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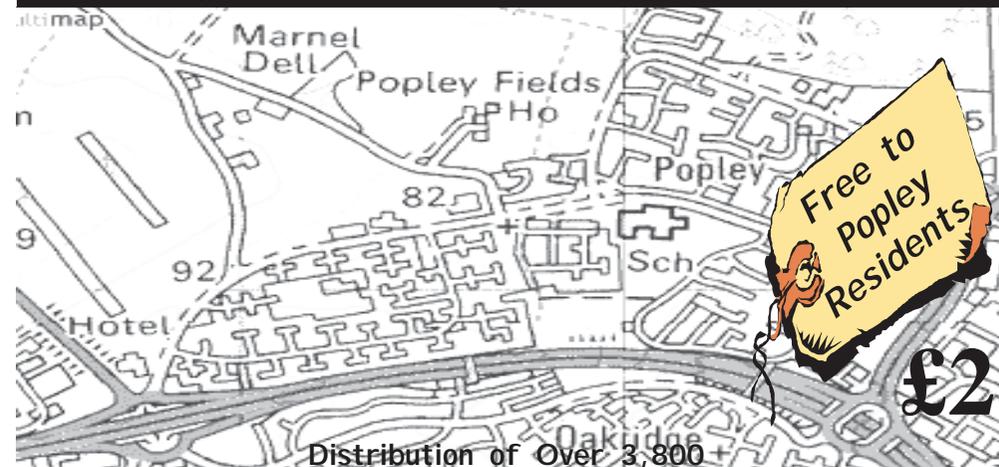
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POPLEY MATTERS

OVER FIFTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

February 2008

Issue 72



FULL OF LOCAL NEWS AND VIEWS

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Closing date to submit articles & adverts (20-02-08)

Message From the Editor:- We were very sad to hear of the death of Kathy from Your Country Florist I will remember her as a lady that nothing was too much trouble to do and the smile she gave when she could see that the flowers and effort were appreciated.

This year is going to be a year of many changes in Popley and I suspect our patience will be tried with road works and new electric cabling among other things. As I have lived in my house since it was built I can just vaguely remember what it was like as a “building site”. So I will try to remember what it was like when I got my wonderful house and how many other young couples will know the thrill my husband and I did in 1971 when we first moved in. To report any concerns or to get updated on the road works phone 0845 603 5633. For the electric cabling in Abbey Road call 0208 900 0203 for any questions or complaints.

Please be careful there seems to be a lot of “bogus callers operating in Basingstoke. There were quite a few reports just before Christmas then I heard of the same type of caller in Bucksin and now again in Popley. Ask for their ID but don’t let them in. We have heard them say they are from BT, Virgin, Sky and others. I always ask if they don’t mind if I check with the police if they are genuine, I close and lock the door and they seem to disappear very quickly! Don’t forget Valentines Day on the 14th. I love the home made card my husband usually makes for me, it means so much more than the expensive commercially made ones. Of course I make him a card too. We will have been married 42 years in April.

We try to keep you all informed in Popley and give you all the chance to ask questions or make comments. The advantage is that we live or work in Popley so not only do we care passionately but we are here on the doorstep so to speak. We always welcome people who want to write in our Popley magazine and try very hard to keep neutral and be as fair as possible. We don’t always agree with some of the comments but that does not stop us from printing your thoughts and comments. There was quite a debate on reducing the speed limit in Popley Way and Carpenters Down. Not only was the overwhelming consensus of opinion that we should but the evidence of reported accidents bares this out. It is confusing to say the least to have 30 mph and 40mph signs on Popley Way so Highways will be doing some work on getting that sorted out.

If you want to write an article or send a letter to the Letters Page please send them to The Editor, PO Box 6727 Basingstoke RG24 9GG. The same address goes for advertisements too. We have a website www.popleymatters.org.uk and we have a message board and forum where we quite often have some lively debates, why not come and have a look and if you want to you can join us.

Hits on www.popleymatters.org.uk website for month of January: 3892

To pass back ideas, comments, suggestions, articles or to offer help please write to:- Popley Matters Group, PO.Box 6727, Basingstoke RG24 9GG, email editor@popleymatters.org.uk. The views in this publication are not necessarily the views of the Editorial Team, the members of the committee, or Popley Forum/Matters.

Editorial Team:- Editor Jane Frankum; Sub-Editor Paul Frankum; Chair Terry Jones; Vice Chair Ron Rowe; Acting Treasurer/Distribution Iris King; Committee Members Louise Tuck, Kate Lomas;

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Youth Volunteers: Joseph Doran, Matthew Stokes.;

More Volunteers Welcome

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Simone's Column

Hi again. For this issue I thought I would talk about a number of things. Firstly I wanted to say how sad it was to see the old school knocked down. I think a lot of people will miss the school that has been there for so long, and I bet a lot of people had some good memories there, I know me and my friends did.

Another thing I wanted to say was that if all the young people could keep an eye out for any elderly neighbours in the winter as the weather has been quite bad for the past few weeks and I know that some of the older generations suffer sometimes in the bad weather conditions, so it would be great to help.

The other thing I want to mention was recycling, because I have noticed that some people do but there are still a huge majority of people who don't recycle around Popley. It is only about 1 in 3 that do. It is such a shame, as recycling is such an easy thing to do. It does not take a lot of effort to separate recyclable things like plastic and cardboards from your normal everyday rubbish. There are new bottle and clothing banks that have been put up which is great because more bottles can be recycled instead of being dumped in landfills, which is what keeps happening. Outside the Abbey Road shops car park there is also a clothing bin, which is a great idea, so if you have any unwanted clothes, instead of just throwing them out why not put them in the clothes bin and they will be given to a charity and put to good use.

For those of you that don't know what can be recycled then you can look at this sign  which can usually be seen on the back of recycling materials. If you want to learn more about recycling there are lots of websites like the BBC for instance or just try typing "recycling" then having a go because it is really easy and simple and it helps to protect the environment.

Well that's it again from my column so keep reading and take care.

Simone

Urgently Required

Volunteers to assist in running a lunch and social club
for people in the local community,
The club takes place at Melrose Community Centre, Popley,
On Fridays from 10am-3pm. Please contact John Houghton
On 07738457700 or 01256 816215 for further information.



We are currently planning our first community event of the year, a football day during half term week. It will be held at Popley Fields Community Centre playing fields on Thursday 21 February, between 10am and

3pm. The event will be a tournament for young people aged 8 years to 17 years old. As it is a tournament, you will need to be available for the duration of the day. Please bring with you the appropriate footwear and clothing for playing on grass or a hard surface and for various weather conditions. You will also need to provide your own lunch and refreshments. Drinks and snacks can be purchased in the community centre.

Registration forms will be available prior to the event from Popley Fields Community Centre and Melrose Hall, or you can sign up on the day.

You are all welcome to come along to join in either on your own or with your friends to make up a team and have a ball!!

If you don't have a full team we will make sure everyone gets to be in one!

For further information regarding this event please contact David and Vikky at the Community Warden office on 01256 845508, or email community.wardens@basingstoke.gov.uk.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Please remember if you have anything you would like to discuss with us, either stop for a chat when you see us in the street, call us on 01256 845508 or email community.wardens@basingstoke.gov.uk.



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Letters to The Editor.



Dear Editor, We must live in the worst part of Abbey Rd. possible. Black bags full of rubbish are continually left out for the cats to rip open right near our house and the bus stop, which is situated directly outside our back gate. It is a dumping ground for everyone getting on a bus and discarding their cigarette ends, crisp packets and empty bottles and cans of drinks.

Editors Reply: I have certainly noticed that around bus stops especially there seems to be collections of cigarette ends and food/sweet wrappings. There used to be lots of litter bins around the estate but they were constantly vandalised and set fire to Perhaps designs have moved on and there could be some litter bins provided?

Dear Editor, Why did the Council not provide alternative parking along Abbey Road while the road works are being done. To give a few

hours notice not to park in front of our house and not give us where we can park is insane.

Editors reply It is not roadworks but upgrading of electric cables done by the utilities, something the council have no direct control over. I agree it is not very professional and I will be letting them know

Editors Note: We look forward to reading your letters on all sorts of subjects. We do not print your name or address if you wish us not to but of course we cannot accept letters that are sent anonymously.

Please send your letters to:
The Editor, Popley Matters,
PO Box 6727, Basingstoke
RG24 9GG or email:
editor@popleymatters.org.uk
or phone 819924



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You may have noticed our new raised beds outside the hall. Our project to regenerate the gardens is in full swing and everyone is invited to come to our Gardening Club, the next dates are 9th and 23rd February 1-3pm, tools and refreshments are provided, just bring your wellies! Any plant donations will be highly valued.

Calling all Bingo fans! 22nd February sees the second family bingo night at Popley Fields run in conjunction with ourselves and Bermuda Close Association. Doors open at 6.00 eyes down

7.00.

We are pleased to welcome Marnel Early Years to our hall. They will be holding family courses and sessions on a Tuesday from now until July, while their new premises is being built.

Thinking of or trying to quit smoking? Why not come to our session on a Wednesday 10-11am, Run by the NHS the sessions are free, you will be offered support, advice and products to help you reach your goal!

MONDAY:

9.30-12pm Friendly Café

7.30-10.00pm Peregrine Healing and Holistics

TUESDAY:

TBC – Molly Moomoo Moosic

4.00-7.30 Petite School of Dance

8.30-3.00 Marnel Early Years

WEDNESDAY:

10.00-11.30 - Popley Little People, Mother and Toddler group

10.00-11.00 NHS Quit Smoking Clinic

12-2pm Oasis Lunch Club

7.15 - Slimming World

THURSDAY:

9.30-12PM Friendly Café

FRIDAY:

10-3 Together

6.00-7.45 Youth Club - age 5 to 10 years 8.00- 9.15 - age 11 plus.

SATURDAY:

9.00-12.30 Petite School of Dance

SUNDAY:

Melrose Christian Fellowship - Contact Pastor Phillip Keeble on 462351 for times of services.

Melrose Community Hall is available to hire for Birthdays, Wedding Receptions, Conferences and all your private hire needs. We take bookings for both occasional and regular events.

Please Ring Vicki Jackson on 01256 420676 for more information or e-mail us at Melrosehall@tiscali.co.uk.

You are warmly invited to Worship with us

Sunday morning 10.30 to 12.00 noon

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Councillors Page: I have once again demanded that road safety in Popley Way and Carpenters Down be treated urgently. I am now assured that 30 MPH in these two residential roads will be addressed. Further surveys will be progressed for the crossing near Tobago Close. I have asked for railings and better signage and markings to show it is a school route crossing too. There were seven reported accidents in Carpenters Down in the last three years, this should be evidence enough that road safety measures are needed.

The works to improve traffic flow with all the new houses begins very soon on Aldermaston Roundabout, it will take up to fourteen months. Because the hospital, ambulance station and Fire station are so close and use this route daily measures are in place to make sure that traffic should not be too inconvenienced. During peak times the lanes should be open and at least one lane at all times. Much of the work will take place at night and hopefully noise will be kept to a minimum.

I was disappointed that the Primary Care Trust (PCT) have said that a doctors surgery in the new development is not needed, I beg to differ on that. With more than two thousand more houses over the next few years I strongly believe that one will be required. Only time will tell. Jane Frankum County Councilor Basingstoke North(819924 or by email jane.frankum@hants.gov.uk

Popley West: No one could have failed to see the Electric company working in Abbey Road. This is a major works to upgrade the cables. The Basingstoke Highways department has said there should be no need to close any part of Abbey Road. I sincerely hope that this proves to be true.

We have secured some grant money to use to help stop the illegal camping of Travellers in Popley, including fencing and a gate at Crockford Lane, Hornbeam hedging will be planted by the Shakespeare Health Centre and work on the Tewkesbury Close Open Space.

There are some temporary parking restrictions being introduced in the new development area around Merton Rise and Chineham Lane and this should help to make that area a lot safer to walk in.

We have noticed an increase with rubbish around the estate, after voicing our concerns we were told that there had been quite high levels of sickness but that it should improve now. Watch this space! Paul Frankum ☎472496

Popley East. Falkland Road scored highly as a road in Basingstoke that is suffering high levels of parking problems it is 17th in the list of 375 areas that need addressing. As you can appreciate only around 20 a year are able to be tackled, but at least it is a start.

The first lot of residents have moved into the homes on the old John Hunt School site. And the school is now demolished I am sure there will be many memories spoken about the old school some happy some sad. But there will also be people who will be grateful to move into their new homes.

There are plans to develop some leisure facilities in the woods behind Popley Fields Community Centre I look forward to getting the report back with the feedback from the residents that went to the meeting advertised in last month's Popley Matters. Mary Brian ☎322108

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New Year Debt Detox



Citizens Advice says people are paying a high price for being ill-informed and unconfident when it comes to crucial financial decisions. That debt 'hangover' from Christmas could turn into a nightmare if people ignore it.

The charity suggests the following tips

- Check that you are not missing out on money that you should be getting in benefits or tax credits, tax rebates or allowances. Information can be found on www.adviceguide.org.uk or your local CAB.
- Don't bank on an overdraft, if you need more money don't just run up an overdraft without talking to your bank first – it will work out much more expensive
- If you are considering taking out a loan, make sure you shop around and get the best deal. Look out for low interest rates.
- Be wary of consolidating your debts, get advice and don't put your home unnecessarily at risk. Defaulting on a loan secured against your home could mean you lose your home.
- Plan to build up an emergency savings fund by saving a regular amount each month
- Shop around for the best savings rates and check regularly that it is still the best deal available
- Check out tax efficient ways to save money like cash ISAs (Individual Savings Account)
- Be wary of low interest credit card transfers. Check the terms and conditions carefully.
- You may be losing money by sticking with your existing bank, shop around, it's simple to change.
- Be organised if you have borrowed money make sure that you pay on time even if it is only the minimum, or you will be faced with additional charges.
- Start planning and saving for next Christmas – make a note of what you wish you had done differently and start saving now for next year.
- Don't automatically renew your car/holiday/house insurance without comparing prices.

Citizens Advice said:

"All too often people come to a CAB when they've already reached crisis point or can no longer cope with their problems. By carrying out a regular financial overhaul and taking some preventative measures many problems could be averted before they become crises. Traditionally people make New Year's resolutions to change bad habits - we're urging people to do the same with their finances."

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www.base2000.co.uk Bookings/enquiries for Base 2000 - Jan or Pete Saunders 01256 410514



The Christmas decorations and pastimes have been packed away for another year (apart from the odd Christmas tree literally hanging around the building awaiting a recycling collection) and the Group is raring to go for an action packed 2008.

Leaders received details of new Challenge Awards For All sections which came into being in January. The Beaver section has four new challenges (Fitness, Creativity, Global and Promise) whilst the Cub section has only three (Promise, Community and Outdoor Plus) and the scout section just one (Promise). The new awards have been introduced as a result of feedback from leaders and demonstrate the Scout Association's determination to ensure the structured programme of activities and interests keep abreast of modern day needs and expectations. The purpose and design of Participation (Joining-in) Badges has also been reviewed. These can now be issued each year on the anniversary of taking the Promise or used as a Birthday badge.

Beavers attended the District Beaver Scouts' New Year party in strength in January. They had a super time and returned home tired but bursting with enthusiasm. We are grateful to the District Leaders for arranging the afternoon and look forward to the Easter Fun Day in March. The Cub section are brushing up their knowledge in readiness for County Cub Scout Mastermind Competition and are also practising football skills to tackle the District Six-a-side Football Competition. Scouts are likely to be preparing for the County Winter Camp at Lyons Copse during the February half-term holiday or developing cooking skills. The annual District Inter-troop Cooking competition takes place in March and good preparation/menu planning and excellent cooking and presentation skills will be required to win the Trophy.

We have vacancies in all three sections and new recruits are welcome, simply come along to Base 2000 and speak with the Section Leader or give them a ring to discuss the opportunities.

We are anxious to find more adult help for the Cub Scout section in particular and to appoint a new Group Scout Leader to coordinate the sections and oversee the functions of the Group Executive Committee. Anyone interested in the GSL post is advised to speak with Andy Cullen, District Commissioner Basingstoke East scouts on 012656 472275. Those wishing to help with sections should contact the Section Leader (details below). All potential leaders are required to complete CRB enhanced clearance before being confirmed to an appointment.



Boy and girls 6-8 years

Meetings: Tuesday 5.30-6.45p.m.

Eve Alexander 346510



Boys and girls aged 8-10½

Tuesday 6.30-8.15p.m.

Elaine Devenport 323453



Boys and girls aged 10½-15

Monday 7-9p.m.

Colin Karslake 410559

Sentinel

Sentinel would like to say a big thank you to everyone regarding the Longfellow Regeneration Scheme. We are very grateful that people are being so co-operative and obliging, especially those residents who have been inconvenienced while work is being carried out in the car park areas.

Basingstoke and North Hampshire NHS Foundation Trust.

In July 2007 I was appointed to the Council of Governors at the Basingstoke and North Hampshire NHS Foundation Trust to look after the interests of Older People and Voluntary Organisations within the Borough of Basingstoke & Deane.

I am sure you have read in the local media that our hospital has achieved Excellent for use of resources and excellent for quality of services and I can assure you we have a brilliant hospital which we should all be proud of. It is very important that you become a member of your local hospital (which is FREE) so that you can be kept informed of everything that is happening at your hospital, and also to have your say in how the hospital should be run. Please also encourage your families and friends to become members, anyone over the age of 14 can join. Becoming a member does not mean you will be expected to give up your time or support the hospital financially. More it is about getting information and news about what is happening at the hospital. If you want to, you can get more involved as a member, but you do not have to if you do not want to. If you need an application form or you need any information, I am the person you need to contact on 07792535116 or e-mail gerald.merritt@ntlworld.com, or you can contact the Foundation Trust office on 01256 313601.

A great deal of work has been done in the past, but there is a great deal more to be done in the future to keep our hospital in the forefront of Excellence, and the credits that can be gained for all those who use our hospital. Let's all work together to make our hospital a better place for us all and I look forward to hearing from you. Gerald.L.Merritt (Governor)

Over 55's Forum

Our next Open Forum meeting will be on Wednesday 13th February 2008 at the carnival Hall, Council Road, Basingstoke. Time 9.30 registration 10.00am start till 2.00pm.

Guest Speakers. Police Chief Superintendent Mark Chatterton - David Edwardson (Retail Liaison Manager) and Theresa Chapman (Events & Promotions Manager) from Festival Place - Jacky Dascombe B & N H Hospital (Head Physiotherapist)

Daffodil Days

Marie Curie Cancer Care provides nursing for seriously ill people in the comfort of their own homes. The major fund raising event for the year is the Daffodil Day. This year there will be collections in Festival Place, Chineham Shopping Centre, Whitchurch and Overton. They will take place 8 March.

Can you spare an hour or more to help on this day? Do you know anyone living in the Overton or Whitchurch area who could organise the rota for the collections? If so please call 023 8026 3123.

Last year your generosity raised £510.60 at Chineham Shopping Centre. Thank you very much.



Winter Driving

Bad weather can strike suddenly so the best advice when severe weather hits is to stay off the road. If you must drive, make sure you are prepared for the conditions. Here are our top ten tips for winter driving:

- Ask yourself - is your journey absolutely essential?
- Check local and national weather forecasts to prepare for hazardous conditions.
- Tell someone at your destination what time you expect to arrive.
- Take time before a journey for your vehicle to defrost
- Have your car checked and serviced regularly
- Beware of black ice, taking extra care in shaded areas
- Use major roads for journeys rather than smaller, quieter roads
- In wet and icy conditions brake gently to avoid skidding
- Keep a safe distance from other vehicles - give yourself time to react
- Always keep within the speed limit - it is there for your safety

Before you go - Make sure you always have a warm coat, hat and gloves in the car in case you get caught out. Always carry a full charged mobile phone with you so you can call for help.

On the road - Be extra vigilant during the winter months. The braking distance is twice as far on wet roads and increases 10-fold on icy roads.

Useful contact points and further information:

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service homepage: www.hantsfire.gov.uk

Community Fire Safety Department: 02380 626809

Email: community.firesafety@hantsfire.gov.uk

Dear Friends

I hope you're like me and find it intensely frustrating when you ring some organisation and get an endless series of options to choose from – press this, press that etc. - only to eventually reach the right department and be told 'all our lines are busy please ring back ...dah dah...dah!'

What would it be like if God was like that?

Thank you for calling My Father's House. Please select one of the following options:

Press 1 for requests

Press 2 for thanksgiving

Press 3 for complaints

Press 4 for all other inquiries

What if God used the familiar excuse, "I'm sorry all our angels are busy helping others at the moment; however your prayer is important to us and will be answered in the order it was received so please stay on the line..." It might be followed by:

Our computers show that you have already prayed once today. Please hang up and try again tomorrow so that others may have a chance to get through ... or

*This office is closed for the weekend to observe a religious holiday. Please pray again on Monday after 9.30a.m. If you need emergency assistance please contact your local priest.**

We live in an 'on-demand', instant society. We so often treat God like he is the 5th emergency service (after police, fire, medical and the AA) if all else fails PRAY! Give me an answer and give it to me now!! But what God wants is a long term relationship with people who want to get to know him as much as he wants to get to know them. That relationship begins with prayer. Talking to God is one of the most life-transforming activities we can take on in our lives. So if you haven't tried it, can I recommend it? We offer free lessons every Sunday morning at 10.30 a.m. Look forward to hearing from you (as I'm sure God does.) and thank God that he doesn't have voice mail, and that he listens whenever we pray and that is something that will never change!

God Bless.

Arthur.

Vicar, St Gabriel's

** from A Bucket of Surprises compiled by J. John & Mark Stibbe*



Hello Folks,

In 2007 I wrote an article about the (Popley Safer Neighbourhoods Team) or (PSNT). This is a group/panel/team set up to tackle local issues and at a community level. Getting back to the way things used to be in some respects but with a modern twist. Anyway just to let you know that this Team is now pretty much established. The Team is made up of over 20

members of dedicated Popley fans like me. The Team will meet 4 times a year to discuss local priorities that have arisen from actual information/concerns etc from the locals. In the first PSNT meeting held in the month of January the Team will discuss the findings of the two community meetings held in Popley in December 2007. The Team will continue to work in conjunction with local community issues. I would urge any individual to contact myself if they believe that the PSNT can help with any local issues. Every Quarter the Team will select from the issues raised, 3 core issues to tackle. Team members will then report back to the self appointed Chairman of the PSNT (Me) as to what work they have conducted in relation to the 3 priorities. This information and results etc will then be fed back to members of the community. This will be in different formats such as the Popley Matters/Newsletters/community centre notice boards etc.

If you want to find out more about the PSNT and it's members then please get in contact. I will respond to private messages, smoke signals and most modern formats. I can be contacted on 0845 045 45 45. This isn't a direct line but if you leave your name number and details and what you want to discuss the PSNT I will surely get back to you.

As always the Popley Team would like to hear from you to discuss community issues good or bad! I have thick skin but am equally determined to make Popley a safe and nice place to live. When I started work on the Popley West Beat in 2006 I had a preconceived view of Popley from what I had heard etc. I thought I was going to be working in a war zone! Well let me reassure you that this is simply untrue. I have found Popley a vibrant community spirited place and a joy to work in. I hope I will continue to meet more of you when I'm on duty and you will give me feedback on your Popley experience.

All The Best

Dan Carter

Popley West Beat Manager



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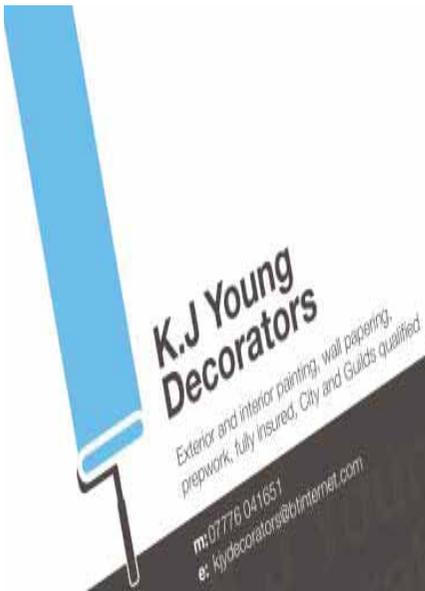
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FAIRTRADE BASINGSTOKE

Would you like to do something positive about reducing inequalities in our world? Does it matter to you that most of the price you pay for something is going to the 'middle man' rather than to the person who produced it? If you buy goods with the FAIRTRADE mark you know that the farmer in the developing world has received a fair price for their products. This helps producers to support their families and invest in a better future, so that they can work their own way out of poverty.

You will have noticed in recent years that our local supermarkets and other shops have been increasing the range of Fairtrade goods that they stock. In addition to bananas, tea, coffee and chocolate, you can now buy Fairtrade wine, muesli bars, sugar, flowers and lots more. Martin Luther King once said, "Before you've finished your breakfast this morning, you'll have relied on half the world."

The Basingstoke Fairtrade Group aims to promote Fairtrade in the borough. It does this through events such as Fairtrade Fortnight and educational activities in schools, churches etc. Members of the Group are currently surveying shops and catering outlets to find out if they sell Fairtrade goods and, if not, offer them advice about how they can make the switch. Within the next few months the Group expect to publish a directory indicating where you can buy Fairtrade goods in the borough.

If you are a retail or catering outlet and already sell Fairtrade products please contact us to ensure that your name appears in this directory.

Basingstoke Fairtrade Group meets one evening each month at Basingstoke and Deane Council Offices to plan and co-ordinate activities. If you would like to get involved with this group or find out more, please contact Lucy Martins on 01256 845620 or at lucy.martins@basingstoke.gov.uk.

The Vyne Community School offers a wide range of community activities:



Leisure Learning and Adult Education Programme - Courses commence Jan 08
 Out of School Care & Holiday Clubs - quality care at affordable prices
 Indoor & Outdoor Sports Facilities (Netball, Football, Badminton courts) for hire
 Halls & Rooms for Hire - meetings, parties, community groups
 Fitness Studio - no membership fee, monthly or casual use
 Dance Studio - sprung floor, mirrors.

CAR BOOT SALE - EVERY SUNDAY 09.30-1.30 pm - £5 per vehicle / Refreshments



HALF TERM HOLIDAY CLUB 18th - 22nd FEBRUARY
 £16 to 3:30pm / £19 to 5pm / £21 to 6pm
 Arts & Crafts / Fun activities / Games
 Opens 8.30 am



CRAFT FAIR SUNDAY 11TH MAY



Assisted by
 Basingstoke
 and Deane

For more information please contact the Community Office.

Tel: 01256 407037 Email: community@vyne.hants.sch.uk

www.vynearts.com (community)

The Vyne Community School, Vyne Road, Basingstoke, RG21 5PB.



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food and if he saw a quick snack as it were, it was down the hatch.

Why is it we all seem to be getting all these funny naming bugs now day is it because we are too clean that children's immune systems do not build up as they grow. I say this because we as kids would go home black God knows what we had played in, a quick wash of the hands, or if you could get away with it, not. Grab a bite then out again playing with snail races and finding the longest worm, you know the good old fashioned playing around in dirt and mud.

Well I have jumped around a bit this month but I wanted to say as much as I could before a big change in the next few months to come.

I hope you all get what you wish for and I hope that great and a better future for the Popley family lay ahead. For all the readers on the site I hope you liked the Baby G stories and the Old Codger, as much as I did that's how mad I am. I was laughing at my own writing of them as I went along.

See I told you I have lost it. Thank you all for your e/mails and letters that you have sent me over the last few years. thank you to all the school children that read my book and sent such lovely letters to me

This is the
The Old Codger

Weight Watchers Moves

Thursday 3rd January was a big night for local Weight Watchers Leader, Sallie Lovelock. Along with the launch of new programme material "KickStart", Sallie launched her revamped meeting in Popley with the idea being - New Year, New Venue, New Time - New You! With the fantastic introduction of KickStart, Area Sales Manager Liz McMahon and Sallie felt it was a brilliant opportunity to make changes - and what better time than the first meeting of the New Year.

Previously held at Melrose Hall at 6.30pm, the major changes included a move of venue to the new Everest Community College, and a change of time to 7.00pm. The new college is a fantastic new venue - and with it's white and pink interior in the Community Room, it complimented to new KickStart packaging extremely well!!!

There are excellent parking facilities, it's really bright and clean, and even though the group meets on the first floor next to the gym there is a lift so that no one is excluded from attending.

KickStart is a fantastic new initiative which asks our members to choose from a selection of menus for Low Point breakfast, lunches and dinners, aiming to give them the best possible start to their weight loss in the first two weeks. We are always looking for new members to come and join us, and at the moment there is free registration and each new member will receive a KickStart pack worth £10, but which are only available while stocks last. For further information please contact Sallie Lovelock on 07730 369279



January hasn't been a very good month, regarding the weather.

We had a trip to Thatcham where the Tornados came away 2-0 victors, and their manager told me that he had never seen such a one sided game end with such a low score. With John back in the midfield, this left Jacob to work his magic putting through 2 delightful passes for Fyn to slot home.

Since then we haven't had much league football. We were invited to a 5-a-side tournament at the Power League on Friday 18th. It was a complete shambles and I must apologize to all regarding the time schedule. We were told it would kick off at 18.30 and finish at 20.30; in fact it didn't start until 19.00 and finished at 22.45. But, The Tornados reached the semi's and were very unlucky not to reach the final.

I really enjoyed the football side of it, because our boys were really enjoying themselves and that's what it's really all about.

I must point out Again! About some parents winging and whining, regarding weather, kick off times and decisions managers make regarding their team.

You must remember that it is a winter sport and the weather is something we cannot predict.

You must remember that it is a Sunday and it is an early kick off, Managers have to get there an hour earlier than everyone else, say no more!

All I want is for parents to come and watch, support your team and son/daughter.

Thanks for your support. Lee Austen

Tel: 07810444995 Email: mfcpopley@hotmail.co.uk

Special scheme set up to help children and parents learn to play

A play scheme, which aims to provide specialist help and fun for children with special needs and their parents, has been launched by the borough council.

Children attending the sessions, which from January will be run on alternate Saturdays at Limington House and Maple Ridge schools, will be able to interact with other children with similar conditions, such as attention deficit disorder and autism, in a safe environment. The equipment used will include soft play areas, parachute games, arts and crafts, remote control cars and, at Limington House, a special sensory room.

There will be an opportunity for parents to learn more about how to get the most out of play time with their child. And parents will also be able to stop for coffee and a chat to share information and issues with each other.

The scheme, which is run by Basingstoke Play Limited, has been set up thanks to the Big Lottery Fund children's play initiative programme funding the borough council successfully won last summer.

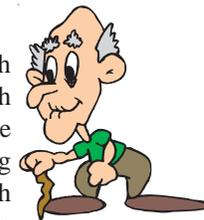
Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Development Cllr Clive Sanders said: "This is one of the many play facilities that we're able to provide thanks to the funding received from the Big Lottery Fund.

"Those attending the sessions will be able to benefit from playing with dedicated, trained staff on hand to support both the children and parents.



*Basingstoke
and Deane*

Diaries from The Old Codger



We are into February already. What would I wish for in 2008? I wish that all my family stay safe, the residents in Basingstoke all turn to each other and give that little extra bit of help and kindness that only Basingstoke people can give. We in Basingstoke have such a variety of people, going back to when the town was being built, and now we have all mixed with each other taking bits from each of their culture. This has turned Basingstoke into what it is today. Many people across the country look upon us and see how well the town is, and what community spirit means to the people in it. I have seen people on TV and listened to them on the radio knock us. That is because they are jealous of the way we are, a strong force to be reckoned with.

I would like to see our council listen to the people before any decisions are made because it is us the people they represent, so they should listen. I don't want to go down the road of politics. All I will say is decisions can split whole communities, and affect the way of life in them. Don't make decisions on what the council think we want, ask us first.

A chap I talked to just after Christmas asked where, I live I told him, I live in Basingstoke. His reply was "what a dump", I asked how many times had he come to Basingstoke, his reply was "I pass it on the motorway". My reply was "Now can you remind me what are your crime figures in Southampton? Tell me how many murders in Southampton was it last year". That was then end of our conversation.

Our police have been doing a great job over the last few years getting into the communities around our town. This is how it should be, driving around in cars is not policing. It is being up front and talking to the community that gets results. Everyone once more knows who their beat bobby is and that they will listen to you, if you need advice they are there to help. Though not immediately as I remember in the past. They talk to our youngsters and get in their minds. Yes we still have the die hards but you will not get rid of that. Kids will get into trouble but nip them in the bud when young stops it. I know this is a sore point at the moment, but our great Wardens have done a great service to our communities they should all be commended for their dedication in the work they have done. The police and people all know that our Wardens could never be replaced.

This may sound a bit strange in February but start to put up your nesting boxes. At the end of the month birds will be starting to look for the best nest sites. Nest box's are very cheap at the garden centres now, or do what I have been doing over the last few years going on line to R.S.P.B. they have some good recommendations. I know this food is a bit extra but well worth buying I get 28lbs of it at time on line and get it delivered it is seed that dose not germinate so no pulling out unwanted grasses and weed I will give you the web site and you can look at the products they have at the end.

A bit of nostalgia, I don't know about the places you lived, but after the war our air raid warden would still run up our alleyway to the church on the green and sound the siren. He was a tubby man, and very short he still put on his air raid wardens helmet. I would laugh as it looked so funny on him, the helmet looked the size of a dustbin lid. As soon as he went up the ally between Granddads and our house Mick our dog would run out. He was a Great Dan he would shoot straight down the shelter, Granddad used to store food, One day he came out licking his lips Granddad forgot that he had a big lump of beef hanging up. Well Mick always loved his

Sherborne St John Parish Council

2008 is an Election Year – there will be **Parish Council elections on Thursday 1st May**. You probably feel quite strongly about village life – why not stand for election to the Parish Council and help to keep Sherborne St John the village you love to live in.? You do not need to have any special skills or knowledge – just common sense and community spirit. So put your hand up and join in.

The Parish is in good form. The **Village Hall** had a great year in 2007 – and promises even more in 2008. The Parish Council was able to contribute a further £20,000 to the overdraft account – the overdraft now stands at £75,000. (All contributions are still very welcome!). The **Post Office** escaped the cuts announced in 2007 and, thanks to Janet, continues to be a cornerstone of village life. (Please continue to support it!). The **Village School** maintains the highest standards (congratulations on the latest Ofsted report!) and its popularity. Following the retirement of Tony Cox as Headmaster, a new regime is in place under acting Headteacher Karen Payne. We wish them all success in 2008! The **Chute Pavilion** remains an outstanding facility; the Parish Council has allocated funds in the 2008/9 budget to assist maintenance/ upgrading.

The Parish Council was far from satisfied with the quality of **grass cutting and hedge trimming** last year, and went out to tender for the 2008 season. Five quotations were received – the winning bid came from Basingstoke & Deane BC who were awarded the 2008 contract. They have already started hedge trimming to good effect.

As previously indicated – **Traffic Calming on the A340** has progressed far too slowly for those who live alongside the road. Between going to press and the start of February, a meeting is scheduled with Hampshire County Council to take the process further. In the meantime, HCC has agreed to install a Gateway feature to the south (Basingstoke side) of the village, they are budgeting to upgrade the traffic island opposite the Methodist Chapel in 2008/9, and are pursuing an extension of the 30mph limit. In correspondence, following the accident at Gales Garage, HCC has also confirmed that it is considering making improvements to the Elm Bottom junction. The Parish Council is concerned to implement these changes – before there is a serious accident.

There has been a rush of development activity in recent weeks. The **Planning Committee** tries to match individuals' aspirations, community needs, and the requirement of the village overall. In general, over-development is a pressure which the Parish Council continues to oppose. In particular, we note that there is a current planning appeal concerning the status of the SINC wetlands in the middle of the village. The progress of all planning applications can be followed on the BDBC website – you can reach this direct or via our site - www.ssj.hampshire.org.uk

Merton Rise and Marnell Park continues to grow despite the mud and rain! The safety of some of the roads through Merton Rise (still largely a building site) is a matter of some concern. New Parish Residents are all welcome – and welcome at the facilities in Sherborne St John.

The **Bottle Bank** located in the Village Hall car park is destined to be removed in late January. The noise levels caused by the bank have been a matter of concern to local residents for some time. At the December Parish Council meeting, residents living near the facility confirmed the noise constituted a nuisance and made a forceful argument to have the bottle bank removed. So far, BDBC is unable to provide a quieter alternative. The Parish Council therefore, regrettably, voted to remove the facility. Please take your bottles to the bottle banks located at the local supermarkets or Wade Rd – don't throw them in with the rubbish!..... *You may have thoughts on recycling – let the Parish Council know what you think!*

... and finally **Power Cuts**. There are too many – the Parish Council is seeking urgent explanation and improvement from Scottish & Southern.

Julian Crawley

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“Kingfisher’s Flying”



Following an unprecedented start, Kingfisher Housing Association has now reserved more than 50% of their first release of new apartments at Skyline Plaza in Basingstoke for Shared Ownership sale. The success follows a concentrated marketing strategy developed by Kingfisher's new Group Sales Manager, Martin Heydon, who over the last four months recruited three full-time sales staff to manage the sales portfolio and process. Kingfisher has now released over 150 units for shared ownership sale throughout Hampshire, Berkshire and Wiltshire. The units range from studio, one and two bedroom apartments through to their more spacious two and three bedroom houses. Development continues strongly with more than 200 new homes planned for release during 2008. With house prices being so high and the ever increasing media coverage, Kingfisher would like to invite everyone to a shared ownership education day being run from 3pm to 7pm on the 22nd February 2008 at the Red Lion Hotel in Basingstoke. You will be able to meet the Kingfisher sales team to ask about the process and our future developments, as well as local solicitors and financial advisors for other independent advice. If you are unable to attend but would like more information on shared ownership, please feel free to contact the Kingfisher sales team direct on 01256 302315, or email sales@kha.org.uk.



There was a recent report of Salesmen alleging to be from Virgin Media trying to gain access to addresses in Abbey Road-the males pitch was that there was a fault with the system etc. The occupant refused entry to the males who had the Virgin Media insignia on their tops and they then left.

The day before this incident two males had attended the address and asked if the occupant was with BT. The occupant informed them he was with Virgin Media- The males stated “That’s all we need to know”

They then left.

If you get cold callers at your house please make sure they have identity badges and you are sure that they are genuine. BT workers should be able to identify themselves and usually have a BT emblazoned vehicle!

Also don’t give up information to strangers on the phone or cold calling as they could use the information against you.

If you have any concerns then please contact me on 08450454545 or send me a private message.

Regards
Dan Carter
Popley West Beat Manager



Dear Residents,

Sadly there have been several dwelling burglaries throughout Popley in the last month. Please take a minute to read the following advice regarding prevention of burglaries and home safety.

Hampshire Constabularies Safer Neighbourhood teams are committed to ensure the safety of our community, the residents and their belongings. Operation Shutout has been set up with the aim to prevent dwelling burglaries in the safer neighbourhood wards

in our case Popley. Unfortunately burglaries do happen and effect residents welfare and can cause a great amount of alarm and distress.

*Do not leave house/car keys by the door. Vamoose burglaries do occur and the burglars will look through the letter boxes and cat flaps with the intention to remove the keys and open the door. Thus breaking in without any physical breaks. Also please ensure that whilst asleep Cat flaps are locked and can not be opened from either side.

*Take car/house keys, wallets/purses, mobiles etc to bed with you at night. This is safer as it prevents vamoose burglaries, and if entry is gained your car is likely not to be taken with the keys in your room with you. Also with the mobile help can be summoned safely without getting out of your room and searching around the house.

*If you have a UPVC door with internal and external handles please ensure that the door is securely locked with a key and don’t just push up the handle. A letter box cage would also be ideal to prevent vamoose burglaries.

As part of the safer neighbourhood team and Operation Shutout I have a few samples of additional security devices Remote alarms, sensor alarms, lighting timers, Smartwater etc which can be purchased cheaply at stores like B&Q and Robert Dyas. If you are interested I would be happy to visit your home and conduct a home security check ensuring the best prevention possible is in place. Whilst here I will also show you these items and explain which ones may suit you best. As always you can contact me on the below details if interested.

At future street meetings for Popley West and East the safer neighbourhood teams will be on hand to offer advice or answer any questions relating to crime prevention. The additional security devices will also be present at these meetings.

If you have any questions relating to Operation Shutout or any other Popley issues please contact me or any of the other safer neighbourhood team members on the number below.

Kind Regards.

Phil Rapley 13284

Police Community Support Officer

Popley East / Basingstoke

0845 045 45 45 ext: 126

