

## Amenities & Leisure Committee Meeting – 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024

### Agenda Item 5 – CULVER LANE ALLOTMENTS - BONFIRES

#### General Information

Currently, there is no ban on plot holders having bonfires at Culver Lane Allotments, the general rule is that plot holders should act with courtesy when having a bonfire, such as not having one on a nice, sunny day when people are enjoying their gardens/allotments, or when residents have their windows open or their washing hung out.

The number of complaints received from neighbouring properties regarding bonfires is very low but we do receive them on occasion. The Allotment Association has confirmed that the number of plot holders who do have a bonfire is also low.

In order to obtain more information about the frequency of bonfires at the allotments and how plot holders feel about them, we sent a survey to all plot holders on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024, closing on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

#### The Survey

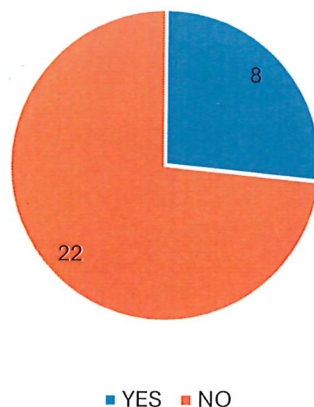
All 90 plot holders were contacted and asked the following questions: -

- As a plot holder at Culver Lane Allotments, do you ever have a bonfire?
- If yes, how many do you have a year?
- Why do you have a bonfire, as opposed to other methods of disposal?
- Which of the following options would you support at Culver Lane Allotments?
  - Rules on bonfires to remain as they are (to act in a courteous manner)
  - Bonfires not permitted between April – September
  - Total ban on bonfires

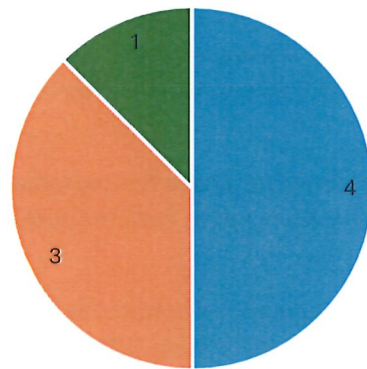
Out of 90 plot holders 30 responded to the survey, which equates to 33.33% of plot-holders.

#### The Results

1. As a plot holder, do you ever have a bonfire?

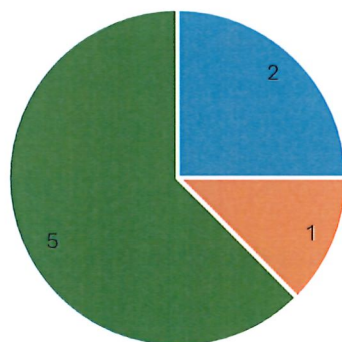


2. How many bonfires do you have a year?



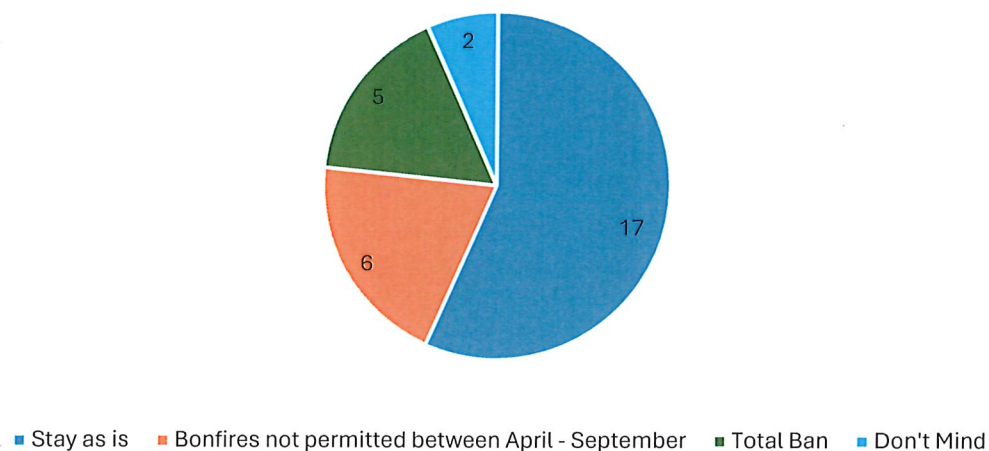
■ 1 to 2 ■ 3 to 4 ■ 5 to 6

3. Why do you have a bonfire, opposed to other methods of disposal?



■ Convenience ■ Ash for soil ■ To burn non compostible/diseased material

4. Which of the following options would you support at Culver Lane Allotments?



Out of the 30 plot holders who responded, we can tell that only a small number are having bonfires, the frequency of bonfires is low and the main reason for having a bonfire is for the disposing of diseased material which cannot be composted.

The majority of plot holders who responded, including those who did not have a bonfire, recommend that the rules on bonfires at the allotments remain as they are, i.e. that plot holders be required to act in a courteous manner.

**Consideration: -**

In view of this report, the Amenities & Leisure Committee are asked to review the position on bonfires at Culver Lane Allotments and **RESOLVE** on either supporting the current position or introducing a change. The options are:

- To continue to support the current rule that plot holders are required to act in a courteous manner when having a bonfire.
- To introduce a partial ban by not allowing bonfires between April – September.
- To introduce a total ban on bonfires.

The Allotment Association and all plot holders will be informed of the Committee's decision in due course.

Emma Carroll, Deputy Town Clerk  
8<sup>th</sup> July 2024

## Amenities and Leisure Committee Meeting – 24th July 2024

### Agenda Item 6.2 – Green Fair

Preparations for the Green Fair are going well. We have a wide variety of stalls attending and the Birds of Prey will be making a welcomed return to our event. Advertising for the event began w/c 2<sup>nd</sup> July and will include the use of large advertising boards, posters and social media. This year, Wokingham Borough Council has been promoting our event in its e-newsletters.

Additions at this year's event include:

- **Food** - Rotary Club will be providing hot and cold drinks and snacks and the ice cream van is returning. We have also secured a Pizza Truck which will be selling freshly made pizzas.
- **Ukulele Fun**, an ETC hirer, will be playing two sets of 25 minutes during the afternoon.
- **Garden Games** – ETC staff (primarily Max) have made large garden games from materials salvaged from ETC waste. There will be Hoopla and a Bean Bag Throw made from unwanted pallets and other discarded materials.
- **Activity Trail** – Joanna has designed two children's activity trails around the lake both based on an environmental theme. Completed trail sheets to be returned to the ETC gazebo where environmentally friendly prizes will be handed out.

### Repair Café

We shall be promoting the new Earley Repair Café on the ETC stall, hoping to drum up some more volunteers. In addition, the Spencers Wood Repair Café will be having a stall and will be running a bird box making activity. This provides an excellent opportunity for potential Earley volunteers to speak with existing repair café volunteers and find out more about what it's like to be a volunteer repairer, or a volunteer for reception or café duties.

### Earley Town Council Stall

This will be manned by ETC officers. We have created new information boards, illustrating what ETC is responsible for and showcasing more of our activities.

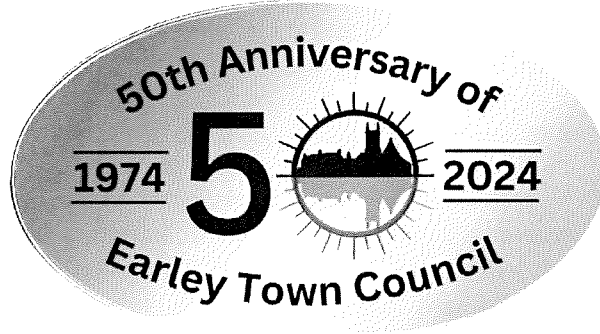
We are also creating a fun 'Carbon Footprint' game. 'Winners' will receive a small prize but the main purpose of the game will be to increase awareness of how all of our individual actions contribute to our own personal carbon footprint.

### Earley Town Council's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

2024 marks 50 years since Earley Town Council, along with many other parish and town councils, were created under the Local Government Act 1974.

To mark the occasion a special logo has been designed by Jess and we are in the process of creating some 'anniversary' bunting featuring the logo to decorate the ETC gazebo. As part of the regular information displays we have in our gazebo each year, this year we will be adding a timeline of significant ETC events since 1974. We have added the logo to all ETC email footers.

EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY LOGO



Jo Friend, Town Clerk

**EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Amenities and Leisure Committee Meeting 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**Agenda Item 7.1.1 – REPAIR CAFÉ - EARLEY**

Update on Establishing an Earley Repair Café

The Repair Café working group have met to discuss next steps and to review the documentation created by Jess. Good progress has been made on the project and ETC's advertising has attracted a lot of interest.

Location & Time

Earley Repair Café (ERC) will run on the second Sunday of the month between 10am and 1pm (this date has been selected so as to not compete with any neighbouring Repair Cafés). ERC will be held at Centrepont Community Centre.

Volunteers

Each Repair Café session will require a minimum of 2 volunteers for the café, 2 volunteers for the reception desk and a number of repairers with varying skills. Therefore, our aim is to have a sizeable pool of volunteers to ensure sufficient cover for each session. We have currently received 9 volunteer applications for repair roles and 7 volunteer applications for either reception or café roles.

The volunteer advert has been shared on our website, Facebook and noticeboards. It has also been picked up by WBC and shared in their Wokingham Borough Connect newsletters as well as being shared by WokinghamToday. We intend to use the ETC stall at the Green Fair to advertise the ERC and hopefully recruit some additional volunteers.

Volunteers that have applied so far have been encouraged to visit other local Repair Cafés to speak with experienced volunteers and to better understand how the sessions run. The working group is arranging for a volunteer induction session for ERC to be run in August.

Opening Date

The plan is to run a dummy ERC session on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> September at Centrepont. This would not be advertised to the public but instead volunteers would be encouraged to bring along their own items for repair. Such a session would enable us to identify any potential issues with set up, layout, logistics etc prior to opening to the public. The first public session will then take place on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2024.

Documentation

As part of the setup process, the following documentation has been produced: Constitution, Volunteer Application Form, Volunteer Policy, House Rules, Donations Notice, Item Registration Form, Risk Assessment, Volunteer Database.

**MANAGEMENT OF THE EARLEY REPAIR CAFÉ**

The First Year

Our intention is to run ERC as an ETC asset for an initial period of twelve months to help get it off the ground.

The management committee, as required under the constitution, will be appointed as follows: Jess Friend (SOSO), Jo Friend (Town Clerk), Cllr Andrew Bradley, Cllr Sheena Matthews and Cllr Al Neal. During the first twelve months at least two of the management committee will attend each ERC session to oversee the operations.

The management committee will oversee the appointment and induction of all volunteers, maintain records, agree expenditure etc.

The finances will be recorded by ETC's Finance Officer, with a separate cashbook and coding being set up within RBS to keep ERC's income and expenditure separate from the rest of ETC's finances. A device to process credit card payments will be obtained.

There is no charge for repairs at a Repair Cafe but customers are encouraged to make a donation. If particular parts are required, customers are required to provide those parts. Repairers are volunteers and bring their own tools. They may, on occasion, bring their own parts/supplies but, as volunteers, they can reclaim the costs ensuring volunteers are never out of pocket. Funds raised will be used to purchase café supplies, specialist tools etc, any surplus funds will be retained and handed to the new management committee (see below). In the first instance, ERC will be added on to the Town Council's existing insurance (subject to the insurer's agreement).

### Moving Forward

After the initial twelve months, it is hoped that ERC will have a team of dedicated volunteers who will be happy to step up and take on the management responsibilities. Officers and Councillors will then step back, appointing suitable volunteers to the management committee.

ERC would then become its own entity as an unincorporated association, open its own bank account, arrange its own insurance, manage its volunteers etc.

It is envisaged that the Town Council would continue to support ERC in a "sponsorship" role, this would include, but is not limited to, continued provision of venue free of charge, assistance with marketing and promotion, consideration of requests for grants or funding. As a condition of the sponsorship, ERC would be required to provide quarterly updates to ETC.

### REQUEST TO THE AMENITIES & LEISURE COMMITTEE

- To **support** the establishment of the Earley Repair Café as detailed above.
- To **agree a budget** for the establishment of the Earley Repair Café, expenses will include:
  - Purchase of essentials toolkit e.g. various glues, zips, fuses, plugs, fixings
  - Purchase of safety equipment kit e.g. safety goggles, gloves and masks
  - Purchase of consumables to start off the cafe
  - Purchase of First Aid Kit and accident book
  - First Aid Training for 2 or 3 individuals
  - Marketing materials e.g. printing of flyers and posters, purchasing an A-board

The Town Clerk/RFO has suggested that the Environmental Projects 2024/25 budget would be an appropriate source of funding for the set-up costs for this venture (current balance £32k). A sum of £1,500 is requested for the set-up of the Earley Repair Café.

**Amenities and Leisure Committee Meeting – 24th July 2024**

**Agenda Item 7.2 – Radstock Lane Community Centre**

**Elizabeth Room – requests for use, free of charge**

We have received requests from departments connected to Wokingham Borough Council, asking for free use of the Elizabeth Room for the delivery of particular services. The requests state that they have no funding for room/venue hire.

Such requests can be problematic as they not only impact ETC's potential income from the halls, especially the Elizabeth Room, but there needs to be adequate justification for charging some of the charities and community groups a hire charge but not others. ETC currently charge a reduced flat rate of £10 per hour for use of the Elizabeth Room, use is restricted to such activities that align with the purpose of such a room.

Members of the Amenities & Leisure Committee are requested to consider the information below and **RESOLVE** upon a policy for dealing with such requests.

**1. Request from Wokingham Health Visiting Team, Berkshire NHS via Senior Public Health Programme Officer, Wokingham Borough Council –**

- Require 1 day per week, 9am – 4.30pm, free of charge
- To run a well-baby clinic; run Health & Development Review appointments (6-8 weeks, 9 months, 2 yrs); antenatal sessions; breastfeeding support sessions; plus any other services they can fit in
- Pre-pandemic these services were run from Radstock Lane Community Centre and from Loddon Valley Leisure Centre (usual hire rates paid at both) but since the pandemic they have not offered these services in the Earley area
- Loddon Valley Leisure Centre has confirmed it cannot provide the space unless a hire charge is paid, hence the request from the Health Visiting Team for a whole day's use of our facilities, the Elizabeth Room, free of charge

There were no scheduled meetings of the Council or its committees imminent so officers asked the Chair of A & L (also has experience of the health service) and the Chair of P & R (also has experience of social care) for their views on such a request in order that an initial response could be provided.

In summary, officers and these councillors expressed a concern that the NHS has a duty to deliver these services but doesn't appear to be adequately doing so, and that Public Health at WBC should be helping them deliver the services. They were concerned that if ETC agreed to provide space free of charge, then further similar requests would be received. It would be unfair on those charities and community groups that are paying for use of the room if others were not. There was also concern that these particular services were likely to require significant caretaking services and a not insignificant amount of waste would be generated for ETC to dispose of. It was agreed that our response would be to urge the Health Visiting Team to go back to Public Health WBC to check that all WBC and NHS facilities (ie library etc) had been approached for availability. If there really is no other venue available, then ETC would consider offering them a reduced rate (4 hours per week (ie half a day) at a cost of £50 per 4 weeks (normal cost £160)), the charge being a contribution towards ETC costs of providing the space.

This response was provided to the enquirer but we have not received any acknowledgement or response.



**2. Request from Children's Services, Wokingham Borough Council –**

- Require one morning per month, term time only, free of charge
- To provide coffee morning, advice, support and signposting for parents/carers accessing the HAF programme (Holiday, Activities and Food Programme delivered using funding received by WBC via the Tackling Poverty Fund)
- Children's Services, WBC can provide staff to run the sessions but say they don't have funding for room hire
- Children's Services, WBC have managed to access library space, free of charge elsewhere as they're using WBC buildings, but not in Earley as the library here already hosts other groups and there is no children's centre or any other WBC community building in Earley

We have yet to respond to this second request.

Jo Friend, Town Clerk

# Wind Turbine Tours

## Green Park, Reading

Thursday 8th August at 6pm  
Sunday 11th August at 10am  
Monday 12th August at 11am


Take a tour around the 120m tall wind turbine and find out how it works, how much energy it produces and how it really helps in the fight against climate change.


Tours last approximately 1 hour and are outdoors, please dress accordingly.

Tours have been arranged by Earley Town Council and are **free to attend**.

Places are limited so booking is essential, priority will be given to Earley residents.

To book, please contact:

 [administration@earley-tc.gov.uk](mailto:administration@earley-tc.gov.uk)

 0118 986 8995





Earley Town Council

# BAT WALK AT BULMERSHE PARK

WEDNESDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Starting at 6.30pm

Meeting at Earley Home Guard Social Club,  
Pitts Lane, RG6 1BT

This event is free to attend but places must be  
booked in advance. To book, please contact  
Earley Town Council:

[administration@earley-tc.gov.uk](mailto:administration@earley-tc.gov.uk)  
or 0118 986 8995

Places are limited and will be allocated on a  
first come, first served basis