



BERKHAMSTED CITIZENS

*The heart of
Berkhamsted*

www.berkhamstedcitizens.org.uk/

February 2023 Newsletter of the Berkhamsted Citizens Association

Annual General Meeting & Environment Award

NOTICE is hereby given that the 98th Annual General Meeting of the Berkhamsted Citizens Association will be held in the Great Hall of the Town Hall, Berkhamsted on

Thursday 30th March 2023 at 8 p.m.

Nominations for the posts of:

- Chairman
- Vice-Chairman
- Hon. Treasurer
- Hon. Secretary
- Hon. Membership Secretary
- Committee Members

should be submitted to the Hon. Secretary (Miranda Cummins, 27 North Road, Berkhamsted HP4 3DU) in writing not later than 24 hours before the AGM. Consent of the person nominated must be obtained previously.

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the AGM held on 30th March 2022
3. Chairman's Report
4. Hon. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of Officers
6. Election of Committee Members
7. Appointment of Independent Examiners of Accounts

Reminder: only paid up members present at the AGM are allowed to vote

Following the formal business of the night there will be a short break for a visit to the bar. This will be followed by:

Environment Awards for 2022

There are 12 contenders for the Environment Award, all completed by the end of 2022.

Guest Speaker

Daniel McManus, who is the Dacorum Watch Liaison Officer on Owl/Neighbourhood Watch.

Chairman's Report

As I write this report, it is the middle of January, and it has been an interesting time for me as Chairman. I hope you had a good Christmas and wish you all a Happy New Year. For me the most exciting was the news that Christopher Talbot-Ponsonby will be awarded the annual Rotary Civic Award at the Town Meeting on Thursday 2nd March at 7 pm at the Town Hall. This is awarded by Rotary, in co-operation with the Town Council, and recognises outstanding service to the town. Christopher is known to you all as our Treasurer and Membership Secretary, not to mention newsletter Editor, and his support to me as Chairman has been fantastic. His service extends to charity work at the St Francis Hospice, and Oxfam, and in Northchurch, which are just examples of his dedication to this area generally. My colleague, Susan Johnson, our Townscape Chairman, wrote a citation for the Town Council and Rotary and she struggled to keep to one page with all his involvement in the town and Northchurch. Well done, Christopher, for all your hard work behind the scenes!

We had an excellent illustrated talk by Ron Basciano in October regarding the history of the Luton Hoo walled garden which was attended by about 40 members. I hope those attending enjoyed the talk and will visit the garden this year.

We had booked our MP Gagan Mohindra to update us on Thursday 19th January after our open forum last year. However we discovered that the Berkhamsted Society (School) was hosting Rev. Richard Coles on the same date. In the circumstances we thought it best to move the MP's visit. (Just as well, because the Rev. Coles was a sell-out.) By the time you see this newsletter we will have had Gagan's visit, on Thursday 9th February. We are planning to do an email with revised details; another reason for the remaining 30 or so members who don't feel able to give us email addresses to have a change of heart. No email, no update! My plan is to extend the evening to 'friends' of members to try to persuade them to join - only £10 per year. I hope this works, as our membership is still dwindling.

I am pleased to announce that Simon Heywood has joined the main Committee having been a stalwart on the Townscape Group and, of course, the presenter and author of the annual Environment Award which is always the highlight of the AGM; this year on Thursday 30th March.

Finally, and most importantly, I am mindful that our membership is at an all-time low for the modern era. We have held an evening workshop to look to the future (3-5 years) of the BCA and we are lucky to have a professional change and sustainability consultant, Victoria Collins, on our Committee to lead it. Most of our Committee members were able to attend, and a professional slide presentation was produced, which we will use as a working document. We are studying it to see how we will implement the five main areas identified. We need to have more members, and Committee members, to help the BCA now and in the future to keep the Association moving forward into the next 100 years. Please, phone me on 07856 665813 or 01442 873548 if you are able to help us.

Gordon Bluck
chairman@berkhamstedcitizens.org.uk

Reach Out Volunteers required, can you help?

Reach Out is looking for people in Hertfordshire who can spare an hour a week to help an elderly person in their local area who is home from hospital, or living with frailty, and feeling lonely and isolated.

Reach Out offers companionship and practical support to people as they recover and rebuild their confidence. Many elderly people really appreciate someone popping in for a cuppa, or helping them by collecting small items of shopping for them. *Reach Out* links up people who are isolated with volunteers who can offer a friendly face and a chat.

Just giving a small amount of your time can make a huge difference.

Find out more here
<https://www.reachout-project.org.uk/>

or contact *Reach Out* via email at reachout@nhcvs.org.uk or by calling 01462 689403.

AROUND THE TOWN

Annual Town Meeting & Rotary Civic Awards

Do come along to the Town Hall's Great Hall on Thursday 2nd March at 7 pm to support Christopher T-P being presented with the Rotary Civic Award 2022. There will also be a presentation of Junior Civic Awards to Imogen Jacques & Eva-May Wood. Then stay for the Annual Town Meeting at 7.30 pm. It will be the last chance to hear a review of what the Town Council has been doing before the local elections on 4th May.

The Berkhamsted Castle Trust

The Castle Trust is considering its future development. It is having a Trust strategy meeting in March, so watch this space for the outcome.

Berkhamsted's Big Coronation Event

Berkhamsted Town Council's planning for the Big Coronation Event - a Street Party on Monday 8th May for the whole community, to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III - is now well under way. (Has to be Monday as there are markets on Saturday and Sunday)

The Council would like to involve as much of the community as possible, so we are inviting residents, schools and community groups to join in making bunting etc to decorate the High St and to volunteer on the day. Local businesses will be invited to sponsor the event and/or provide prizes for our Big Raffle, raising funds to put on free children's events over the summer.

Tables and chairs, with an option to book a table in advance (to guarantee a place), will line the High Street; street entertainers, a music stage and a food court are planned, and the History Society will mount an exhibition, in the Civic Centre, of photos from previous coronations.

Watch this space!

If you would like to volunteer on the day or to get involved with making decorations for the High Street, please contact Cllr Anne Foster
anne.foster@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk

Graham Greene International Festival

Will take place in 2023 from Thursday 28th September to Sunday 1st October.

First 'Charles III' Post Box in Berkhamsted?

Wait! What's this? Is this a new Royal Mail letter



box still under wraps and awaiting its first item of postage? Just as we thought that Royal Mail had 'lost interest' in letters and the future was e-mail, so this new post box has been installed at the eastern end of Berkhamsted. Apparently

98.3% of houses in the UK are within half a mile of a post box; someone at Head Office has evidently found that the statistics needed to be kept favourable, so this new installation has recently been carried out.

We wait to see if it bears a 'EIRR' crest or a CIIR one! Has anyone seen any more new post boxes in the area?

NEW YEAR'S DAY WALK

I would like to apologise again for the short notice cancellation of the BCA New Year's Day walk. The walk didn't take place in 2021 or 2022 because of COVID. Unfortunately, I wasn't up to leading it this

year due to having had knee surgery at Easter last year, from which I hadn't fully recovered. Hopefully all will be well to start the walk again at the start of the BCA's Centenary year - 2024! Another loss associated with the NYD walk is that, as many of you will know, the *Valiant Trooper* pub in Aldbury has closed during the pandemic and the future use of the building is uncertain. Other refreshment options are available in Aldbury, but the loss of the *Trooper* is disappointing....

Paul Crosland

£2 Maximum Fare on Local Buses in January, February and March

The Government has introduced a maximum single fare of £2 on local bus services for the first three months of this year. Participation in the scheme by operators is voluntary which means that, in our area, the maximum fare applies only on the 500 route from Aylesbury to Hemel Hempstead (and on other Arriva routes operating from Hemel to St. Albans, Watford etc.). The information on whether buses operated by Red Eagle Buses on the 354 to Chesham and the Sunday 501 to Aylesbury, Hemel and Watford is contradictory between the national Government website and the Hertfordshire Intalink website. Little Jim's Buses 502/532 to Hemel via Potten End or Bourne End are not participating in the scheme.

Townscape Group

Susan Johnson, Chairman, writes

At this time of year we are concentrating on our annual Environment Awards. We even lavish praise on some developments! But we do not forget the basics. We offer help to those who want to make sense of the planning system, but we keep our comments going to the Dacorum Borough Council planning website. Here are some updates on the representations the Group has been making on the most significant sites since the last newsletter:

- **Aitcheson Rafferty, 154-158 High Street (now Ashtons)** We remain hopeful that Ashtons will be made to amend its side window.
- **New development at 57 South Park Gardens** An application now in for 6 houses rather than the 5 given permission; no decision yet.
- **The Tooth Club** at Black Prince Yard has been prevented, for now, from erecting internally-lit signage in the conservation area and next door to a listed building
- **Felling trees subject to TPOs and Conservation Area controls**, without justification or suggested replacements. The poplar at *The Crystal Palace PH* seems to have survived the chop, all but pollarding, but that won't save the driveway next door.

That's the updates; now for the new ones:

- **85-87 High Street** The extensive, inappropriate work to this heritage (locally listed) asset, which we had highlighted to Enforcement in 2019 and continued to object to, has been refused permission. Next steps awaited.
- **Milton Cottage, 287 High Street** Dispute over the design and colour of the replacement coach door, at a very prominent position opposite the top of St John's Well Lane.
- **42 Charles Street** Another shop being converted into a house – no objection. But its frontage should match its neighbours.
- **29 Bridge Street** Excellent scheme to replace uPVC windows and doors with painted wood, in the heart of the conservation area. We supported, and it's been granted!
- **Bungalows** mostly in Northchurch being made into two-storey houses. It ruins the street scene, and also takes away housing stock, particularly for older people.

We have contacted senior management of DBC Planning about the general slowness of decision-making, and lack of enforcement. They assure us they are recruiting staff as quickly as they can to break the backlog; but are incidentally hampered generally by Government restrictions on the planning process in the Chilterns.

Come along to the Town Council Town Planning Committee to listen, and to make your voice heard on these and other matters. If you need any help to make representations on a planning matter, whether in person or written, please get in touch. We might not agree, but we will help you put your point of view across. townscape@berkhamstedcitizens.org.uk

On a general note, we are sorry to see that the *Lamb PH* has closed; and that the *Copper House* has 'paused' trading. We are particularly sad to see the demise of the High Street NatWest bank. A lot of fundraisers will be inconvenienced, to say the least. We now rely on the HSBC staying open. M&Co's conversion is coming along. Have you tried the new, independent bookshop?

Centenary Projects We are working on them! More news in the summer, after the Coronation.

Environment Awards

In 2023 on Thursday 30th March we will have our AGM in the Great Hall of the Town Hall. After the business of the evening we will consider all the contenders for the Environment Award 2022 in a presentation, thanks to Simon Heywood of the Townscape Group. All the developments will have been completed by 31st December 2022.

We hope you will come along to see where the accolades (or brickbats) for 2022 go. Will this be another year of multiple winners? This year, as we had *slightly* fewer developments completed by 31st December 2022, all contenders, not just the 'public benefit' ones, are being considered. These, in no particular order, are as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. 22A Ashlyns Road | extension of chalet bungalow to create two storey house |
| 2. Durrants Lane Bearroc 2 | 84 dwellings and provision of amenity space |
| 3. 51 Bridgewater Road | demolition and replace with 5 bed dwelling |
| 4. 61 Bridgewater Road | single storey front & two storey front and side extension etc |
| 5. 11a Meadway (The Courtyard) | new single storey private dwelling with integral garages |
| 6. 11A South Park Gardens | demolition and replace with 4 bed chalet dwelling |
| 7. 15 The Meads | demolition of existing garage & conservatory and build one and two storey side etc |
| 8. Canal Fields Children's Play area | complete revamp |
| 9. Ponderosa, Barncroft Road | first floor extension, front gable extension with roof lights & rear dormer windows |
| 10. Somersall, Shootersway Lane | one & two storey side extn, alts to fenestration and enlargement of driveway |
| 11. 3 Finch Road | reconstruct whole house etc |
| 12. 7-9 Anglefield Road (r/o) | construction of 2 detached houses |



Dacorum Borough Council Garden Waste Subscription Service

Our garden waste collection is now an opt-in paid subscription service. If you wish to continue receiving fortnightly green-lidded bin collections you will need to subscribe and pay an annual fee.

Subscriptions for the 2023 collection service (starting in March) are now available to buy using the link below. You can also purchase additional green-lidded bins.

If you do not have internet access call 01442 228000

[Subscribe now](#)

How does it work and what is the cost?

- To continue having your garden waste collected, you need to sign up to the new paid subscription service. Registration for subscriptions is now open via the link above. Those who are unable to access the internet can call our Customer Services on 01442 228000.
- **The annual subscription charge is £45 per wheeled bin.** All additional green-lidded bins will be charged at the same rate.
- Once subscribed you will receive a subscription sticker with a unique serial number. This sticker will need to be attached to the body of a Dacorum Borough Council green-lidded bin to make it eligible for collection. Collection crews will also use their in-cab system so they know which households have subscribed to the service.

However, if a bin does not have a sticker attached then there will be no collection.

- Green-lidded bins will be collected fortnightly from the beginning of March until the end of November. **Find out when your next collection is.**

What are the alternatives?

If you decide not to sign up to the paid service, there are many ways you can still recycle your garden waste. You can compost it in a **home composting bin** and turn it into valuable and nutrient-rich food for your garden, or take it to your **local recycling centre**.

Terms and conditions

Please view our full

[Garden Waste Subscription Service terms and conditions \(PDF 139KB\).](#)

Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Association
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