



WBC Parish Report for October 2022

Cllr Graham Bridgman (West Berkshire Council, Burghfield and Mortimer Ward)

West Berkshire Council

Council

Council met on 6 October and, as well as dealing with public and Members' questions, was updated on the work undertaken by the Constitution Review Task Group to date. The meeting approved the revised parts of the Constitution proposed and work will now be undertaken in anticipation of further revisions that are due to be brought forward to Council in December.

Motions on respect for councillors and the cost of living were debated.

Papers and a recording of the meeting can be found [here](#).

The next meeting is scheduled for 1 December.

Executive

There was no meeting this month.

The next meeting is scheduled for 3 November with an agenda including a Co-Production Framework and WBC joining the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) Integrated Care Partnership (ICP).

HM The Queen

Service of Thanksgiving

A service of thanksgiving for the late Queen Elizabeth II will be held in Newbury at St Nicolas Church at 19:00 on Friday 4 November.

The service will be an opportunity for West Berkshire to come together to remember Queen Elizabeth II and celebrate her life. It will reflect her connection to West Berkshire and fondness for horse racing and give thanks for her lifetime of service to the country and its people.

Local residents have been invited to attend the service alongside guests including representatives from communities across the District

The service will be led by the Revd Will Hunter Smart, Rector of St Nicolas Church and will be streamed online on their [YouTube](#) channel.



Economy

Cost of Living Hub launched

A Cost of Living Support Hub has been opened to make it easier for residents to get help if needed.

Anyone who needs advice and support around cost of living issues should contact staff who will provide advice and match their needs with support available nationally and locally, including from local charities and voluntary organisations.

The initiative has been set up by WBC in partnership with Greenham Trust and the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire and will work closely with the local community and voluntary sector.

The hub is open Monday-Thursdays 8.30-5.00pm and Fridays 8.30am-4.30pm. More information about the hub and an online contact form can be found on the WBC website westberks.gov.uk/cost-of-living or residents can contact the hub by email at costofliving@westberks.gov.uk or by calling 01635 503333.

Household Support Fund

A further £694k is being made available by WBC via the Household Support Fund (HSF).

To date, the HSF, has successfully helped support more than 2,400 households to pay for energy bills, food, clothing and wider essentials. The funding has also supported more than 4,000 children across the district by providing Free School Meal vouchers, recognising the additional financial pressure during this time.

The provision of Free School Meal vouchers will be prioritised to assist and support children during school holidays and will be made available directly via early-years settings and schools.

Cost-of-living help for pensioners

WBC have allocated £200k to four local charities to help pensioners with the significant rising cost of living. With pensioners among those likely to be most affected, some of the £694k grant was set aside specifically for residents of pensionable age. To help provide this assistance, £50k is being allocated to each local charity: Greenham Trust, Age UK Berkshire, Age Concern and the Volunteer Centre West Berkshire.

Cost of Living Appeal

Charities in Newbury are asking for people who can afford it to donate to the Cost of Living Appeal to support residents in desperate need.

Greenham Trust and WBC have each awarded £50k of match funding, which means any grants and donations made will automatically be doubled (until the £100k is fully allocated). All funds raised will go directly to emergency food, energy poverty and homelessness prevention charities.

Environment

Animal Warden Team Awarded RSPCA Golden Paw Print



The Public Protection Partnership's animal warden team has again been awarded a gold award for the stray dog provision from the RSPCA.

Services for West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest Councils are provided by a dedicated in-house Animal Warden team, supported by external out of hours partners.

GOLD STRAY DOGS 2022

The award recognises how the service in West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest is of a 'Gold Standard' delivered by the dedicated in-house team.

Their aim is to provide a service that meets the requirements of the local community and undertake regular proactive work to encourage responsible pet ownership.

aDoddle

Across the District, litter picking groups are popping up to keep their local area clean. Litter picking equipment is available to [borrow](#) from the WBC waste team.

WBC have also launched a new resource to help advertise groups and recruit more volunteers, [aDoddle](#).

Community Repaint Scheme

A new community repaint scheme has been launched at the WBC household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) in Newbury and Padworth in partnership with Veolia UK.

Community repaint allows residents to drop off paint at either of the HWRCs in the usual way. Staff at the HWRC will assess the paint and see if it is in a good enough condition to be re-used. This will then be available



for other residents to take free of charge. This scheme is only open to householders, and cannot be used by traders, retailers or manufacturers.

New LED lighting in Theale Library



Upgrades have been taking place to the lighting in Theale Library.

All the lighting in the public areas has been replaced with energy efficient LED lights. These are not only more environmentally friendly and cost-effective, but they have helped to create a brighter, more welcoming space for staff and visitors.

Food Waste

The new WBC separate weekly food waste collection service started on 31 October. Food waste caddies and liners were delivered over the summer and can now be left out each week.

The weekly collections will take place on the same day as black bin or recycling collections, and will recycle the same food waste as the current service, which includes meat and fish, fruit and vegetables, cheese and eggs, bread and pastries, uneaten food from plates, and tea bags and coffee grounds. Residents are requested not to put any packaging, bones from red meat, oils, liquids or fats in the caddy.

Residents with a communal bin store with shared bins, will receive at least one purple wheelie bin soon and this service will start week commencing 28 November 2022.

Resident's Birthday Surprise

A bin lorry made a special stop to visit Harrison for a surprise birthday visit. Harrison has been obsessed with the bin lorries from a very young age and the highlight of his week is to wave to the collection crews when on their rounds.

WBC arranged with Veolia to stop by his house for a visit where he got to see the vehicle, talk to the crew and see how the tail lifts are operated.



Education

Nature Tots

The Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) are running their popular 'Nature Tots' at the Nature Discovery Centre in Thatcham from November through to April to explore the nature reserve and enjoy wildlife themed activities suitable for children aged 18 months to four years.

Tots can take part in outdoor nature play, stories, trails and craft activities. They just need to be a confident walker and dressed for the weather.

Children must be accompanied by an adult who is able to encourage and help them with the various activities. The cost is £7 per child.

Current Consultations

[Lawrence's Lane, Thatcham / Cold Ash – Prohibition of Motor Vehicles \(Experimental Order\)](#): closes 19 January 2023

[Community Orchard at Almond Avenue Open Space, Newbury](#): closes 30 December 2022

[Station Road, Newbury - Prohibition of Motor Vehicles \(Experimental Order\)](#): closes 22 February 2023

Parish Matters

Stratfield Mortimer

Manns Farm

Having called this application into the planning committee and spoken in favour of the application at the meeting, I was very pleased to see the committee agree with me and grant permission (contrary to officers' advice) for "Conversion of existing farm building and replacement of existing to provide a 'Wellness Centre'" in support of the principle of rural business diversification.

72 Windmill Road

The Planning Inspectorate has dismissed the appeal against WBC's refusal of planning permission, in line with the views of SMPC supported by me.

Station Car Park

I've had conversations with Cllr Morsley about a bid (eg by GWR) to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for some of the funding Slough Council has had to hand back to them/not taken up (due to the financial shambles they find themselves in). We shall see if anything transpires...

Wokefield

Land on James Lane

Another positive decision by the Planning Inspectorate, refusing an appeal against WBC's refusal of permission to build a house outside the settlement boundary in open countryside, in line with the views of WPC (again supported by me).

Pitchkettle Farm

I've chased Planning to see where this application has got to in the process.



Graham Bridgman

Council Member for Burghfield and Mortimer

Deputy Leader of Council and Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing

3 November 2022