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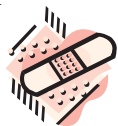
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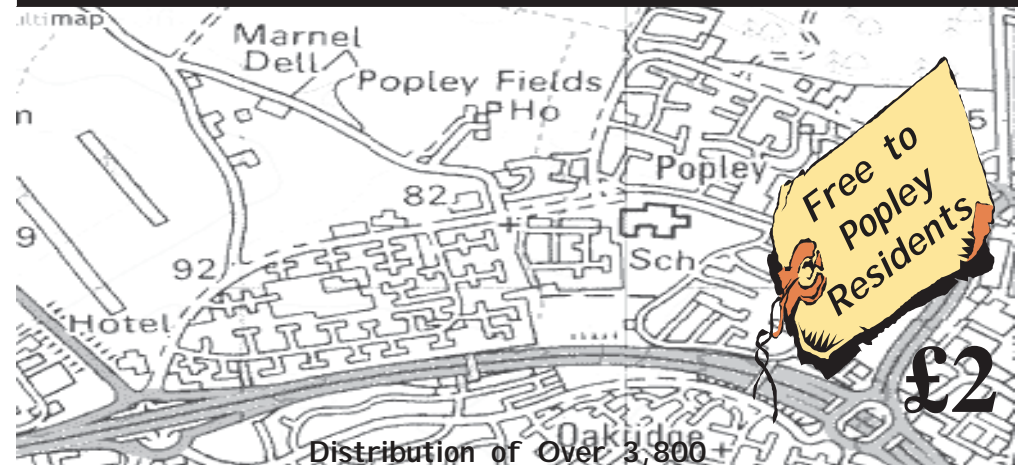
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# POPLEY MATTERS

OVER SIXTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

May 2008

Issue 75



**FULL OF LOCAL NEWS AND VIEWS**

## Contents

Message from the Editor	Inside cover	CAB Advice	Page 18
Popley Festival	Page 1	Sherborne St John Parish Council	Page 19
Councillors Page	Page 4	Popley Fields News	Page 20
Air Scouts Report	Page 6	The Old Codger	Page 21
Popley Beat Manager Report	Page 7	Popley Donations of Tokens	Page 23
Gardening Tips	Page 8	Arthur at St Gabriel's	Page 24
Letters to the Editor	Page 10	Popley Everest Scouts	Page 25
Marnel Football Club	Page 11	Fire Safety Home Electrics	Page 26
Merton Infant School	Page 14	Community Wardens Report	Page 27
Over 55's Forum	Page 14	Popley 40 Years On Appeal	Page 28
Popley Conservation Group	Page 15	Melrose Community Hall	Page 30
PCSO Report	Page 16	Rural FosterCare	Page 31
Hoax Calls	Page 17	Simone's Column	Page 32

Don't Forget [www.popleymatters.org.uk](http://www.popleymatters.org.uk)

Closing date to submit articles & adverts (20-05-08)

**Message From the Editor:-** I am extremely concerned about the youths that are running amok around the building sites in Popley Poets. They are taking some very dangerous risks and don't seem to realize the dangers to themselves and other people. In the report from the Fire Service on page 10 and in the local press, malicious hoax calls are being made to all the emergency services. I am a serving member of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and it is a privilege and an honour to work with these Firefighters. I worked for 28 years in Basingstoke Hospital, 25 of them on the Children's Ward. As a Councillor I have worked closely with the police so I know first hand what massive repercussions can come from stupid and dangerous calls like these. In December I was at the scene of a bad accident where a young student was seriously hurt. Time was of the essence and all the emergency services were involved. When I saw Daniel at his first day back at school weeks later, I was so thankful for all the wonderful people who were involved. Daniel's parents are an exceptionally wonderful couple, would the idiots who make these hoax calls like to have been the one to have said "Sorry the services were at a hoax call and we couldn't get back to help Daniel". THINK. don't be so stupid. Stop think again before you may cost someone their life. If you know who does it then please for everyone's sake report it before it's too late. The great Popley Festival is on 18<sup>th</sup> May and I hope I see you there. It looks like there will be lots to see and do and bargains at the big boot sale. I hope the weather stays fine as it makes such a difference. I remember one year when it poured and it was so muddy. About 5,000 people still turned up though. The next year the weather was great and we nearly tipped 15,000 people. So much work and preparation goes into this ever popular yearly event, so I would like to thank all of you. Read about what's on in page 1.

You can write a letter or email to [editor@popleymatters.org.uk](mailto:editor@popleymatters.org.uk)  
 We always welcome articles, letters and advertising. Our contact details are email [editor@popleymatters.org.uk](mailto:editor@popleymatters.org.uk), phone Jane 819924 or Iris on 411113. You can also write to 405 Abbey Road, RG24 9EL or PO Box 6727 RG24 9GG

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](mailto: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,

**More Volunteers Welcome**

**Advertising Index**

1 <sup>st</sup> Response	Page 2	Leak Seek	page 5	Sentinel	Page 22
Accountancy (Small Businesses)	Page 2	PKG Plumbing	Page 9	The Residence	Page 23
Your Country Florist	Page 2	PC Martin	Page 9	Guy Stevens Local Plumber	Page 29
New Testament Church	Page 3	The Ovenscleaner	Page 9	Slimming World	Page 29
Paul and Lee Plumbing	Page 3	C.M. Hills Capentery	Page 9	Young's Chinese Food	Page 29
Adam Window Cleaning Service	Page 5	Vyne Community Events	Page 12	Cornerstone Nursery	Inside Back Page
Kylies Whipper Snappers	Page 5	Kingfisher Shared Ownership	Page 13	Fastfare Pharmacy	Back Page
MAD Academy	Page 5				

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Hi again. For this issue I thought I would talk about the Thorpe Park reward trip that some of us pupils from Everest went to. I think the day went well as everyone enjoyed themselves, even the teachers, and it turned out to be a really nice, hot, sunny day. I think most people went on the main rides to start off with like Stealth, Colossus, Nemesis Inferno and Tidal Wave etc. Me and my friends went on these rides, Tidal Wave being first, and we went on twice so we were absolutely soaked but it was great fun. We also went on so many more rides and the whole day was fantastic. Not everyone went, so at school they had non - school uniform and an activity day which included sports, arts and crafts and more etc. Overall I think everyone had a good end of term.



I hope all you kids have had a good two weeks off school and I bet some of you parents loved that!! I enjoyed it as I spent most of my time out and about especially at the cinema, even though you

have to pay ridiculous prices, but still I would recommend, especially for young kids, the film Horton Hears A Who. If you haven't already seen it I think you should as it is very funny and it's great for the little ones. The thing I can't wait for is summer, especially the summer holidays, and I think a whole load of kids would agree with me, as we



have had so much rubbish, dull and dreary weather lately and I always find everyone is much more happy and cheerful when the sun is shining. So all I can say is hurry up summer time!!! Also I recommend going to a theme park, with your family, like Thorpe Park or Chessington. In the summer holidays would be great fun, so in the summer if you're stuck with what to do I think a theme park would be a brilliant idea. I would just like to say Happy Birthday to my sister, Monique, this month.

One last thing I wanted to say was if anyone would like me to mention anything in my articles that you think is important or just something you would like to say or me to write about then please don't hesitate to mention them on the Popley Matters website, because sometimes I just don't know what to write about. Thanks anyway and don't stop reading my articles!! Bye.

Simone



# POPLEY FESTIVAL

SUNDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2008

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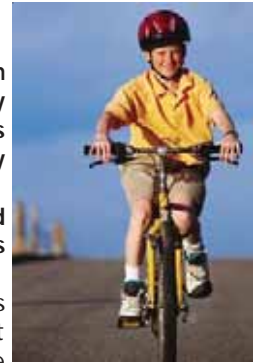


## Rural FosterCare WANTED

Josh, aged 12, is looking for a family who can take care of him until he is old enough to live independently. Josh is a friendly young man who enjoys the company of adults. He also likes skateboarding and riding his bike and would like to live in a family where there is a dog.

Due to difficulties in his early life Josh sometimes finds it hard to talk about his feelings and can get angry if he feels he is being put down.

Could you offer a home to someone like Josh? The profile above is fictional but there are lots of Joshes and others like him who cannot live within their birth families and need to be cared for in the community. At Rural Foster Care we are committed to finding and training individuals and families who can offer the sort of commitment and care that will enable such children and young people to recover from the experiences they have suffered and begin to enjoy their childhood and growing up. It's a real challenge both for the RFC team of social workers here in Hampshire and for those who join us as carers. But the reward for foster carers of seeing a child or young person settle into their family and begin to make the shift to a happier childhood is, according to one carer, 'The best experience ever'. All children are different and therefore people are needed from all different backgrounds, ethnic and social groups to come forward for training as foster carers. The main criteria is a real interest in children and young people, lots of emotional energy, and a spare bedroom to accommodate a child or young person.



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Spring is finally here! Our building has had a new coat of paint and our gardens are looking more beautiful with every passing day. We hope you have all enjoyed the wonderful display of daffodils in our new raised bed. Pupils from Merton Junior School have been helping us to plant new shrubs in the beds alongside the hall; they worked very hard and thoroughly enjoyed themselves too! Thank you

guys for all your help and we hope to arrange another date for you again this term.

On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2-4pm we will be holding a huge summer sale! Books, clothes, toys, plants and much more will all be on sale so come along and grab yourself a bargain!

### Whats on at Melrose Hall

- MONDAY:** 9.30am-12pm Friendly Café  
7.30-10.00pm Peregrine Healing and Holistic
- TUESDAY:** 4.00pm-7.30pm Petite School of Dance  
8.30am-3.00pm Marnel Early Years
- WEDNESDAY:** 10.00am-11.30am Popley Little People, Mother and Toddler group  
10.00am-11.00am Quit Smoking Clinic  
12-2pm Oasis Lunch club 7.15 Slimming world
- THURSDAY:** 9.30am-12PM Friendly Café
- FRIDAY:** 6.00pm-7.45pm MCF Youth Club - age 5 to 10 years  
8.00pm-9.15pm - age 11 plus.
- SATURDAY:** 9.00am-12.30pm Petite School of Dance
- SUNDAY:** MCF - Contact Pastor Phillip Keble on 462351 for times of services.

Melrose Community Hall is available to hire for Birthdays, Wedding Receptions, and Conferences. **Please ring Vicki Jackson on 01256 420676 for more information or e-mail us at Melrosethall@tiscali.co.uk.**

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**Councillors Page:** I went to the Sherborne St John parish meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> March where I brought up several issues and asked the Parish Council for support. Among them was the issue of a safe route from the village to the new Everest College. I was able to inform them that 16 new students have registered for the new school year already and of residents' and my concern for the lack of a safe route to the school. Though the view expressed was that the likelihood would be that the students would be driven there, I was adamant that there should be a choice and that it was not only students that would be walking that narrow road. Some people like to walk or cycle into town via that road. I will be working with County Cllr Keith Chapman to see if there is a way forward.

Another issue was whether the residents of Marnel Park and Merton Rise want to be part of the parish of Sherborne St John paying extra Council Tax with the precept but being in the ward of Popley West. What were the advantages or disadvantages? The item has been put on the agenda for a future meeting.

If you belong to a club or group you may qualify for a small grant from the "Members Devolved Budget" scheme. Details can be found on the Hampshire County Council web site [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk) or contact me at 405 Abbey Road telephone 01256 819924.

**Popley West:** It seems to be taking a long time to lay the new electric cables, and we are watching to make sure that when they finally finish that all the verges and roads will be repaired.

We are working with some residents of Abbey Road to get the play area upgraded, we have devised a questionnaire for the residents who live in or near the area of the swings and already before we have delivered the questionnaire had some amazing drawings from some of the children of what they would like to be there. There is also a plan to put in a bench to the memory of a much loved resident Emma, a young Mum who died recently of cancer.

Sentinel have started on upgrading the kitchens and wiring in the bungalows in Glastonbury close. The residents have had to live through major disruptions to their lives when I asked how do you cope a resident answered with this is nothing to what we went through in the war, we do have wonderful people who live in Popley.

Contact Cllr Paul Frankum 472496 [cllr.paul.frankum@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.paul.frankum@basingstoke.gov.uk) or write to Popley Labour 405 Abbey Road RG24 9EL Paul Frankum ☎472496

**Popley East.** There have been massive problems in the Longfellow regeneration and residents have had to put up with an appalling level of antisocial behaviour since the beginning of April. Reports of kids climbing all over the building site and jumping 40 foot down the lift shafts onto piles of bin bags. Car windows have been broken due to gravel being delivered outside the main building site and left unsecured. Kids have also been climbing onto some roofs and entering gardens in Milton Close. We have complained to Chief Inspector Jill Baldry to get extra resources to patrol, identify and punish the culprits.

A detailed planning permission (BDB/68128) has been submitted with plans for 237 dwellings. The application is in its consultation period and we expect it to go before Development Control in June. A number of residents have voiced concerns and we will be arranging meetings with Sentinel in which we hope they take on board the residents' concerns.

Finally by the time you read this the Election will be over and we hope that Mary and I will be able to be there to see the final stages of all the work that has gone in Popley. Andy McCormick ☎419376

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## Popley: 40 Years

40 years ago in picturesque Hampshire pastures, just north of Basingstoke, instead of planting crops, family homes were built and the community of Popley began. To celebrate, Basingstoke's Willis Museum would like to tell the story of Popley, and we need your help.

Whether you were a local farmer, a builder, a labourer, a new settler from London, a teenager moving from the city to rural Basingstoke, or if you remember the new schools, community centres, public houses, roads, old peoples homes and industries, we want to share your memories.

Do you remember playing in Chineham Park? Or remember that St Gabriel's Church started in a caravan? Did you go to one of Popley's new schools? Did you bring up your family in Popley? Or did you grow up there in the early days? Then yours is a story that has a place in this project. This story will be told using your words, experiences, memories, photographs and objects, so we need your help!

If you are willing to talk to us about your memories as part of the community history project or to lend us objects and photographs so that we can tell the story of Popley and the experience of its people during this period please contact the Willis Museum on 01256 465902. Children from local schools will be involved in recording the story and creating the displays, which will be on display at the Popley Festival on 18 May 2008. At the Festival there will be a quiz for families to complete, which will test their knowledge of Popley, its past and present.

The 'Popley: 40 Years' Project is being funded by Hampshire County Council which has been granted funding through the Big Lottery Fund to deliver family learning projects. The Children's Services and Recreation & Heritage departments are working together to work with families from Popley.

If you would like to contribute to 'Popley: 40 years' exhibition please contact Sue Tapliss at the Willis Museum on 01256 465902 or at The Willis Museum, Market Place, Basingstoke, or by email to [sue.tapliss@hants.gov.uk](mailto:sue.tapliss@hants.gov.uk).



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# Basingstoke Air Scout Group

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Charity number 267734

[www.base2000.co.uk](http://www.base2000.co.uk)

Group Scout Leader: position vacant - contact Section Leaders please

Bookings/enquiries for Base 2000 - Jan or Pete Saunders 01256 410514



Hello to everyone in Popley.

As you all know, there is a lot of building work going on in Popley at the moment. There are building sites in Marlowe Close, Marnel Park, Merton Rise, the old John Hunt of Everest School

site, Marnel School and elsewhere. Some of the work will be finished in the near future, other sites will be the focus of building activity for much longer and new sites will also appear. We cannot escape the fact that building work will continue in Popley for some time to come. When it is all finished Popley will obviously look very different, but it should be a more vibrant and even more pleasant place to live.

The Beaver Scouts have been working very hard towards gaining Experiment and Personal Safety badges in the past few weeks. They had lots of fun doing experiments and have started to learn First Aid (not as a result of experiments we hasten to add!). The project to raise money for Children with Leukaemia is ongoing and, if all goes well, the final total should be around £500 at least! Well done Beavers - keep on with all those challenges! The colony recently received the last 'pup-date' on Ella the Guide Dog they have sponsored for the past year.

Some of our Cubs and Scouts visited Runways End Scout Activity Centre recently to try abseiling and climbing on the climbing wall. A few grazed knees but lots of fun! A repeat visit may be on the cards for later in the year. Currently they are working on Naturalist badge.

The Scout Troop held a spring into 'spring-into-summer sleepover' at Base 2000 at the end of March as the clocks changed to British Summer Time. They spent some time on a hike through Basing Woods and collected a large amount of litter and rubbish including a stolen fire extinguisher!! They also watched video films and cooked an adventurous evening meal. Future plans include air rifle shooting, water rockets, hot air balloons, first aid, kite-making and GPS. Summer camp will be at Buddens in Dorset. Section Leader (Colin Karlake) would like to relinquish the role of Troop Leader when a suitable person can be found to take on the responsibility. Colin intends to continue working with the Troop and the Groups but would like a variation to his role.

The Air Scouts will run its customary BBQ at Popley Festival on 18<sup>th</sup> May. We shall have the best burgers on the site at very reasonable prices and hope for fine weather.

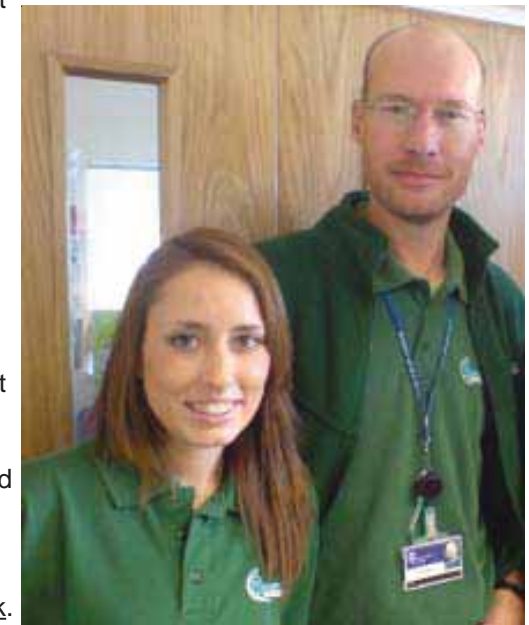
The Group is still looking to find a Group Scout Leader to replace Jerry. The role is largely one of management and coordination with responsibility for making sure leaders complete the required training and to oversee the Group as a whole. The District Commissioner, Andy Cullen, would be pleased to hear of anyone willing to consider the position (01256) 422725 [andy.cullen@eu.effem.com](mailto:andy.cullen@eu.effem.com). All potential leaders are required to complete CRB enhanced clearance before being confirmed to an appointment.

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 all curious to know what is going on within the wooden and metal fences that surround building sites and are naturally excited to see the buildings rising from behind the barriers. These barriers are for our protection. No one, young or old, should venture onto a building site without the permission of the site manager. It goes without saying that building sites are extremely dangerous places. There are reasons why workmen wear high visibility jackets, helmets and other personal protective equipment and follow strict rules and regulations regarding health and safety. As new buildings get higher so does the scaffolding and the possibility of a fall becomes ever greater. Clearly people who venture onto a construction site without permission and without personal protective equipment are not only trespassing (which is against the law) but are putting their lives at risk. We would, therefore, ask people to keep away from the building sites and ask parents and teachers to reinforce to their children and pupils the message that **building sites are not playgrounds!**

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter. Of course, as Community Wardens we are carrying out regular patrols of the building sites to ensure that no trespassing occurs.

Remember if you have anything you would like to talk to us about either stop us when you see us patrolling, call us on 01256 845508 or email [community.wardens@basingstoke.gov.uk](mailto:community.wardens@basingstoke.gov.uk).



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 Karlake 410559





### Popley Festival

Yesterday I attended a meeting in the Popley Fields Community Centre for the upcoming Popley Festival on **Sunday 18th May 2008**.

By the sounds of things, this year's festival will be a great family event. Events on the day include: fairground, archery, beer tent, food court with refreshments, Kestral FM Radio and stage entertainment, arena entertainment, stalls, craft, hugh car boot sale and much more. I hope you can all make it. I will be working on the day with my Team and approx 15 Special Constables.

### On the Beat

It remains busy for us all in Popley. As always the weather has an effect on the juvenile nuisance experienced by the locals. We are having multiple reports of juvenile nuisance and all over Popley. Building sites appear to be a favourite target. I have heard a lot about this "free running" craze which seems to be happening all over Basingstoke. Obviously I am against this for obvious health and safety implications. If you are a parent I would strongly urge you to warn your children about the dangers they may face. And although trespassing is a civil issue, the company are still able to take the trespasser to a civil court where large fines may be issued!

Recently a number of vehicles have been broken into along Abbey Road. Tools and other items were stolen. So once again we would advise vigilance and remove valuables from vehicles when not in use.

### Popley Safer Neighbourhoods Team (PSNT)

As you may be aware, the community raised a number of issues for the PSNT to tackle for this quarter of the year. They are as follows: 1) Bermuda parks flooding 2) Anti Social Behaviour at Chineham Park Court 3) ASB and motorbikes along Melrose Walk.

The team are busy working towards these tasks and I will update you at the end of June with the work completed by the Team. If you would like further information about the work the team are involved in or if you would like to let me know about your concerns or ideas for the good of Popley then let me know. I can be contacted on the Popley Matters website [www.popleymatters.co.uk](http://www.popleymatters.co.uk) or the Safer Neighbourhoods email box: [basingstoke.town.north.snt@hampshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:basingstoke.town.north.snt@hampshire.pnn.police.uk) or phone on 0845 045 45 45.

If you would like to discuss any issues with our Team that may be relevant to our work then get in contact-we don't bite!


Regards  
Dan Carter  
Popley West Beat Manager



## Home Electrical Safety.

In most homes today you will find an array of electrical equipment such as televisions, DVD players, stereos and computers to name a few. Some of these items are designed to be left switched on (i.e. fridge, freezers etc). If they are not designed to be left on, then always switch them off and unplug them last thing at night dont leave them on standby (televisions, stereos etc).

Do not overload electrical sockets and ensure that all plugs are fitted with the correctly rated fuse.

 When buying electrical garden or DIY tools, look for the British Standard Kite mark.

Check cables and flexes regularly for frays, kinks and bared wires.

Check plugs to make sure they are firmly wired and not damaged.

Replace damaged flex or plugs.

Use a Residual Current Device (RCD) or Power Breaker on all appliances.

Fully unwind extension leads before use.

### *Useful contact points and further information:*

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service homepage: [www.hantsfire.gov.uk](http://www.hantsfire.gov.uk)

Community Fire Safety Department: 02380 626809

Email: [community.firesafety@hantsfire.gov.uk](mailto:community.firesafety@hantsfire.gov.uk)

Now the weather is warming up, it is safe to start thinking about your summer bedding plants. Busy Lizzies, pansies, petunias, geraniums and more will soon be readily available in most garden departments. Plant up your pots and hanging baskets now, but make sure you can put them indoors somewhere if we should happen to get a frosty night. Otherwise they will be fine outside. A tip for planting up those awkward baskets – stand a small bucket on your bench, then stand the basket in the top of it. Fill up with compost and plant the top of the basket first. When that is done you can hang the basket up and plant the sides. Use water gel crystals mixed in the compost to help retain water and stop it drying out too fast. I usually pop a tiny plant pot in the top of the basket to pour water in, which will prevent too much root disturbance. You could use the ‘water wizards’ which fit into the top of small cola bottles and water large pots and baskets with those instead.

Vegetable pots can be started now too. Climbing beans can be grown in large pots and trained up a wig-wam of tall canes tied at the top. Poke the beans about 2 inches under the compost around the base of the canes and keep them well watered. Another tip here – to help keep the roots damp, scrunch up a load of old unused wallpaper (not washable or vinyl) or newspaper and soak it in a bucket of water to use in the bottom of the pots.

Tomatoes can be started on windowsills or cold greenhouse now. Again, be careful of overnight frosts if they are outside. There is a huge variety of tomatoes these days, and they can be grown in a variety of containers too. Small cherry tomatoes do fine in hanging baskets, grow-bags and pots, while the larger fruited ones really need a large pot or grow-bag with canes for support. Follow the instructions on the packet. Try some orange or yellow fruited ones for a change – they are often sweeter than the red ones.

Grow bags and pots can be prepared for strawberries, and salad vegetables. I also managed to get hold of some blueberry plants in a cheapy shop in town this year, they are in pots too.

Whatever seeds you decide to grow, don’t get carried away and plant the whole packet of tiny seeds in one tray. They will come up like grass and become tall and weak, and most likely go mouldy and die off. Better to scatter the seeds sparingly and save the rest for next year, keeping them in an airtight container. Old film reel tubs are ideal for keeping both home saved seed and part packs of bought seeds. Make sure you label the pots so you know what is in them!

Now is also the time when the garden pests start to surface. Keep a close eye on young plants as slugs and earwigs can wipe out a lot overnight. My lily shoots already look lacy!

Some of the spring bulbs will have finished flowering and the leaves dying back. Tidy them up by folding the leaves over and secure with elastic bands. You can leave them to die back naturally like this, and collect the dry leaves later on. Plant your bedding plants between them and they will soon be covered.

Checking my pots over the last couple of weeks, the leaf buds on the acers are bursting, the broom bushes are beginning to glow with flower buds, the olive trees (yes olive trees) and figs are sprouting new leaves. Spring is definitely sprung!

If you are new to gardening and don’t have a clue where to start, use the library to borrow books on the subject. Pay a visit to your local allotments and chat to people there, they are full of experience and information. Don’t be afraid to experiment either. Who knows, in a few years you could be writing this article. *Julie*



## 1<sup>st</sup>. Popley (Everest) Scout Group

Popley is served by two Scout Groups. Last month you would have read about the Basingstoke Air Scout Group, based at Carpenters Down. This month we want to tell you about the 1<sup>st</sup>. Popley (Everest) Scout Group, which is based at St. Gabriel’s Church Hall, Tewkesbury Close, Popley, RG24 9DU.

The Group meets on Tuesday evenings during school term times and the details are as follows:



Boys and girls 6-8 years  
years  
Tuesday's 5.00 - 6.15pm



Boys and girls 8-10.5 years  
Tuesday's 6.30 - 8.00pm



Boys and girls 10.5-14.5  
Tuesday's 6.30 - 9.00pm

Places are available in all sections now, and if you want to get an application form please contact one of the leaders, either John Talks on 01256 414 168, or Brigitte Cleall on 01256 412 307. Membership fees are only £2 per week per child. The Group is also looking for further adult leaders or helpers, and if you can help by giving some of your time, to increase the activities available for the young people in the Group, please call John for an informal chat.

The aim of the Scout Association is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens, and as members of their local, national and international communities.

Scouting provides a wealth of fun, friends and great activities. Join the Group now, and be part of the experience and help the young people of Popley achieve their full potential. 1907 – 2007, 100 years of Scouting, and here is to the next 100 years.



Dear Friends

Well now that May is here I guess our thoughts are perhaps turning to the summer holidays – where we might go and what we might do. Marilyn and I enjoy our holidays and being a self-confessed sunseeker I prefer to go abroad where the sun is guaranteed to shine. I find there is nothing better than sitting by the pool with a cold beer and a good book for company while Marilyn prefers to be out and about exploring. So, each year it's a bit of compromise and concession to make sure that we both enjoy the break and come back relaxed and refreshed. Perhaps because of this we always seem to leave it till the last minute before we do anything about booking a holiday, though if I'm honest I'm often like that in other areas too – ask the editor! Last minute.com is my nickname!

While this is okay for holidays and such like, one area of my life I decided some years ago not leave to the last minute is my spiritual life. You know the old saying 'those who plan to repent at the eleventh hour often die at ten-thirty! We all prepare for the long term future in some way - in fact we're actively encouraged to take out life insurance, pension plans and investments to provide for our old age but the future can be a very uncertain place.

I find it remarkable that so many profess a belief in God and in Jesus and yet choose to turn their backs or ignore Him and His plan for their lives. Jesus said two things, "I have come that they may have life and have life in all its fullness" and "Do not store up treasure for yourself on earth where moth and rust destroy"

Before becoming a Christian twenty years ago I was engaged in a successful IT sales career and completely focussed on all things material – money, house, car, fixtures & fittings and family – this in the mistaken belief that if I acquired all these things then the future would be secure. But having them somehow never completely satisfied me! It was only when my 15 year old niece told about Jesus that I suddenly recognised what was missing in my life for the now and forever.

There's a modern hymn that we sing in St Gabriel's, one of the verses reads like this; 'No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the power of Christ in me; from life's first cry to final breath Jesus commands my destiny. No power of hell, no scheme of man can ever pluck me from his hand. Till he returns or calls me home, here in the power of Christ I'll stand.'

Whatever holiday the summer brings for you and your family I hope that you'll have a wonderful break from the routine of life and come back sun-bronzed, refreshed and relaxed. I hope to that you'll find time to step back and think longer term, beyond pensions and insurance and consider making an investment now for your eternal future. We're open every Sunday at 10.30 for enquiries and advice on how to make the best of your assets!!!!

God Bless.  
Arthur.  
Vicar, St Gabriel's

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# Letters to The Editor.



Dear Editor, Having just read the letters to the Editor Page in this month's Popley Matters I wanted to write to say that I live in a flat that was converted from a family home in Falkland Road. We don't have much space but the flat has been done to a high standard and I can assure you that although it used to be a house it is now a very lovely family home. Lots of people cannot afford the rent of a house and so have no choice but to rent a converted flat. At the time that we moved in there wasn't many places available on Popley that we could afford and as our son goes to Merton Infants and we have relatives here (at the Vicarage!) we didn't want to move out of the area.

Our landlord is not a money grabbing developer but someone who has enabled us to set up a home for our family that we can afford. Thanks, Emma, Falkland Road.

**Editor's reply; I don't doubt that there is a need for some flats, but do we need so many and so high? If the three bedroom houses go on being converted to small flats where would the young couples go as their families grow? I started married life in a mobile home then an upstairs masionette in Oakridge and finally my lovely houe in Abbey Road where we brought up my two sons. I loved having a garden that my boys could play safely in and my little flower and veggie patches. There are genuine landlords and ones who are not so good, as in all things in life. I am happy to know you are contented where you are now, but as I have already said we can't afford to keep losing family homes to yet more flats.**

Dear Editor, I read in the local paper that there is an increase in hoax calls to all the emergency services. It is hard to believe in the stupidity of people who could put their fellow human beings in such danger. It is like wilful murder. What would happen if through their total insanity someone died, heaven forbid it was a friend or relative of theirs. Surely it is a criminal

offence and I am sure the readers of Popley Matters would agree that the full force of the law is brought to book on them. Mind you I will not hold my breath as the courts are far to soft in my book but that's another letter! Kate, a very concerned resident.

**Editor's reply; I am a serving member of the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service it is a priveledge and an honour to work with these Firefighters. I worked for 28 years in Basingstoke Hospital, 25 of them on the Cchildrens Ward. As a Councillor I have worked closely with the police so I know first hand what massive repercussions can come from these nasty, stupid and dangerous people can cause. In December I was at the scene of a bad accident where a young student was seriously hurt. Time was of the essence and all the emergency services were involved. When I saw Daniel at his first day back at school weeks later I was so thankful for all the wonderful people who were involved. Daniel's parents are an exceptionally wonderful couple. Would the idiots who make these hoax calls like to have been the one to have said "Sorry the services were at a hoax call and we couldn't get back to help Daniel?". THINK-don't be so stupid. Stop and think again before you may cost someone their life. If you know who does it then please for everyone's sake report it before its too late.**

**Editor's 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](mailto:editor@popleymatters.org.uk) or phone 819924**



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## Unused Travel Tokens Help local Charity

A VERY BIG THANK YOU. May I on behalf of Basingstoke Neighbourcare, thank all The lovely people in Popley who donated their spare bus Tokens to this local charity. Some of you will already have had a thank you letter, but others dropped tokens into Melrose Hall anonymously. In Popley you donated a total of £380.00. This will enable us to take people who are unable to use buses (if there is one) to Dr's appointments, Hospital, chiropodist, shopping or befriending. If you feel you could help us to help Others please contact me on number. Iris King Tel: 411113 Volunteer driver & Trustee

Help local charities by supporting POPLEY CAR BOOT  
12.30pm - 4pm every Sunday & Bank Holiday Monday Cars - £5.00  
Vans/Commercial - £10.00

# Sentinel

RESIDENTS OF Faroe Close and Maldive Road could soon be living in state-of-the-art homes, if a major £32m regeneration project gets the go-ahead.

The planning application for the regeneration of Faroe Close and Maldive Road to demolish the 120 outdated blocks of flats and maisonettes and build an exciting new community of 237 new houses, apartments and shops has now been lodged with borough planners. Sentinel Assistant Director Julie Porter said: "This project provides a great opportunity to replace some of Popley's poorer housing stock with a high quality new development centred around a large park."

The project will be partly funded from loans secured by Sentinel, with the balance hopefully coming from government funding via the Housing Corporation. It will feature 355 parking spaces, including 24 spaces for existing shops, plus a whole new road and footpath layout.

Ms Porter added: "We've consulted heavily with residents, neighbours, and councillors, and so far everyone is really positive about the renewal prospects for this community."

Sentinel aims to start demolition early next year, with development progressing in phases over a three to five year period.

## Local residents take Pride in Their Place



Thank you to everyone who joined Sentinel's Neighbourhood Co-ordinator Larissa Trussell on Wednesday 9 April for a Pride in Your Place walkabout of Tasmania, Montserrat and Dominican Close. Following your feedback we will be working with residents in Tasmania Close on plans to create a

communal garden and with Basingstoke and Deane to improve parking. We will also be carrying out some minor repairs to fencing in Tasmania Close and garage down pipes in Montserrat Close. If you would like to organise a Pride in Your Place walkabout in your neighbourhood please phone Sentinel on 0800 195 5515.



## Finally!

We had our last league game which we played against Overton, and what a game! The last time we played them, we won the game 3-0, but we struggled. It was apparent key players were missing and we made it hard for ourselves. In the final game, we had a full strength team and showed Overton what football is all about with an 11-2 thrashing. John and Jacob dominated the game putting Fin through 3 times for his hat-trick.

John scored a great solo effort and Jacob scored 6. Nathan Parker made up for an absolute sitter with a great left footed strike, hard and low.

We finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Peter Houseman Navy Youth League, which is a great achievement by anyone's standards, well done Tornadoes!

Not everything has gone as planned with the U11's, from having 14-18 players at the beginning of the season, to 4 or 5 turning up for training and 9, 10 or 11 turning up for the game. Unfortunately if Adam hasn't got a regular 15 players for next season we won't be able to go ahead with an U12's. I must say that it's not fair on the players that turn up week in, week out. Shane, Joe, Daniel and Jamie, well done boys. It's the likes of Simba, Jack, Callum, Bradley, Kieran, etc who can't seem to be bothered to turn up. ***I won't do it again!*** They have got one more chance to prove that they really do want to play, regardless if they lose every week. They are the losers if they don't turn up.

## Talk about a LOSER!

When the game between Popley and Overton was being played, a woman decided to let her dogs run across the field where the game was playing, and it terrorized everybody. The dogs (mastiffs) were not muzzled and tore up 3 footballs in the process, so you can imagine what they could do to a small child. And when approached, she became abusive and the language that was coming out of her mouth was appalling and in front of children. The woman in question, who obviously had a drink problem, wasn't interested in the safety of the children or people present and just smirked and carried on being abusive and only left when she realized that the police were on their way. I hope you feel very proud of yourself, scaring kids, well hard!

Spoilt a good day!

I don't mind people bringing their dogs on the field, but as long as they have a lead on and are manageable or come on after we have left, please.

Well done everybody and thanks for the support

***mfcpopley@hotmail.co.uk***

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



Indoor & Outdoor Sports Facilities (Netball, Football, Badminton courts)  
 Halls & Rooms for Hire - meetings, parties, community groups  
 Fitness Studio - no membership fee, monthly or casual use  
 Dance Studio - sprung floor, mirrors.  
 Leisure Learning and Adult Learning - Courses include English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)\*, 'Getting Back to Work\*', Ballroom Dancing, Digital Photography and lots more. (\*Free to learners who do not hold a GCSE English and/or Maths qualification at level C or above).

### CAR BOOT SALE

EVERY SUNDAY & BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY, 5<sup>TH</sup> AND 26<sup>TH</sup> MAY  
 09.30-1.00 pm - £5 per vehicle / Refreshments

### NEW - SATURDAY CAR BOOT SALE

(FROM MAY TO SEPTEMBER)  
 STARTING SATURDAY, 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY  
 2.00-5.00 PM

### CRAFT FAIR

(in addition to regular Car Boot sale)

### SUNDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> MAY

Come and browse for that special piece of hand-made jewellery, bags, body products, craft supplies and lots more.

Entrance 50p (children free). Raffle and refreshments. Free Parking.

Limited exhibitor spaces available - £15 per table.



MAY HALF TERM HOLIDAY CLUB 27<sup>TH</sup> - 30<sup>TH</sup> MAY

£16 to 3:30pm / £19 to 5pm / £21 to 6pm

Arts & Crafts / Fun activities / Games

Opens 8.30 am

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB to 6pm term-time



Assisted by  
 Basingstoke  
 and Deane

For more information please contact the Community Office.

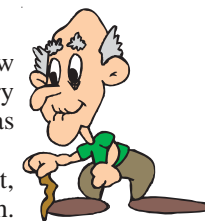
Tel: 01256 407037 Email: [community@vyne.hants.sch.uk](mailto:community@vyne.hants.sch.uk)

[www.vynearts.com](http://www.vynearts.com) (community)

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



## DIARIES FROM THE OLD CODGER



Yet another month has gone by, and winter now is passed. As I said a few months ago, more and more of our songbirds are staying in this country because of the warmer winters so it was important to keep feeding them as much as you could. Those of you that did so, well done.

One of our readers asked how to make fat balls!!! Dripping, or lard, is best, melt it in a pot, take it off the heat, stir in as much wild bird seed as you wish.

Line up your plastic beakers, push a small hole in the bottom of the beaker and thread a piece of string through and tie a good knot. Just put a bit of Clingfilm on the bottom of the cup to seal it. Let the mix cool or it will melt the beaker. You can then fill and leave a long length of string so you can tie it to a bird table, or hanging bracket. Another way, if you can get hold of them is coconut shells and do the same method. Freeze these and use them when needed. It sounds a bit complicated but its not. Don't forget, if you use the plastic beakers you need to cut them off before hanging out.

Now I would like to address all the schools in Popley. You all have large buildings that birds such as Swifts House Martins and Blue Tits could nest on. If you were to put up nest boxes on the side of the buildings they would nest. Perhaps you could make them or you could get your dads to do it. The House Martin cups are very cheap to buy; there has been a lot of news on the facts that due to building they no longer have places to nest, leaving our gardens in some areas without the songbirds.

The nominations for a Place to be Proud of are now closed. To the wonderful people that are nominated I wish them all well. All my family are true Londoners and I am very proud of that fact. However I have lived in Basingstoke, along with many others that Basingstoke adopted more than half my life so I feel just as passionate about it. In April the out going Chief Constable of Hampshire was on the radio because Basingstoke comes under that area from the radio station. They talked about our town, they picked on deaths, graffiti and shootings. Lets just pick on the shooting, the person that did it as far as I know came from Reading where the radio station is, also why did he single out Basingstoke we have no more or less trouble than any other large town in Hampshire. Look at Southampton, Portsmouth etc. The way he portrayed Basingstoke tells people to stay away. We have great people in the town and I was pleased the station read out my statement about it. We all have the odd few that want to spoil it for the rest. No matter where you go or live and we will never change that.

Now years ago we had people we called tally men. Nowadays they are loan sharks that pray on families with little or no money, and yes we still have a lot of residents like this that are willing to sign up to these unscrupulous people. In the end you never stop paying them. Every time you can't pay they charge you so the amount increases. Do not be fooled by them. Seek help from CAB, they will give you good advice. I can remember my grandfather saying that they would take things to the pawn shop on a Monday and when they got paid on a Friday they would be back to pay off the amount plus a fee. How many of you remember coming to Basingstoke from London to a new life? I had to bring Her Indoors. Well she said so and I do what she says. It was a bit funny to us at weekends, the town became deserted as people got on trains or in the car and headed back up home. Funny we still say that, yet Her indoors and I would dump the kids in the car and head for the coast. Yes Basingstoke is our home but also many memories of our past in London will always be part of us. All the dance halls and the big bands. Yes they were great times but I would never change what I have now. Well maybe one thing!!

OUCH!!!! THAT HURT

Keep well, and if Her Indoors stops hitting me See you next month The Old Codger.

Phone: 01256 414494

Fax: 01256 418529



Charity Reg No: 1052133

popleyfields@hotmail.com

**Popley Festival** — This takes place on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2008 at Popley Fields Open Space 11am-4pm. There is still time to book a stall for anyone who hasn't booked already. Anyone wanting information should phone Tracey/Christine at the centre on the telephone number below.

**Free Computer Classes** – New classes have now started again at Popley Fields Community Centre. There will be courses in Beginners Guide to Computing; Desktop Publishing with Digital Photography; Internet and email; Learn how to help your children, or yourself, by revising basic grammar (in a fun way!); Spreadsheets and Introduction to Word-processing. Also trace your family history using the internet. All classes run for a 10 week period and take place on one morning or afternoon per week. For a full list of classes or to enrol, please contact Queen Mary's College on 01256 417517 or Popley Fields 414494. Classes are free to anyone who does not have 5 GCSEs grades A\*- C. All classes are ideal for beginners!

### **Line dancing-Wednesday Evening**

There is a beginners line dancing class held from 6.30pm-7.30pm in the large hall. And a more advanced class from 8.00pm-10.00pm.

### **Dynamics Baton Twirlers-Thursday Evening**

This takes place in the large hall from 5.00pm- 7.00pm

**Mad Academy**– This is a new opportunity for toddlers and will run on Tuesdays 9.15am-11.15pm – Mad Academy will be holding high-energy music and dance classes combined with learning for babies from 3 months to 5 years.

Popley Fields Community Centre is also available for hire for conferences, meetings, private parties, weddings and kids' parties at very reasonable rates.

Call us now for more information on any of the above or to find out more about any of the other activities which happen at the centre every week!

**Tel:01256 414494 or email:popleyfields@hotmail.com**

**Page 20**



You cannot have failed to have noticed all the talk and speculation in the media recently, about the 'credit crunch' and falling house prices. Lenders are withdrawing mortgage deals, making it more difficult to obtain a mortgage, particularly without a deposit, so you are probably thinking that it is not a great time to move.

However, although local estate agents are full of doom and gloom, in the Kingfisher Sales Team. we have never been busier!

The shared ownership scheme is an affordable alternative to stretching your budget with a large mortgage, so if you are a First Time Buyer looking to get out of rented accommodation or move out of home for the first time, then this scheme will help you to get your foot on the first rung of the ladder.

But did you know that shared ownership could also be an option for you even if you already own your own home? Do you need to sell your existing property to move into larger accommodation? Would you like to downsize your monthly outgoings because of escalating costs? Do you need to sell your home, following a separation, but cannot afford to buy on the open market? Then shared ownership could be the key!

Kingfisher currently have over 165 properties on the market available for shared ownership sale, with everything from stylish apartments in the town centre, to family homes in the countryside. All our properties are built to a high specification with the needs and aspirations of the modern lifestyle in mind.

Call Kingfisher TODAY to speak to one of our friendly sales executives, who will be happy to advise you on how to turn the dream of living in a brand new Kingfisher home into an affordable reality!



**Page 13**

***Merton Infant  
School “Love  
learning - love life!”***

*Head Teacher: Mrs Larissa James BA (QTS). NPQH*

*We would like to introduce you to the Merton Infant Parent Teachers Association (PTA). The parents have come together with the staff to raise money to improve the school and obtain improved equipment for the children. Our first fundraiser will be a May Day Ball following on with a sponsored race on our sports day, and then a summer fete plus other activities. Money from all fundraising will go towards improving the garden area, and we also desperately need a makeover in the Year R outdoor play area. If anyone is interested (parent/company) in donating money/time, or maybe you would like to join us on the committee or you just want to find out more information about our PTA, please contact the PTA secretary. Lee-ann Dirienzo mobile 07861386064 E-mail- [leeann.dirienzo@btinternet.com](mailto:leeann.dirienzo@btinternet.com)*

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## **Over 55's Forum**

The Basingstoke & Deane Over 55s Forum is still growing and our membership is now just over 500 and at our April Forum meeting last Wednesday (16th) we collected another 8 new members.

On Friday 23rd May 2008 we are holding a social evening at the Carnival Hall for all our Over 55s members, which will consist of music for easy listening, sing-a-long and dancing the cost is £1. Any new members are welcome.

On 28th May 2008 I am arranging a 2 hour round trip from Maidenhead to Windsor with a cream tea, but we will be going to Windsor first, to look around and have lunch and then onto Maidenhead for the trip. The cost is £21.50 members- £23.50 non members. Future trips being arranged to Waltzing Waters Show at Ryde I.O.W and Wisley Flower Show.

Our next Open Forum meeting will be on Wednesday 11th June 2008 at the Carnival Hall, guest speakers booked to date are Paul Gaylor (Will Writing & Legal matters) and Hampshire & I.O.W. Air Ambulance, and guest speaker on the new Digital Changeover in 2012.

## **SHERBORNE ST. JOHN PARISH COUNCIL**

Following the article and comment in last month's Villager on the Core Strategy Consultation, which implied that B&DBC supported the expansion of development to the north of Basingstoke, Councillor Leek was keen to emphasise this was quite definitely not the case and that this document does not identify any allocation of land.

The School Travel Plan for the village school, having been presented to representatives of the PC has been forwarded to Hampshire County Council for approval and action. It was noted that many issues and recommendations overlap with the long-standing concerns of the PC and the Sherborne St. John community. Most notably problems of parking in the village square at school drop off/pick up times; encouragement to use available car parking at the Chute and Village Hall; safer walkways and pavements near the school and also difficulties crossing the very busy A340 at West End. Parents be warned - PC Smith says he will issue tickets to motorists who breach parking regulations in the square.

With the new Everest Community College now taking pupils from the village there are issues for children walking and cycling safely to the school. The PC has raised the issue of a safe path/cycleway south of the village many times in the past but has found little support and available finance from the authorities. Do you think this pathway is a priority? Where would you envisage the potential route from village to school? Please let us know your thoughts on this matter?

With safer travel to school much in mind, the PC is seeking funding for some lighting along Church Path. It is envisaged that two 'tasteful' lights by the pond would operate on timers and assist walkers particularly in the darker winter months. However, some believe this lighting is inappropriate and unnecessary in our village and might disturb wildlife. We are keen to hear your opinions before making any final decisions.

When it comes to adding an extension, a new fence or cutting down that tree it pays to seek planning permission first. This is even more important for those of you living within the village's conservation area. The PC was advised of a number of impending actions against householders who had recently carried out work without planning permission.

With the prospect of a playschool at the Chute Pavilion commencing in September the PC have been asked to consider fencing around the recreation ground's play area. The council is generally supportive and has obtained quotations for this work. And in Cranesfield, in order to dissuade travellers from using an adjacent field and to better protect the children's play area, installation of replacement fencing has been approved by the PC.

The Council were swift in sending a litter picking party to Chineham Road to clear the mass of litter left near the development and new school. They also responded quickly to notice of dangerous potholes in Sherborne Road. So if you see litter, potholes, broken stiles, overgrown hedges etc. whilst on your travels, please take the time to report your findings to Clover Morgan, our Parish Clerk.

*Chris Cooke, Vice Chairman*





Had trouble finding an NHS dentist? Been ripped off by your bank? Credit cards maxed out? Then Basingstoke Citizens Advice Bureau is the place for you.

BCAB serves the people of Basingstoke by providing the advice people need for the problems they face. Our

advice is free, independent, confidential and impartial. We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination.

We advise mainly on:

- Debt
- Benefits and tax credits
- Relationship and family issues
- Employment
- Housing
- Consumer issues, travel, utilities
- Health and community care

But we pride ourselves on being able to help with any issue our clients bring up. We aim to help people help themselves, but in certain cases we can help with letters, complete forms, represent clients and negotiate on their behalf.

As well as helping individuals, we also challenge from the top down – providing evidence for Citizens Advice nationally to persuade the government to make changes that will help us all. Last year we reported on NHS dentists, unfair practices by banks and creditors and unreasonable behaviour by retailers and credit card companies.

This year we are working on charging orders – where a creditor forces someone to secure a debt to their home, meaning if the debt is not paid off, the home could be repossessed. We aim to make a difference for all the people of Basingstoke, not just those who come through our doors.

Basingstoke CAB – help at the heart of the community, whoever you are, whatever the problem.

We don't charge, we don't judge, and we don't tell.

For more information contact BCAB on 01256 322814  
or drop in and see us Monday – Saturday

[www.basingstokecab.co.uk](http://www.basingstokecab.co.uk)

## Popley Conservation Group

Have you ever walked in Basing Woods? Have you ever wondered what you might see there? Would you like to know more? If the answer is yes to any of these questions you might like to join Popley Conservation Group at Popley Festival on the 18 May. The group will be conducting two walks during Popley Festival.

Visit us at our display and find out more about a green Popley.

# Popley Festival A Walk on the Wild Side

Come and join Popley Conservation Group for a guided walk through Basing Woods.

Popley Conservation Group will be conducting two guided walks during the Popley Festival.

### Walk 1 For Families. Tracks & Trails

A walk for families. Join an experienced ecologist and discover animal tracks, trails and signs. The children can make plaster casts of tracks to take away as a souvenir.

### Walk 2 A Walk for All

A walk for all everyone. Find out about the wildlife in the woods and the wonderful resource we have right on our doorstep.

Come and see us on our stand on the day or to be sure of not being disappointed book your place by contacting Lee Roth on 01256 330738

Many people will be familiar with the small pond at the top of the track leading into Basing Woods. This pond is a favourite with frogs. The amount of frogspawn is quite staggering for such a small pool. The pond is under tremendous pressure, from people. Please do not remove spawn or tadpoles from this pond. Taking tadpoles may introduce disease into your pond and removing spawn and tadpoles decreases the sustainability of the pond as a breeding site. If you value your local wildlife please try to protect it otherwise we will lose it.

Popley Conservation Group are supported by Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council



Dear Residents,

It has been a while since I last wrote an article for Popley Matters magazine so its been quite a task compacting all that I have done in to a one page article. Let me start by saying you may have seen me being shadowed by another PCSO these last couple of months. This is PCSO Joel Baker who is set to be the PCSO for Oakridge and I have been showing him all I can about our job role whilst on the streets away from the classroom.

Over the past month I have been meeting with different agencies regarding the "Get With" scheme. For those of you who may not know, the "Get With" scheme is a project set up to find and organise activities for the youths to do over the summer holidays. This should be good as I feel it is important for the youths of Popley to do something rather than being bored on the streets.

I am sure you are aware that over the next few months a large re-development and construction in the Poets are planned and we are already having large amounts of problems with youths climbing on the sites or using building materials as tools. Can I just remind you not to let your young children out on these sites as the dangers are endless. So far any youths caught on building sites in Popley are having letters sent home and Social Services being made aware. Please continue to report any evidence you have of anti-social behaviour in or around these areas as together with the construction team, we can work together to sort them out.

Finally together with PCSO Smith we have now issued approx 100 homes with Smart Water Prevention Scheme and Home security checks. I am also looking at setting up a neighbourhood watch in the area of Chineham Park Court in regards to the recent rise in anti-social behaviour and criminal damage. Any residents wishing to join this or show an initial interest should not hesitate to contact me.

If you would like any information or speak with me regarding any of the above please feel free to contact me.

Kind Regards,  
Philip Rapley 13284  
Police Community Support Officer  
Popley East



## **Hoax Calls**

Hoax calls are not funny - this is where somebody contacts the emergency services and reports an incident, knowing it to be false. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service receive the occasional hoax call but in 2007 the number of hoax calls rose dramatically and continues to be a serious problem in 2008.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service have received a whole range of hoax calls in the last 12 months, including calls to small rubbish fires: fires in buildings where people are trapped inside: road traffic collisions: and many others. In one week alone we received 6 hoax calls.

Some of these calls have attracted the attendance of one fire appliance with a crew of 4 people, where as the larger reports have resulted in 4 appliances attending (up to 16 firefighters), plus other services such as the police and ambulance. Not only is this a real drain on finances, it is putting members of our community at risk.

Residents are at risk because, whilst we are attending these calls, the availability of other appliances is reduced which will delay a response to a genuine emergency received at the same time. Residents are at risk because emergency vehicles are driving at speed around the roads of Basingstoke, roads where you and your families may be driving, walking or cycling.

And, of course, the lives of the firefighters, police officers and ambulance crews are at risk whilst they are attending these calls.

We are taking this very seriously and are working closely with the police to identify the people responsible, and when they are identified the police are taking action. Our control operators know immediately where a call has come from - if calls are made from mobile phones control operators can, and have, contacted network providers and had these phones cut off. Making hoax calls to the emergency services can also attract heavy fines and even imprisonment.

If you are aware of somebody making hoax calls we would ask that you contact the police and report this on 0845 045 45 45, or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Further information can be found at <http://www.hantsfire.gov.uk/hoaxcalls>

Remember - hoax calls increase the risk to you and your families, and they must stop!