

BROOKWOOD NEWS

August 2023

WOKING COUNCIL AND OUR COUNCILLORS

We invited Leslie as a new Councillor for Heathlands to introduce himself to Brookwood residents and comment on the current situation of Woking Council.

He told us: "I was both thrilled and surprised to be elected to represent Heathlands in May, particularly as I don't have a political background or aspiration. What led me to stand was the desire to try and ensure that the most vulnerable in our communities are protected to the maximum extent possible given Woking Borough Council's financial situation.

"In June, the Council issued a Section 114 notice. There are government appointed commissioners, who will oversee the work of the Council for the next five years. It is hoped that the financial situation can be improved within that period and that the special measures will be relaxed. Before that, there is a lot to do in terms of disposing of assets, when feasible, and improving Woking's finances. The independent commissioners have issued a report and there will also be an independent 'value for money' review to ascertain what happened and why.

"The financial situation is only one of a number of concerns for local residents. When I was campaigning, there was very clear feedback on local issues, particularly road safety and traffic flows as well as house building at Brookwood Lye. Open government is a right for all of us. In order to bring better transparency to local issues, I am hopeful that we can have a public meeting with Council officials and your elected councillors in order that matters are explained and the options, possibilities and constraints are clear to all stakeholders.

"The dire position of Woking's finances will constrain many of the discretionary services and Council grants and funding for local initiatives. Nevertheless, there is a clear desire from the Council to look at all options to support the most vulnerable in our community."

Kevin Davis has also commented on the current position for Woking Council.

He has told us: "Everyone should now be aware that the Council is in financial difficulties and is having to follow a path not envisaged a couple of years ago. The whys and wherefores of how we got to where we are, are currently being investigated by a third party auditor, but there is a need to look forward as well because residents depend on a number of services from the Council.

"The focus is on ensuring statutory services continue to be provided and that will be the case. The government has appointed commissioners to ensure that happens. There is some debate as to exactly what statutory services are as there is no defined list; however, things like residual bin collections, wellbeing needs of vulnerable residents and housing fall into that category for example."

Thank you to both Leslie and Kevin for contributing to Brookwood News; we look forward to hearing more from both of them.

EDITORIAL

While Brookwood News does not support any political party, and indeed usually tries to avoid politics completely, I hope you'll agree that it is always good to hear from our elected representatives. I'd therefore like to welcome Leslie Rice's first contribution to Brookwood News and thank Kevin Davis for his ongoing support. I'd also like to encourage you all to complete the survey on discretionary services provided by the Council so that your views can be taken into account.

It's great to see several articles in this edition showing how busy people have been recently on an astounding range of activities. There are also plenty of opportunities this month to engage in village life in addition to the regular activities. Whether you fancy helping develop our neighbourhood plan, decide the future of the phone box, or just have a fun Bank Holiday Saturday afternoon and evening at Brookwood Club, please have a great August!

John Power – Editor

DISCRETIONARY SERVICES SURVEY



The Council is examining the options for the provision of discretionary services. As part of this examination, it is seeking views on exactly what discretionary services residents feel are most important to them. Both Leslie and Kevin have highlighted the importance of residents sharing their views on this. Please submit your views by completing the survey at https://communityforum.woking.gov.uk/values by Thursday 10 August.

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STATION TICKET OFFICE



As you may be aware South Western Railway proposes to close all ticket offices and provide more face-to-face support to customers. Unfortunately, the consultation on this only ran for three weeks and finished on Wednesday 26 July 2023, so your opportunity to express your views on this has gone.

Brookwood has been rated as a category 2 station. According to the consultation document, category 2 stations have been selected to have staff available at peak times when ticket office sales are particularly high. During specified hours of high demand, South Western Railway will aim to have available a minimum of one person whose primary role it is to help customers purchase tickets. All other staff working at the station will be upskilled so they are able to support customers with ticket purchasing. At these stations, customers will be able to buy standard walk-up tickets, monthly and weekly season tickets, and railcards.

This means that there will be staff at Brookwood station between 6am and 10pm Monday to Friday, between 8am and 10pm on Saturdays, and between 9am and 7pm on Sundays.

BROOKWOOD CLUB

A Night At The Races



Please join us for an evening of fun for the whole family on the Bank Holiday weekend! On Saturday 26 August, the club will be hosting a BBQ followed by a Race Night.

The BBQ starts at 4pm and 'They're Off' at 6pm. This event is open to all villagers and their families. Please contact info@brookwood.club for more information. We will also have our regular Bingo from 8.30pm on the first Saturday of the month – 5 August and again on 2 September. And don't forget to put the Halloween Disco on Saturday 28 October in your calendars too; this will also be open to all villagers.

We were incredibly pleased by the support of the local community at our Summer Fair held on Saturday 1 July. Despite early morning rain and a number of other local schools holding their fair on the same day, ours was a great success and very well attended. Thank you as always to Friends Of Brookwood School (FOBS) for their hard work in organising the whole event.

The month of July was incredibly busy for our school community, in particular our year 6 children who engaged in their residential trip to Thames Young Mariners, created and rehearsed their amazing Leaver's Assembly, and engaged in a number of last-week activities. We are incredibly proud of all of their achievements both this year and throughout their time at Brookwood, and we wish them every success for the next stage of their school journey.

During the summer holidays, NS Sports will continue to offer their highly successful playscheme. In September we will again offer before and after school care provision, all bookable via the NS Sports website. As this provision continues to grow, there are now opportunities to join the NS Sports team as we require additional staff for both the Breakfast Club and After School Care Club. Please see the newsletter website for full details (https://www.brookwood.org.uk/).

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Back in 2014, the village created the Brookwood and Bridley Neighbourhood Forum with a view to getting a Neighbourhood Plan together. For various reasons, it has lapsed. In light of the challenges facing the village at the moment, however, it would be a very good idea to reactivate it. This will need people who are willing to give a little bit of time running it. The legislation allows for Neighbourhood Forums to be a statutory consultee on various things affecting the Neighbourhood Area and as such is a powerful voice. Kevin Davis is seeking to get it back off the ground again and so if you are willing to help, please email him (cllrkevin.davis@woking.gov.uk).

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Brookwood WI have had a very busy few months! In June we welcomed a talk on Burlesque dancing from a president of another WI, and how she combined the two together. It was a very interesting and funny talk, and they gave us a demonstration of a few dances at the end. In July we enjoyed a games and quiz evening in a last-minute change of plan. It was a very relaxed and laid-back evening with lots of discussions and laughter.



In between these, we were lucky enough to have a stall at the Brookwood Primary School Summer Fair. We held a basket raffle, with prizes being a cheese and wine hamper, afternoon tea or breakfast hamper. The weather just about held out; it was great to see so many other members of the village involved. Thank you to everyone who came along and bought tickets from us.

August will (fingers crossed!) have good enough weather to allow us our annual picnic, with normal service being resumed in September. If you are interested in what we do, please join us at 7.45pm on the third Tuesday of each month in the small hall.

PHONE BOX

The phone box in Brookwood is the last remaining K6 in Woking Borough still *in situ* on the public highway. It dates from the late 1930s, and was adopted by Woking Borough Council and fully restored in 2010 by a couple of residents with sponsorship from businesses and residents. Some 13 years later and it is looking a bit tired and could do with a refurbishment. Perhaps it's time to decide if there is a better use for it other than to have it locked all the time. If you'd like to be part of a small working group that looks at options and has the time to freshen it up, please contact Kevin on 01483 488109.



THE NHS AND YOU

The Friends of Pirbright Surgery are holding a public meeting in Pirbright School at 7pm on Thursday 14 September at which you can find out how the NHS can help you. Hear speakers and visit a number of stalls with advice on where to go for what. Open to all.

PIRBRIGHT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Thank you to everyone who supported our Annual Show by either visiting on the day or entering some of the classes. Thanks too to our sponsors, all those who advertised in the show schedule, and all those who gave up so much time in order to stage this show. The results will be published in the September or October editions.

A reminder that we do not meet in August; our next meeting will be at 7.30pm on Tuesday 12 September in the clubroom of Lord Pirbright's Hall. Our speaker will be Andrew Halstead talking on 'Beneficial insects in the garden'. Refreshments will be available as usual. Do come and join us for another interesting evening.

BROOKWOOD ART GROUP

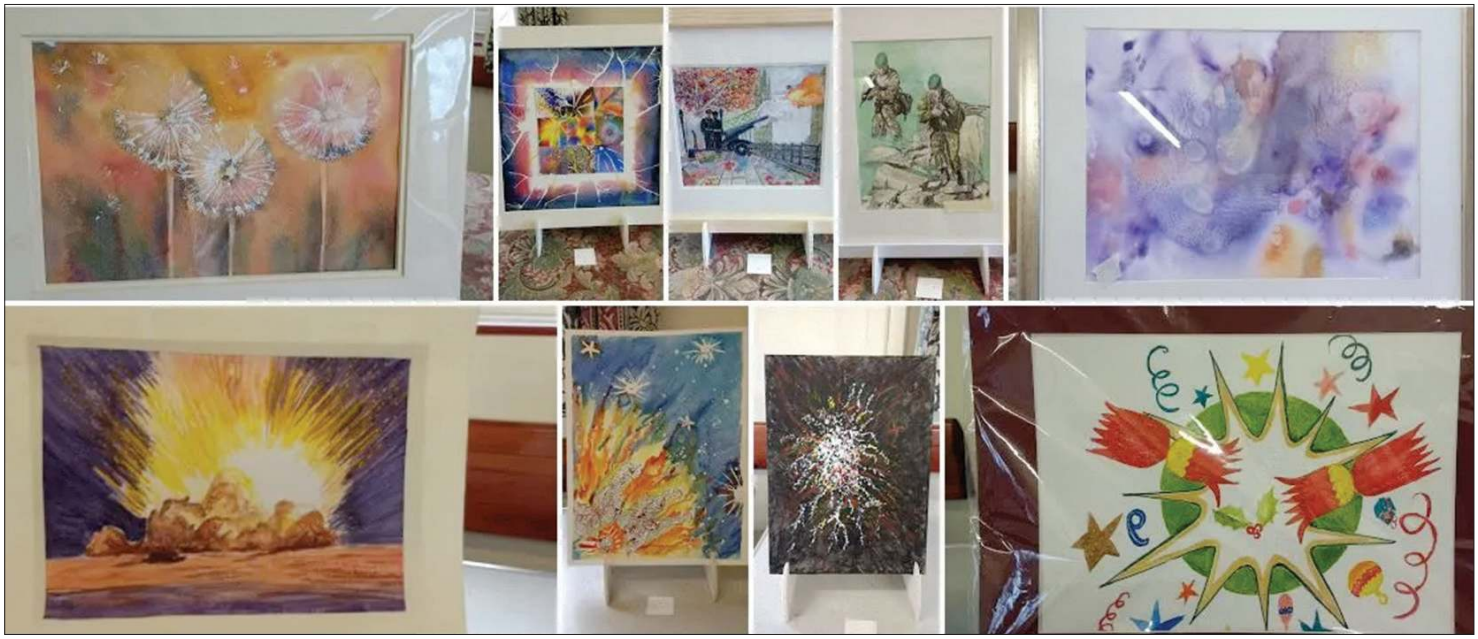
At Brookwood Art Group we continue to enjoy a varied programme of artistic activities on Friday mornings in the Memorial Hall.

Last month we had our summer party which we greatly enjoyed despite the inclement weather. Our visiting group of musicians, which included a couple of our members, entertained us with a cheerful performance on the hall stage, and we had simple picnic food, drinks and a most enjoyable time.

In June we had a stall at Pirbright Fete with a display of members' artwork; we sold several pictures together with a number of artist-made greetings cards, the proceeds of which go to the charities which we support. We are planning to display pictures at the forthcoming Pirbright Horticultural Society event.



We also had a demonstration of Chinese brush painting recently, which was followed by a workshop on the technique. We are looking forward to further visits from established artists after the summer holiday season.



VILLAGE DIARY DATES (also see the village website at www.brookwood.org.uk)

Every Sunday	Weekly Sunday Evening Service, 6.30pm, St Saviour's
Every Monday	Brookwood Babies and Toddlers Playgroup, 9.45am, Brookwood Memorial Hall
Every Friday	Brookwood Art Group, 9.30am to 12.30pm, Brookwood Memorial Hall
Saturday 5 August	Brookwood Club Bingo, 8.30pm
Saturday 26 August	Brookwood Club BBQ, 4pm, and Race Night, 6pm

Would you like to advertise in the newsletter?

The cost of advertising is £30.00. The advert will feature on the back of the newsletter and will be no less than a 1/4 of a page. We do not normally put advertising anywhere else in the newsletter. For more information on advertising please contact us on community@brookwood.org.uk

NB: DEADLINE FOR SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER IS MIDDAY 20 AUGUST preferably by e-mail to community@brookwood.org.uk or telephone 01483 480273 or a note through the door of 78 Connaught Road.

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