted there for a week.



Over recent years, a little way inside the woods and out of sight of the lane, some enterprising youngsters had constructed a series of jumps for their BMX bikes. They had brought wheelbarrows, spades and so on to move a considerable amount of soil around to form a launch platform, sloping runway and a number of steep ramps for firing themselves high into the air. These were reinforced with lengths of carpet to help them stand up to the rigours that their exploits would have subjected them to.

Around the site was evidence to suggest that it had also been used for other social activity. There were the remains of tents, tarpaulins, camp fires, spent fireworks and even a trampoline. It was reminiscent of the way I enjoyed spending my youth, but so much more impressive than any of my own endeavours.

This had all developed while the land was owned by people who had moved from the area and were blissfully unaware of what was happening here. Strictly, as a heavily protected natural wildlife site, none of this should have been going on without the proper planning permission and approval for a change of use.

I was so pleased that when the bulk of the Coombes changed hands last year, it was taken over by the Parish Councils. This has allowed the general public to continue enjoying the rather special natural environment. However, as public bodies, they have to take their responsibilities seriously. They can't



turn a blind eye to changes and activities taking place on their land that fall outside planning law.

They also need to take reasonable care of the health and safety of those who access the land. It is an unpalatable thought that people may misjudge their launch at a jump and land awkwardly on a ramp's pointy top, possibly breaking their back.

Those were the main reasons why it was decided to reshape the land back to something more natural. A digger was brought in to flatten the launch platform and ramps, taking care not to damage tree roots. Where soil had been removed to build the raised areas, some of the resulting hollows contained standing water. These were left as ponds that could be beneficial to the wildlife. The levelled land was left bare for nature to recolonise and it is expected that in a year's time it will be fairly well grown over, looking much as it did

before the BMX track started to be built.

There was a degree of sadness to see all the efforts undone in the space of a couple of hours. Signs warning what was going to happen and why. Attempts were made to contact those responsible for the track and explore whether an alternative site could be found for them. Unfortunately, though, the councils have not yet managed to find them.

If you happen to know any of the people involved in making the track, perhaps you could encourage them to contact either the Arborfield & Newland or Barkham Parish Council. They won't get into any trouble and the icing on the cake for me would be to get to meet them and hear more about their impressive creation.

Joe Wild

The Quiz

This year there have been a large number of general elections around the world. Most importantly for us, the UK general election and the US presidential election. Here are a few questions to test your knowledge of facts loosely related to them.

1. In the UK general election which constituency had the smallest majority?
2. In the UK general election, the Reform party had the third-highest vote share across the country. How many seats did they win?
3. Drawing amusing comparisons in the media, at which location did Rishi Sunak make one of his first speeches/rallies of the general election campaign.
4. When was the last time that there were two UK general elections in one year?
5. Who is the only person to have served as British prime minister in four non-consecutive terms?
6. Donald Trump is the second US president to be elected in two non-consecutive elections. Who was the first?
7. Who was Kamala Harris' Democratic Party running mate?
8. The minimum age to vote in a UK general election is 18. What is it in the USA?
9. Which president was elected unanimously, i.e. won every electoral college vote?
10. There are seven swing states in the USA. Six of them are Pennsylvania, Michigan, Arizona, North Carolina, Nevada and Georgia. What is the seventh?

Neighbours

A new puzzle to keep you entertained for a while!

Brazil has land borders with ten countries. Can you name them all?



Social Events



It's now November as I write this and Autumn has definitely arrived with the trees changing their colours, and shorter days and darker evenings now upon us.



The Distributors' BBQ on 17th August is now just a memory. It was a fine, dry evening and 24 of us enjoyed eating and drinking outdoors, with our three chefs, Jim, Peter and Simon having cooked the beefburgers, sausages and chicken drumsticks so well - so many thanks to them. We all tucked into these, some tasty salads, and a glass or two of wine or beer !

This event is when we say 'thank you' to all the wholesalers and distributors who four times a year sort and deliver the Newsletters to all the BVRA members in and around Barkham. Their time and commitment is greatly appreciated.

The other event to have taken place this Autumn is the Annual Quiz on 5th October. This was attended by 60 people, with Steve Richardson, assisted by wife Jan, again providing the tricky questions. The usual fish and chip supper went down well, and a great time was had by all.

The winning team was 'The Allsorts', with members Simon and Louise, Ruth and Mike and Steve and Kay. This is the third time that a team consisting of Simon and Louise and Ruth and Mike has been the winner - these are definitely the great minds to try and beat next year!!

Instead of a fee for the evening Steve and Jan had asked for a donation to their chosen Charity - 'The Reading Lions Prostate cancer testing Charity', a truly worthy charity.

The next and final event for this year will be the popular *Carols in the Park* on Friday 13th December. The Breakaway Brass Band will be leading us for the carol singing again, and carol sheets will be provided.

We meet at the junction of the Woodlands and the Junipers at 7pm, and gradually make our way to the edge of the Junipers for more singing. And then mulled wine or soft drinks, and mince pies will be available.

This is always a lovely way to enjoy the start of the Festive Season for families, adults and children alike, and is a 'free event'. We do have a bucket collection for the Band who very kindly give up their free time to play for us.

The usual social events for 2025 are being planned with the following provisional dates:

- Family Skittles - 17th May
- Children's Easter Egg Hunt - 20th April 20th (Easter Sunday)
- Annual Quiz - 18th October
- Carols in the Park - 12th December 2025

Further details will appear in future Newsletters, on posters around the village, on the BVRA website and on Facebook.

I hope to see as many of you as possible at these events - it's a good way of meeting people, especially if you are new to the area.

I now send my very best wishes to you all and your families for a Very Happy Christmas and hopes for a Healthy and Peaceful 2025.

Shirley Warner



“What You Got?” A Detectorist’s History of Barkham - Part 3



Having spent our first year detecting in fields and gardens around Barkham and surrounding villages, Josie and I decided to venture out on our first public dig. These are set up by various groups on Facebook all over the country and charge around £20 per person per day. With a picnic packed and sun cream applied, we found ourselves in a field amongst an eclectic group of hopeful detectorists. Heads down and coils to the soil we were soon let loose on hundreds of acres of freshly ploughed fields in the stunning countryside of Hampshire.

We were having a very quiet day with few finds so when we picked up a very weak signal after a 15 minutes of silence we decided to dig anyway. After 10 minutes of frustration when the signal seemed to disappear we finally found the most tiny bit of metal...it was actually a ‘cut quarter’ of a silver penny of Henry III dating back to the 13th century! This is in fact a rarer find than a complete coin; when people needed change or smaller denominations they would cut the penny into 4 and use the cut quarters (fourthlings) or halves instead. This is how the modern day Farthing and Halfpenny came about. We have since found a cut half and a coin with just a quarter taken off too... you can see how easy it was to lose these tiny fragments of silver!

Every time we venture out we learn something new about the fascinating history of the land and those working and living on it. Footpaths no longer trodden, roads no longer travelled, homesteads no longer occupied; they all leave imprints and tantalising evidence of everyday life in our countryside.

The myriad of buttons we have found in these fields doesn’t mean that the sewing was poor...it is in fact evidence of early recycling - clothes and fabrics that were past their best were simply handed over to the farmers to plough in to the fields as ‘shoddy’, a form of waste-wool fertiliser. Another common find in fields are lead bag or cloth seals, whether for sealing bags of cloth or bags of fertiliser...we found several of these in one field in rural Hampshire that were later identified as 18th Century Russian Fur trade bag seals!

With the changing seasons the opportunities for detecting also change; the ground can become so hard it’s almost impossible to dig. The ploughed fields are sown with crops for the new season and the grasses grow too long for us to swing the detector. Sometimes there are only a few weeks between ploughing and sowing in which we can get on the land...it is a race that no tide or plough will wait for so we have to turn back to the gardens, pastures and parks once more until we can discover what treasures the plough will turn up next!

Please do let us know if you have a field or a garden that you think might be hiding some secrets underneath...we would be very happy to have a look with you and share our excitement of

unearthing the history of our land. When I’m not hooking up crocheted post box toppers and poppies for the town I really do love nothing better than getting out in the fresh air with the hope of finding a little bit of magic!

Gaynor and Josie White

Familywhite25@gmail.com



35 Years Ago

In Issue 10, we are up to eight pages. This time we take a look at the celebrations we used to stage around Halloween and Bonfire Night. Sadly that stopped many years ago.

BV
RA

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 1989

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

BARKHAM VILLAGE
RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

HALLOWEEN FIREWORKS BONANZA





ISSUE 10

Some 150 village folk braved the inclement wind and rain to attend our third and final social event for 1989 at the village hall. Thanks to all the committee members, relations and friends for their support before and during this mammoth event. Included were children's games, junior bar, barbecue, fancy dress parade, face painting, fireworks and not forgetting the enormous bonfire. All the effort and work made this evening a memorable one. The hot soup was a must to keep warm during the fireworks display which lasted 45 minutes encompassing rockets, mortars, Catherine wheels and many set pieces. Our St John's Ambulance nurses Ruth and Dawn proved to be excellent judges for the children's fancy dress competition which was won by Ralph Thomas and Kelly Durham. Many of our guests entered into the spirit of Halloween (pardon the pun) by having their faces painted before the lantern parade to the firework display and bonfire.

rep, the Membership Secretary or any other Committee member. Many thanks for your cooperation.

EVENTS:
Our display expert Peter Wischusen and his team ignited over 150 fireworks, despite the high winds, without incident in an excellent sequence. Meanwhile Lyn, Sue and James Austen coped well with the beefburgers and sausages from a wind-driven barbecue. Once Peter Forest and David Tyrwhitt-Drake had lit the huge bonfire, the crowd came forward to get warm before re-stirring inside the hall when Harry Dann, our resident barman, and his crew re-opened the bar.

Those who attended will, I am sure, feel this village social event was a resounding success. Only the weather prevented more people attending. See you all next year....

Gary Brooks
Social Secretary

become due. In order to save everyone time and effort, please will you give your subscription to your area representative, who is:

Dishy Carter
321 Barkham Rd

Alan's Patch

With the heavy low clouds and general dampness I've not mown the lawn for several weeks or started to gather the leaves (with the mower) yet.

One of my farming relatives in Cheshire told me last week that he has ten acres of potato still in the ground waiting to be harvested. The ground is simply too wet to take the weight of the harvester. He needs a few dry, windy, sunny days fairly soon for the ground to harden otherwise there is a danger of them rotting in the ground. Fortunately, I've only a few potatoes to harvest and can do it by hand. Here are some of mine!



Some of my main crop apples were ready for picking about a month earlier than usual - in early September. Other varieties are still hanging on into early November, probably because of a lack of frosts. Here are a couple of beauties.



Overall it's been a very good crop. My drastic thinning yielded fewer but far larger fruits than in the past. There is also less damage from codling moth too.

Strawberries were surprisingly successful, though oddly enough the best ones were in September, not in June, because of the cold early summer. .



It was another good year for butternut squash, as you can see.

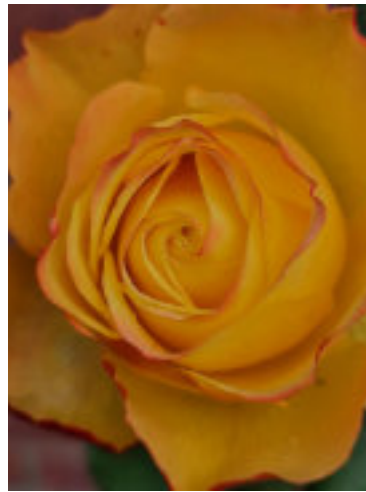


Despite poor germination, I've a decent crop of carrots but far fewer parsnips. They are still in the ground and doing fine. I've plenty of spinach and have had an excellent crop all summer. Leeks are an overwintering crop and looking good. Also overwintering are cabbages, which for the first time, I've been able to successfully net from butterflies. It doesn't stop the slugs though!

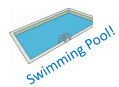
Peas were excellent, successfully netted from the pigeons, as were the beans. They have all finished now. I've some French beans in the freezer and a good crop of Cannellini and Borlotti beans dried and in jars, plus seeds to sow next year.

In the last few weeks there has been wonderful flowers, taking advantage of the mild, if damp, weather - most notably a passion flower planted last year on a trellis, but also a clematis and a rose.

The next serious job in the garden is to mow the lawn and gather the leaves, hopefully when it's a bit drier. Then to clear the greenhouse and give it its winter clean.



The Coombes CE Primary School - Arborfield, Berkshire



Open mornings now bookable:

21st Nov
5th Dec
9th Jan



Contact us for more info
office@coombes.wokingham.sch.uk or
ph: 01189760751 or

visit: www.thecoombes.com

Outdoor Learning!



Where in Barkham?
Along Highlands Avenue on the right-hand side as you walk towards the woodland from Bearwood Road.

Neighbours

In alphabetical order:

- Argentina
- Bolivia
- Colombia
- French Guiana
- Guyana
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Suriname
- Uruguay
- Venezuela

Quiz Answers

1. Hendon - Labour won by a margin of 15 votes
2. 4 seats
3. The Titanic Quarter in Belfast. It drew comparisons with the Conservative Party being a sinking ship!
4. 1974
5. W E Gladstone 1868-1874, 1880-1885, 1886 and 1892-1894. Over twelve years in total. There's hope for Boris yet!
6. Grover Cleveland in 1884 and 1892
7. Tim Walz
8. Also 18! They have to be 21 to drink alcohol in public.
9. George Washington
10. Wisconsin

Barkham Hookers

The hookers have been busy again, this time for Remembrance Day.

For more information on their activities contact

Gaynor White

Familywhite25@gmail.com



involve
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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/>



Autumn has arrived and Summer BBQs are now a distant memory.

But we Ladies continue to meet each month and have had speakers visit us in September, October and November.

The topics have ranged from *Local Stories of early Bus and Coach Transport*, a *Look Back to Wokingham 800 Years ago*, and then in November, when some husbands and guests joined us, *A Spooky Ghost Story* about a sewing room in a large Manor House in Kent. The speaker had recently discovered her Grandmother's journal of 1902 with

an account of what had happened. But did this really happen or not, who knows for sure - but it was a riveting story!

Our last monthly walk of the year in September had to be cancelled because of a severe weather forecast. We managed two lovely walks in May and July, but sadly others were cancelled. Marilyn hopes to resume in April 2025 with a new programme of walks.

The next and last meeting in 2024 will be our Christmas Party on December 4th, when the Ladies all bring some food to share. A wonderful buffet table always appears, and we have mulled wine and mince pies too. The hall is decorated with a tree etc. and we enjoy Christmas music to give a party atmosphere.

A 'Secret Santa' adds to the festive mood, and we will be signing a large Christmas Card for us all to sign, with our Christmas messages to each other instead of giving individual

cards.

The donations for doing this will again be going to the 'Link Visiting Scheme' - a local charity which supports and befriends lonely people in our area, and especially at Christmas by providing a Christmas Day lunch for those living alone.

In January we start the New Year by having a lunch out at a local Golf Club, and then in February we hold our AGM.

We meet at Barkham Village Hall from 7.30 for a 7.45pm start on the first Wednesday of the month. We enjoy friendship and a varied programme of speakers and events.

We warmly welcome new members, so for more information about us and joining the Ladies Group please contact :

Shirley Warner

Chairperson on: 0118 9789124, or on 07949234085 or at shirleyannwarner@gmail.com

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SCAN THE QR CODE TO BOOK A MEETING WITH ME

CROWTHORNE Symphony ORCHESTRA



Our last main concert of the year in November featured some interesting music that many of us had not played before including the sparkling flute concerto by Jacques Ibert. Rehearsing with our Principal Flautist, Camille Curtis, who played the solo part

There will be refreshments and a raffle in the interval. Make sure you put the date in your diary and bring the whole family, old and young! **Tickets are £10 for adults, children and young people 18 and under are free.**



The Trinity Concert Band will be performing their annual Christmas concert on Sunday 8th December 2024 at Reading Minster. This concert will feature a festive mix of timeless carols, holiday favourites, and selections from popular Christmas movies.

For more details, we invite you to view the full press release available on our website: <https://www.trinityband.co.uk/christmas-press-release/>

Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or require further information. We appreciate your support in helping us spread the word about this exciting event, which also supports our 2025 charity partner, Prostate Cancer UK.

was quite an experience - her virtuoso playing was just amazing. The main work in the programme was 'A Colour Symphony' by Arthur Bliss and we were grateful for support from the Bliss Trust. Next year is the 50th anniversary of the composer's death and the Trust, in collaboration with the Arthur Bliss Society, is marking the anniversary by encouraging performances of his music during 2025. We were thrilled to hear our concert mentioned on BBC Radio3 in relation to this.

The Christmas season is a great time for lots of musical events and our traditional afternoon **Family Christmas Concert** is always much enjoyed by all ages, with a selection of seasonal music along with carols for everyone to join in. We usually invite some young volunteers to try their hand at conducting the orchestra - great fun all round! This year the concert will be on **Saturday 14th December at 4.30pm** at our usual venue of **St John's Church in Waterloo Road, Crowthorne.**

Looking ahead to the new year, we are back at **All Saints in Wokingham** for our **Spring Concert on March 29th 2025 with the much-loved Saint-Saëns Symphony No.3**, usually known as the **Organ Symphony**. An **Earlybird discount** will be available - see our website for more information as well as the link to purchase tickets for all our concerts.

The orchestra has over 60 regular members **rehearsing on Mondays in term time from 7.45-10pm** - now at **St Crispin's School, Wokingham**. Our website has information about concerts, past and future, and you can also sign up to receive our **e-newsletter** with details of events and special offers. www.crowthorneorchestra.com

Chris Gadsby





Sing Healthy Choirs is delighted to announce their Xmas Concert for this year, as follows:

Sat. 21st December at All Saints Church, Wokingham RG40 1TN, 7.30 pm.

Featuring Yurie Lee (cello) and Joshua Ryan (organ/piano).

All profits from each concert go to a local charity and for this concert we are raising money for THRIVE.

For further details and to purchase tickets please visit our website <https://singhealthy.co.uk/>

Join us in Wokingham for a powerful choral experience!

Sing Healthy Choirs is inviting singers to join a special project in 2025. The choir will perform Michael Tippett's choral masterpiece *A Child of Our Time* on 20th July. This moving, monumental work for choir and orchestra, written as a response to the tragedies of WWII, combines spirituals and classical choral music to deliver a profound message of peace and resilience. They will perform alongside Berkshire Youth Symphony Orchestra - a 100-strong ensemble of some of the best young musicians across the county.

Rehearsals will take place term time on Monday evenings at St Cecilia's School, Wokingham from 6th January. All voice types and experience levels are welcome. Whether you're a seasoned singer or new to choral music, this is an opportunity to make music with a welcoming community and be part of a very memorable performance.

To find out more get in touch at

<https://singhealthy.co.uk/contact-us/>

local PAYG singing groups for fun and wellbeing

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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 400+.

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.

Facebook



Facebook Group



Website



Membership

Membership of the BVRA costs £3 per year and entitles you to receive four issues of this magazine.

To join please make your payment using one of the following ways:

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.

2. By Bank Transfer: email us at membership@barkham.org.uk for details.
3. By cash, drop off your payment at one of our collection points around the village. Contact us at membership@barkham.org.uk for details.

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/>

Currently closed

St James Church, Barkham

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

Finchampstead Flower Club

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

Dinton Walking Group

dintonwalkinggrp@yahoo.co.uk

Groups with Events

at Barkham Village Hall

Barkham Village Hall Bookings

<http://hallbookingonline.com/barkham>

Art Class

Kay Young

kaycatlady65@gmail.com

Barkham Ladies Social Club

Shirley Warner 0118 978 9124

shirleyannwarner@gmail.com

Barkham Pre-School

[Preschoolbarkham.net](http://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

Simply Fit

Melissa Buckle

melissa@simplyfitberkshire.co.uk

Sunday Club

Julian Bidgood

office@abch.org.uk

Youth Club

David Horrocks

david.horrocks@abch.org.uk

BARKHAM DIARY

BVRA Events

13/12/24	BVRA Carols in the Park	Junipers	19:00
20/4/25	BVRA Easter Egg Hunt	Junipers	15:00

Monthly Events

1st Wed	Barkham Ladies Social Club	BVH	19:30
2nd Tue	Barkham Parish Council	AGCC	19:30
2nd Wed	Bonsai Club	BVH	19:30
4th Mon	Finchampstead Flower Club	CRH	20:00
2nd Tue	Dinton Walking Group Social	BVH	19:30

Weekly Events

Mondays	Pilates Class	BVH	10:00
Mondays	Dog Training	BVH	18:30
1st & 3rd Mon	U3A Group 2 Music Group	BVH	13:30
2nd & 4th Mon	U3A Group 1 Music Group	BVH	14:30
Tuesdays	Rainbows	BVH	16:30
Tuesdays	Sing for your Self (term time)	AVH	12:30
Tues-Fri	Barkham Pre-School	BVH	08:30
Wednesdays	Art Class	BVH	19:30
Wednesdays	Brownies	BVH	17:00
Thursdays	Pilates Class	BVH	18:00
Thursdays	Martial Arts Class	BVH	19:30
Fridays	Youth Club	BVH	19:00
Saturdays	Simply Fit	BVH	08:30

Special Events - See Pages 21 & 22 for details

8 th December	Trinity Concert Band - Carol Concert		
	Reading Minster		
14 th December	Crowthorne Symphony Orchestra		16:30
	Family Christmas Concert		
	St John's Church in Waterloo Road, Crowthorne		
21 st December	Sing Healthy Choirs - Christmas Concert		19:30
	All Saints Church, Wokingham		
29 th March	Crowthorne Symphony Orchestra		
	Spring Concert		
	All Saints Church, Wokingham		

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 or change this information

The BVRA Privacy Policy can be viewed at the foot of the Home page of the website, www.barkham.org.uk. Email or telephone numbers provided by members will be used only for BVRA communications or to receipt their annual subscription. Any member is free to see their details by contacting the Webmaster.

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

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

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