

# Wokingham Borough NEWS

Your magazine from Wokingham Borough Council  
Summer 2022

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# Let's Get Active:

committed to safer  
walking and cycling  
across the borough



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**Online:** You can search for information, book, report and pay for services on our website [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk)

**Web chat:** Our web chat is available between 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, and you can access it from our website [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk)

**Email:** [customerservice@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:customerservice@wokingham.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** Call us on (0118) 974 6000, and select the relevant option for your enquiry

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# Welcome

This is my first introduction to the Borough News since I became the new Leader of the Council in May 2022. This happened following the creation of a new Wokingham Borough Partnership that includes Liberal Democrat, Labour and independent councillors.



These are difficult times for all local councils, including us, with the cost-of-living crisis meaning more and more people need our help while escalating prices mean we have less money available. For this reason, we are looking very closely at the council's spending, assets and contracts to make sure we are providing value for money to our residents.

Beyond securing our financial future, you will see in these pages, more information about the things that are important to me, my executive team and the wider partnership. These include a commitment to real action on climate change and finding ways to reduce carbon emissions. We want to help people reduce their reliance on cars, throw away less, tackle poverty and celebrate diversity.

We also believe in standing up for our residents. There are many areas where the borough does not get a good deal from central government. We have had too much housing forced on us, we don't get enough funding to

help people in poverty and we need more support to keep our bus services running for those who need them. We are actively lobbying the government on these things and will continue to champion the cause of our residents as well as providing the services they need.

Part of our commitment to be the residents champion is our commitment to listen to you and properly consider what you say. There will be difficult decisions ahead. Whatever the outcome of our lobbying, we will need to accommodate some more housing in the borough and must choose the best location for it. We must also decide the future of our waste collection service. Our decisions on these and other issues will be informed by proper consultation; that does not mean we can please everybody because views will vary greatly. But consulting widely and well will help us make the right decisions for the borough now and in the future.

Clive Jones  
**Leader of the Council**

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# Carnival Hub, a centre for the community

## This summer saw the Carnival Hub, our flagship new community building, open its doors to the public

The Carnival Hub brings together a large leisure centre, which opened in July ready for the holidays, and a new home for Wokingham library which is due to open soon.

It is also one of the most energy-efficient leisure centres in the country with heat pumps and a large number of solar panels installed on the roof. It has a range of other technologies and materials aimed at reducing energy use and carbon emissions.

The new Wokingham Leisure Centre @ Carnival Hub, which is being managed by Places Leisure;

- a range of great facilities including a six-lane swimming pool with a viewing gallery
- a training pool with a moveable depth floor to help accommodate a wide range of activities and sessions
- a children's splash pad with water jets and fountains
- a health suite featuring an aromatic citrus steam room and detoxifying salt room
- 120 station fitness suite
- a four-court sports hall and fitness studios including one for group cycling
- a specialist gym for those with long term health conditions

And there's great news for the cultural scene, as the Hub is also set to become a home for local events, with a dual-purpose sports hall which can convert to a 400-seat performance space. There will be a modular stage and a range of equipment including lighting and sound.

When it opens the new Wokingham Library @ Carnival Hub will offer a range of fantastic facilities, including;

- dedicated areas for browsing books and resources
- computers and study areas
- children's reading area
- an exhibition area
- improved meeting rooms which can be combined into one to create a bigger space.

The new layout has been designed to be as flexible as possible for a range of events and activities as well as offering improved access for all with the new library now located all on one floor.



### Sign up for membership now

In addition to using the new leisure facilities on a pay as you go basis, a range of great value memberships are also available from Places Leisure. You can find out more about memberships, and view the timetables for classes at the Carnival Hub here: [www.placesleisure.org/centres/wokingham-leisure-centre/](http://www.placesleisure.org/centres/wokingham-leisure-centre/)

# Campaign against housing targets

We have been actively campaigning for reduced housing targets and for planning policies that genuinely benefit local communities

Our executive members and officers have been making the case for a fairer planning system to MPs and central government at every opportunity. Among the key points we've made are:

- The borough has already taken a huge amount of housing (with the population having increased by 15 per cent from the 2011 to 2021 Census)
- There is clear local opposition to high housing targets
- Large extra housing would cause significant environmental damage
- There has already been an impact on our over-stretched doctors, schools and roads
- There is a need to level-up the country by developing away from the south-east

In its campaign, we have put forward positive ideas that would bring genuinely local controlled housing, where it is needed, a large proportion of social / affordable homes and proper infrastructure investment.

We are determined to persuade the Government to reduce the number of houses it is currently forcing on the borough. Under the current system, the target being imposed is 781 houses per year. We are also calling for new planning rules

that would give communities more power to create better places to live.

At the time of going to press, we had held a meeting with local MPs Sir John Redwood (after which he raised the matter in the House of Commons), Theresa May and James Sunderland.

As well as calling for a straight reduction in the number of homes the Government is currently forcing on Wokingham Borough, we are seeking changes to overall housing policy.

Our view is that national planning policy does not plan for how development should be managed on a national scale. Housing need is calculated through a simple mathematical formulae and these formulae are applied without any sense check or any consideration of constraints or opportunities.

We are now calling for a move away from the purely mathematical approach and instead set out a positive strategy that links housing with wider aspirations such as levelling up and climate emergency. It should be fair and achievable for all places. Housing policy should also recognise that places that have been asked to accommodate more development in the past cannot simply continue and that another solution is required.



## Executive View

**Cllr Lindsay Ferris,  
Executive member for  
planning and local plan:**



"We're determined to be a strong voice for residents and the government must understand the problems its policies are causing.

We don't need large-scale housing development that blights our countryside, clogs roads and overloads services, but we want to be constructive and help find better ways to build communities."

# Wokingham Borough's Residents Equality Forum

As part of our commitment to tackling inequality, we've supported the launch of the new, independent Residents Equality Forum (REF) in the borough

The forum provides representatives from local community groups with a platform to create change for a more inclusive borough. It's a place where they can discuss the needs and aspirations of their communities, respond to hot topics that impact their communities and inform and shape our services.

The initiative is part of our wider Equality Plan 2021-25, where we have pledged to act on our commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion in the way we plan, deliver and shape our services.

The REF is independent from us, and entirely community-led, giving residents and groups the chance to talk about local issues and influence decision making.

The forum has met several times already, with representatives from the following groups attending: Kaleidoscopic, CLASP, SEND Voices Wokingham, The Wayz Youth, Involve, All Churches, Berkshire Active, Oxfordshire Mind, Aisha Mosque, Pakistani Association, Kimel Foundation, WBC Involved Tenants, First Days Children's Charity, Refugee Support Group, the Wokingham Youth MP, Wokingham Pride and the African Caribbean Society.

We've been engaging with local groups to ensure all communities, particularly those that match the nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act, are represented in the REF. New members are welcome to join, so long as they are from a represented community or voluntary organisation.

This summer, we also allocated £5,000 to the REF to help with the development of small community and voluntary organisations in the borough.

This meant new and emerging groups could come forward for a grant of up to £500 to help with things like developing their new organisation, holding community cohesion events and increasing education or employment opportunities of protected characteristic communities in the borough.

The REF hopes to continue to engage as many organisations and groups as possible and have a huge positive impact in the borough.

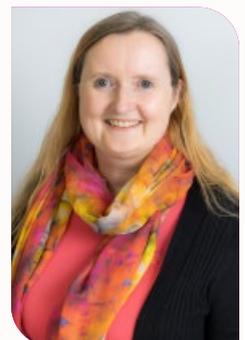
» For more on the council equalities work visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and search for 'Equality'



## Executive View

**Rachel Bishop-Firth, executive member for equalities, inclusion and fighting poverty:**

"Working with the community is fundamental to what we do, especially when it comes to equality. With a Residents Equality Forum in place, we can work even closer with key communities to ensure we get our policies right and that we shape services that address the lived experience of all residents."





# A brand-new strategy for tackling poverty

## Wokingham Borough's first Tackling Poverty Strategy was approved by our decision-making executive in June.

The strategy is underpinned by annual action plans, which will be developed each year to address key issues.

We'll start by focussing on things like making sure people can easily find out how to get support, increasing access to debt advice, lobbying for changes to government policy to help those most in need, and more.

### Worrying about money?

Help is here if you're struggling to make ends meet. There are lots of ways to get support in Wokingham Borough.

People in a crisis or emergency situation can get apply ffor help from the Local Welfare Provision. Visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and search 'Local Welfare Provision' or call **(0118) 974 6000**

### Household Support Fund

We were given money from Central Government to support households that are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis- particularly those with children and pensioners.

- Families in the borough with children who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals received support during the summer holidays
- We have now committed to providing support to these families during school holidays until the end of May next year, even if the funding rom Central Government does not continue

Anybody needing support is encouraged to contact the One Front Door, by calling **0808 278 7958**, 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

You can also contact the charity First Days on **(0118) 9219 338** for help.

### Council support schemes

If you are on a low income or suddenly have no money, you may be eligible for housing benefits, council tax support and discretionary housing payments from us.

You can find out more at: [www.wokingham.gov.uk/benefits](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/benefits)

There are also other schemes to help with things like finding employment, free school meals and more. You can find information at: [www.wokingham.gov.uk/local-support-hub](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/local-support-hub)

### Maximise your income

If you are struggling and find your money doesn't go far enough, you can speak to an advisor at Citizens Advice Wokingham for free and confidential advice.

They can do a benefit check, make sure you aren't missing out on things you may be eligible for, refer you to further support, and more.

- Call **0808 278 7958**,
- email [contact@citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk](mailto:contact@citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk)
- or visit the website: [www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicewokingham.org.uk)

You can also use online tools to check what benefits you may be eligible for: [www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators](http://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators)

### Debt advice

Anyone can fall into debt. Free advice and support can help you find ways to manage your debt and reduce how much you pay each month. The team at Citizens Advice Wokingham can help (see contact details above).

Step Change is also a charity that can offer advice on debt matters.

- Call **0800 138 1111** (freephone)
- or visit the website: [www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)

### Feeding your family

If you're on a low income, pregnant or have a child under 4 you may be eligible for Healthy Start Vouchers to help buy fruit, vegetables and milk. You can apply online:

[www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)

You may also qualify for free school meals.

Visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and search 'free school meals' to find out more.

This is not an exhaustive list. For more advice and support please visit: [www.wokingham.gov.uk/local-support-hub](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/local-support-hub)

# ACTIVE TRAVEL, TRANS

We're determined to get people using their cars less by making it safer and easier to walk, cycle and use public transport more. We've done a great deal to achieve this, with bigger plans still in the pipeline.

By improving access to more active and sustainable ways of travelling, we can significantly reduce vehicle emissions to improve our air quality and help tackle the climate emergency.

On top of that, active travel has huge physical and emotional benefits for residents of all ages and ability levels, so we want to help everybody to include it in their daily life as much as possible.

## MY JOURNEY WOKINGHAM CHALLENGE

We're also offering prizes (and some fun competition!) for travelling actively and sustainably this summer through the My Journey Wokingham challenge, hosted on the free Innovation Valley Rewards smartphone app.

This automatically tracks when, where and how you've travelled and awards points, or ValleyCoins, which can be exchanged for shopping and gift vouchers or a charitable donation. There are larger prizes too- previous examples included a six-month Brompton bicycle hire subscription.

The challenge launched in March and finishes at the end of October. In the first three months, participants logged almost 65,000 miles and burned at least 3.2 million calories – the same amount found in 12,500 jam doughnuts!

## GET ON YOUR BIKE

Our My Journey Wokingham team has staged Bikeability workshops for secondary school pupils who missed out on training during covid lockdowns and advised motorists on safely overtaking cyclists with Thames Valley Police's support.

It also promoted Love to Ride Wokingham's Bike Month Challenge in May, which enjoyed record levels of success with 56 workplaces taking part- a massive improvement on last year.

More than 300 participants aimed to ride as many miles as possible that month, including 23 newcomers, and they managed more than 50,000 miles across nearly 4,000 trips.

It potentially saved 5,700 tonnes of carbon emissions, which is vital as we declared a climate emergency in 2019 and vowed to do everything we can towards becoming a net-zero carbon borough by 2030.

## BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

To build on this, we're seeking your views on our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), which will propose a raft of improvements at specific locations based on your feedback from an earlier consultation.

This could include new cycle routes, better footways and crossings and measures to reduce the impact of through-traffic in certain neighbourhoods. By publishing this plan, we're more likely to get Government funding for these upgrades. To find out more, visit [wokinghamboroughlcwip.commonplace.is](http://wokinghamboroughlcwip.commonplace.is)

We're also asking for your thoughts on proposals for an active travel route between Woodley and Palmer Park at Reading borough's boundary, which we've revised following your comments at a previous consultation. More information is available at [engage.wokingham.gov.uk](http://engage.wokingham.gov.uk). Both of these consultations end on 19 August.

We'll also be seeking your views on a new Local Transport Plan, which will consider all the ways of getting around the borough.



# SPORT AND HIGHWAYS

## BUSES AND TRAINS

We can integrate Active Travel routes with bus and train services which play an essential part in reducing the need to travel by car for those longer journeys. Travel by bus and train is a safe mode to use and increasingly has the benefits of free wi-fi and mobile charging facilities, so you can work whilst travelling as well as an app to check on live timings to your nearest bus stop or rail station.

The Borough Council are supporting bus services, where it can, which are not run on a commercial basis. Local bus services are required as they enable all residents including children to attend places of education, employment and access medical services as well as retail and amenities. Without these local bus services there would be a particular risk of social exclusion for communities.

## GREENWAYS (IAN SHENTON'S AREA)

We recently started work on our latest greenway, which are mostly traffic-free routes connecting key destinations in the borough. They're accessible in all weathers for wheelchair users and those pushing buggies or prams as well as cyclists, skateboarders, push scooters and more.

This section crosses Woosehill Meadows in Wokingham town as part of a wider route linking Cantley Park with Arborfield Cross. It should mostly be finished by early August, with further works including a new bridge over the Emm Brook to follow.

We're creating eight greenways over the next decade or so and the first, running from Arborfield to Finchampstead through California County Park, opened in 2020.

## Executive View

**CLlr Paul Fishwick, the council's new executive member for active travel, transport and highways:**

"With the provision of safe and good standard infrastructure many short journeys could be converted to Active Travel and public transport, where there are a wide range of benefits including public health (physical and mental), reducing traffic levels and congestion, decrease in air pollution, and climate change emissions."



# Supporting the borough's most vulnerable residents



## Starting your career in adult social care

You're never too young to start thinking about a career in social care. You may be considering your GCSE options and feeling uncertain. Our adult social care team have been engaging with local students to talk about just this.

During a careers fair at The Holt School, we were able to dispel many of the assumptions about working in adult social care, as well as highlighting the benefits to you and the community, as well as the difference made to residents' lives.

### Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a great option for anyone who's ready to start work and wants to develop. Options include working as a social care employer while achieving a qualification, doing skills training and earning a wage. Search for opportunities at: [wokingham.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers/gaining-experience/apprenticeships-traineeships-and-work-experience/](https://wokingham.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers/gaining-experience/apprenticeships-traineeships-and-work-experience/)

### Graduate Programme

The Graduate Management programme is open to ambitious graduates from any degree subject. It can accelerate your career towards a leadership role and – as with all social care positions – allow you to make a real impact on people's lives. More information at: [local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/national-graduate-development-programme](https://local.gov.uk/our-support/leadership-workforce-and-communications/national-graduate-development-programme)

### Roles

There are lots of different roles in adult social care. Some of the most popular are:

- activities worker
- care worker
- community support worker
- business and administration



To find out more visit: [wokingham.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers/careers/careers-in-care-work/](https://wokingham.gov.uk/jobs-and-careers/careers/careers-in-care-work/)

## Support for unpaid carers in Wokingham Borough

Unpaid carers nationally deliver an estimated £132 billion of care every year to loved ones and family members. In Wokingham Borough, it is estimated there are 2,300 unpaid carers supporting people to stay at home, helping them to retain independence for as long as possible.

Carers do an invaluable job, but sadly this can have a negative effect on their health and well-being. We are committed to supporting carers in their role as well as having an active life outside of caring.

The theme of this year's National Carers Week (6 to 12 June) addressed the visibility of carers with the aim of encouraging people to feel safe coming forward for support. Wokingham Borough's carers services provider, TuVida, ran a series of activities during the week, including a lunch with the Borough Mayor, Councillor Caroline Smith, as well as meditation sessions and a trip to a theme park for young carers.

TuVida provide help and information to unpaid carers in the borough, including regular group meetings, one-to-one support and help with accessing respite. Support is available to both adult and young carers.

## Executive View

**CLLr David Hare, executive member for health, wellbeing and adult services:**

"Connecting with children and adults who may not see themselves as carers – and reminding them that support is available for everyone – is hugely important. Carers need to have the chance to enjoy themselves in their role, while also having that responsibility removed occasionally. They need to be praised and applauded, as they are unsung heroes."



Carers looking for support can contact TuVida by emailing [berkshire@tuvida.org](mailto:berkshire@tuvida.org) or call (0118) 324 7333.



# Meet Wokingham Borough's new Mayor, Cllr Caroline Smith

At the annual meeting of council in May, Cllr Caroline Smith was elected as Wokingham Borough Mayor for the coming year (2022-23), taking over the office from Cllr Keith Baker.

Cllr Smith has represented the Hillside Ward and Radstock Ward under Earley Town Council. She was born in Reading and moved to Earley thirty-four years ago. After working in a Wokingham charity shop for 23 years, she retired in December 2021 and now volunteers at a charity shop in Reading in her spare time.

Cllr Smith said: ***"It is a real honour and privilege to be elected as Borough Mayor and I am very much looking forward to my year in office. Our borough is a fantastic place to live, work and grow and I am very much looking forward to meeting as many local people as possible during the next 12 months."***

The Mayor traditionally chooses a local charity to benefit from fundraising during their year in office. This year, Cllr Smith has chosen Wokingham Foodbank, founded by local churches and communities groups working together to stop hunger in the borough.

The Mayor is officially the 'first citizen' of the borough with a civic role, representing the council and the people of the borough as well as presiding over borough council.

The Deputy Mayor for the year is Cllr Beth Rowland who represents South Lake Ward in Woodley.



## Taking care of our finances

With inflation running at the highest level for many years and the cost of providing vital services escalating, local authorities across the country are facing tough financial situations – and Wokingham Borough Council is not immune.

With other councils across the country getting into very serious difficulties, including some who have effectively gone bankrupt, we must be very cautious. Our financial position is better than most; we have good Council Tax collection rates thanks to you, our residents, and we have a strong local economy.

We have been reviewing how we work and focussing on using our assets (buildings and land), contracts and staff as efficiently as possible. We have also reviewed our capital projects to make sure they are providing value for money.

We have reviewed our capital projects for this year to make sure we are only spending the money we need to right now.

This careful look at our finances and practices is helping us make the savings we need to find as painlessly as possible but we will have difficult decisions to make in the months ahead.

We need to respond to the cost-of-living crisis by helping those in poverty, as well as to other significant cost increases such as that facing adult social care. And to meet these challenges, we will need to prioritise our spending as well as seek efficiencies.

We will work with partners and residents to set these priorities and ensure you are kept engaged and informed.



### Executive View

**Imogen Shepherd-DuBey,**  
Executive Member for  
Finance:

“With people struggling to make ends meet, it is even more important – I would say a moral necessity – for us to make best use of every penny. We simply cannot waste anything. Beyond the necessary efficiencies, we also need to prioritise our spending to make sure it is focussed on the needs of all our residents.”



## Listening and learning from our residents

We are committed to improving the way we consult with residents – to make sure we really listen to your views.

Part of this is about making sure we hold consultations in the right way so everybody can take part as easily as possible and another part off it is actually listening and considering what you tell us.

Last year, we launched Engage Wokingham Borough, an online platform that is your one-stop-shop for all consultations and, since its launch more than 6,000 people have signed up have their say. Those of you who do not have internet access can always take part by requesting a paper copy of a consultation.

But we know we need to improve in this area because in the past too many consultations have not been meaningful and we have not really listened to what people say.

We need to be honest about consultations so you know what we are using them for. Some key points are:

- Consultations are not referenda: councillors are elected to make decisions, but consultations should be used to help them make those decisions.
- Consultation must take place before decisions have been made and we must take account of what people tell us (that does not mean we can satisfy everybody because we will hear lots of different views)
- We should publicise consultations widely and make available to all.
- We should publish the findings from consultations, including decisions made following them

We run our consultations online on Engage Wokingham Borough but paper copies are available for those who really need them and we also provide contact telephone number for people who need support to complete consultations.





# Go all out to reduce waste

According to the Government, in the UK in 2020 we generated around 27 million tonnes of waste in our homes, and less than half of that was recycled

Waste reduction has become one of the top priorities in the battle against the climate emergency. In Wokingham borough, we are working hard to encourage residents to reduce the amount of waste they produce and to recycle whenever possible.

We asked you to join us last year in our 'One Bag Challenge' and only use one blue bag per week – or one every two weeks. Recycling is by far one of the easiest ways to reduce waste. Thanks to you, our overall recycling rate remains pretty good, at around 54 per cent. But we want to do better.

## Plastics

We use a lot of soft plastics every day, such as plastic packaging for fruits and ready meals, fruit punnets, crisp packets, chocolate or biscuit wrappers, and cling film.

In 2020, 92 per cent of plastic film (soft plastics) in the UK was not recycled. Most were likely incinerated, but many would have ended up in landfill or in our oceans, where they will stay for centuries.

Soft plastics can be recycled locally. Currently, most of the major supermarkets across the borough have set up collection points for customers to return soft plastics. Find out where you can recycle soft plastics and other items by using the Recycling Locator Tool provided by the climate action non-governmental organization Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP). Visit WRAP's website at [www.wrap.org.uk](http://www.wrap.org.uk) and search 'Recycling Locator Tool' or use the QR code to learn more.

Besides soft plastics, rigid plastic items such as plastic buckets, crates, bins, storage boxes, and garden furniture can be locally recycled as well. For every 100 tonnes of rigid plastics recycled, it saves 250,000 kg of carbon dioxide emissions, which is equivalent to the consumption of 180 cars.

At the recycling plant, rigid plastic items are sorted, separated, cleaned and ground into flakes. High-quality raw materials are produced from recycling rigid plastics, which are used in the plastic industry and for construction materials, cars, furniture and more.

You can take rigid plastic items to the household recycling centres in Reading and Bracknell.



## Food Waste

According to WRAP, 70 per cent of the food wasted in the UK is from average households like yours.

Food waste contributes significantly to global warming due to the methane emitted during the decomposition of organic materials in landfill. Methane is a much more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. We've said it before, but it's still true: If food waste were a country, it would be the world's third largest emitter.

We have been seeing an increase of food waste collected from residents since the service started in 2019. Well done!

In the last two years, the amount of food waste in the blue rubbish bags has gone down from 24 per cent to 21 per cent. That may seem like a small decrease, but it is important.

At present, all food waste collected in the borough is transported to the anaerobic digestion facility operated by re3, our waste management partner, in Oxfordshire. As the food waste is broken down by bacteria in the plant, methane is created, captured and used to generate electricity.

The plant produces 2.4mw of electricity continually, enough to power 4,800 homes. The food waste is then turned into a liquid fertiliser which improves soil and helps plants grow.

The benefits are not only environmental, though. It costs £29 per tonne to turn the food waste into a useful product, but £109 per tonne to dispose of that same food waste if it is in the blue rubbish bags.

That means we are spending over £400,000 of your money per year that we could spend on other things, if everyone used our food waste collection service for all of their food waste.

If you have any food waste, please put it in your kitchen caddy rather than throwing it away.

We are stopping the distribution of green caddy liners as part of drive to reduce single-use plastic and to avoid spending £125,000 on the caddy liners for 2023. See page 23 for more.

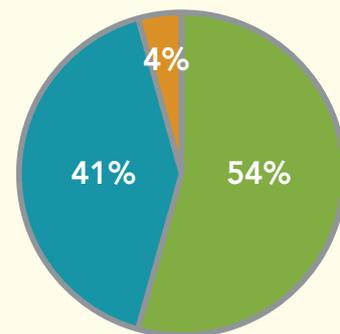


## New Waste Collections Strategy

Our current waste and recycling collection contract expires in 2026 and, to make sure we get the right service for the future, last autumn we asked you what your priorities are around waste and recycling.

The survey was the first step in the process of writing a new waste and recycling strategy, which we expect to complete later this year. More than 2,000 of you responded and told us that the most important thing about our waste collections is the environmental impact, followed by convenience and then cost.

### When you think about our waste collection service, what matters most?



- Environmental benefits
- Convenience or ease of use
- Cost

## New steps

We have been looking at your feedback, gathering data and doing analysis to come up with a list of options for your new service. At the time of going to print, we expect to have the options ready this summer and will be asking what you think of them in early autumn.



## Executive View

**Cllr Ian Shenton, executive member for environment, sport and leisure:**

“Our waste collection service is one of the most important services we provide residents – every household in the borough produces waste. That’s why it’s so important we get it right and we have a great opportunity to change how we do things when our current contract runs out in 2026.

“We know this is important to you, which is why we are including three rounds of public consultation in this process. Look out for a postcard telling you how to get involved.”





## Working with the Gorse Ride community

With work underway on the second phase of our ambitious Gorse Ride regeneration project it's important that we can make sure the local community stay informed of what's going on.

In spring this year, we opened the new Gorse Ride community hub, converting an empty bungalow at 20 Gorse Ride South, into a new space for the community whilst the area is regenerated.

With its relaxed seating area, kitchen and offices, the hub is the ideal place for local residents to meet with council officers to discuss their thoughts, ask questions about the regeneration, or to simply pop in for a cup of coffee and a friendly chat.

As well as regular activities for the local community, the hub will also be used to host regular pop-up exhibitions, housing surgeries and events to help residents keep involved throughout the works over the coming years.

But it's not just about the hub as the Gorse Ride project team continue to attend other events across the area, including an exhibition at St Mary & St John Parish Centre, and an exhibition and presentation at the Finchampstead Parish Council's annual gathering this summer.

These exhibitions gave residents the opportunity to view and discuss the latest detailed designs for Gorse Ride, which include proposals for changes to some of the roofs to make it easier to maintain, a move away from mains gas in support of the council's climate emergency ambitions, and changes to the proposed brick type to address concerns over supply of materials whilst keeping the feel of the original design.

The updated designs also include proposed changes to a handful of properties, which have been allocated to individuals



and families with specific needs and have been adapted to provide individualised solutions to help give them the highest quality of life.

Alongside this work is also continuing to prepare the Gorse Ride site ready for our contractors to start groundworks and foundations later this year. Most of the vacant properties have now been stripped out, cleared of asbestos and demolished, along with tree and ground clearance, and archaeological surveys and reviews.

The Gorse Ride community hub is located at 20 Gorse Ride South, Finchampstead, RG40 4EH. Residents can either drop into the hub when open or contact the community engagement team to organise an appointment if preferred by emailing [community.engagement.localities@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:community.engagement.localities@wokingham.gov.uk)

## New youth MP for Wokingham Borough elected

Holly Mackinnon, a year ten student from The Holt School, has been elected Youth MP for Wokingham Borough, representing the voice of local children and young people in the UK Youth Parliament.

In Holly's manifesto, she outlined plans to put pressure on the board of education to reimagine "Britishness" from an ethnically diverse and anti-racist perspective, take steps towards implementing anti-hate measures, take action against climate change and ensure representation of students across the borough through regular forums. She will be supported by Deputy Youth MP, Alassane Wone, a year ten student from The Forest School

Holly said: ***"At the moment, being a young person in the UK is exasperating. It is easy to feel helpless as our planet is destroyed and inequality and insecurity grows. Our views are often ignored by those in power, by those who make decisions that dictate our future. This is why amplifying the young voices in our community is more important than ever."***

***"Becoming Youth MP is a way for me to represent young people in the borough and fight for the change we want to see locally and nationally. I aim to make young people in***

***Wokingham Borough feel that their voices matter and their views are heard, by both decision-makers and myself."***

Holly would love to hear from any young people that want to get involved, so get in touch with any suggestions, questions or concerns you have about the youth voice in Wokingham Borough at [youthvoice@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:youthvoice@wokingham.gov.uk)



## Fostering Awards

And finally, foster carers across the borough were celebrated in May as part of The Foster Care Fortnight, during which awards for outstanding contribution were presented.

It was revealed that the number of children needing foster care in the borough has increased by a third over the past couple of years and more carers are needed to offer safe, loving homes. Find out more about fostering at [fostering.wokingham.gov.uk](http://fostering.wokingham.gov.uk).



## Improving emotional wellbeing for children and young people

Earlier this year, we launched a new virtual emotional wellbeing hub for children and young people, making it more straightforward for them to get the help that they need.

The virtual hub acts as a central point of contact for children and young people, parents and professionals across the borough, bringing together a mix of existing, redesigned, and new services, supporting them with issues such as anxiety, friendship and relationship issues, low mood, or exam stress.

For more information, visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk/ewh](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/ewh)

## Executive View

**Councillor Prue Bray, executive member for children's services:**

"The pandemic has been difficult for children and young people, so I am very pleased we can now offer them support through our new emotional wellbeing hub.

"We are working hard behind the scenes on the first stage in our candidacy to be a UNICEF UK Child Friendly Community and will be soon be inviting residents to take part in surveys to shape our work."





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# Outdated accommodation for homeless people replaced and improved

We've improved outdated temporary accommodation for homeless families in Wokingham borough by replacing it with almost twice as many state-of-the-art stackable homes.

We removed 12 mobile units at Grovelands Park in Winnersh and started craning in the first of 23 modular two-bedroom units, which are more energy efficient and should last more than 50 years.

Each has its own toilet, bathroom, open-plan lounge, dining room and kitchen, offering safety, comfort and dignity to those waiting for somewhere more permanent.



## Executive View

**Executive member for Housing Cllr Stephen Conway:**

"Providing more social and affordable housing is one of our major priorities. The homes in Grovelands will provide a safe and secure roof over the head for people who have faced appalling situations – and that is great. But we need to do more and so are looking across the borough for opportunities to provide the right, affordable homes that local people need."



# An innovative way to reduce food waste and save money

110 cafes, coffee shops, supermarkets, bakeries and the like in the borough have joined the Too Good To Go app to offer delicious, unsold food to residents for just a fraction of the full price.

We're partnering with the Too Good To Go app to help reduce food waste and save residents money in an innovative way. Through the app, shops and restaurants are able to sell their surplus food items in the form of magic bags to customers, instead of throwing it away.

The app is user-friendly to both businesses and customers. Shops, if they have surplus food items, put them into "magic bags" and list them on the app at a discounted price of £3.00 to £4.00 on average.

Residents search for nearby businesses to find magic bags they want and buy them through the app. Then, they can go and pick them up at a set time.

From the businesses that have joined the app in the borough, over 46,000 magic bags of food that might have gone into the bin have been saved, equivalent to the carbon dioxide emissions from 1,310 flights from London to Berlin.





## Borough comes together to welcome Ukrainian refugees

The whole borough has welcomed hundreds of refugees coming from Ukraine, with more than 160 families opening their doors.

As war broke out in Ukraine earlier this year, Central Government launched its Homes for Ukraine scheme giving people a chance to host families as they looked to flee their homes.

This incredible offer of help by these families has required support from our teams, with scores of staff from the council involved in providing help and support.

We have received over 500 offers from local residents who are willing to house victims of the war under the Governments Homes for Ukraine Scheme They've opened their homes to provide somewhere to stay for at least six months.

We've joined the borough's voluntary and community sector to provide a range of services to provide support, with a team effort across the area to provide support.

We've provided all kinds of help, from school uniforms and welcome packs to providing advice on accessing benefits and learning English.

It mirrors exceptional effort by these organisations in recent years as the area responded to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Every family which arrives under the Homes for Ukraine scheme is supported by a case worker from the council to make their arrival as smooth as possible.

Our partners in the voluntary and community sector stood up a range of services to provide support, as they did in recent years as the area responded to the Covid-19 pandemic.



## How the borough came together to support refugees

- Team of case workers recruited and trained to provide ongoing support for both guests and host families
- School places team working tirelessly to find places for more than 150 children who are
- Hundreds of free SIM cards from Vodafone via partners in the voluntary and community sector
- Free bus passes for first 90 days after arrival to help guests to get around, thanks to Reading Buses
- Our partners Places Leisure offered short-term free gym memberships for refugees
- Bicycles from our re3 recycling centres were handed out for free to help children and adults get around, our MyJourney Wokingham team supplied helmets as well as cycle training so they could travel safely
- The Cowshed provided welcome packs to families to help them feel settled immediately upon arrival
- Faith organisations arranged welcome events for guests and hosts to help them meet each other and create a sense of community
- Charity partners MIND ran trauma awareness training for host families, to help those who are hosting refugees to spot those who may need further support
- Preparing and helping refugee families as their placements with their hosts ends and ensuring they can be independent, finding their own place to live
- Huge response from another 150 families to provide a rematching or respite home for refugees if required

## Community responds to help child refugees

We know many residents wanted to help Ukrainians coming to the area but weren't able to host.

We set up our Chance to Thrive coordinated community fundraising to give residents a way to help children coming to the area.

More than 500 people donated and more than £32,500 was raised. This will be used to help pay for:

- Equipment for education (including digital technology)
- Membership of sports clubs (such as football, basketball, netball etc)
- Membership of social organisations (such as Scouts or Guides)
- Membership of cultural groups (such as drama groups, theatre schools or dance classes)
- Equipment or kit necessary to participate in sporting, social or cultural activities

We're now working on distributing the funding to ensure it provides help to the right people. We're now assessing applications, made by families via case workers, looking at potential benefit, impact and value for money.

Donors will be sent regular updates on how we've used the funding so they can see the good it is doing in the local community.

## Hear from our case workers

**Chris and Lisa are part of our case worker team, hear about their experiences welcoming people who have come from Ukraine.**



***"The guests are always so grateful for everything that's being done,"*** Lisa says. ***"Particularly the children, they don't ask for anything, but whatever we offer or give to them they are so grateful for it. It's the small things."***

## Refugees from other countries

In the last year we've also welcomed refugee families from Syria and Afghanistan to the borough.

For all these schemes we have worked in partnership with the Refugee Support Group, previously known as Reading Refugee Support, as well as other organisations across the local voluntary sector to meet government requirements and support new residents to settle safely in the UK.

Support includes free English as a second language courses, working with health partners to ensure health assessments take place, translation and interpretation facilities and invitations to local events to help integrate these groups into our communities.




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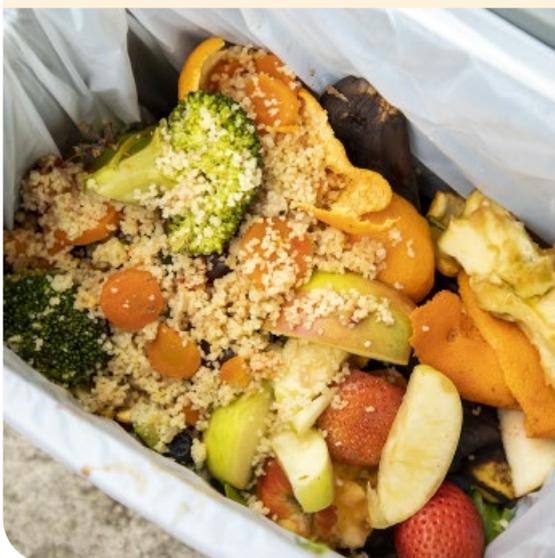
## Council cuts back on single-use plastics

As part of our drive to reduce the use of non-recyclable single-use plastics, we are urging residents to line their food caddies using more environmentally friendly alternatives to the single-use plastic caddy liners.

In the past, we had provided a supply of non-biodegradable single-use plastic caddy liners to line people's kitchen food waste caddies. But this was just handing out a huge number of single-use pieces of plastic and so we've decided to stop and instead encouraging residents to use more environmentally friendly alternatives.

Food waste collected from residents in Wokingham borough is taken to a recycling facility managed by re3, our waste management partner. The food caddy liners are burned and the energy captured after the food waste inside is removed for further processing at the facility.

Residents can line their kitchen caddies with a compostable liner, newspaper or any soft plastic bag they have that they were going to throw away, such as carrier bags, bread bags, cereal bags or fruit and vegetable bags. Residents can also instead line the bottom with newspaper or used kitchen paper, emptying it into the outdoor caddy, and wash both between uses.



## Rainbow Flag flown with Pride over our offices

Our Borough Mayor Cllr Caroline Smith proudly raised the rainbow flag to celebrate Pride last month



The flag was raised on Wednesday 6 July at the council's Shute End office as part of the annual celebration of equality and diversity within communities across the country including Wokingham Borough.

2022 is a significant year for the Pride movement and the LGBTQ+ community as it marks 50 years since the first Pride in London parade took place.

The flag raising event was also attended by leader of the council Cllr Clive Jones, the council's new executive member for equalities, inclusion and fighting poverty Cllr Rachel Bishop-Firth, Cllr Rachel Burgess, Cllr Imogen Shepherd-DuBey, Cllr Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey, Cllr Rachel Burgess and Cllr Mike Smith.

Many of our Borough libraries, schools and churches used the week leading up to Saturday 9 July to promote a greater understanding of LGBTQ+ issues and local businesses showed their support by displaying rainbow flags.

On Saturday 9 July, residents were invited to the Wokingham Pride Picnic in Elms Field, Wokingham.



# Working to decarbonise the borough



If you read our news pages, or our climate emergency newsletter, you will often see us talking about projects we've been rolling out to help improve our own buildings and facilities

We are making our buildings more energy efficient by retrofitting older properties, such as schools, libraries, leisure centres, offices and the housing we own. We also work with our architects and contractors to make sure any new buildings are designed to be as low carbon as possible through a mix of careful design, green technology and high-quality construction. By doing this we can help reduce the council's carbon footprint, the amount of carbon dioxide emissions we generate through

carrying out our activities, contributing towards the vision for a carbon net zero borough by 2030.

And it's not just about the carbon reduction and tackling the climate emergency, as these improvements also help reduce the costs of heating and running our buildings. This helps us better plan our budgets through the year, as well as freeing up essential funds which can be spent on providing services for our residents.



# So how do we go about making our buildings more energy efficient and low carbon?

Each building is unique so, before we make any changes or propose ideas, we undertake a thorough energy review of the property. This helps us understand how it's currently performing, or in the case of new buildings predict how it should perform and help us identify the range of improvements we could make.

Below are some of the main changes we use to help improve our properties:

- **Improving air tightness –**

By improving the air tightness of our buildings we can help keep our buildings at a constant temperature, reducing the amount of energy required to heat or cool them during opening hours. We do this by installing things such as new windows and doors, insulating roofs and walls and, installing lobby areas at entrances where they are regularly used.

- **Energy efficient heating –**

Energy generated using fossil fuels comes with a high carbon footprint so we're increasingly looking at using green technology to help heat or cool our properties including installing Air Source Heat Pumps instead of more traditional gas boilers. These pumps work by absorbing heat from the outside air, compressing this to increase the temperature, and then using this to heat the building and, in some cases, produce hot water.

- **Generating renewable energy –**

Where suitable we're increasingly installing solar panels on roofs to generate renewable energy on site, with this energy either used to power the building, or sold back to the national grid to create a source of income. In many properties we've also started installing battery systems alongside the panels, allowing energy to be stored so it can be used when required rather than just when the sun is out.



- **Building management systems –**

A bit like installing a smart meter or digital thermostat in your own home, by installing state of the art monitors and management systems on site we can keep much better track of energy usage in our buildings. In addition to being able to manage them more flexibly, the technology also enables us to monitor properties closely and identify issues quickly, such as water leaks or equipment being left on when properties aren't in use, so we can get them resolved.

- **Lower energy equipment –**

Many electrical appliances and equipment come with an energy rating, giving details about the amount of power it will need to run and how efficient it is. We use information like this to help choose the things we install, such as low energy LED lighting, across our sites.

- **Fabric First and carbon efficient materials –**

When designing new facilities we're trying to take a fabric first approach, where carbon efficient materials and construction practices are embedded in the very structure of the building itself, allowing us to create incredibly low energy buildings, with high levels of insulation and air tightness.

- **Support sustainable travel –**

In addition to improving our buildings, we also want to support people to travel to our facilities in a more sustainable way. We're increasingly providing electrical vehicle charging points in our car parks and outside our larger buildings, along with more bicycle parking for cyclists.

## Executive View

**Sarah Kerr, executive member for climate emergency and residents services:**

"By making changes to our own properties we're continuing to try to drive down our carbon emissions and reduce the amount of energy we use during the year.

But it's not just us who can benefit and increasing numbers of residents and businesses are realising switching to things like solar power, or installing insulation, is easier and more cost effective than they think.

Keep an eye out for more stories to see what can be achieved by making the change."



# New anti-social behaviour team getting out and about

The council's new anti-social behaviour (ASB) team has already experienced huge success since launching at the beginning of April

Our team offers a visible presence seven days a week to address concerns that affect residents' wellbeing, such as fly tipping, noisy neighbours and nuisance vehicles.

Officers focus on areas such as parks and open spaces where issues are more common, and will attend when loud music or other noise is causing a nuisance in a neighbourhood, such as building noise.

The team includes animal wardens to handle stray dogs, tackle animal neglect and promote responsible ownership. The team works closely with the licensing team, which oversees alcohol sales, betting shops, amusement arcades and taxis.

In the first two months, the service dealt with a total of 239 cases, plus a number of general enquiries where advice was given. The majority of these (92) were for environmental issues, but there were also 47 cases of ASB and 51 cases of noise nuisance.

As expected, Easter proved to be a busy period for the team, with lots of reports coming in over the long weekend.

One of the biggest tasks was a car meet at the Mere oak Park & Ride near Three Mile Cross. There were more than 100 cars present, along with a large gathering of spectators, which was managed with assistance from Thames Valley Police.

The animal wardens have been proactive when it comes to dog fouling, which has resulted in signs being put up in areas where it has been reported. The wardens have also dealt with stray dogs and visited a property that was illegally offering a dog walking service.

In cases involving noise disturbances, organisers and households have been politely instructed to respect neighbours and given advice. On the whole, this has seen a positive and respectful response.

In the first two months, 175 licenses were issued by the licensing team, while safety advisory groups were formed for Henley Regatta and the party at Elms Field for The Queen's Jubilee.

If a crime is being committed and people are in danger, call the police on 999, or 101 if it isn't an emergency.

For any other nuisance, contact the council at [asb@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:asb@wokingham.gov.uk) or on **(0118) 974 6000** during business hours. The out of hours service is available on **0800 212 111** from 5pm into the night on Fridays and Saturdays and during the daytime at weekends and bank holidays.



# Promoting independent living by creating specialist accommodation

Working in partnership with our housing company Loddon Homes, and our social care company Optalis, we've converted seven properties into specialist accommodation for local residents with additional care and support needs. This includes three bungalows, one house, four two-bed flats and 15 one-bed flats for 30 people – an investment totalling £4million.

Housing plays a huge role in people's lives and supporting vulnerable residents with a range of different housing options in the heart of communities is a key priority for us. Our vision is to provide these residents and their carers with appropriate support that prevents, reduces, or delays the need for ongoing care, while giving them choice of where and who they live with. This is key as it makes such a positive difference to their lives and maximises their wellbeing and independence.

We met with Rob\* who recently moved into new purpose-built accommodation near Hatch Farm in Winnersh.

Rob explained that he worked with his social worker to apply to move to a new home. Having previously lived at home with his mother, at age 54, he felt it was time to move on to his own space.

Rob explains: ***"I put in to move out. I came to have a look. I have lived at hostels before, but they have a lot of rules and I had nothing but problems. Now I have my own place, its my house, my rules."***

Rob described how he was supported by the team to plan his move. With his DVDs and CDs being a very important part of his life. ***"I met the staff, I liked them, they helped me move. It took a while to pack all my stuff and we had to get cabinets. All my stuff is here."***

During the last few weeks Rob has experienced several positive benefits following his move; He is losing some weight due to being more active, taking more pride in his appearance and improving his personal care. Rob jokes ***"Mum used to 'say take a shower', but I just ignored her"***. He has also received help to



manage his risk of falls. Rob continues ***"When I fell at home, mum couldn't help me up."*** The team have supported him to get a pendant alarm and with staff support around at all times he is able to get the help he needs without delay.

Rob had been shielding during the pandemic, while living at home with his mother. Due to this he has not been able to enjoy many of the activities and pastimes he previously did. ***"Now I go out, I walk to the shops, we also go out for meals and get take aways. I'm planning with my staff to go bowling."*** The Optalis team explained that having previously reduced his outreach support and his activities, he has begun to feel confident enough to meet new staff to look at accessing further activities in the community.

Rob sums up, ***"It's quite a good place, I enjoy it here."***

*\*name changed as per individual's request.*



# Let's enjoy our countryside

Our borough boasts many magnificent green spaces and outdoor venues, and we invite everyone to go out and make the most of them before summer ends.

A range of activities are available at our country parks, with plenty of scope for you to enjoy yourself on the water or on land.

## Fun in the sunshine at Dinton Pastures

Dinton Pastures Country Park in Hurst offers a huge variety of courses for adults and children of all levels of experience and ability.

These include Royal Yachting Association sailing weeks, the Wild Days holiday club for children and teens, dinghy sailing for adults, open water swimming and a "doggy paddle" for you and your four-legged friends to enjoy paddleboarding together.

On top of this, all kinds of inclusive activities are available for visitors with disabilities or special educational needs, and mobility scooters are available for hire.

The boat hire service is available seven days a week over the summer holidays. You can hire pedalos, paddleboards, canoes or single and double kayaks and unwind while taking in the beautiful views or buy a lake access pass to launch your own.

If you'd rather sample the scenery from the banks, why not hire one of our pedal-powered nature buggies which can seat up to two adults and two children?

We've made several improvements at Dinton Pastures so residents can enjoy their summer to the fullest. These include the new Dinton Activity Centre, which opened last September and is enjoying its first full summer.

It's the borough's first carbon-neutral building and has a high-tech indoor climbing wall with the latest automatic safety harnesses, an accessible ground-floor washroom, a terrace with coffee bar and much more.

We've resurfaced the footpath around Black Swan Lake, which is the most popular route at the site, to make it more accessible, and appointed award-winning caterer Cleverchefs to provide refreshments.

They now run the Coffee House, formerly the Dragonfly Café, as well as the nearby Coffee Pod stall and the Coffee Deck at the activity centre. Why not pop in for lunch or a drink?



# side at its summer best

## Cool off at California Country Park

The popular paddling pool at California Country Park near Finchampstead has been re-opened and is welcoming adults and children back to beat the heat. It's situated next to an award-winning play park with equipment for all ages including water play, sensory kit and climbing challenges for older kids.

The onsite Jackson's Café has been refurbished, giving it a modern and spacious new look, although regulars will

be pleased to hear it's still run by the Jackson family as it has been for the past eight years. It offers fresh, locally-sourced produce and changes its menus seasonally so there's always something new to try.



## Enjoy the rich variety of wildlife at Charvil

Charvil Country Park and Charvil Meadows have been designated as Local Wildlife Sites for their rich variety of wild animals. The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre also praised the high level of public access via a network of six footpaths, which range between about one and four miles long.

Several rare and sometimes colourful bee and wasp species can be found at the site while otters can be seen in the artificial burrow that we have installed. In the lake to the south of the sites, there are grey herons breeding on the wooded island.

If you come back in the winter, you might spot gadwall and smew, two nationally important types of wildfowl, plus several wetland bird species including bitterns. We're putting up information boards to explain this, which include links to downloadable self-guided walks.



## Go wild in play parks – or chill out among nature

We've opened a major new £450,000 play area at Cantley Park in Wokingham town, which has state-of-the-art interactive equipment designed to be as engaging as computer games.

The kit, which includes a football wall, DJ booth, a dance arch and more, includes accessible features and is laid out in zones for children and teenagers of all ages to play together.

It's proven hugely popular in its first few months and we were delighted to have it up and running well before the summer holidays.

But if you're looking for something more relaxed, you can visit the nature parks at our new communities in Shinfield

parish, Arborfield and North and South Wokingham.

The newest is Parklands near Three Mile Cross, a 1.6-hectare green space with trees, hedges and wet grassland which is a haven for bats, birds, beetles, hedgehogs and more.

Across the borough, our nature parks total more than 120 hectares- about the size of 170 football pitches. For more information about our nature parks, visit our website (<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/countryside-parks-and-conservation/country-parks/new-parks/>)





# Wokingham Borough celebrates the Platinum Jubilee in style

Many Wokingham Borough residents came together for a right Royal knees-up to celebrate Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee over the extended bank holiday weekend of 2 to 5 June 2022.

There were street parties galore, afternoon teas and fun-filled events as the borough celebrated this once-in-a-lifetime event as The Queen became the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee after 70 years of service. Almost 100 street party road closures were in place across the borough over the weekend as residents hung up their bunting and celebrated the Platinum Jubilee in style.

## New Jubilee bench and walking route unveiled

The Platinum Jubilee celebrations were kickstarted by Wokingham Borough Mayor Cllr Caroline Smith who unveiled a commemorative, engraved bench and new signage at Dinton Pastures Country Park. Part of the walking route at Black Swan Lake has been renamed to 'Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Walk' and the new bench is positioned opposite the lake overlooking the bird feeding area, providing residents and people who visit the borough opportunities to explore the great outdoors whilst celebrating and remembering this prestigious event.



## Jubilee activities

Leading up to the eventful weekend, there were plenty of Jubilee activities residents participated in including Royal-themed coffee mornings, reminiscence sessions and art sessions at our libraries,

signing a congratulations card to The Queen and uploading their street parties and events to an interactive map on our Engage Wokingham website for other residents to view and attend.

## Planting for The Queen's Green Canopy

The Queen's Green Canopy is a tree planting initiative to mark the Platinum Jubilee. With a focus on planting sustainably, the initiative encourages planting of trees to create a legacy in honour of The Queen's leadership of the nation, which will benefit future generations.

Since the start of the year, we have planted nearly 20,000 trees across the borough as part of a tree planting project and we will be identifying further sites suitable during the next planning season which commences in October. We will be dedicating one of the planting areas to mark The Queen's Green Canopy.

## Hooked on jubilee post box toppers

Hundreds of residents decorated their homes and streets with bunting and flags. The talented Barkham Hookers raised the bar and adorned the borough with beautiful crochet post box toppers, bunting and various decorations to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee. Thanks to Barkham Hookers for the photos.



# SPORT FOR ALL

## Summer holiday fun for children

During the summer, children from across the borough have been enjoying our Power-Up Kids Activity Camps that offer a range of sporting activities to keep them active and entertained.

And these camps will be back during the October half term when children will be able to enjoy activities such as pool fun, basketball, inflatable run, hockey, martial arts, football, tennis and many more\*.

The Power-Up Kids Activity Camps will be running at the Wokingham Leisure Centre (Carnival Hub) and Loddon Valley Leisure Centre.

To book your child's place, visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and search for 'Power-Up'. Residents can also book online for the October half-term activity camps and receive 15 per cent off by using discount code **OCTOBER15** at the checkout. Discount valid until 2 September.

*\*Classes subject to availability. Power-Up Kids Activity Camps is a separate scheme (paid by parents) to the government-funded Holiday, Activities and Food Programme.*



## Over-55? Join SHINE

Almost 100 residents attended our free SHINE open day at Cantley Park in June. The event introduced people, who had not yet tried our over-55s activities classes, to SHINE. The open day was successful with many residents enjoying a range of indoor and outdoor activities including Nordic walking, Pilates, Zumba, yoga, circuits, tennis and seated exercise.

If you are aged 55 and over and interested in taking part in SHINE, you can download the activities timetable and book a class on our website. Activities run daily and take place in a welcoming, friendly and relaxed environment. Membership options include a 'pay as you go' option at £5.20 per class or you can buy a pack of 10 classes for £43 (saving of £9). Find out more by visiting [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and search for 'SHINE' or call **(0118) 974 3728**.



## Personal training available at BXGFit

Are you looking to have fun, get fit and learn boxing? You can sign up to one-to-one personal training packages at our state-of-the-art boxing gym, BXGFit, in Peach Place.

We have a dedicated team of friendly and experienced instructors who can help you kickstart your fitness journey and achieve your goals. Prices start from just £40 a session. If you block book more than one session, a discount is available. Save 10 per cent when you book three sessions (price £108), 15 per cent when you book six sessions (price £204) or 20 per cent when you book 12 sessions (price £384).

For more information and for other membership options, visit [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk) and search for 'BXGFit'. Alternatively, download the free BXGFit app available on the Apple App Store or Google Play Store and look for the 'membership' option.





**Each week across our area, an average of 13 perfectly recyclable plastic items are thrown in the wrong bin in each household. Could you recycle more?**

Plastics that end up in our rubbish bins, instead of recycling, contribute to climate change.



Recycling just 13 more plastic items such as bottles, pots, tubs and trays by each household across re3 will have the same impact as removing 87 cars from the roads for a year.

**All individual actions matter but together we can play an even stronger part in the fight against climate change.**



**Scan & find out  
your recycling  
impact**



More information at: [www.re3.org.uk](http://www.re3.org.uk)

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