

# WOKINGHAM Town Council News



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2024

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Celebrating  
50 years



## A Message from the Mayor

What an honour to be taking office at this time, our 50th anniversary, making me the 50th Wokingham Town Mayor.

Over these fifty years Wokingham has grown significantly, and I can testify after having lived, worked, and brought up my family here, that it has always been a friendly and welcoming place and I'd like to help ensure it remains so for the next generation.

For me, one of the wonderful aspects of the Town Council is that a large part of what we do is focused around bringing the community together and providing new experiences through town centre events and activities. Please take a look inside to discover all that we do, from the marvellous Wokingham Fun Day, Party in the Park, Wokingham in Bloom, allotments and parks to name but a few.

Since becoming a councillor, I have been both astonished and humbled by the sheer number of people involved with local charitable groups, supporting both individuals and the environment, and have become aware of the number of residents who are in need. This is why I have chosen Wokingham SHARE as my Mayor's charity of the year. A very local charity, only established during Covid, it provides fresh food and other help and support to residents across the town & borough.

As your Town Mayor, I'd like to meet as many of you in our community as I can. If you would like me to visit you or your event, or offer support in other ways, please get in touch at [mayor@wokingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:mayor@wokingham-tc.gov.uk)

**Cllr Robert Comber, Wokingham Town Mayor 2024/25**



## Mayoral Year 2023/24 Cllr Sally Gurney

"Being Mayor comes with a level of responsibility and I have loved every minute of it. It has been a privilege to be invited to spend time with residents, volunteers, and staff from across the many charities, organisations, businesses and event organisers. A very special time where I've learnt, listened, and laughed.

During the year we have also raised over £4,000 for my chosen charity Berkshire Search and Rescue Dogs, raising awareness and making new friends, both two and four-legged!"



**Leah, Mini Mayor 2023 – 24**

"As Mini Mayor I most enjoyed meeting the amazing people who live and work in our town. All have encouraged me, told me stories, and given me ideas. I am truly grateful to Mayor Sally for these opportunities, guidance, and encouragement."

# Town Council Responsibilities

<p><b>Green Spaces and Parks</b></p> <p>Elms Field, Howard Palmer Gardens, Joel Park and Holt Copse, King George V Playing Field, Langborough Recreation Ground, Leslie Sears Playing Field, Redlands Farm Park, Viking Field</p>		<p><b>Town Mayor</b></p> <p>The first Citizen of the town and Chair of the Town Council. Meets individuals, communities &amp; organisations to recognise their contribution to the life of our town, and to promote civic pride</p>	
<p><b>Wokingham in Bloom</b></p> <p>An annual RHS competition that uses gardening to transform communities. Financially supported and led by Wokingham Town Council in conjunction with many local volunteers</p>		<p><b>Town Hall's History</b></p> <p>Responsible for many historical artefacts, and the sharing of our history via Heritage Open Days, Museum Open Days, our Virtual Museum and Wokingham Town History app</p>	
<p><b>Allotments</b></p> <p>Management of 8 sites: Ormonde Road, St Paul's Gate, Latimer Road, Gipsy Lane, Mulberry Grove, Binfield Road, Ifould Crescent and Penny Row</p>		<p><b>War Memorial</b></p> <p>An historic memorial inside the Town Hall, which records the names of Wokingham residents lost in the First, Second and Falklands Wars</p>	
<p><b>Hanging Baskets &amp; Planters</b></p> <p>Provision of hanging baskets and planters in the town</p>		<p><b>Christmas Lights</b></p> <p>Provision of Christmas lights in the town centre, including the town Christmas tree</p>	
<p><b>Markets</b></p> <p>Run regular weekly markets on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays &amp; Saturdays. Host the Vegan Market &amp; Antique/Vintage Market</p>		<p><b>Community Grants</b></p> <p>Funding available to organisations and voluntary groups who offer direct benefit to our residents</p>	
<p><b>Planning Consultee</b></p> <p>Consultative body on town planning applications, development proposals and transport issues</p>		<p><b>Events</b></p> <p>Delivery of several arts and cultural events throughout the year to bring the town together, many of which are free</p>	
<p><b>Information Centre</b></p> <p>Offers local information about events, voluntary groups and public transport. Open Mon, Wed and Fri 10am to 2pm</p>		<p><b>Room Hire</b></p> <p>A variety of rooms for community and business use, at the Town Hall and Woosehill Community Hall</p>	
<p><b>Love Wokingham</b></p> <p>A brand, website, and social media feeds created to support and promote our town, local events and activities</p>		<p><b>Weddings / Civil Ceremonies</b></p> <p>Two stunning rooms at the Town Hall available for hire, suitable for intimate or larger, more formal occasions</p>	



# Civic Awards 2023

Each year we recognise residents for their outstanding achievements within the community, those who touch the lives of others, who help make Wokingham the truly welcoming town it is today.

Nominate someone now at [www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk/civic](http://www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk/civic)

## Our worthy winners



**Alan Jeffries** for his volunteering work for Wokingham in Bloom at Cockpit Path Community Garden, Wokingham in Bloom, as a driver for Wokingham Link Visiting Scheme and work with the Community Apple Press. Alan is described by those who nominated him as warm hearted, practical, and generous in time and spirit.

**Andy Goffin** for his volunteering work at the Wokingham Lions Club (including being a Past President), Wokingham Festival, Building for the Future Wokingham, JAC - Just Around the Corner and Emmbrook Residents Association. Andy gives selflessly to support others, is always the first to volunteer, and is community focused.



**Jane Scholey** for her huge contribution to Wokingham in Bloom, both through leading Friends of Howard Palmer Gardens, Wokingham Fire station community garden, and Link to Nature project. Jane's impressive gardening knowledge, her practical mindset, and a loving nature always inspires others to get involved.

**Lucy Martin** for her tireless voluntary work as Operations Manager with Wokingham Foodbank. Lucy has adapted the services to meet the current pressures, ensuring everyone who is in need receives food parcels in person or via a new delivery service. Lucy's ability to listen, not judge, and make sure that people walk away feeling they have been heard and treated with dignity is her superpower.



**Mary Paul** for her dedication to Cockpit Path Community Garden (having established it 10 years ago), the Community Apple Press and many other Wokingham in Bloom projects. Mary is passionate about the community, bringing energy and inspiration to all that she's involved with.



**Pauline MacBrayne** for her boundless energy and years of volunteer work with Wokingham Horticultural Association, Wokingham in Bloom and The Salvation Army. Described quite simply as a do-er, her practical nature, love of making people happy and attention to detail has meant that she's often behind the scenes at many a town event!



**Roger Ford** for volunteering as a driver at Wokingham Volunteer Centre, repairs and maintenance at Helen & Douglas House, volunteering at Wade, visiting care homes with his dogs, Wokingham cycling club and litter picking. Roger is willing to help in any situation and is a great leader and communicator, especially with older people.

“ Thank you for inviting me. I so enjoyed your civic award presentation and everyone's company. The formality of the Town Council civic occasion both surprised and delighted me. ”

# Our Market

The general market runs every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday  
9am – 3pm

We've a wonderful mix of fresh produce, treats, gifts, flowers, plants and delicious street food from local and regional traders. From donuts to gin, alpaca shawls to fresh bread.

Traders vary each day. See Facebook [@WokinghamMarket](https://www.facebook.com/WokinghamMarket)



We host two markets throughout the year which are run by external providers:

## Wokingham Vegan Market

The Vegan Market run by Sparkle Events is held 11am – 3pm on the third Sunday in a month, every other month.

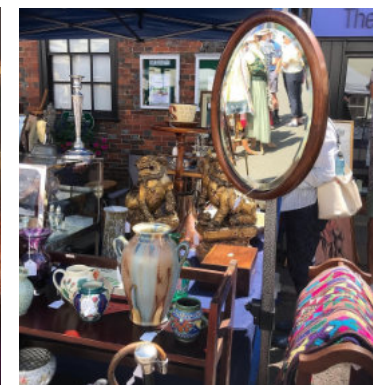
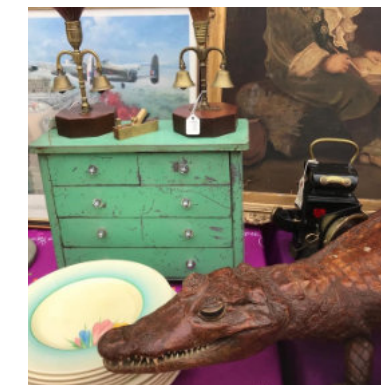
It's easy to see why this market is popular with residents. Brimming with street food, food suppliers, gifts and natural products, it's a lovely way to spend a few hours on a Sunday.



## Wokingham Antique & Vintage Market

The perfect place for unusual gifts and for those who seek out antiques or products that can be reused or recycled.

The market runs three times a year. The next two dates are June 2nd and November 17<sup>th</sup> 2024.  
10am – 4pm.





# Our Services

## How does the Council operate?

We have twenty-five Councillors representing the eight wards within the town. Our elections are every four years; the last election being May 2023. The Council is served by a Town Clerk, who is the Chief Executive Officer, and a number of officers who all work together to meet the council’s vision, direction, and budget.

Like most Town Councils, we work with a ‘committee system’. These are:

- Finance and Personnel
- Amenities
- Arts and Culture
- Civic
- Planning and Transportation

Residents are welcome to attend our committee meetings. Dates and agendas can be found on the calendar on our website [www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk)



## Parks, Green Spaces & Playgrounds

We own and manage many parks and green spaces across the town. Our focus being to create accessible spaces the community can enjoy where wildlife can thrive.

This past year, as part of our park’s improvement plan, we have resurfaced Leslie Sears play park to improve safety, and extended the footpath across King George V Playing Field to aid safe, mud-free transit between Westende Junior and Wescott Infant Schools.

Our parks team alongside Wokingham in Bloom volunteers have transformed Howard Palmer Gardens over the last few years. It’s now a wonderful, tranquil space perfect for enjoying a bit of down time, or partaking in one of the free yoga sessions we fund with Park Yoga on a Sunday morning. Sessions run May to September 9.30am-10.30am. All abilities are welcome!



## Allotments

We run eight allotment sites across the town at present and continue to invest in sustainable management systems such as solar panels, water butts, and plantings that encourage wildlife and broaden the biodiversity within each site.

Our allotments are very popular, and we currently have a three- year waiting list for many of our sites.

However, if you have an interest in growing your own and at least 4 hours a week to work a plot, then do contact us to register your interest.

[www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk/allotments](http://www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk/allotments)



## Room Hire

We have several rooms to hire in our beautiful grade II\* listed Town Hall. With rooms of varying size, it’s perfect for weddings, civil ceremonies as well as community and business meetings.

We also run Woosehill Community Hall. This can be booked for parties, classes, business, or community meetings.

For further details please contact the Information Centre on **0118 978 3185** or [info@wokingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@wokingham-tc.gov.uk)

(photo credit: Lisa Gigante Photography)



## Information Centre

Situated opposite WHSmiths, our Information Centre is open Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 10am – 2pm

Our friendly staff are on hand to help with queries about the town, timetables, event information, details of local days out and local charities.

## Grants

We offer grants to local voluntary organisations. This funding helps deliver projects and services that benefit residents of the town and that support our vision to embrace our past, celebrate our present and build for our future. For details of how our grant recipients use their funding, please go to our Facebook page [@wokinghamtowncouncil](https://www.facebook.com/wokinghamtowncouncil).

Grant applications open in July each year. For criteria and an application form go to: [wokingham-tc.gov.uk/grants/](http://wokingham-tc.gov.uk/grants/)

**New!** - We are delighted to introduce a small in-year grants pot for activities that could not have been planned for in our usual grants process timeline. Activities that will be eligible are those that bring the community together and help the town to thrive.





# Celebrating 50 years of Wokingham Town Council

1974! The year that Abba with their iconic song Waterloo was vying with The Wombles, and Terry Jack's hit single 'Seasons in the Sun' for no.1 in the charts, when women took a liking to flares and trouser suits, a packet a crisps was 5p, and the Rubiks Cube was the must have toy.

For us it was the year that the Town Council was formed. April 1st, 1974, to be precise.

After the publication of the Local Government Act 1972, we split from the then Wokingham Borough Council and responsibilities were split too, with much of the administration taken over by the new Wokingham District Council.

In view of the town's historic past, we retained our Mayor, our Coat of Arms, our civic ceremonies, the beautiful Town Hall, allotments, and the management and running of the markets.

The newly formed council comprised of 25 councillors, as we remain today with Councillor John Tattersall elected as our first Town Mayor.

Full council meetings were held in the main hall, a tradition which continues today. Below is a photo of a 1974 council meeting. We've identified some of the councillors, but can anyone help us fill in the blanks?

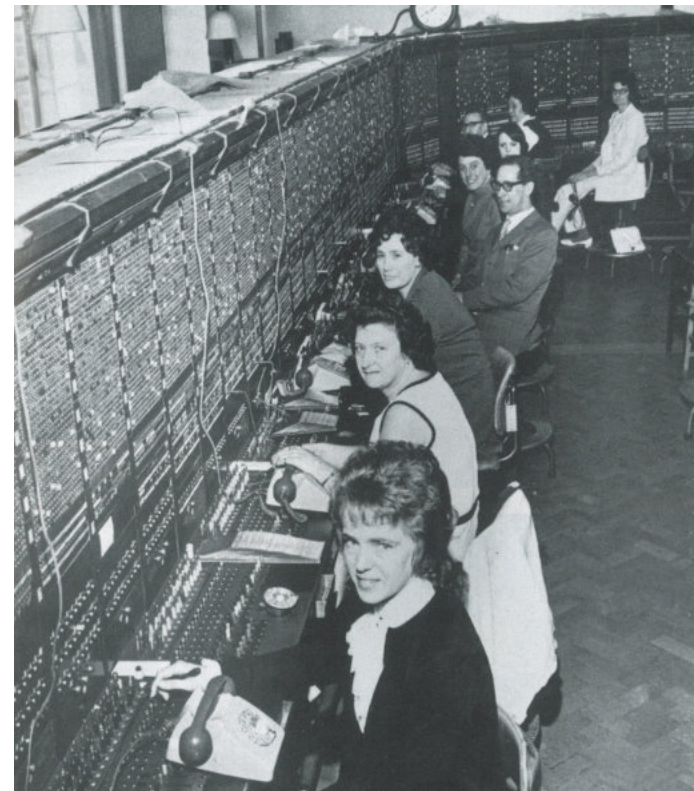


Clockwise from the Mayor:

John Tattersall (Mayor), Rev Kenneth Martin (Chaplain), John West, William Smith, Reginald Child, Robert Naish, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, Margaret Busst, Mary Orgill, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, Robert Boyd, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, John Butcher, Peter Johnson, Alfred Skedgel, Stanley Bowyer, Sally \_\_\_\_\_ (Mayor's Secretary), Richard Jones (Town Clerk), 'Chick' Biddle (Macebearer)



Residents line up to watch the 1978 REME parade



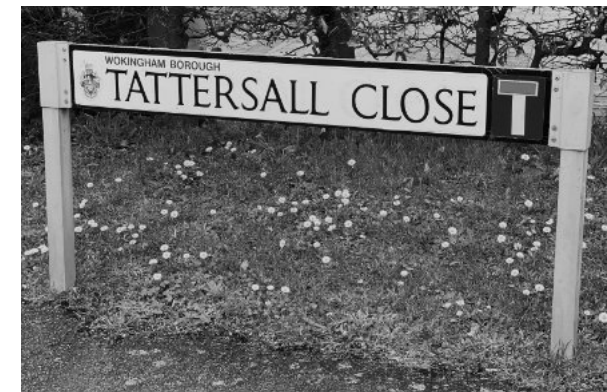
Telephone switchboard operatives circa 1975. Operating out of Wokingham Post Office, Broad Street (below)



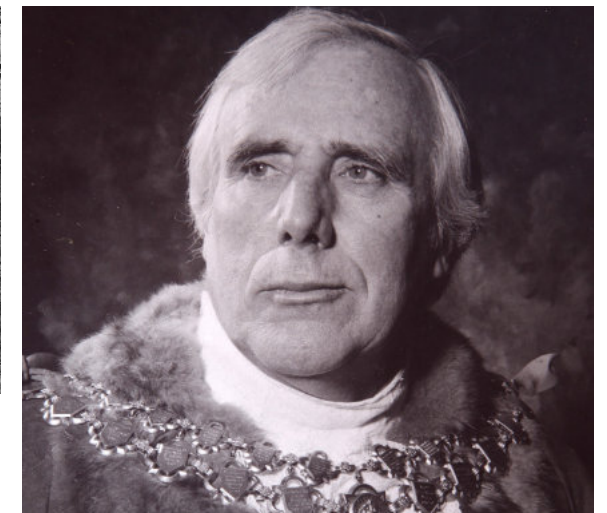
Over the last 50 years, our remit has changed in response to population increase and the needs of our residents.

We:

- Acquired and now manage many green spaces and public parks across the town
- Added allotment sites across the town in response to resident's desire to 'grow their own'
- Created an Arts & Culture committee to manage art projects and run events
- Created Wokingham in Bloom (part of RHS Britain in Bloom) to support wildlife, improve sustainability, and bring people together
- Manage Christmas lights across the town centre



Many roads have been named after past Mayors. With Tattersall Close named after our 1974 Mayor John Tattersall (right)



## 50th Anniversary event – 'Beating the Bounds'

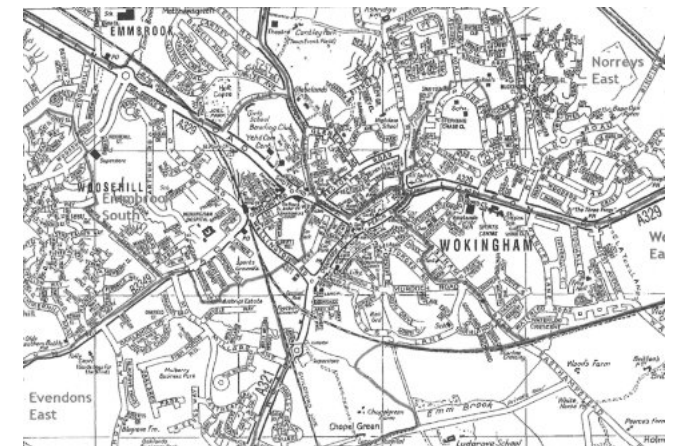
To mark our 50th anniversary we are running a special 'Beating the Bounds' walk with fellow 50th celebrant Wokingham Lions Club.

'Beating the Bounds' was an ancient practice carried out to ensure the knowledge of parish boundaries was maintained and passed from generation to generation. This involved swatting local landmarks with branches to maintain a shared mental map of parish boundaries.

There will be two walks; one for the boundary of 16 miles for keen walkers, and a shorter one if preferred. Swatting sticks will be provided at points around the walk!

**Sunday 8 September, Market Place  
Start between 10am and 11am. Free**

Online registration coming soon







## Wokingham in Bloom doesn't just grow, it flourishes!

Wokingham in Bloom had another hugely successful year in the 2023 RHS Thames & Chilterns Regional Bloom Competition, winning overall best town and a Silver Gilt award.



A number of local projects, showcased as part of the entry, all received high praise and their own individual awards, with some receiving national recognition.

As a result of winning Gold in the regional competition last year, Wokingham in Bloom was invited to take part in the national RHS National Bloom competition, in which it received a Silver Gilt and a Community Champion Award.

“The Wokingham in Bloom’ initiative fosters community spirit where local volunteers unite and forge friendships whilst transforming neglected spaces into inviting, nature-rich places. Their dedication plays a vital role in enhancing the well-being of both the volunteers and the community who come to enjoy all that has been created.”

*Cllr Morag Malvern, Chair of Wokingham in Bloom*



New volunteers are always welcome, however much or little time you have. We can always find a project for corporate or individual volunteers or help develop one. Please email: [bloom@wokingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:bloom@wokingham-tc.gov.uk).



## The Great Wokingham Bug Hunt

Wokingham in Bloom would like your help to establish a baseline count of bugs and mini beast across the town, it will only take 15 minutes a week.

- Between May and end of September
- Anyone of any age can take part
- Participants select an area and observe the bugs and mini beasts they see
- Data will be collated so Bloom can see year-on-year change

You can pick up a printed guide for the Big Bug Count from Wokingham Information Centre or download a copy online at [www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk/bughunt](http://www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk/bughunt) It includes instructions and pictures of bugs plus fun activities for children too.

## Open Air Youth Theatre

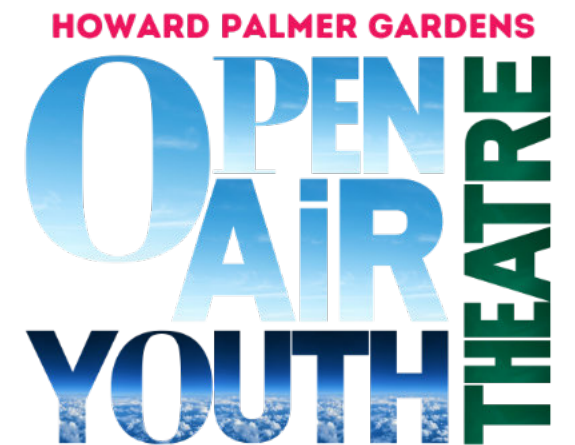
Saturday July 6th 2024

From 5pm, Howard Palmer Gardens

Wokingham in Bloom is not just about creating beautiful nature filled spaces but about using them for the community too.

That's why this year, we have decided to put on a bit of a show! We are delighted to be welcoming the BARTA Theatre Academy to perform in Howard Palmer Gardens, alongside young musicians from St Crispin's School.

They will be performing a fun, alternative version of The Secret Garden. With stalls and refreshments, we're looking forward to an entertaining evening.



## Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of RHS Britain in Bloom



The RHS Britain in Bloom has been connecting people across the UK for over 60 years. To celebrate this anniversary and the role Wokingham in Bloom has played since it started 11 years ago, please join us on **Sunday September 14th at Howard Palmer Gardens. 11am - 3pm.**

We'll have our community apple press, hands on garden activities such as bird house making, seed bombs for birds, pebble painting, plant stalls and much more!





# Town Council Events, Art & Culture

Each year we run a number of free or low-cost arts and cultural events and activities within the town to suit a variety of interests and ages.

For information about all our events plus details of quiz nights, comedy nights, theatre productions and music events across the town, please go to [www.lovewokingham.co.uk](http://www.lovewokingham.co.uk)

## Children's Fun Day

Always a fun day out with mobile farm, mini fairground rides and lots of free entertainment on Langborough Rec. Suitable for 10 years and under

Returns: Saturday 25th May, 2024, 10am to 4pm, Langborough Rec



## Party in the Park

A great day was had by all last June as four fantastic acts entertained us throughout the afternoon and evening, proving Elms Field really is the place to party in Wokingham. Whether you enjoyed the street food or brought a picnic, we hope you'll all join us again this year.

Returns: Saturday 1st June 2024, 3pm – 9pm, Elms Field



## Wokingham Children's Book Festival

One not to miss, with authors coming to reveal their secrets and talk about their latest book for all young bookworms. In 2023 we hosted Nick Sharratt and we are working on the line up for 2024 right now.

Returns: Saturday 19th & Sunday 20th October, Town Hall & Wokingham Library



## Town Hall Tabletop Takeover

Our annual board and tabletop gaming event, that will now be biannual (twice a year)! It was lovely to see so many teenagers at this event. Everyone seemed to really enjoy the Dungeons & Dragons taster sessions so these will be making a return.

Returns: Saturday 16th November 2024, Town Hall



## Heritage Open Day

Each year we, and other historical venues across the town, take part in National Heritage Open Days to celebrate and showcase local history. With interactive displays, demonstrations and activities for children, it's perfect for all the family.

Returns: Saturday 14th September 2024, 11am – 3pm, Town Hall & Howard Palmer Gardens



## Lunar New Year

It's been wonderful to see so many of you enjoy the various aspects of East Asian culture from the story and intricacies of the Lion Dance to music, dance, arts, crafts and delicious street food. Many thanks to Wokingham Baptist Church and Reading Hongkongers for helping us to connect with the local Hong Kong community.

Returns: Sunday 9th February 2025, Market Place







Isn't there a saying 'Love the place you are in?'  
Well, we do, and we love to shout about it

Want to know more about the town?

Find out what retailers we have?

Choose a restaurant?

See What's On locally?

Find an activity or group to join?

Then pop on over to  
[www.LoveWokingham.co.uk](http://www.LoveWokingham.co.uk)  
you'll find everything right there

Follow Love Wokingham on  
Facebook and Instagram too  
[@lovewokingham](https://www.instagram.com/lovewokingham)



## Your Councillors

### Evendons East

- Councillor Susan Cornish**  
via Town Council on 0118 978 3185  
s.cornish@wokingham-tc.gov.uk
- Councillor Sally Gurney**  
via Town Council on 0118 978 3185  
s.gurney@wokingham-tc.gov.uk
- Councillor Adrian Mather**  
07983 445950  
a.mather@wokingham-tc.gov.uk

### Evendons West

- Councillor Adrian Betteridge**  
07985 088298  
a.betteridge@wokingham-tc.gov.uk
- Councillor Warren Dixon**  
07740 812413  
w.dixon@wokingham-tc.gov.uk
- Councillor Alexandra Domingue**  
07903 839436  
a.domingue@wokingham-tc.gov.uk
- Councillor Tony Lack**  
07827 823457  
t.lack@wokingham-tc.gov.uk
- Councillor Heather Richards**  
07377 209443  
h.richards@wokingham-tc.gov.uk

### Wescott East

- Councillor Robert Comber**  
01189 782 321  
r.comber@wokingham-tc.gov.uk
- Councillor Louise Timlin**  
07873 379606  
l.timlin@wokingham-tc.gov.uk

### Wescott West

- Councillor Maria Gee**  
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m.gee@wokingham-tc.gov.uk
- Councillor Annette Medhurst**  
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a.medhurst@wokingham-tc.gov.uk

### Emmbrook North

- Councillor Basit Alvi**  
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- Councillor Alexandra Fraser**  
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- Councillor Morag Malvern**  
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### Emmbrook South

- Councillor Rachel Bishop-Firth**  
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r.bishop-firth@wokingham-tc.gov.uk
- Councillor Keith Malvern**  
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- Councillor Imogen Shepherd-DuBey**  
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i.shepherd-dubey@wokingham-tc.gov.uk

### Norreys East

- Councillor Andy Croy**  
07793 767314  
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- Councillor Matteo Fumagalli**  
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- Councillor Chetna Jamthe**  
via Town Council on 0118 978 3185  
c.jamthe@wokingham-tc.gov.uk

- Councillor Alwyn Jones**  
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a.jones@wokingham-tc.gov.uk

### Norreys West

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b.callender@wokingham-tc.gov.uk
- Councillor Philip Cunnington**  
07711 800401  
p.cunnington@wokingham-tc.gov.uk
- Councillor Nagi Nagella**  
07803 170071  
n.nagella@wokingham-tc.gov.uk



WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL PRESENTS

# PARTY IN THE PARK

**ELMS FIELD, WOKINGHAM**

LIVE MUSIC | STREET FOOD | FREE ENTRY

**SATURDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE**

**3PM - 9PM**



**ABBA FEVER**



**LE FREAK**



**WOMEN IN ROCK**



**MAJESTIX**



Wokingham  
Town  
Council

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

[WWW.WOKINGHAM-TC.GOV.UK/PARTYINTHEPARK](http://WWW.WOKINGHAM-TC.GOV.UK/PARTYINTHEPARK)

