



# UPDATE

## THE NEWSLETTER OF BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL

November 2018

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### TOWN MAYOR'S WELCOME

by Cllr SUE BEARDSHAW

It was a real honour to be elected Town Mayor in May of this year. Since then, I have had the opportunity to visit many of the voluntary and charitable organisations that offer such invaluable services and facilities to the people of Berkhamsted. There are so many unsung heroes within our community and it has been a privilege to be invited to observe the outstanding contributions being provided for the health and wellbeing of Berkhamsted citizens. Since May, I have been delighted to attend a number of functions which include: Bridgewater Sinfonia Concert; Great Berkhamsted Bake Off; Happy



Wanderers Club; Berkhamsted Aspiring Business Leaders; Multiple Sclerosis Centre, Wendover; Hertfordshire Young Orchestra; Berkhamsted Castle; Rectory Cemetery Project; Herts Valley CCG AGM and the Battle of Britain Memorial Service at St Bartholomew's Church. The range of events reflects the aims of these organisations to encourage both good health and wellbeing involving all ages of the community; from involvement in music and business to support for the elderly and frail, and those with chronic conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

With many more functions planned, I look forward to continuing to experience more of the worthwhile contributions these voluntary and charitable organisations provide for the people of Berkhamsted. The Deputy Town Mayor, Cllr Barbara Newton, also attends other, similar functions. Her hard work and dedication is very much appreciated.

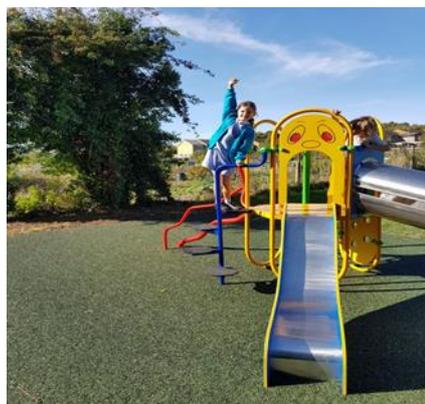
The Town Council regularly provides grant funding to charitable and local organisations and applications are considered at Finance and Policy Committee meetings. So far this year we have provided funding to Berkofest, the British Legion, Event Berkhamsted, Junior Parkrun, Sunnyside Rural Trust and Herts Vision.

I hope you enjoy reading about some of the projects and initiatives that the Town Council has been involved in recently. Contact details for the Town Councillors and Council officers are at the back of this newsletter. Please remember that all Full Council and committee meetings are open to members of the public who are always welcome. There is the opportunity for public participation at the start of each meeting. Meeting dates are on the website and notice boards in the town.

## Children's Play Area In Normandy Drive

The original play equipment here had to be removed by the site owners, Dacorum Borough Council. Most items had failed safety inspections and we regret that there has been some delay in securing and installing the new items, including new safety surfaces; this delay was partly due to land ownership discussions with the Borough Council - now happily resolved.

Just before the end of August we were delighted to see the re-opening of the Normandy Drive play area, with the installation of a set of completely new play equipment. The Town Council contributed £5,000 to the overall costs.



Local children have quickly returned to use the new set-up in this popular location.

Thank you to our testers and photographers.

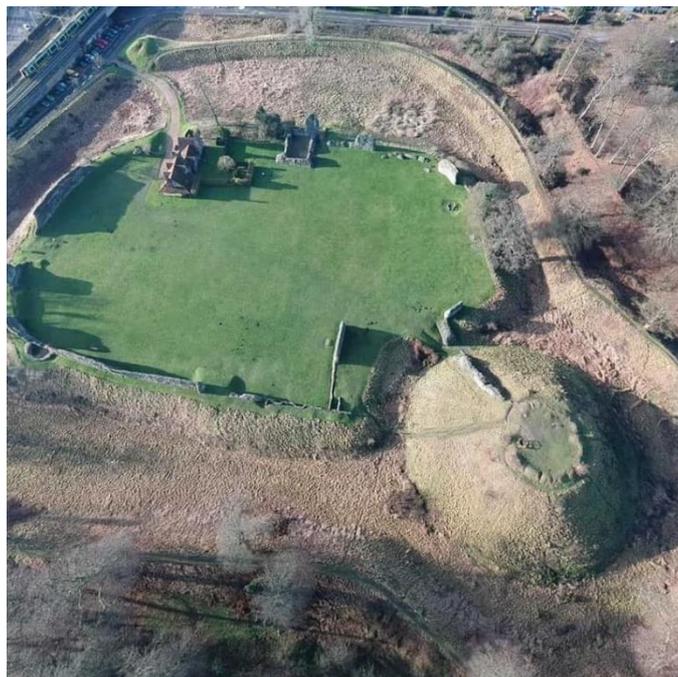
Come along and see the rest of the play items for yourself.



## Berkhamsted Castle

Berkhamsted's Norman motte and bailey castle is a scheduled ancient monument of great historic importance. The Town Council is proud to be involved with and support initiatives to enhance the castle site as an asset for the Town. The Town Council currently grants a licence for the operation of the Visitor Room to the Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society (BLHMS). Its volunteers advise visitors and answer questions about the history of the site, its significance, key historic figures

and events. They also conduct tours for visiting school groups and other organisations. 2018 saw the culmination of over two years research by dedicated members of the society.



Photograph courtesy of Will Adams

Adrian Barham and BLHMS colleagues tracked down the previously unknown owners of the three acre area of land to the east of the site. The land had passed from owner to owner over the years, most recently moving through a series of complex pharmaceutical company mergers and acquisitions. The current owners were US pharmaceutical company Mallinckrodt. Following detailed discussions the company generously agreed to donate the land to the newly formed Berkhamsted Castle Trust together with a donation towards maintenance and set up costs. The land was handed to the Trust at an event at Berkhamsted Castle on 11 May 2018.

The Trust will focus specifically on providing education about, promoting and maintaining Berkhamsted Castle. It aims to foster the use and enjoyment of the castle by the public, and undertake historical research and archaeological investigation into the castle and people or events of historical significance connected to it.

The new charity has been registered with HMRC for Gift Aid purposes and online donations can now be made at [donate.berkhamstedcastle.org.uk](https://donate.berkhamstedcastle.org.uk). You can also donate to Berkhamsted Castle Trust via text message on your mobile phone, by texting the words "MOAT00 £5" to 70070 to donate £5. The Town

Council will nominate a representative to act as a Trustee and looks forward to working with the Trust on projects that will further enhance the Castle site for the benefit of the public.

### Festival of Light Sunday 25 November 2018

The Town Council is looking forward to another successful Festival of Light and to working with the many wonderful groups and individuals who make the event such a hugely popular feature of the Town's calendar. The afternoon will feature stalls lining the High Street selling festive fayre, crafts, gifts, mulled wine and mince pies together with activities, games and raffles. Stalwarts of previous years' arrangements have been members of the Lions Club of Berkhamsted who arranged for Santa's Sleigh to visit after the switching on of the lights by the Town Mayor. The Town Council is very happy to announce that The Rotary Club of Berkhamsted Bulbourne has stepped into the breach and will ensure that Santa will be there as usual. Another popular attraction previously arranged by the Lions is Mrs Claus and the Elves Posting House, a firm favourite with younger residents. Thanks therefore to Westfield PTA and friends who are taking over the arrangements and will donate funds raised to the Keech Hospice, the Hertfordshire children's hospice.

The winner of the best dressed window competition run by Berkhamsted Citizens in association with the Town Council will also be announced.

Put the date in your diary:

**Sunday 25 November**

starting at 3.30 pm.

Entertainment will include the award winning Lockers Park Chapel Choir, Rock Chorus and children from Gobstoppers Theatre Arts.

There may also be a visit by the London Community Gospel Choir. Please watch the Town Council's website for further information.



### Remembrance Sunday 11 November

Sunday 11 November is the centenary of the armistice that ended World War I. Town councillors will be joining British Legion members at a market stall on Saturday 10 November to sell poppies for this year's Poppy Appeal.

## Markets

Berkhamsted has two flourishing weekly markets on Saturday and Wednesday, a monthly farmers market and a selection of speciality markets at other times.

The Saturday Market is a social event as well with a free stall for local organisations to talk to the public.



The Country Market Stall (still called the WI stall by many) gives local people the chance to sell their home cooking, preserves, honey, eggs, plants, fruit and vegetables with some crafts as well. Everything is freshly baked so our customers can take it home and freeze it. There is also small range of gluten free, vegetarian and vegan goodies. Allergens are listed on the labels. The group pioneers the use of recyclable materials and is always looking to increase its range and welcome new cooks and producers.

If you would like more information about the Country Market Stall please contact Eileen Heylin on 01442 255862 and she will be able to explain how you can get involved.

## Tree Planting in the High Street



The trees along the High Street are highly valued by residents and really enhance the appearance of the Town. For some time, the Town Council has been asking Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) to replace trees that had previously been removed due to disease or

damage. Persistence has paid off and, at last, some trees have been planted helped along by a very welcome donation from County Councillor Ian Reay's localities budget and the Town Council contributed this to the cost of digging the tree pits. Thanks must also go to Town Councillor Gordon Yearwood who has been out with his watering can to ensure that the saplings survived the crucial first months after planting which was especially important during the hot summer we had this year.

## Defibrillator Outside Civic Centre

The Lions Club of Berkhamsted very generously donated £6,000 to the Town Council for the purchase and on-going maintenance of a publicly accessible defibrillator for use to save lives in cases of sudden cardiac arrest. The donation was to mark the Lions Club centenary in 2018 which sadly, also saw the closure of the Berkhamsted branch because of lack of volunteers. DBC, our landlords, gave permission for us to install the device on the front of Berkhamsted Civic Centre and we are glad to say that to date the defibrillator has not had to be deployed. It is designed to be used by anyone and training is not required. The device is registered with the ambulance service and once 999 has been called advice will be given over the phone on how to open the cabinet, operate the equipment and possibly save someone's life. We have already had one training session for members of the public and will be planning more.



Town Mayor Cllr S Beardshaw with former Lions Club President Mr P Block by the defibrillator.

Many thanks to all members of The Lions Club of Berkhamsted for their great contribution to events and activities in the Town over many years.

## Play Streets for Berkhamsted?

A recent Town Council Committee was asked to discuss the idea of a number of Play Streets being introduced to Berkhamsted; there is a National "Playing Out" initiative to allow and encourage children to play outside and form local friendship groups within their community.

The idea is that certain streets are closed off to traffic for one or two hours on a certain day/days of the week and younger children are allowed to play out, with volunteer adults being in attendance to supervise and control traffic.

Currently, most of the Play Street schemes in the UK are in inner cities and towns but there is a successful scheme running in our near-neighbour Tring - so would it work in Berkhamsted?

There were differing views expressed at the Council meeting but it would be helpful for residents to comment on the idea, including:

- would a scheme work in Berkhamsted?
- is it needed here?
- do we already have enough accessible open spaces?
- would we get enough volunteer parents to supervise?
- What locations could be considered?

Any comments please to [enquiries@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk)

## Allotments

Berkhamsted has four beautiful allotment sites so if you want to combine exercise, growing fresh produce and enjoying good company to enhance your wellbeing perhaps you should think about applying for a plot.

All the information you need is on our website [www.berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk) or call

01442 800146. Although there is a waiting list for each site the wait is usually a matter of months rather than years at most locations.



Sunnyside Allotments (Old and New) are off Ivy House Lane. Other sites are at Dellfield and Butts Meadow.

## Local Plan to 2036 – Green Belt Threat

Dacorum Borough Council held a consultation last November seeking comments on The Local Development Framework Issues and Options Paper in preparation of the Local Plan to 2036. In particular this paper examined the level of new housing required in the Borough and the future role of the Green Belt. A number of public meetings were held in the town to alert people to these proposals which not only include significant increases to the existing target of 430 new homes a year but also identified eight sites in Berkhamsted and Northchurch that could be put forward for release from the Green Belt. A Working Group made up of Town Councillors, local residents, members of Berkhamsted Residents Action Group, Northchurch Parish Council and Berkhamsted Citizens Association met throughout the consultation period. Together with input from the public meetings already mentioned, the group helped the Town Council to prepare its response, objecting strongly to the proposals. Those comments are available on the Town Council's website. Key points made include the lack of infrastructure in Berkhamsted to make such development viable and the inappropriate release of Green Belt land driven by the need to meet quotas. It was felt that the urban capacity of Hemel Hempstead would be best placed to absorb such

development rather than imposing growth on market towns.

The Borough Council has recently published the consultation responses which run to 1,923 pages. These responses are being analysed and we have been advised that the next stage of the consultation is planned for the autumn of 2019. So, no firm proposals have been made yet and we will keep you informed as matters progress.

## Multi storey car park project (MCPC)

Most residents will already be aware of the approved plan to build a multi storey car park on the site of the current car park off Lower Kings Road, adjacent to Waitrose.

The Lower Kings Road car park will remain open until the New Year. Construction of the new MSCP is planned for January 2019, once the utilities companies have completed their diversionary works. Proposed changes to other car parks in town will be implemented when the construction commences on the MSCP. During the construction period the Lower Kings Road car park will close and customers will be asked to utilise the alternative parking available in town. A temporary car park on the Moor is planned to supplement parking in the town centre. At the time of writing a second, revised planning application for this temporary car park has been submitted as a result of pressure from the Town Council, groups and individuals in the town who wished to see the retention of three trees at the access point.

The new MSCP car park which will provide 327 parking spaces and is expected to be operational by early autumn 2019.

## Public Participation

On the next page you will find the contact details of your town councillors and the staff employed by the council. The Full Council, Finance & Policy Committee and the Transport and Environment Committee each meet six times a year.

The Town Planning Committee meets every three weeks to consider planning applications in the civil parish of Berkhamsted.

Members of the public are welcome at all meetings and, as the Town Mayor has said in her welcome, there is an opportunity for you to speak at the start on subjects relating to the agenda.

Meetings are generally on a Monday starting at 7.30 pm in the council chamber which is on the second floor of the Civic Centre at 161 High Street.

## TOWN COUNCILLOR AND TOWN COUNCIL STAFF CONTACT DETAILS

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Castle	David Collins	01442 876368 david.collins@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
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West	Gordon Yearwood	gordon.yearwood@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk
West	Peter Matthews	01442 866738 peter.matthews@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk

Committee	Chair	Vice Chair
Town Planning	Cllr Anthony Armytage	Cllr Barbara Newton
Finance & Policy	Cllr Barbara Newton	Cllr Jackie Jones
Transport & Environment	Cllr Tom Ritchie	Cllr Peter Matthews

Town Clerk and RFO	Janet Mason	Telephone: 01442 800146 e-mail: <a href="mailto:enquiries@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk">enquiries@berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk</a>
Finance/Allotment Officer	Christine Jerram	Contact details as above
Town Warden	John Bushby	Contact details as above
Our Website: <a href="http://www.berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk">www.berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk</a> ;		Postal address below

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