Badger Farm & Oliver's Battery

Community News

Autumn 2026



Activities at Badger Farm Community Centre

Health & Wellness

Aucott Karate	Thursday 6.45-7.45pm	Phil Aucott philaucott@gmail.com
Body Control Pilates	Every weekday except Tuesdays	Jenny Forster 07929 624526
Body in Harmony Pilates	Monday 5.30-6.30pm	Catherine Thomas info@bodyinharmonypilates.com 07818 038912
Pique Dance Fitness	Friday 9.30-11.15am	Gemma Feeney hello@piqueschoolof performingarts.co.uk
Glenda Davis Tai Chi	Wednesday 2.15-3.15pm Beginners 3.30-4.30pm Experienced	Glenda Davis 07504 533771 taichienquiries @gmail.com
Dance for Parkinsons	Friday 2.00-3.00pm	bryettdanceschool@gmail.com
Legs, Bums & Tums	Wednesday 11am-12pm	Catherine Jones 07990 513434
Line Dancing	Thursday 1.45-3.15pm	Brian Woodford 07511 876149 07761 327488
Sarah B Yoga	Tuesday 9.15-10.15am 7.30-8.30pm	Sarah Barguirdijan SarahBYoga.net
Slimming World	Saturday 8am and 9.30am Thursdays 6:30pm and 7pm	Suzi Buccheri suzibuccheri@hotmail.com
Weight Watchers	Wednesday 5.15-6.45pm Thursday 9.00-11.00am	Mary Blanchard mary.blanchard@ww.com Lorraine Small lsmall@ww.com
Winchester Tae Kwon-Do	Monday, Wednesday 6.30-8.30pm	Lucy Scott info@ winchestertkd.co.uk
Wyeth Yoga	Monday 9.30-11.30am	Chris Wyeth c.wyethnobili@gmail.com
Iyengar® Yoga	Wednesdays 17:45 - 19:15 (Beginners/ Improvers)	Iris Lee 02380 616 505 (Please leave a message)

These are some of the regular activities that take place at the Community Centre. For more details, see bfobrca.org/activities or contact the group's organiser.

If you can't find what you are looking for or would like to enquire about setting up a new group, please email bfobrca.manager@gmail.com (Monday to Wednesday only).

General Interest

Badger Farm Art Group	Thursday 1.30-3.30pm	Sarah Zimmer snippycards@hotmail.co.uk
Friday Afternoon Bridge	Friday 2.00-5.15pm	See website winchesteru3a.co.uk
Chess Course for Adult Beginners	Thursday 7.00-8.00pm	Lukasz Piecha 07711804361 chesshood@chesshood.com chesshood.com
Repair Cafe Winchester	2nd Saturday of the month 10.00am-12.00pm	See website for dates repaircafewinchester.org
Wessex Wargames	Tuesday 7.00-11.00pm	Alan McFarlane 01962 864210
Winchester Chess Club	Wednesday 7.15-10.30pm	John Schonenberger schoneys54@gmail.com
Winchester Basics Bank	Mondays 10-12 pm	winchesterbasicsbank.co.uk

Older Adults

Chat-Tea Cafe	Last Monday of the month 2.00-4.00pm	info@chat-tea.co.uk
Vital Life Fitness	Thursday 10.15-11.15am	Abby O'Connel abby@vitalifefitness.co.uk
Gentle Seated Pilates	Monday 2.00pm	Catherine Thomas info@bodyinharmonypilates.com 07818 038912

Children

Aucott Karate	Thursday 6.45-7.45pm	Phil Aucott philaucott@gmail.com
Badger Farm Pre-School Playgroup	Mon. Tues. Wed. 9.15am-3.00pm Thurs. Fri. 9.15am-12.15pm	Denise Tosdevine 07771 798 474 deniseinpreschool@hotmail.co.uk
Southern Karate	Friday 6pm-7pm	southernkarate.org
Winchester Junior Chess Club	Thursdays 6pm-7.00pm	Lukasz Piecha chesshampshire@gmail.com chesshood.com

How We Celebrated...

Badger Farm Community Centre Turned 40

On Saturday 22 August 2026, Badger Farm Community Centre marked its 40th anniversary with a happy and well-attended afternoon celebration, bringing together residents, volunteers, local organisations and friends of the Centre, past and present.

A Gathering to Remember

It was particularly special to welcome some of the original trustees who helped establish the Centre four decades ago. Their presence provided a wonderful link to the Centre's early days, and it was a pleasure to hear their memories and reflections while showing them how the Centre continues to serve the community today.

Local Groups Join In

The afternoon had a real community feel, with plenty of opportunities for people to meet, chat and find out more about the many groups and organisations that contribute to life in Badger Farm and beyond. We were delighted to be joined by representatives from Repair Café Winchester, CHAT Tea Café, Bio-Diverse Badger Farm, Slimming World, Weight Watchers and the Rev. Marianne Foster. Their support was greatly appreciated, and their stalls attracted considerable interest throughout the event.

Tea, Cake and Chats

Refreshments were, as always, an important part of the occasion. The ever-reliable members of the WI provided a magnificent array of cakes, and their baking skills ensured there was something to tempt everyone. Many visitors praised the wonderful selection and enjoyed sitting down over tea and cake with friends and neighbours.

Crafts, Tai Chi and Live Music

There was plenty to keep everyone entertained. Jo from Funky Cat Design ran popular craft activities, while Glenda Davis introduced visitors to Tai Chi and demonstrated how this gentle exercise can benefit both body and mind. Meanwhile, High Octave Jazz provided live music that helped create a warm and festive atmosphere throughout the afternoon.

Exploring Local History and Community Ties

A highlight of the afternoon was when Kirsty delivered a short, engaging presentation on the history of Badger Farm and Oliver's Battery. Those attending enjoyed learning more about the origins of the area, including the fact that Badger Farm takes its name from William Badger, who was a 16th-century landowner and Mayor of Winchester.

We were also pleased to welcome the current Mayor of Winchester, who took time out of his busy schedule to visit the celebrations. He chatted with residents, volunteers and representatives from the various groups, and was keen to join them for photographs to mark the occasion.

Looking Ahead

As we celebrate this milestone anniversary, it is worth reflecting on the thousands of people who have passed through the Centre's doors over the past 40 years - whether attending classes, clubs, meetings, parties or community events. The Centre has remained at the heart of local life thanks to the dedication of volunteers, trustees, staff and users who have supported it over the years.

Thank you to everyone who helped make the day such a success. It was a fitting celebration of the Centre's first 40 years, and we look forward to seeing it continue to flourish as a welcoming hub for the whole community in the years ahead.







Winchester City Councillors' Update

There is plenty happening at Winchester City Council this month — and some of the decisions being taken now could affect our city for many years to come.

River Park Lido

The Council wants to dispose of the former River Park Leisure Centre site to Sea Lanes for a new outdoor lido, splash pad, padel court and other facilities. This site has been derelict for many years, so being brought back into use would be welcome, and a good-quality swimming facility could be a real asset.

Central Winchester

The Central Winchester Regeneration scheme is finally moving towards a planning application, with around 232 homes, shops, businesses, public spaces, play areas, trees and the reopening of the Abbey Mill Stream.

In a changing economic climate, the council-owned land that was expected to be worth around £3.4 million in the 2021 business case is now assessed as having "no residual financial value".

Badger Farm Road – Have Your Say

A public consultation on proposed changes to the nearby Badger Farm Road and Oliver's Battery Road South junction took place during September through to 11th October. There are some potentially positive improvements — including new pedestrian crossings, a signalised junction, new cycle routes and bus priority measures — as well as the proposed reduction of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph from the Sainsbury's to the Pitt roundabouts.

For more details, visit: https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportschemes/badger-farm-junction-improvements

Local Government Reorganisation

There has been an important development on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The Government has withdrawn its previous decision on the proposed new councils for Hampshire and the Solent and has ordered a review. The proposed new unitary councils will not now be created in 2027, so the planned 2027 unitary elections will not take place.

The normal Winchester City Council elections are expected to take place in 2027, with the possibility of the Hampshire and Solent mayoral election also being brought forward to 2027. The Government has an opportunity to go back to the drawing board on LGR. The previous proposals raised serious questions about cost, financial sustainability and the splitting of established communities.

Your Winchester City Councillors for the Badger Farm and Oliver's Battery City Council Ward:

Cllr A. Brophy: abrophy@winchester.gov.uk
Cllr B. Laming: blaming@winchester.gov.uk
Cllr J. Warwick: jwarwick@winchester.gov.uk

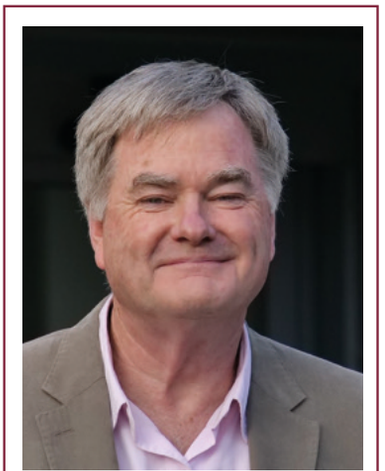
Hampshire County Council Update

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce myself as your Hampshire County Councillor for Winchester Downlands, which includes Badger Farm and Oliver's Battery. I am also a Winchester City Councillor, having been re-elected to represent the St Barnabas ward in the North of the City.

I would like to acknowledge Cllr Jan Warwick for her service to the community, and commit to continuing to support our residents on local issues with highways, schools, children's and adults' social care. My interests are safer streets, particularly the reduction of speed on Badger Farm Road from 40mph to 30mph, supporting young people in education, skills development, and ensuring access to mental and physical health services.

One of the most valuable aspects of being a Councillor is hearing directly from residents about the issues affecting their daily lives.

If anyone would like to meet me in person, I hold a monthly drop-in surgery on the second Thursday of each month at 2 pm in Starbucks, Badger Farm. The next dates are 12th November and 10th December. No appointment is necessary; I look forward to welcoming you for an informal conversation.



Cllr James Batho
Hampshire County Councillor
james.batho@hants.gov.uk
07889 960690

theWI INSPIRING WOMEN Hampshire

Fun, Friendship and Forward Thinking

Oliver's Battery WI

What a fun-packed summer we've had as a WI group. We visited Highclere Castle, exploring the house, gardens and exhibits in the Tutankhamun Museum. Shortly afterwards, we enjoyed a visit to Bere Mill Gardens in Whitchurch, where we learned about the mill's history before strolling through the beautiful gardens. We then held our annual Garden Party, raising much-needed funds for charity.

In the Romsey Show WI Tent Competition, we had 3 entry winners, a 2nd Place for our group entry and a 2nd and 3rd place for individual members, such talented ladies.
But the talents of our members just kept going! Did you spot our OBWI Scarecrow entry 'Potty President' positioned on the corner of Austen Avenue?

Our Lunch Group continues to discover great local eateries, while our Craft and Knit & Natter Groups have created more poppies for St Mark's Church. The Book Club and Walking Group also meet monthly.

We have amazing speakers at our meetings; one that stood out to me recently was titled 'Life before and after Sight Loss ', a most inspiring story of an incredible man.

Looking ahead, we will be holding our Christmas Social on 14th December. In January, we have a talk from the Mission Aviation Fellowship, and in February, a talk on the History of Winchester. If you would like to visit us, just pop in or contact us for more information at: oliversbatterysec@hampshirewi.org.uk.

We are a very friendly group of ladies who would love to see you join us. We meet the 3rd Monday of the month at St. Mark's Church Hall, Oliver's Battery. Doors open 7.15 pm for a 7.30 pm start.

Sandra Herron (OBWI Vice President)



Winchester City Belles: Redefining the WI

Welcome to Winchester City Belles WI as we relaunch at Badger Farm Community Centre. We are a friendly, modern WI with members from a wide range of backgrounds, meeting on the third Monday of each month at 7.00 pm.

Forget the old "Jam and Jerusalem" stereotype. Today's WI is about friendship, learning and fun, and yes, sometimes a glass of wine replaces the traditional cup of tea!

Our next meeting, on 16 November, features a prominent Winchester travel agent sharing practical advice on booking holidays, travelling safely and getting the most from modern travel planning.

Our recent meetings have included CPR and first aid, as well as a fascinating look at the Enigma machine and the codebreakers of Bletchley Park. In January, we will swap speakers for board games, friendly competition and plenty of laughter.

Beyond our monthly meetings, members enjoy a thriving book club, craft group and our new "Out and About Club", with visits to gardens, exhibitions, cinemas and galleries, plus gentle walks accompanied by coffee, cake and good company.

With many more events planned, including our popular summer party, there's never been a better time to join us. You'll find a warm welcome, easy public transport links and free parking at Badger Farm Community Centre.

For more information, visit our Facebook page: Winchester City Belles WI.

Chris Wilson (WCB WI Secretary)

Fibre, Fermented Food and Less Stress?

Wishing You Well by Amanda Turner

Fibre is famous for being good for our health, though did you know the same holds true for fermented foods? Recent research shows that both fibre and fermented foods, if tolerated, seem to impact gut health mechanisms in beneficial ways: Fibre feeds gut microbiota (gut bugs) already there, and fermented foods introduce more variety of happy gut dwellers.

Commonly available fermented foods include dairy-based kefir, cheese and natural yoghurt, water-based kombucha, mixed vegetable-based kimchi, and cabbage-based sauerkraut.

Furthermore, a new study has shown eating more fermented foods and fibre daily for just four weeks had a significant effect on lowering perceived stress levels in healthy adults:

"When it comes to dealing with stress, we're often told the best things we can do are exercise, make time for our favourite activities or try meditation or mindfulness ... and feed your microbes to deal with stress?" J Cryan, Food and Behaviour Research *https://library.fabresearch.org/viewItem.php?id=15505*

This new research suggests your plate might hold another key to managing stress. A recent four-week study indicates that eating more fermented foods and fibre daily could significantly lower how stressed we feel.

Scientists recruited 45 healthy adults and split them into two groups. One followed a "psychobiotic diet" rich in prebiotic fibres (like in fruit and vegetables, nuts and seeds, herbs and spices) plus fermented foods such as sauerkraut, kefir, and kombucha. The other group received general healthy eating advice.

The results? Those sticking to the psychobiotic diet reported notably lower stress levels. Interestingly, there was a clear link: the more closely participants followed the diet, the greater their stress reduction. Sleep quality also improved in both groups, but even more so among the psychobiotic dieters.

It is unclear how this works. One potential mechanism is the gut-brain axis, a constant communication channel between your brain and gut. While the diet caused changes to gut bacteria, it also shifted certain key chemicals linked to mental health.

Of course, longer studies are needed, and we don't yet know if these benefits extend to those with health issues. But the evidence is promising: when stress hits, maybe consider what's for dinner. Adding fibre-rich fruits, veggies, oats, and a dash of fermentation might just help you breathe easier ... So next time life feels overwhelming, your fork might be your friend. Happy Christmas!



References: Wastyk et al., Cell 2021, and Berding et al., Mol Psychiatry 2022. This is general educational information only, not advice. As part of charity/community work, Amanda Turner BSc(Hons) volunteers for food and health charities. Amanda also has an MSc in Nutritional Medicine from Surrey Uni, which is an AfN-registered degree (Association for Nutrition).

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OPENING TIMES (flexible)

Monday – Tuesday – Wednesday ~ 9.15 – 3.00
Thursday – Friday ~ 9.15 – 12.15

Spaces are now available!

All Government Funding options available.

Ideally situated in Badger Farm Community Centre next to Sainsbury's

Our staff are highly experienced and qualified. We ensure a high ratio of 1:6 for 3 and 4 year olds and 1:4 for under 3 year olds enabling plenty of individual time and attention.

"The friendly and nurturing staff build positive relationships with children and attend swiftly to their needs. This helps children to feel safe and secure. Children treat their friends with kindness and respect. Staff support children to develop their language and communication skills. Children are confidant communicators" Ofsted 2023

The playgroup operates an open door policy so please feel free to call in at any time and see us or call the playgroup manager Mrs Denise Tosdevine on 07771 798 474 to arrange a visit. You can also see us in action and get more information on our website badgerfarmpreschool.co.uk and follow us on our Facebook page

Winchester's New Professional Orchestra

A new professional string orchestra is being launched in Winchester this autumn, with a simple ambition: to bring high-quality live music to the city while supporting the musicians who make it possible.

The Orchestra Session has been founded by Winchester musician James Symington, a professional musician, Army Bandmaster and BMus(Hons), FRSM graduate.

Its first concert, The First Movement, will take place at the Chapel of the Hospital of St Cross on Saturday 21 November at 7.30 pm. The programme will feature music by Bach, Pachelbel, Vivaldi, Mendelssohn and Dvořák, performed by professional string musicians.

But for James, The Orchestra Session is about more than putting on concerts. He wants to create opportunities for professional musicians to perform together in Winchester and to ensure that they are properly paid for their work. At the same time, he hopes to make professional live music accessible to a wide audience.

The Orchestra Session has been established as a Community Interest Company, with a commitment to supporting music education. A fixed share of every ticket sold will be donated to music education charities, helping children and adults who might otherwise have difficulty accessing musical opportunities.

The first concert is also the beginning of a longer-term vision. James hopes that The Orchestra Session will become a regular part of Winchester's musical life, bringing professional musicians and audiences together in some of the city's beautiful and historic venues.

The choice of the Hospital of St Cross for the inaugural concert is particularly fitting. The historic chapel provides an intimate setting in which audiences can hear the sound of a professional string orchestra at close range.

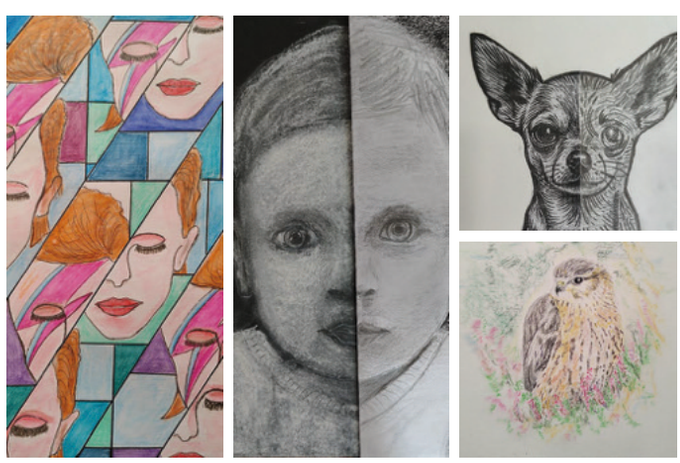
James says he wants people to feel that professional live music is something they can be part of, rather than something reserved for a select audience.

"The First Movement" will be the first step in that journey — bringing together professional musicians, a historic Winchester setting and some of the great music written for strings.



Badger Farm Art Group

Badger Farm Art Group is a vibrant and fun group, working with the guidance of an experienced Art Tutor. We look at a variety of themes, artists and skills, and we aim to practise and develop our skills along with our understanding and appreciation for Art. If you are interested in Art, making friends and having a chat, come and see us. We meet on Thursdays 1.30-3.30 during term time. Bring your own equipment. The cost is £10 per session, and your first one is free. No need to pay in advance; just come when you can. Please contact Sarah for more information: *snippycards@hotmail.co.uk*



Badger Farm Parish Council

Community News Autumn 2026

In the last edition of the Community News, I said that the Local Government Review may well have problems in the future. This has happened, and the Government has withdrawn the plans for Hampshire and three other counties. It seems that we will carry on as usual in the short term, but who knows what the long-term situation will be.

During the long hot summer, a group of residents looked after the new saplings that have appeared all over the state. I would like to thank the residents for all their efforts, which have been very successful.

We have placed the contract for the new goals on the Central Kick About, and hopefully they will be installed in the next month or two.

The Parish Council welcomes comments and questions from residents. If you do contact us, it would be helpful if you could include a name and phone number so we can ask for further information and give updates. Anonymous communications can in fact, slow down any action that has been requested.

We have made enquiries about what can be done about the bottom of the estate being used as a free park and ride. The daytime parking in Rooks Down Road and Ashbarn Crescent can be very dangerous, forcing traffic onto the wrong side of the road on a blind bend. Unfortunately, it seems that any measures taken will just force the problem further into the estate. The only workable scheme would be estate-wide parking restrictions along with parking permits; I am sure this would prove extremely unpopular with all residents.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the team at the Community Centre; their 40th year celebrations were a great success and very well attended.

Cllr John Godbold
Badger Farm Parish Council

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Badger Farm Preschool Report

How time flies!

Our Preschool has been at the heart of our community for 40 years, still welcoming new families! Opening in 1986, we have cared for many children, some of whom are now returning with their own offspring!

As an established team, all of which have been here for many years, we continue to provide care and education to the surrounding area.

Usual activities will be taking place as Christmas approaches, with our Nativity, Christmas crafts and Grand Raffle finishing off a busy Autumn Term.
Spaces are available, and for further information and photos of us in action, please visit our new website:
www.badgerfarmpreschool.org.uk





Little Fishes News

This year marks an incredible milestone for Little Fishes Pre-School as we celebrate our 27th year of providing high-quality early years education and care within our community. Since opening our doors, we have been proud to support generations of children as they take their first steps on their learning journey. Over the years, we have built a reputation for creating a nurturing, safe and inspiring environment where children can develop confidence, curiosity and a lifelong love of learning.

As we begin another exciting year, we are delighted to welcome new families to the Little Fishes community.
Starting pre-school is a significant milestone for both children and parents, and our dedicated team works hard to ensure every family feels supported, valued and included.

At Little Fishes, we recognise that children learn best through play, exploration and meaningful experiences.
Our thoughtfully designed learning spaces, both indoors and outdoors, provide a variety of opportunities for children to develop the skills and knowledge outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Each space encourages children to discover, investigate and grow in their own unique way. Every day is filled with exciting opportunities to explore, create and have fun.

We would like to thank our families, staff and wider community for their continued support throughout the years and look forward to many more years of learning, laughter and achievement together.





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Oliver's Battery, Winchester

Pilates class timetable

Monday
12.45 Twyford Village Hall
5.30 Badger Farm Community Centre

Wednesday
12.10 & 1.10 St Mark's Hall Oliver's Battery

Gentle seated Pilates based exercise class

Monday
2pm Badger Farm Community Centre

Wednesday
11.15 St Mark's Hall Oliver's Battery

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Oliver's Battery Parish Council Update

We need you! New councillors sought for Oliver's Battery

The Parish Council (PC) currently has two vacancies. Parish Councillor is a voluntary position, and there are six PC meetings a year. Councillors are supported by a very experienced and qualified Parish Clerk, who provides advice, support and administration. Training is also available.

Being a councillor is an opportunity to shape decisions, including maintaining and improving the quality of life for your local community.

The PC owns Oliver Cromwell's Battery (a scheduled monument), the Recreation Ground and the Wildlife Area. It has the power to comment on planning applications, apply for and raise funding, deliver services, support local events and activities, and give the local community a voice.

We need more local people who want to help shape the community and keep Oliver's Battery a high-quality place to live, play and work.

If you'd like to join the PC, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please contact James Sheehy, Parish Clerk, via *clerk@oliversbatteryparishcouncil.gov.uk* or 07312 126160. If you'd like to discuss the role informally, you can email the Chairman, David Kirkby at cllrdavidkirkby@oliversbatteryparishcouncil.gov.uk or speak to any councillor.

Recent Events

The PC would like to thank the Community Events Group for another successful Scarecrow Competition and the Sustainability Group for organising the Great Swop.

Local Plan 2044

Winchester City Council (WCC) adopted its District Local Plan in March and this remains the Local Plan (LP) against which planning applications will be determined. However, the Government requires WCC to start preparing the next LP.

The first stage of this LP is now underway, asking for views on the main issues it should address, such as housing, the environment, infrastructure and climate change.

This is primarily a technical consultation and does not include locations of future housing or employment sites, which will be considered at a later stage in the process with full public consultation.

Improving Travel at Badger Farm Road and Oliver's Battery Junction

I hope that many of you completed the survey on potential improvements to make it easier and safer for people traveling along Badger Farm Road and at the junction with Oliver's Battery Road South, which closed on 11 October 2026. The junction has for many years been one of the most significant concerns for local residents.

I understand that the public information event held on 23 September at St Mark's Church was well attended and informative.

David Kirkby
Chair Oliver's Battery Parish Council



Help Our Hospitals Prepare for Winter

Danny Chambers, MP for Winchester

We need to help our hospitals prepare for winter before it's already upon us. World Mental Health Day took place this month. Mental Health can be tough to talk about, but in reality, we support each other's mental health every day, without even realising. Sometimes, looking out for others is not about grand gestures but about the small differences we can make.

When I first became an MP, half a million children were on waiting lists for mental health support. That figure is now one million. At the same time, mental health charities are struggling due to rising costs. That is why I wrote to the government to express my real worry about the closure of PAPYRUS - a vital service for many children and young people. No one should be left to reach crisis point alone. As an MP, my message is clear: I will continue to fight for mental health to be treated as seriously as physical health.

The winter crisis in our hospitals comes around every year, including here in Winchester. Action is always promised, yet never delivered. In Hampshire, over 12,000 people waited more than 12 hours in A&E fit-to-sit areas last year. The Liberal Democrats tabled an amendment to end corridor care within a year, with a dedicated inquiry to be launched into the Department of Health if this failed to happen. Unfortunately, the Conservatives skipped the vote. This cannot be kicked into the long grass.

Another winter is fast approaching, and we need to support our NHS so that it is well prepared for winter every year. That would help patients and families worried about whether they'll get the care they need, and it would help our hardworking NHS staff under pressure during really tough circumstances.

After a record-breaking summer heatwave, climate change should be taken more seriously than ever before. That's why it's so upsetting to see prominent politicians like Kemi Badenoch and Nigel Farage downplaying the threat for short-term political gain.

Rather than ignore the science, I organised a screening of the National Emergency Briefing this month with Winchester Action on the Climate Crisis and Wonderseekers at Winchester Science Centre. The message is clear: the more we delay action on the climate crisis, the greater the cost, not just to our precious natural environment, but to public health and our whole economy too. We need politicians who do not ignore science but take seriously the threats to food security, biodiversity collapse and work to protect our planet for future generations.

Finally, it was a joy to visit both Twyford School and Peter Symonds Sixth Form College recently. During an assembly in Twyford, we debated and voted on whether students should go to school on Fridays, and we spoke about the House of Commons and the House of Lords and life in Parliament. And at Peter Symonds, we had questions on mental health policy and what motivated me to go into politics. A big thanks to the staff and students for inviting me along.

If there are any issues you'd like to get in touch with me about, please contact me at:

danny.chambers.mp@parliament.uk

Prostate Cancer Support Group

The North Hampshire Prostate Cancer Support Group recently heard from trustee Ian Harrison, who delivers acupuncture therapy at the Ark Cancer Charity and champions "wellbeing at the heart of cancer treatment".

Ian explained how modern cancer treatments can be brutal and often cause significant side effects. Thanks to changing medical culture and strong patient advocacy, Ark now receives many hundreds of NHS referrals each year. He then challenged the group with several eye-opening "guess the statistic" questions: the human body contains around 30–37 trillion cells and produces about 330 billion new ones daily; the prostate alone holds 10–30 billion. Stem cells become specialised within 24 hours. He also noted that the body has roughly 86 billion neurons and around a trillion connections.

Using a slide of the nervous system, Ian described how nerves cross over to opposite sides of the body and how peripheral nerves feed into the main pathways to the brain. He explained current thinking on acupuncture: specialist needles stimulate remote nerves, prompting the body to release natural pain relievers and helping the brain adapt through neuroplasticity. It does not work for everyone, though electrical stimulation can improve results, similar to a TENS machine.

Ark Cancer Charity's work centres on creating an uplifting environment with emotional support, relaxation and complementary therapies to ease treatment side effects — all aimed at improving the experience of those facing the difficult journey of cancer diagnosis and treatment.

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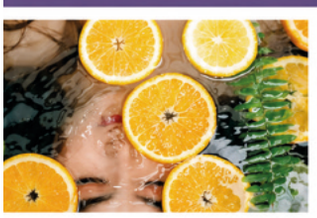
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Winchester Gardening Club

Autumn has moved in officially, although it has been creeping in gradually for some time. The sun is still with us, but it feels less fierce after the summer's heatwaves. It is time to start tidying up the garden: leaves need raking, perennials need cutting back, produce in the vegetable patch needs harvesting, and there is plenty more to do. The lawn has come back to life and needs mowing after weeks of hardly growing, unlike the weeds which never stopped thriving despite the lack of rain.

Once a month, however, we put down our tools and head for St. Mark's Church Hall in Oliver's Battery to spend a couple of hours listening to a variety of interesting talks by knowledgeable speakers and to socialise with fellow gardeners.
We also run a couple of in-house Mini Shows in March and August and organise outings to private gardens.

Our programme for the next few months covers the following events and you would be very welcome to join us:

- Wednesday, 9 December 2026 - Magic In the Mayenne, speaker Gillian Taylorthe lawn has come back to life and needs mowing after weeks of hardly growing,
- Wednesday, 13 January 2027 - Chelsea Secrets, speaker Pip Bensley
- Wednesday, 10 February 2027 - A History of the Hairy Pot Plant Company, Derek Taylor of Kirton Farm Nurseries
- Wednesday, 10 March 2027 - AGM and Mini Spring Show and Q&A session (tbc)

Our meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month, 7.30 pm - 9.45 pm, at St. Mark's Church Hall, Oliver's Battery Road South, Winchester SO22 4EZ. Visitors: £5. For further information, please visit *wingardenclub.weebly.com*.

Maya Whitmarsh

3rd Winchester City Rainbows and Brownies

Hello Again!

We started the Autumn term designing and making our prize winning scarecrow of Peter Pan and friends for the Olivers Battery Scarecrow trail. Colin came to the unit to present the girls with their Highly Commended certificate. They were very pleased and as Lucy said "Its not the winning, it's taking part and having fun. And we had lots of fun!"
Cassie came to talk to them all about sustainable transport options to coincide with Winchester Green Week, we have learnt about renewable energy and experimented with circuits. Did you know you could power a digital clock with fruit and vegetables?

Most recently we looked at the different jobs involved in making a chocolate bar and publishing a book. The girls then drew which job they would like to do when they were older. We look forward to seeing some future vets, dancers, pop stars, marine biologists, fashion designers, authors and illustrators in the years to come. We will be continuing our 'skills for my future' theme looking at some first aid for teddy bears, working out which tool does what and taking part in the UK Parliament Week. Term finsihes with a bit of baking and an advent service led by Rev. Marianne. Please also look in St Mark's church for our christmas appeal box. Items will go Winchester Beacon and Trinity Winchester.

This term we have welcomed Alice and Jo to the leadership team. Having a few more adults to support the unit really helps with making sure we can meet every week so thank you for volunteering. There is room for more though...
Finally I want to say a big CONGRATULATIONS to Kathleen on completing her leadership qualification. Well done!
Visit *https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/* if you'd like to register a potential Rainbow, Brownie or volunteer to help run the sessions. Those living on Olivers Battery, Winchester Village or Badger Farm do get priority for spaces but we are currently holding a short waiting list.



Best Wishes to you all.

Kate Fletcher, Brown Owl.
3rdwincitybrownies@gmail.com

St Peter's Catholic Primary School

A New Chapter for Reading

There is a renewed sense of excitement at St Peter's School as pupils, staff and families enjoy the beautifully refurbished library — a welcoming space designed to inspire a lifelong love of reading and learning.

The school's Governing Body has invested significantly in the project, together with the tremendous support of the PTA. Their shared vision was to create a vibrant environment where children could discover new worlds, develop their imagination and enjoy reading for its own sake.

The result is a bright, inviting space filled with carefully chosen books, comfortable seating, attractive displays and areas where pupils can read independently, work collaboratively or just enjoy a good story. Staff, volunteers and parents are also using the library, strengthening the school's culture of reading across the whole community.

Research shows that reading for pleasure strongly supports children's future success and wellbeing. At St Peter's, reading is central to the curriculum, and the refurbished library shows the school's commitment to giving every child access to quality books and the chance to develop a real love of reading. The children have responded overwhelmingly positively.



"I love coming to the library because it feels calm and cosy," said one Year 4 pupil. "There are so many different books to choose from, and I always find something interesting." One younger pupil shared, "It feels like walking into a story. I like looking for new books and reading with my friends."

Headteacher Louise Buxton said, "We are incredibly grateful to our governors and PTA for their generosity and support. This library represents our belief that every child deserves access to wonderful books and a space that nurtures curiosity, creativity and learning. It is already making a real difference to our children."

The refurbished library stands as a lasting investment in our pupils' future — a place where stories come alive, imaginations flourish and a love of learning can grow.

St. Peter's Catholic Primary School | Oliver's Battery Road North, Winchester, Hampshire SO22 4JB
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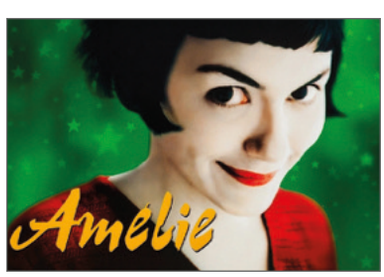
Olivers Battery Community Film Club

We are a small Community Film Club showing a mixture of mainstream films and National Theatre Live productions in St Marks Hall, Oliver's Battery. We currently have the following 2 Comedy / Dramas left to finish off a successful 2026 ;

- **Wednesday 18th November – My Mother's Wedding (Starring Scarlett Johansson, Sienna Miller and Emily Beecham)**
- **Wednesday 16th December – Amélie (Starring Audrey Tatou)**

As this is our Christmas showing, we will be serving free mince pies and mulled wine.

On 20th January 2027 we are proud to be celebrating our 10-year anniversary and to mark the occasion we will be welcoming several VIP guests including the Mayor of Winchester, Jamie Scott, to the event and providing free refreshments.



Amelie

The film is based on a young waitress, Amélie, who decides to help people find happiness, despite being caught in her own imaginative world.

To allow time for a short presentation we will be opening our doors half an hour early i.e. at 6.30pm to allow a start time of 7.00pm.

Full details for the above films can be found on our website *www.obcfilm.co.uk* where you can keep in touch with all our latest news by signing up to our newsletter. Please come along and support us!

Oliver's Battery Primary and Nursery School

It has been a wonderfully busy and positive start to the new school year at Oliver's Battery Primary and Nursery School, with much already to celebrate. Our youngest school children, Butterflies Year R class, have settled brilliantly into school life and are already growing in confidence and independence. It has been a delight to welcome them.

We believe that some of the best learning happens through experiences that bring the curriculum to life. Our Hares Year 5 children enjoyed three exciting days at Ferny Croft Residential Centre, developing independence, teamwork and courage. Our Kingfisher Year 6 children have completed their Bikeability training and are looking forward to their residential visit to Calshot Activities Centre.

Hares and Foxes in Years 3 and 4 enjoyed a fantastic day at Fairleigh Wallop, learning first-hand about farming, woodland and forestry. Experiences such as these complement the outdoor learning that is such an important part of life at our school. Children benefit from our extensive grounds, Forest School and Edible Playground, developing curiosity about the world around them and enjoying learning outdoors.

Creativity has been flourishing too. Visitors from Theatre Royal Winchester delivered inspiring puppet workshops for Years 3 to 6, while Bumblebees in Year 2 had the excitement of visiting the theatre and discovering what happens behind the scenes.

Community is at the heart of our school; this was beautifully demonstrated at our Harvest Festival. Thanks to the generosity of our families, we collected a wonderful range of donations for Basics Bank Winchester, helping our children understand the importance of kindness, contribution and the wider community.

There is plenty to look forward to as Christmas approaches. Hedgehogs Nursery and Butterflies Year R will share Christmas songs, while Ladybirds and Bumblebees will perform a Key Stage One Nativity. Celebrations across the school will also include a touring production of Beauty and the Beast, Christmas Jumper Day, Christmas Lunch and Carols on the Decking.

Hedgehog Nursery

Our Nursery continues to thrive, welcoming children from the age of two in our Hoglets Room, with eligible families able to access funded childcare.

At Oliver's Battery, we want children to be curious in their learning, courageous when facing challenges and proud to be part of a strong and caring community. From outdoor adventures and creative experiences to community celebrations and everyday classroom learning, we aim to give every child the opportunity to grow, achieve and flourish.

If your child is due to start school in September 2027, is looking for a Nursery place, or you would simply like to find out what makes our school special, we would love to meet you. Please contact our friendly Admin Team to arrange a visit.

www.oliversbatteryprimary.com





Your Aluminium Rubbish Can Help Save Lives

Badger Farm and Oliver's Battery now have a powerful, zero-cost way to support the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance through our aluminium-recycling fundraising scheme. The charity provides highly trained critical-care specialists who respond to life-threatening emergencies across our county, including road traffic accidents and cardiac arrests. Their work saves lives every week, and now our neighbourhood can help fund it simply by collecting aluminium.









We launched the scheme on Badger Farm in August, and thanks to local residents, we've already filled and processed three full collection bins. By teaming up with Winchester Litterpickers and other groups, we raised over £20,000 across Hampshire in 2026. It is a fantastic start — and now we are hoping to spread the word even further and galvanise the whole community to keep the momentum going.

Drop-Off Point

Please use the collection planters located in Lowden Close (SO22 4EW) — by the wall behind the blue Hyundai i10, next to the pampas grass area.
Please do not use the blue Air Ambulance bin directly; all items need sorting first. Let's turn everyday recycling into life-saving support for a charity that's always there when people need it most.

What to Collect

Please gather and donate:

- Drink cans (please crush to save space)
- Aluminium pet food containers (no cans)
- Aluminium food trays
- Empty deodorant cans
- Wine bottle screw tops

Please note that all items must be rinsed, crushed and free from plastic debris.

A Traditional Polish Christmas

As a child growing up in Łódź, central Poland, Christmas began on Wigilia (Christmas Eve, 24 December). Before supper, the family gathered to share opłatek, a thin white wafer, exchanging wishes for the year ahead. Children were encouraged to watch for the first star in the night sky, signalling the start of the celebrations.

Traditionally, twelve dishes were served, representing good fortune and abundance. Family members were encouraged to try a little of each dish to bring luck in the coming year. The meal was pescatarian, with fish, mushrooms, vegetables and dumplings taking centre stage. Meaty dishes were traditionally reserved for Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

After supper, we sang carols and exchanged gifts. Many families also took an evening walk to admire the nativity scene at their local church and listen to the choir preparing for Midnight Mass.



One of my favourite Christmas dishes is porcini mushroom soup:

Quick Porcini Mushroom Soup

Soak 25g dried porcini mushrooms in 500ml hot water for 30 minutes. Fry 1 chopped onion in butter, add the mushrooms and their soaking liquid, then simmer for 15 minutes. Season with salt, pepper and a little cream. Serve with cooked mafalda corta pasta, the closest supermarket alternative to traditional Polish łazanki.
Wesołych Świąt! (Merry Christmas!)

Jo Martynka
Community Newsletter Editor

A Year of Celebrations, Community and Connection!

What a busy and brilliant year it's been at the Badger Farm Community Centre! From celebrating a very special milestone to welcoming new faces and continuing to support our wonderful local community, there has been plenty happening within our walls.

Celebration of the Centre

In August, we celebrated the Centre's 40th anniversary with a special open afternoon, welcoming many visitors to join us in marking four decades at the heart of the community.

It was lovely to celebrate this important milestone and reflect on all the people, groups and activities that have made the Centre such a valued part of local life over the years.

Welcoming our New Editor

We've also just now welcomed a new editor, Jo, to our Community News magazine team. We're delighted to have her on board and look forward to seeing the magazine continue to bring local news, stories and community spirit to our readers.



Essential Services

Our doors remain open to a wide variety of important services and activities. We continue to host the Winchester Food and Basics Bank, alongside the NHS, which uses the Centre to provide a range of vital services. It's a privilege to help make these essential services accessible to our community.

Events Now and Ahead

There's plenty to keep enthusiasts entertained, too! Our calendar continues to feature gaming and trading card events, auctions and our popular Holistic Market, bringing people together to share their interests, discover something new and enjoy a friendly atmosphere. Looking ahead, we're excited to welcome a toy fair this spring and are particularly pleased to be anticipating the return of NCT sale. We're always happy to see new events and familiar faces joining the Centre's busy programme.

Our Long-Standing Hirers

Of course, a community centre is only as good as the people who use it, and we're especially proud that so many of our regular hirers have stayed with us for many years. Their continued support, loyalty and enthusiasm are a huge part of what makes the Centre such a welcoming and lively place.

Closing Thanks

As we look forward to another year of activities, events and opportunities to bring people together, we'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to everyone who visits, hires, supports or volunteers at the Centre.

Here's to the next chapter — and many more happy years at the heart of our community!

Ali Cochrane
Badger Farm Community Centre Manager

Nature Notes - Autumn 2026

As I write these autumn nature notes, the extreme heat of summer has become a distant memory, and thankfully, after much-needed rain, the garden and grass have recovered. Autumn is a good time to spot otherwise secretive animals as they search for food which will fatten them up for the colder weather and shorter days of the winter months ahead. Squirrels and Jays are important distributors of nuts and acorns and rooks of walnuts, the saplings of which pop up in the most unexpected of places.

Blackberries are ripening earlier and are usually over by late September. The old saying goes that they shouldn't be picked after Michaelmas Day, which is on the 29th of September. Allegedly, this is when Lucifer was thrown from heaven by St Michael and landed unceremoniously onto a bramble bush. In his rage, he cursed the plant and caused the fruit to be bitter after this day.

Wasps, which are usually going about their business preying on pests to feed the growing grubs in summer months, now become a nuisance. The old queen has died, and the new queen's gone into hibernation, leaving an undisciplined mob of workers living off decaying fruits and becoming more and more sleepy before dying off with the first frosts. The wasps you see in late Spring are the new queens who are looking for suitable nest sites. Once active, the spherical nest can house around five thousand wasps.



© Wendy Bramall

There are 9,000 species of wasps in the UK, but only nine of these are social wasps which form large nests. The others include parasitic wasps, some so tiny they can only be seen under a microscope. In the Midlands, the common wasps are known as 'Jaspers', maybe from their Latin name Vespula vulgaris or from the striped mineral jasper.

A family of Long-tailed tits have been frequenting my garden. These charming little birds are easily identified by their long black and white tail that is longer than their body and their white head with a black eyestripe and pale pink belly. These tiny, sociable birds flit from branch to branch, hunting for small insects and spiders and communicating with a sweet tinkling sound.

Wendy Bramall
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Badger Farm & Oliver's Battery Parish Council Meetings

Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Badger Farm Parish Council

meets on the second Monday of every second month at 7.30pm, starting 11/01/2027, at Badger Farm Community Centre. For more information, please check the council website *(badgerfarm-pc.gov.uk)* or contact the clerk, Christine Howe *clerk@badgerfarm-pc.gov.uk.*

Oliver's Battery Parish Council

Please see the Parish Council website (oliversbattery. info) and Facebook page (@OliversBatteryParishCouncil) for information on the dates, times and location of future meetings, or contact the clerk: *clerkoliversbattery@gmail.com.*



If you have a community contribution or would like to advertise with us, please get in touch.

Editorial deadline for our next issue: Friday, 26 February 2027 | Editor: Jo Martynka | Editorial email: bfobrca.cnews@gmail.com

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