



www.wokefield-pc.org.uk

Interim Parish Clerk, Sandra Faulkner
Keepers Cottage
Goodboys Lane
Mortimer
RG7 3AH

wokefield.parcishclerk@hotmail.co.uk Tel 0118 9835025

Newsletter from Wokefield Parish Council Summer 2016

Introduction

Wokefield is one of the smallest parishes in West Berkshire. It comprises of the hamlets of Bloomfield Hatch, Grazeley Green, Goddards Green, Wokefield and a small section of Burghfield Common. The Parish currently has 5 councillors under the Chairmanship of Richard Thorne. They were appointed following an uncontested election in April 2015. Details of all Councillors can be found on the parish web site.

There are approximately 140 residential properties and 300 residents. Unlike many parishes we have no community assets such as hall or recreation ground. As a consequence, we have few outgoings other than the statutory requirements to run a Parish Council. This is funded by your Council Tax and may be seen on your annual bill. We can act as a conduit for dialogue with West Berkshire through your elected district Councillors who are currently Graham Bridgman and Mollie Lock. We hold quarterly meetings where current issues are discussed. Members of the public are welcome. Details of these meetings including agendas and minutes may be found on the website and the three Parish notice boards in Goring Lane - Grazeley Green, rear of Reading Road – Burghfield Common and Junction New Road and Lockram Lane, Wokefield.

Speed Limits on Goring Lane and Adjacent Road

Once again the Parish Council have lobbied West Berks Council to reduce the speed limit on Goring Lane through Grazeley Green. We also asked West Berks to lobby Wokingham District to do the same on Fuller's Lane/ Grazeley Green Road up to MereOak Lane such that there was a coherent 40mph limit all the way to the A33. Again West Berks have declined to do this. We will continue to pursue this.

Road Closures and Weather Events in Wokefield

There have been a number of road closures in Wokefield and the surrounding area recently. West Berkshire advise us of any in our area that they are involved with. We regularly publish these. Extreme weather events, when forecast, and gritting schedules are also communicated to the Parish Council together with useful practical advice regarding safety and wellbeing of yourself and your neighbours. Details of both these items may be found on the "news" section of the Parish website www.wokefield-pc.org.uk.

Housing Need Survey

As part of the preparation for production of a Parish Plan the Parish Council commissioned a housing needs survey. From the responses it was determined that there is very little need for additional development in Wokefield. For more information, visit the Parish website.

Superfast Broadband in Wokefield

As part of the government commitment to improve broadband, West Berkshire District Council have signed a contract with Gigaclear plc to deliver a new, ultrafast, fibre-to-the-premises broadband network to properties not already addressed by Phase 1 of the Superfast Broadband project.

Anyone connected will be able to receive broadband speeds from 50Mbps up to 1000Mbps. Currently most premises in Wokefield get barely 4Mbps.

The project will install a fibre-optic connection point at the roadside by properties not already connected. There will be a one-off connection charge to connect the property to the network and then a variable monthly charge depending on the speed required. In addition, it will be possible to route phones over this network. Phase 2 is currently underway in the west of the county. Gigaclear are still finalizing their implementation plans but Wokefield is currently scheduled for Phase 3 (Sept 2016 – Feb 2017). Further details, updates and links to west Berks and Gigaclear may be found on the Parish website. By using the Gigaclear postcode checker on their website, you can find out when you are scheduled to enjoy Superfast Broadband.

Wheelie Bin Speed Awareness Stickers

Wheelie bin stickers are an effective and cost effective way of reminding drivers to slow down and stick to the speed limit, especially in 30mph residential areas. These stickers are classed as temporary signs and the visual impact is increased as they will only be used once weekly. Your Council have ordered a supply of these and will make them available to residents. Watch website for availability.

Grazeley Green Team

The Grazeley Green Team is a voluntary group of local residents who carry out tasks to maintain Grazeley Green's common land for the benefit of all. It meets at the North end of Goodboys Lane on the first Sunday of every month at 10am for two hours. **More volunteers very welcome.** Bring gloves and small hand tools. The team's aim is to tidy up and maintain the Common Land verges to the north and south sides of Goring Lane between the road and landowners' boundaries within the limits of Grazeley Green. In particular, to provide access to ditches to improve drainage to reduce flood risks and to provide improved site lines for motorists and pedestrians.

Since its formation the team has successfully cleared bramble thickets around the junction of Goodboys Lane and Goring Lane, cleared the verges and ditches between the Pightle and the Old Bell. There is now a pedestrian access virtually all the way to the Old Bell. We would encourage groups to take responsibility for their local environment in other areas of Wokefield Parish.

Vacancy for PARISH CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

Applications are invited for the post of part-time Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to the Wokefield Parish Council.

Applicants should have basic IT skills, experience in financial accounting and budgeting and the preparation of Agenda for, and the accurate recording of Minutes of meetings. Access to a computer, printer and the internet should be available. An average 2.5 hours per week applies to the post. Any additional hours will be paid as overtime at normal rates. Some evening work is involved.

The salary will be within the NALC/SLCC Scale SCP 20-23 (£19,048 - £20,849) pro-rata to the number of hours worked and subject to experience and qualifications.

Applications, including current curriculum vitae, should be submitted to Councillor Richard Thorne, Chairman of the Parish Council, The Courtyard Garage

James Lane, Grazeley Green, Reading RG7 1NB (Tel: 0118 983 1200), from whom further more detailed information can be obtained.

Building Community Together

Building Community Together is an initiative to help people in West Berkshire to help each other.

It aims to make our communities stronger, and less reliant on council services whilst still getting the things they need to thrive.

To support such initiatives, West Berkshire Council has established the "Building Community Together Fund" which will be available over the next two years and will close in November 2017. Local community groups can bid for funds from this pot to help them take responsibility for providing projects and services in their communities to meet local needs.

For more information and examples of current initiatives visit <http://community.westberks.gov.uk/>

If you have an idea as to how this initiative could benefit Wokefield, please contact the parish council via the Parish Clerk: wokefield.pariahclerk@hotmail.co.uk

Clarkes Educational Foundation Report

The Foundation provides educational grants to local schools, youth organisations and residents of the parishes of Wokefield, Stratfield Mortimer and Mortimer West End. It owns part of the land on which Mortimer St Mary's School is built, the School House and its garden. The charity derives its income from renting the School House to tenants and an annual grant from the Stratfield Mortimer Relief in Need charity. Grants are made available to local schools to cover items not available via the Local Education Authority and to eligible individual residents in the three parishes to further their education. For more information, see Parish website.

RE3 Recycling Centres Closed to West Berkshire residents from 1st July

As a result of the Government's austerity measures and resultant reduction in income, West Berks Council had to make difficult budgetary decisions, one of which was to cancel the RE3 contract that allowed West Berkshire residents access to Reading Smallmead Recycling Centre. The nearest recycling centre to Wokefield is at Padworth Lane, Padworth RG7 4JF but note there are restrictions on what can be taken there **and access will be by permit only from 26th September**. Details and information on alternative arrangements can be found on West Berks Website.

Preparation of Parish Plan

Parish plans are a form of community-led plan. Parish plans determine the future of communities and how they can change for the better. They are documents that set out a vision for the future of a parish and outlines how that can be achieved in an action plan. A plan can help a community either support or object to proposals by parties wishing to cause change in the area. The Parish Council are committed to developing a Plan for Wokefield. Watch the Parish website to see how you can get involved in the future of your local community.

Stratfield Mortimer Relief in Need

Stratfield Mortimer Relief in Need Charity is a local based charity covering the parishes of Stratfield Mortimer, Mortimer West End and Wokefield and its mission is to provide relief for those in Need. All its Trustees live in the parishes and are committed to helping and supporting those in need. If you are an individual, family, group or organisation that requires funding for the purchase of any sort of equipment, conversion of a building, running your organisation or society, the purchase of food, medical supplies or fuel for heating they may be able to help. They have contributed to medical equipment, wheelchairs, food parcels, Kindergarten costs, specialist medical care, photographic equipment for a local charity and were a major contributor for the Mortimer Fairground Pavilion and Nurturing Room at St John's School.

They also support the giving that currently occurs within the community, being a contributor to the Together in Mission Project and Fun Day within the Villages and are happy to consider applications from friends and families who identify others in need and would welcome some assistance. All applications received are considered quickly and in complete confidence. Please do not be shy in coming forward. They are there to help you.

Please write to Mrs VJ Glanville, 3 Beenham Court, Newbury road, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG19 8JX or call 01635 268195. The Charity is registered with the Charity Commission as number 237073.

Planning Applications

One of the Parish Council's major activities is to review and comment on Planning Applications referred to it by West Berks Council. Generally speaking, West Berks policy for this area is that there is a presumption against new residential development: only extension, change of use or replacement of existing buildings will be considered.

We maintain a register of applications on our website and record our opinions there together with the current status / outcome as decided by West Berks. West Berks offer a chargeable Pre-planning advice service. For more information, visit <http://info.westberks.gov.uk/>