

# Town & Country

Brought to you by Bracknell Forest Council

Winter 2023

## Celebrating our wonderful community in 2023



Over the past year, the borough's diversity and heritage has been celebrated and explored through a range of successful, free civic and community events.

This has included the coronation of The King and The Queen in May, the borough's first ever Pride in June, a reimagined community day in July and a host of activities throughout the autumn, which you can read more about here and over the page.

### The Great Wellness Exchange



The Great Wellness Exchange 2023 was a new community event that took place at different locations across the borough. It aimed to support residents'

wellbeing and promote a variety of wellness activities and clubs that can help to improve residents' health and lifestyles.

Bracknell Forest's public health team, which devised and ran the event, invited residents to get involved, try out new activities and explore some of the support offered locally.

The main event took place at Bracknell Leisure Centre on Saturday, 16 September.

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Starline/FreePik





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As part of the event, Bracknell Open Learning Centre provided activities for residents of all ages, including workshops and taster sessions from tai chi to watercolour painting.

### Fab-u-lous tea dance



Hot on the heels of the Great Wellness Exchange, residents got their toes tapping during a traditional tea dance in Princess Square. The dance was led by former Strictly Come Dancing pro Ian Waite and local dance school, KL Dance Steps. Held on 1 October, it coincided with Silver Sunday, which aims to reduce social isolation for older people. However, residents of all ages were on the dance floor enjoying fun, energetic dancing, and the community spirit was felt throughout.

Thank you to all the amazing local groups, charities, support services and Everyone Active for their contribution to The Great Wellness Exchange and tea dance.

### Royal visit to Vsi Razom

Vsi Razom welcomed a special guest in October, to showcase how it is making a difference to the lives of local Ukrainian families displaced by conflict.

The Princess of Wales visited the Ukrainian community hub, which is based in Princess Square, speaking to staff and volunteers as well as families who have been using it for advice, support and friendship.

During the visit, Her Royal Highness helped to pack goodwill boxes for Ukrainian families, which provide essentials like toothbrushes and toothpaste, nappies and wipes.

She also spoke to a number of people who provide essential support and advice, including Ashleigh Toomey and Natalia Vil, who set up the hub following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

We will continue to celebrate our community over the coming months, including over the festive period. Turn to page 13 for information on upcoming activities.



# We Clean Ovens

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# Leader's welcome



**Hello and welcome to the winter edition of Town & Country.**

The past couple of months have been filled with terrible news from Israel and Palestine. The horror of war is again upon the people in both these countries. I am sure you all hope, like me, that someone will soon be able to stop the aggression, the attacks, the retaliation and start to work for reconciliation and peace, a lasting peace that will endure.

Locally, we've been working hard on the Council Plan, which reflects our manifesto. It is ambitious and focuses on many key issues – climate change, the cost of living, children's and youth services, education, adult services, housing, business and arts and leisure to name just a few. We want to achieve as much as possible in four years.

You can read more about the Council Plan below.

The council's budget situation is challenging and there are a lot of tough decisions to make. The care and support to our most vulnerable residents, old and young, requiring social care, is non-negotiable and must be prioritised, but still adds to our budget pressures.

Although the current year's financial position is particularly challenging, we are in a strong place compared to similar local authorities. But I want to be honest and transparent with you. Financially, the next couple of years are not going to be easy, and difficult decisions will have to be made.

I will be visiting key places in the borough at the start of next year to talk to you about the budget and listen to your concerns. If you have any questions, you can come and talk to us.

If you are struggling with the cost of living, please know there is help available. Turn to page nine for details on advice and support that could help you this winter.

Our priorities include making the council more open, transparent and inclusive. We

promised we would involve residents by taking the work of the council out to the community, we have already done this and will continue to do so. We want to increase residents' knowledge of the hard work of the council, it's not only about potholes, bins and grass cutting. Unless you need support for adult social care and children's services, it's possible that you might not know much about these vital services.

I would encourage you to contact your local councillor, who is always available for help, support and signposting. You can find their contact information on the council's website: [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk) and search 'find your councillor'.

At Christmas time, we produce 30 per cent more waste in the UK compared to the rest of the year. You can read more about how to recycle accurately, thereby helping reduce our recycling costs and saving you money, on pages 22-23.

Having said that - I'd like to wish you a very happy Christmas and best wishes for a safe and healthy 2024.

**Cllr Mary Temperton**  
**Leader of Bracknell Forest Council**

## Growing together and shaping tomorrow through our new Council Plan

The council's new priorities for the borough have just been agreed and will look to improve local health, the environment, communities and our economy over the next four years.

The Council Plan, which sets out where the council will focus its attention, time and money, was agreed at the end of November. It aligns to the Labour administration's election manifesto.

The overall vision for the council in this period is to grow together and shape tomorrow. The plan has three key themes in line with that vision:

- Engaged and healthy communities
- Thriving and connected economy
- Green and sustainable environment

**Key projects under these themes include:**

- Building and opening a new supported living service in Birch Hill (called Bridgewell).
- A new SEND school at Buckler's Park.
- Creating more than 80 new affordable and/or social rent homes in Market Street

and additional affordable homes on the former depot site in Old Bracknell Lane West.

- Working with the NHS to create a new health facility in the town centre.
- Enabling the delivery of a new community hub in Warfield alongside Warfield Parish Council.
- Working with Bracknell Regeneration Partnership to provide some 'meanwhile' activity on the former Bentalls site in the town centre.
- Researching the possibility of providing new energy schemes at the old London Road landfill site, including a solar array and charging hub.

The plan details how the council will monitor the progress being made in achieving its goals for the borough. These include: an increase in recycling the correct items, reducing the number of people sleeping rough and increasing the number of affordable homes, improving education outcomes for disadvantaged children and those in care, reducing carbon emissions, increasing bus use, increasing the number of electrical vehicle chargers, and increasing the effectiveness of mental health support as well as other physical health measures.

It also sets out that reducing unemployment further and increasing the skills and training

of local people are key ambitions over the next four years, as well as increasing the number of people visiting the town centre.

The council cannot achieve these ambitions on its own, so will work with other organisations like the NHS, community groups and businesses on relevant priorities and projects.

You can find the full plan on the council's website.



## 4 Register for your new My account at: [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk) and click My accounts

### Quick links



Keep these links handy (or bookmarked in your internet browser) to find everyday and useful information you might need from us.

**Community groups, organisations and events in your area -**  
[helpyourself.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://helpyourself.bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

**Council tax enquiries -** [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/council-tax](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/council-tax)

**Refuse and recycling collections -**  
[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling)

**Brown bins -** [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling/garden-waste](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling/garden-waste)

**Leisure facilities -** [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/leisure-services](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/leisure-services)

**Jobs -** [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/jobs](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/jobs)

**e+ account -** [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/e-plus-card](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/e-plus-card)

**Register for your new My account at:**  
[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk) and click My accounts

If you need a reasonable adjustment to communicate with us, please call 01344 352000 or email: [customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@bracknell-forest.gov.uk).



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### Sign up and discover Bracknell Forest!

Did you know that we produce a regular newsletter called Discover Bracknell Forest? It includes information about the events taking place across the borough. You can sign up for free at: [bit.ly/BFCUpdates](http://bit.ly/BFCUpdates).

You can also sign up to our weekly news update called Town & Country Extra at: <http://bit.ly/TCExtra>.



### About Town & Country

**Town & Country** is published by Bracknell Forest Council.

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**Town & Country** is delivered to more than 50,000 households in the borough and is also available on our website: [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk).

A summary of **Town & Country** can be made available in large print, in Braille or on audio cassette. Copies in other languages may also be obtained.

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# Bracknell Forest Council's financial position



Parradee Kietirikul/Stock/Getty Images Plus/via Getty Images

Like most other local authorities across the country, Bracknell Forest Council is facing a challenging financial position - with unprecedented pressure on its budget.

Earlier this year, the council was facing a financial gap of around £4m. However, due to lots of hard work behind the scenes, this had reduced to around £2m.

While this brings the council closer to balancing its books, and there is no current risk of bankruptcy (called a section 114 notice), it is still in a difficult financial position. A position it has never been in before.

This deficit is largely due to rising costs, rising inflation, increased service demand and years of underfunding from central government.

Like everyone, the council is not exempt from the rise in the cost of living. The high rate of inflation also affects all council services.

In addition to inflationary costs, the council's budget is affected each year by other cost pressures, notably relating to increased demand for services. Alongside the higher demand for social care services, prices for care packages are rising much faster than inflation.

Additionally, more people in the borough have care needs that the council must meet, including children in care or with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and adults with learning difficulties or physical disabilities. This care and support is non-negotiable and must be prioritised, but still adds to council budget pressures.

Another pressure has come from the amount of business rates collected dropping drastically. The national Valuation Office Agency (VOA) determines business rates for all businesses, and continuously re-assesses how much companies are paying. A number of significant businesses in the borough have been reassessed this year and so the council must make refunds backdated to 2017 – totalling several million pounds.

Changes have already taken place with immediate effect to help reduce overspending.

This includes making sure staff only spend on essential items necessary to provide frontline services and holding vacancies where possible.

Cllr Kathryn Neil, executive member for finance and business change, said: "Although the current year's financial position is particularly challenging, we are in a strong place compared to similar local authorities.

"Some councils have declared bankruptcy, thankfully Bracknell Forest Council is not in

this position, but we want to be honest and transparent with our residents about our current financial situation.

"We are in an unprecedented financial position with a £2m gap due to spiralling costs, rising inflation and increased demand for our services.

"While these are not factors within our control, we must address the budget gap. This means that over the coming months we will have to make some difficult decisions and look very carefully at what we can afford to prioritise for the remainder of this year and future years."

The council's interim financial position will continue to be monitored by senior staff weekly. Additional spending controls will be put in place, where necessary.

In parallel, work is being carried out on the budget for 2024/25. Many of the pressures being faced in the current year will inevitably impact on next year too. Draft budget proposals will be put to the executive in December, where they will be asked to approve a public consultation on the plans.

Our executive councillors will visit key places in the borough at the start of next year, to talk to residents and answer any questions they may have about this. More information about this will be available on the council's website and social media channels shortly.



# Bracknell Forest Council's executive

## Cllr Mary Temperton, Leader

Having joined the Labour party at the age of 16, Mary spent her working life as a science teacher. Mary became a borough councillor in 2011 and has been on Bracknell Town Council for over 40 years. She led the party to victory in the 2023 local elections after over 20 years of a Conservative administration.



Mary is resolute about climate change and has made it a top priority for the council, taking it into her portfolio area alongside council strategy.

Mary is passionate about education and ensuring every child matters. She is prioritising provision for our youth and focussing on tackling the issues with SEND provision.

## Cllr Dr Roy Bailey, executive member for children, young people and learning

Now retired, Roy is a former Thames Valley police officer, with extensive experience in a range of roles, including CID, drug squad, community and race relations and senior command. In his final role as head of training, Roy qualified as a teacher at Surrey University, where he gained a PGCE.



Roy subsequently taught sociology at both Farnborough Sixth Form College and Buckinghamshire New University. Following that brief teaching spell, Roy became a business consultant for Oracle, eventually becoming a programme director for executive sponsorship.

An active local politician, Roy has previously been a councillor for both Bracknell Forest Council and Bracknell Town Council. He is chair of the Bracknell Forest Constituency Labour Party, a position he has held for several years. Roy has been a school governor in Bracknell for over 30 years, including chair of one school for several years.

Roy holds a doctorate in criminal justice, and he is a regular contributor to academic journals on policing related issues, especially around governance. He writes regular blogs on policing for Policing Commentary, of which he is a founder member.

In addition to his role as a local councillor, Roy is a carer for his wife and proud grandad to his two grandsons.

## Cllr Megan Wright, executive member of adult services, health and housing

Megan has a degree in nursing and worked in intensive care for 12 years. In 2009 she moved to Kenya for four years with her family and set up a charity called Tushinde. This was her full-time job until 2022. To date, Tushinde has grown to 25 staff and has directly helped over 1,000 children and thousands more indirectly through community projects. She is currently finishing handing it over to the management in Nairobi.



Megan had returned to the NHS at the start of 2023 and intended to resume her nursing career when she was elected to the council.

She is borough and town councillor for the Town Centre and The Parks. She sits on several committees and is the chair of the health and wellbeing board.

## Cllr Paul Bidwell, executive member for economic development and regeneration

Initially from an IT background, Paul has held many senior positions in the private sector and has worked in the US (World Trade Centre) and Europe. He has worked for many international corporations, typically providing services into local government including adult services. He ran his own consultancy allowing him to understand the local SME landscape before returning to programme management,



this time within the security sector for an international renowned risk management organisation. He is a school governor at Fox Hill Primary School as well as chair of Age Concern Bracknell Forest.

He has been a town councillor since 2015 and borough councillor since 2021, for Easthampstead and Wildridings. He is a board member of the Cambian Partnership Joint Venture between the council and Countryside Properties and is on the board of the Bracknell Business Improvement District (BID), as well as being chair of the town centre regeneration committee and a member of the economic supplier development partnership.

## Cllr Helen Purnell, executive member for environment and community cohesion

Helen first joined the Labour Party when she was 16 years old, believing in social equality and hoping for a fairer, kinder society.

She obtained a degree in history from Southampton University and a few years after graduating, joined Thames Valley Police, serving as a constable for almost 10 years and qualifying as a detective. She worked on various units, including the domestic violence unit, prisoner intervention, and local priority crime, investigating burglaries and robberies.

Helen is one of the elected Labour councillors for Easthampstead and Wildridings. She is on the licensing and safety committee, the climate change council sector group, disability and access advisory panel and is the Homestart representative.



## Cllr Iksandar Jefferies, executive member for culture, delivery and public protection

Iskandar started his professional career on the frontline in the private security sector and worked





his way up to his current role overseeing Europe, the Middle East and Africa as a risk management professional. He has held board positions with international security industry bodies for diversity, equity and inclusion and young professionals respectively. Currently he is advisor to the board of directors for the International Foundation for Protect Officers. He has always had a passion for volunteering and empowering the next generation to success. He was honoured to be awarded the Freedom of the City of London in 2019.

Elected in May 2023; in his current capacity, Iskandar holds the positions councillor for Bracknell Town Council and Bracknell Forest Council respectively.

Iskandar and his wife moved to Bracknell 15 years ago as they wanted to raise their three young daughters in an area that was built for families. They have seen a lot of change since, and his vision is to ensure Bracknell Forest remains a place for families to live, grow and call home.

**Cllr Guy Gillbe, executive member for planning and transport**

With a background in operations for the charity sector, Guy was elected to Bracknell Forest Council in May 2023. Guy has spent most of his life in the borough, first in Sandhurst, then Bracknell. As a regular bus user, Guy is keen to make sure we always look beyond cars as the only means of transportation. He also serves as chair of the council's licensing and safety committee. He enjoys spending his free time making use of the borough's many ramble routes and walkways.



**Cllr Kathryn Neil, executive member for finance and business change (deputy leader of the council and vice-chair of the executive)**

Kathryn has lived and worked in Bracknell for a number of years. She has worked in the retail industry for over 15 years, including customer facing and head office roles and is now a branch manager. She has also held project and change management roles, including business change manager for Bracknell Forest Council in the transformation team.



# Housing allocation policy consultation

Residents are being asked for their views on the council's proposed new housing allocation policy.

The housing allocations policy sets out who qualifies to join the housing register for social housing, how they can apply, how their application will be assessed and how their priority for rehousing will be determined. The current policy was drafted in 2016 with a minor update in 2021.

Demand for social housing in the borough is high and increasing. In April 2023, 1,900 households were on the housing register in the borough, this is an increase of more than 550 households compared to just three years ago. Over the same period, the number of homes available to let has steadily declined. The shortage of larger family homes is a particular issue with overcrowded households waiting many years to be rehoused.

The housing service is committed to developing a new housing allocations policy which provides a fair, transparent, and easily understood approach to meeting the housing needs of the local area.

The new policy will:

- make best use of the properties available for allocation and prioritise those in greatest housing need
- reduce waiting times for the most overcrowded households
- support key groups such as care leavers by ensuring their housing needs are recognised

- take account of legislative changes, such as the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, to ensure it is supporting work to prevent households from becoming homeless

Cllr Megan Wright, executive member for adult services, health and housing, said: "The new housing allocation policy is needed to ensure the right people are receiving the right housing. It will also help to address the shortage in larger family homes for social and affordable rent in the borough, ensuring the most overcrowded households with dependent children are prioritised for these homes.

"By focusing on this group, we aim to reduce rehousing times for families living in unsuitable and overcrowded accommodation, which are currently much longer than for one and two bedroom properties.

"It will also allow us to give adequate recognition to the needs of groups, such as care leavers, foster carers, ex and serving armed forces personnel. We hope our residents will get involved with the consultation to ensure their views are heard." More information on the consultation will be available on the council's website and social media channels in the coming weeks.





## Working together to tackle climate change

Earlier this year, the council joined forces with local businesses, schools and community groups to take part in the first Bracknell Forest Council climate change summit.

Over 130 representatives from across those areas attended to learn about the current climate situation in Bracknell Forest and discuss how groups can work together with the council to make progress on climate change.

Following the summit, the Bracknell Forest Joint Climate Action Board was formed. The board consists of representatives from local businesses, schools, community groups, parish and town councils, as well as Bracknell Forest Council officers and councillors. They will play a key role in creating and



implementing the new Bracknell Forest community climate emergency strategy, an essential requirement following the council motion to reach net zero as close to 2030 as possible, which was passed in September.

Moving forward, the board will be supported by working groups representing specific sectors within the borough. Each working group (aside from those for councillors and council officers) is being led by an organisation external to the council and will

select two representatives to attend future board meetings.

Local organisations or residents are welcome to register their interest for the working groups through an online survey: [https://bit.ly/climate\\_group](https://bit.ly/climate_group).

## Cut your car journeys and take the bus this Christmas

**Are you used to driving around the borough?  
Why not try taking the bus this Christmas?**

Thanks to funding by the Department for Transport, the council is offering free single bus fares on Thames Valley Buses or Reading Buses for the first four Saturdays in December.

Anyone can board a bus in Bracknell Forest on the 2, 9, 16 and 23 December for free, regardless of their destination.

If you travel outside of the borough, please be aware that

you may need to pay for your return trip, depending on other travel schemes operating in that area. The offer will not be available on 30 December. Seasoned bus travellers and newcomers are all welcome. You can plan your journey on the My Journey Bracknell Forest website: [myjourney.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://myjourney.bracknell-forest.gov.uk).

**Anyone can board a bus in Bracknell Forest on the 2, 9, 16 and 23 December for free, regardless of their destination.**



## Bike into Christmas

**If you don't fancy taking the bus, how about cycling into the town centre instead this Christmas?**

We have a great network of cycle paths across the borough, many of which lead to Bracknell town centre as well as other local shopping areas.

Not only is it better for the environment, cycling also has many health benefits and it's free.

There are also plenty of places to lock your bike around Bracknell town centre as the centre is for pedestrians only.

[bit.ly/Cyclingmaps](http://bit.ly/Cyclingmaps).





### Beware of loan sharks

Before you borrow money, find out how to avoid loan sharks. If you can answer yes to one or more of these questions, you might be borrowing from a loan shark:

- Did they offer you a cash loan?
- Did you not receive any paperwork?
- Did they add huge amounts of interest or APR to your loan?
- Have they threatened you?
- Are you scared of people finding out?
- Have they taken your bank card, benefit card, passport, watch or other valuables from you?

Loan sharks can come in any shape and size. A recommendation from friends or family is the most common way to be introduced to an illegal money lender.

Loan sharks don't always use violence to ensure payments but might use psychological manipulation, such as threatening to expose their lending to loved ones or constant messaging through social media.

If you or someone you know are affected by illegal money lending, then more information can be found at: [www.stoploansharks.co.uk](http://www.stoploansharks.co.uk). Support and advice are available by calling the confidential 24-hour helpline on 0300 555 2222, a live chat option is available for people who are not able to make a call. Any reports can be made anonymously.

### Energy saving tips

Turn your thermostat down by one degree



Avoid half loads when using the washing machine and dishwasher



Plan meals to make full use of oven space or use an air fryer or microwave instead



Only fill the kettle up with what you need



Use eco mode on appliances where possible



Close curtains to trap heat in



Cut your shower by one minute, this not only saves on energy costs but also water



Draught proof your home



Turn radiators off and close doors in rooms you don't use



Move furniture away from radiators to allow heat to flow

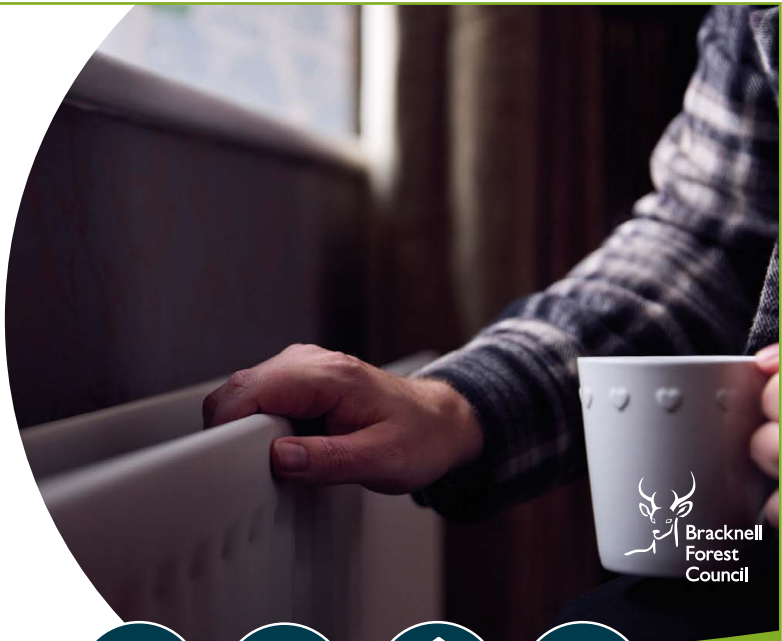


Use LED light bulbs and turn lights off in rooms you are not in



# Need help with the cost of living?

Reach out online at:  
[bracknell-forest.gov.uk/cost-living-support](http://bracknell-forest.gov.uk/cost-living-support)





## Season's greetings from everyone in the parks and countryside team



### Calisthenics comes to The Parks

The Parks residents have been enjoying new outdoor exercise equipment, after it was opened in the summer.

There are 10 different workout stations to try and features such as parallel bars and rings. These can be used for body weight exercises, known as calisthenics, to increase body strength, power and endurance.

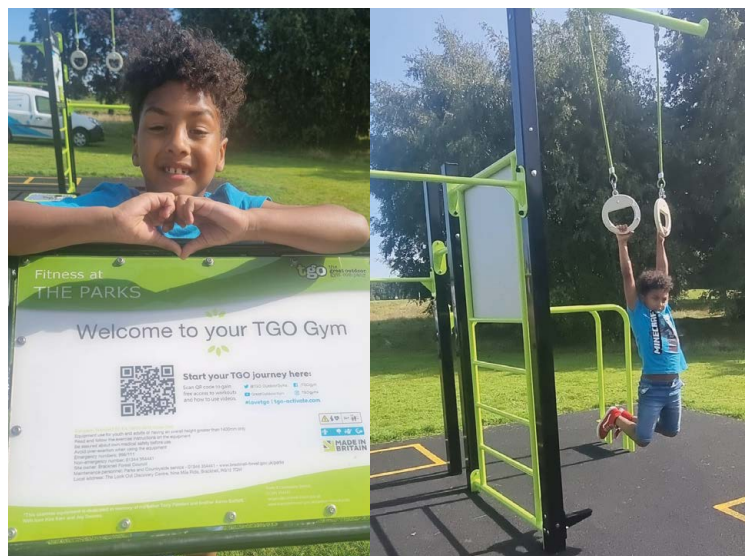
Cllr Iskandar Jefferies, executive member for culture, delivery and public protection, said: "Calisthenics equipment is well-suited for use in an outdoor environment, as it has minimal moving parts and it is of robust construction.

"The local development money we used for this improvement was earmarked for enhancing local open space and recreation.

"Our thanks to The Parks community for their help and support in developing these new facilities. We are pleased to hear how they are enjoying using them."



Ranger Andy with Sienia, Cllr Jefferies, Kim, Jahiem and Junior.



Jahiem enjoying trying out the new facilities.

**Resident Kim Kerr and her family member Junior Bartlett, of Jay Deucesfitness, were the inspiration and driving force behind the new calisthenics park.**

Kim said: "I contacted the council in 2020 with the suggestion of establishing a calisthenics park in Bracknell.

"Calisthenics has helped my family with our body and mind fitness following personal loss. Sadly, my sweet dad, Tony Palmieri, passed away in 2022 and Junior's younger brother Aaron passed away in 2020. The new calisthenics park is dedicated to their memories.

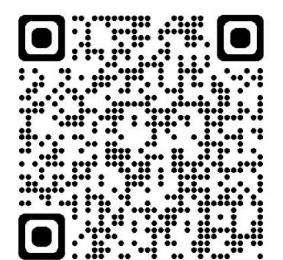
"Residents of all ages and abilities will now be able to get fit and healthy for free. The new equipment will also provide a facility for the next generation, which includes my four children, Jahiem, Sienia, Jordan and Thierry."



## Have your say

Have you visited one of our greenspaces lately? Our short online survey can be used to provide us with feedback about your visit.

To take part, scan the QR code or visit our website: [https://bit.ly/parks\\_consult](https://bit.ly/parks_consult)  
Click 'start the survey' under give us your feedback.



All information is anonymous and will be used to help us improve parks and open spaces for people and wildlife.



## Blooming marvellous effort by volunteers

**Council staff and volunteers planted thousands of wildflowers at Lily Hill Park this autumn.**

50 TDK volunteers from across Europe were hosted by the local office TDK UK Limited, a business based in Bracknell. They joined our heritage parks team in September to carry out the work.

Their combined effort saw them planting 6,000 young wildflower plants in the lawn in front of the summer house. A further 6,000 wildflower plugs have since been planted thanks to the support of local volunteers.

A low flowering lawn plug mix was used containing 16 different wildflowers. Species such as cowslip, oxeye daisy, red clover and wild marjoram will add a splash of colour when they flower in spring and summer. They will also provide a source of nectar for important pollinators, such as bees and butterflies.

TDK donated funding towards the improvements. The rest was paid for using local development money allocated for improving suitable alternative natural greenspaces (SANGs).

The corporate volunteer event was organised through the Green & Active project, a campaign which promotes local green volunteering opportunities.

<https://involve.community/green-active>.



Volunteers from TDK.



Preparing the wildflower plugs before the planting.



Volunteers receiving instructions from Jimi, one of our heritage parks gardeners.

## What are SANGs?

SANGs, or suitable alternative natural greenspaces, are recreational sites created and enhanced for people and wildlife.

There are 14 SANGs in Bracknell Forest, with examples including Cabbage Hill, Lily Hill Park, Peacock Meadows and Pope's Meadow. There are also grouped spaces, such as the Bullbrook Countryside Corridor.

These natural spaces provide attractive places for recreation away from the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). Reducing visitor numbers to the SPA will help to protect the internationally important ground nesting birds that live there.



Peacock Meadows has a north and south side to explore.



Protected bird species in the SPA include the Dartford warbler (pictured), nightjar and woodlark.





# Merry & Bright

The  
Glow  
Room

The  
Sparkle  
Selfie Station

The  
Light  
Pool

From the Glow Room and Light Pool to our  
Selfie Station, we have something for everyone.  
Find out more at **[thelexiconbracknell.com](http://thelexiconbracknell.com)**



[thelexiconbracknell.com](http://thelexiconbracknell.com)

**THE**  
**LEXICON**  
BRACKNELL



# Merry and Bright at The Lexicon this Christmas

Nothing says Christmas quite like sparkling lights and glowing smiling faces.

The Lexicon has festive fun throughout the town centre with its Merry and Bright Christmas activities.

Activities include:

- The Lexicon Glow Room, a magical winter forest light experience for all the family. More than 20,000 dazzling LEDs will create a unique sensory experience with light projection, soundscapes and some of your favourite Christmas tunes.
- A Twinkle Trail to follow with prizes to be won.
- The Lexicon's Light Pool, a sea of more than 20,000 balls that come alive with a sparkling light show.

Entry to The Lexicon's Light Pool is free but visitors can make donations to Bracknell Foodbank to help families who are under financial pressure this Christmas.

On Thursday evenings in December (7, 14 and 21 December), there will be local performances to entertain you while you shop.

To find out more about Merry and Bright at The Lexicon, visit: [www.thelexiconbracknell.com](http://www.thelexiconbracknell.com).



## Operator appointed for Buckler's Park Community Hub



Work to open Buckler's Park Community Hub in Crowthorne moved one step closer in August, with the appointment of Age Concern Bracknell Forest (ACBF) as the new hub operator.

ACBF will breathe life into the hub, delivering a number of activities and services for all ages using the range of facilities on offer, including a café, large sports hall, meeting rooms and tennis courts.

Ideally located against the backdrop of Buckler's Forest, a popular spot for walking and cycling, the aspiration is for the hub to start serving the community within the next few months.

Bracknell Forest Council is working with ACBF to get the building ready for opening. Further details of the opening date will be issued in due course.

In the meantime, anyone wishing to enquire about providing their classes or activities at the hub, should contact Angela Harding, lead events and community officer. Email: [angela.harding@ageconcernbracknell.org.uk](mailto:angela.harding@ageconcernbracknell.org.uk) or call 01344 422048.





## SOMETHING FOR **EVERYONE**

### DOWNSHIRE GOLF COMPLEX

- 18 Hole Championship Course
- 9 Hole Pitch and Putt Course
- 30 Bay Floodlit Driving Range
- Practice Putting area
- Indoor Golf Simulator
- Event Hire
- Restaurant/Bar
- Golf Pro Shop
- 1-2-1 Tuition
- Holiday Camps

SCAN ME



### BRACKNELL LEISURE CENTRE

- Gym
- 3 Swimming Pools
- Group Ex Studio
- Sports Hall
- Sauna
- Swim Lessons
- Birthday Parties
- 3G Pitch
- Athletics Track
- Squash Courts
- Cafe

SCAN ME



### CORAL REEF WATERWORLD

- 5 Water Slides
- Swimming Pool including: rapids, bubble pool, children's area, pirate ship & more!
- Spa
- Birthday Parties
- Cafe
- Accessible Sessions

SCAN ME



For more information on our facilities or to become a member with us today, head to [www.everyoneactive.com](http://www.everyoneactive.com)



everyone  
ACTIVE



**For Chloe it's a new beginning**

### Bracknell Forest Fostering

Request a call back for an informal chat

[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/fostering)  
01344 352411



## School Governors are people like you



Interested in influencing the future of young people?

Want to use your skills and develop new ones?



Email: [governors.helpdesk@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:governors.helpdesk@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)  
[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/schoolgovernors](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/schoolgovernors)



## A message from the Mayor of Bracknell Forest

Time flies. I had heard this expression, but it is now that I have come to believe it. It has already been seven months since I was elected to be the Mayor of Bracknell Forest. I must say that it has been a humbling experience to be serving my community.

As your Mayor, I had the privilege to share in your joys and sorrows. Summer was full of village fetes and celebrations, with some great weather. The council hosted the annual memorial service on 3 September for our residents who had lost their loved ones. It was a deeply touching and poignant service, where communities came together to remember those who graced this earth, enriched our lives and left the legacy of love for us to hold on to. As our beloved late Queen once said, "grief is the price we pay for love."

As the health and wellbeing of residents is really important to me, I was delighted to introduce the mayor's walk, and walk with residents in the beautiful setting of Lily Hill Park, guided by one of the council's rangers. We were grateful for the hospitality extended to us by Bracknell Rugby Club. Such walks are hosted regularly, all around our beautiful borough.

Bracknell Forest is twinned with Leverkusen. As it was the 50th anniversary of this friendship, we hosted a delegation here. Our guests enjoyed the local hospitality and toured our lovely town and nearby historic buildings, including a day trip to the Houses of Parliament. They also joined me in the mayor's parlour and visited our council offices.

I was humbled to be invited to attend the Lord Lieutenant's Award Ceremony to honour the fire and rescue services of Berkshire. I was touched by the stories of selfless devotion to duty and the bravery of our men and women who keep us all safe in our homes, out on our streets and on the roads.

During the latter part of the summer, myself and Deputy Mayor, Cllr Jenny Penfold, inaugurated numerous new businesses in The Lexicon and Princess Square, adding to the economic vibrancy of our borough, bringing more job opportunities to our town.

Last month I was invited by The Lexicon to launch the Christmas advent calendar appeal for Bracknell Foodbank. If you are able, please consider extending your festive goodwill to those in our community, who are

less fortunate and need a helping hand during these challenging economic times.

Please keep all those impacted by wars in your thoughts.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

**Cllr Naheed Ejaz**  
**Mayor of the Borough of Bracknell Forest**



## Community Learning at Bracknell Open Learning Centre



**Adult learning courses in wellbeing, arts, computing and employability skills.**

Visit: [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/community-learning](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/community-learning)

Phone: 01344 354220

Email: [community.learning@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:community.learning@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

By post: Bracknell Open Learning Centre, Rectory Lane, Bracknell, RG12 7GR

 Follow us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/bracknelladultlearning](http://www.facebook.com/bracknelladultlearning)



  
**Bracknell  
Forest  
Council**



# Making improvements to SEND services



## New autistic spectrum condition school

In September we announced that, following the successful bid for funding to build a new autism spectrum condition (ASC) school, a site has been confirmed. Having considered a number of sites throughout the borough, the council's executive agreed that the school site at Buckler's Park is the preferred location.

The site at Buckler's Park, where freehold land would be made available by CALA Homes, allows for construction to start as soon as planning and design have been finalised, making it the most time and cost-effective option.

The new ASC school will accommodate 100 pupils from reception to year 13, with the site providing indoor and outdoor teaching spaces. It is anticipated that the school will be ready to welcome pupils in September 2026.

## Written Statement of Action

The new school is just one area of improvement for the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) service. As part of the written statement of action (WSOA), following the Ofsted inspection of SEND provision in 2021, the council holds regular review meetings with the Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England.

The DfE and NHS officials have been complementary of the progress being made to SEND services for our young people and their families.

Feedback from government education experts on improvements to the borough's SEND services for children has been overwhelmingly positive – acknowledging many changes are being made quickly and for the better.

The new SEND strategy 2023-26 was published in June 2023. DfE officials commended this, having heard positive feedback from schools and parents on their involvement in the development of it.

It was also highlighted that a number of new staff had been recruited, with all posts within the new SEND structure now filled. A robust induction system is in place for new staff and the new leadership team is implementing improvements to all processes. A focus on improving communication is beginning to have an impact.

The improvements have also seen an increased focus on mediation, a new approach to Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) assessments and a focus on upgrading systems, which has improved the quality and timeliness of assessments. It was noted that there is also a much more efficient use of Kennel Lane School places, with most vacant places being filled by Bracknell Forest children.

Families have reported that short breaks support is much better and communications with children has improved.

Within the Integrated Care Board (ICB), there is an apprenticeship role available for a young person to support the youth board. The next step planned is to develop a SEND youth forum.

From a health perspective, waiting times for occupational therapy (OT) services have continued to reduce since the last review meeting. Waiting times for triage for most children and young people referred to the OT service is now down to two weeks. There has also been a reduction in the number of children and young people awaiting a sensory processing workshop, with positive feedback from families in relation to the triaging process.

Since the last review meeting, the new approaching adulthood policy has been completed and uploaded to the local offer website, which young people and their families can access. A preparation for adulthood senior member of staff has joined the council recently and work will continue with a focus on ensuring a positive impact for children and young people.

School leaders, including headteachers, provided positive feedback about the changes that have taken place, and in particular their involvement in developing the new SEND strategy. They provided constructive feedback around the need to develop a new specialist school, which is currently being progressed, and that while improvements were being felt, it would take time to feel the full impact of all the changes.

Cllr Roy Bailey, executive member for children, young people and learning, said: "Improving services and opportunities for children and young people with SEND is a key priority. The feedback from the DfE is positive to read and we will continue to ensure this progress is maintained."

Victoria Stageman, chair of the Bracknell Parent Carer Forum, said: "We have been working closely with Bracknell Forest Council and we are starting to work more closely with the ICB. We have built positive relationships within both. Co-production is becoming embedded in many of the projects we are working on. We are able to provide appropriate challenge and feel we are listened to and the opinions of our members matter. As a Parent Carer Forum, we can see the improvements coming and parent carers are starting to give more positive feedback."

Grainne Siggins, executive director for people, said: "We are pleased to receive this positive feedback from the DfE, an acknowledgment that progress is being made with our SEND provision. However, we know there is still more work to be done. While we have completed 81 of the 113 actions of the WSOA, we continue to work to address those that have been delayed due to recruitment and process issues. We can assure parents and carers that we remain focussed on delivering the best possible provision for our children and young people."



# Upcoming changes to childcare support

The financial support available to parents to help with the cost of childcare is increasing, to make it easier to move into or take on more paid work.

Starting from April 2024, existing childcare support will be expanded in phases. By September 2025, most working families with children under the age of five will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare support.

## HOW MANY HOURS OF CHILDCARE CAN YOU GET PER WEEK?

Age 3-4 years

ALL PARENTS

15 HOURS

15 HOURS

15 HOURS

15 HOURS

Now

APR 2024

SEP 2024

SEP 2025

WORKING FAMILIES

30 HOURS

30 HOURS

30 HOURS

30 HOURS

Now

APR 2024

SEP 2024

SEP 2025

Age 2 years

FAMILIES WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

15 HOURS

15 HOURS

15 HOURS

15 HOURS

Now

APR 2024

SEP 2024

SEP 2025

WORKING FAMILIES

15 HOURS

15 HOURS

30 HOURS

APR 2024

SEP 2024

SEP 2025

Age 9-23 months

WORKING FAMILIES

15 HOURS

30 HOURS

SEP 2024

SEP 2025

This is based on childcare for 38 weeks of the year (school term time). You may be able to use fewer hours per week for up to 52 weeks. Check if this is something your childcare provider offers.

There are 570 funded hours available per year if eligible for 15 hours and 1,140 funded hours if eligible for 30 hours.

You must apply the term before your child turns nine months, two years or three years. Funding begins the term after they turn nine months, two years or three years.

You can use tax-free childcare or Universal Credit for childcare at the same time as this offer.

Visit: [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) to check what offer you might be eligible for and sign up to their newsletter for updates about the childcare support expansion.

### The current offer

All parents and carers of three and four-year-olds are entitled to 15 hours childcare support with registered providers. Eligible working parents and carers can also get an additional 15 hours childcare support, bringing their total up to 30 hours a week.

More information: [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/30-hours](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/30-hours).

Some parents of two-year-old children may also be entitled to 15 hours support.

More information: [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/free-places](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/free-places).

### The upcoming expansion

(Based on current 30 hour working parent eligibility)

From **April 2024**, working parents of two-year-olds will be able to access 15 hours childcare support.

From **September 2024**, 15 hours childcare support will be extended to working parents of children from the age of nine months.

From **September 2025**, working parents of children from the age of nine months to starting school will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare a week.

For more information about the expanded childcare offer and help with finding and funding childcare, contact the Family Information Service: [fis@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:fis@bracknell-forest.gov.uk) • 01344 353133





## Update on The Deck redevelopment

Developers have announced that plans for The Deck redevelopment in Bracknell town centre cannot go ahead as originally planned.

However, they have assured residents they are already developing fresh new plans for the site, which formally housed the Bentalls department store.

In the interim, Bracknell Regeneration Partnership (BRP) and the council are considering what could go on the site while permanent plans are developed.

BRP, which owns the land, said substantial rises in construction costs, the effects of inflation and the change in market conditions post pandemic had made the original plans unviable.

Tom Woolven, asset manager for BRP, said: "This is not the end of the road for the area that The Deck was due to occupy, and we now have an opportunity to look at alternative proposals for the site that respond to the changing needs of the local community and

help contribute to an already thriving town centre.

"We are already researching and developing new plans. It is early days for this major rethink, but we will be able to share clearer ideas in due course, with the ambition to prepare a fresh planning application.

"We will also be working with our partners at Bracknell Forest Council to consider a range of temporary uses that will allow us to utilise the space whilst longer term plans are developed."

While the site is not owned or managed by the council, it is committed to working with BRP to see what could go in the site temporarily and permanently for the benefit of the community.

Cllr Paul Bidwell, executive member for economic development and regeneration, said: "We know that residents will be disappointed that The Deck cannot progress in the form that was agreed back in 2019.

"However, the world has changed significantly since then and BRP is clear that the development, in the original guise, isn't financially viable given rising costs and the

impact of unforeseen global events.

"What this does allow for is completely re-imagining how that site will be developed in line with current and predicted local shopping, leisure and market trends and needs.

"BRP is already researching and developing plans for the site and, in the interim, we are very keen to support it being used for the benefit of the local community – using it as a meanwhile space for temporary activities and events.

"We are committed to getting this site regenerated – it is a key part of our town centre redevelopment – and we will work with our partners to ensure what is taken forward is viable and reflects what the local community needs and would like to see in the town centre."

The council has also moved to assure residents that no council taxpayers' money was used on The Deck. A full video explaining the situation can be found at: <https://bit.ly/deckupdate>

Keep an eye on our website, social media and newsletters for the latest information.





As winter rolls on, staff in our highways team and our contractors, Ringway Infrastructure Services, have been preparing for the cold nights ahead. Our gritting service is a vital part of our winter weather plan, keeping our roads, footpaths, and most importantly, our residents safe. The team often works around the clock, to ensure the borough keeps moving throughout the colder months.

**Did you know?**

- Our contractor, Ringway, has three gritters with eight drivers working on a rota basis.
- Over the summer months, Ringway calibrated and serviced all gritters and associated plant and equipment and replenished the salt barn with fresh salt stock.
- We have three primary routes covering approximately 178km of roads and 56km of secondary routes.
- There are 78 salt bins throughout the borough.
- We started the gritting season with 1,500 tonnes of rock salt in storage ready for the months ahead.
- We use pre-wetted salt - a mixture of salt and brine.
- Last winter, gritters salted routes 69 times using 962 tonnes of salt.
- It takes around an hour to get a gritting truck ready to go out.
- It takes around three hours to treat primary routes.
- In severe conditions, the gritters go out up to four times per day.
- Salt works by lowering the freezing temperature of water and requires the action of cars driving over it to turn it into solution.
- Salt becomes less effective below minus seven degrees centigrade.
- Salt cannot stop water freezing if temperatures fall below minus 10 degrees centigrade.
- During times of snow, our grounds maintenance contractor, Continental Landscapes, helps with clearing snow from roads and public footpaths.
- Our heaviest truck weighs around 26 tonnes when fully loaded—so in severe conditions, it’s not always safe or possible for gritters to navigate smaller streets.
- If road users park their vehicles without due care and consideration, there’s every chance the gritter won’t be able to access the road to treat it.

You can find more information about gritting, including interactive route maps and advice on how you can help yourself and others during bad weather, by visiting: [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk) and searching ‘gritting’.

Cllr Guy Gillbe, executive member for planning and transport said: “Our highways team is extremely busy in winter months, working hard to keep our roads and footpaths safe for residents. During periods of snow, we treat the busiest roads in our area first. It takes around three hours to get round this network and when this is complete, should the need arise, we begin to treat secondary roads.

“We kindly ask residents to show patience and understanding during times of bad weather. Please take extra care if you are walking or driving in snow and icy conditions and remember to show due care to other road users. Please show consideration when parking, to allow enough room for larger heavy vehicles, such as the emergency services, gritting lorries and waste collection lorries to be able to drive safely in icy conditions.

“The following advice may help:

- be aware of the local forecast and road conditions by listening to the radio, watching TV or using the internet
- generally, the mainstream media issues air temperatures which may be several degrees higher than surface temperatures where ice forms
- take precautions to grit and clear your own paths and driveways
- clear snow from your car before driving
- get your own salt supplies in advance - these are often available from garden centres and supermarkets - but do not leave it too late
- be a good neighbour and check on the elderly and vulnerable who may need your support during snowy periods, as they may not be able to get to the shops or collect medication.”

# Safe. Secure. A place to call home.



**Scared children travel alone to escape war, oppression and civil unrest. Now they need safe and caring foster families.**

**If you can help an unaccompanied asylum seeking child to settle in school, make friends and learn English, we'll help you with any cultural needs and the asylum process.**

Contact Bracknell Forest Fostering to find out how [www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/uasc](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/uasc) or request a call back





## Keep well, safe, happy and connected this winter

Bracknell Forest's public health team is continuing to support residents this winter, linking you to a range of local support services, key health advice and guidance.

Winter health is not just about staying warm and getting your winter vaccinations (if eligible). It is also about looking after your own mental health, making healthier food choices and staying connected with your friends, family and community.

The Bracknell Forest Community Map is a valuable online resource linking you to local community groups, clubs, events and activities to help you stay healthy and well this winter.



### Keep well



Get active.  
Make healthier food choices and stay hydrated.  
Get enough sleep.

### Keep safe



If eligible, get vaccinated for flu and COVID-19.  
Wash your hands regularly to stop the spread of viruses.  
If you can, stay home when unwell.

### Keep happy

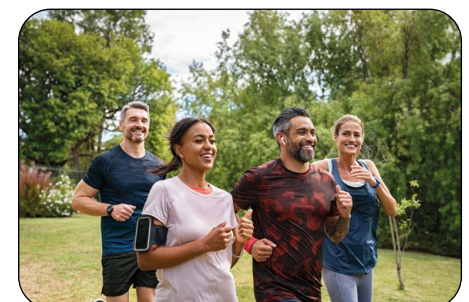
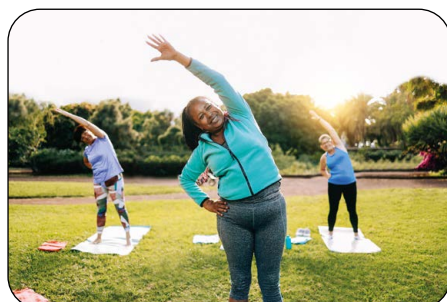


Look after your own wellbeing and mental health.  
Keep a healthy work-life balance.

### Keep connected



Keep in touch with friends and family.  
Try new activities to meet others in your community.



There are many activities that continue over the colder months, to support residents to get out into the community, learn new skills, meet up with friends or make new ones! Find out about local groups and activities, visit: [health.bracknell-forest.gov.uk](http://health.bracknell-forest.gov.uk) and click on 'community map'.

## Choose the right service

**As Christmas approaches, it's important to know where to access medical help when needed.**

Demand for local NHS services is extremely high and therefore it's crucial that people are seen and supported by the right service, so everyone can get the help they need. Unless it's an emergency, there are many alternative places to access health and wellbeing advice:

- Visit your local pharmacy – find out pharmacy opening times for the Christmas period
- During the day, contact your GP practice
- Contact NHS 111 online, or call 111. NHS 111 may advise you to contact your GP, its out-of-hours service or attend the minor injuries unit
- For minor injuries, such as sprains and strains, suspected broken limbs or minor head injuries, visit the minor injury unit at Brants Bridge in Bracknell – open 8am to 8pm every day
- Anyone with a life-threatening condition should call 999

[www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/your-health/choose-the-right-service](http://www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk/your-health/choose-the-right-service)



## Healthcare starts at home

This winter, health services are urging everyone to focus on what we can all do to better care for ourselves and our loved ones. We can work together to ensure a safer winter for us all, by:

- eating well
- staying active
- getting enough sleep
- keeping a well-stocked medicine cabinet
- knowing how to treat minor illnesses
- being aware of the right health service to use

Speak to your local pharmacist. They can:

- fill your prescription and advise you on the medicine you’re taking
- help you with minor ailments
- provide you with healthy living support, such as help to stop smoking

Mental health support is available for those who struggle, particularly during winter. Self-referral options are available for many common mental health concerns, such as anxiety.

Winter may not feel like a time to be outside, but if you have the right clothing and footwear, and you don’t have difficulty walking, a winter walk is great for your mind and body. Remember, there are also options to exercise at home. Search online for ‘NHS fitness studio’ for tips on everything from active cardio exercises to pilates or yoga. Remember to also clear any clutter to reduce the risk of falls.

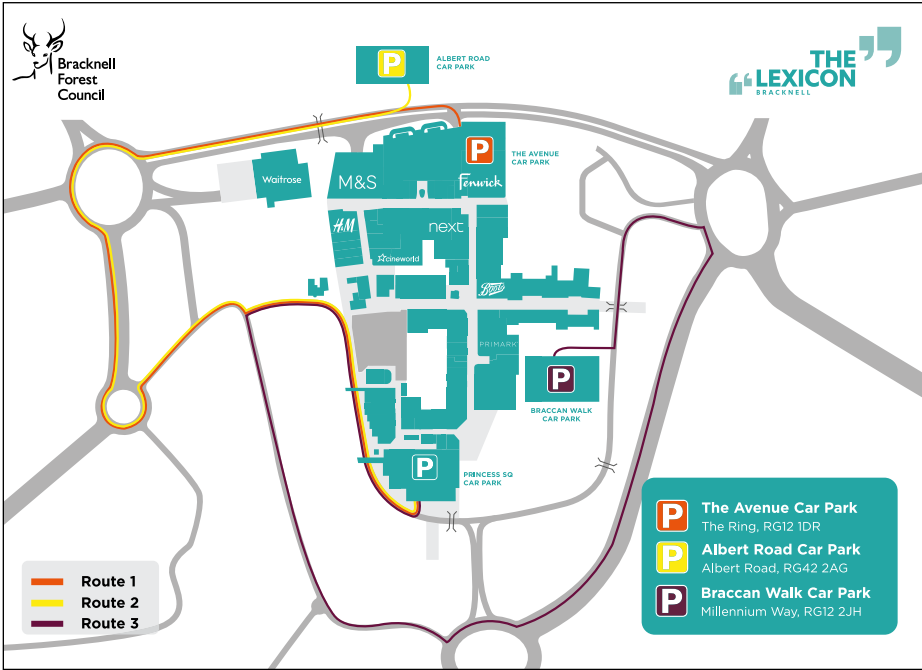
Eating and drinking the right things, in the right amounts, is crucial for our physical and mental health. If you need some support with trying to eat well on a limited budget, there are lots of recipes and tips on the NHS Better Health healthier families web pages.

Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System will be sharing more information and advice over the winter months. You can find details on their website at: [www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk](http://www.frimleyhealthandcare.org.uk) or by following their social media channels.



## Town centre car parks

High Street car park closed permanently at the end of October. As Christmas approaches, The Avenue car park is likely to be very busy. Please consider using other car parks to avoid queues. Below is a handy map that highlights the available car parks. Braccan Walk is the closest car park to the town centre with the entrance between TK Maxx and Primark making it as central as The Avenue car park.



# Bracknell Forest Council meetings winter 2023

## December

Tue 5	5pm	Corporate Parenting Advocacy Panel
Tue 12	5pm	Executive
Thur 14	6.30pm	Planning Committee

## January

Wed 10	7.30pm	Council
Thur 18	6.30pm	Planning Committee
Tue 23	5pm	Executive
Mon 29	5.30pm	Bracknell Town Centre Regeneration Committee

## February

Thur 1	7.30pm	Licensing & Safety Committee
Tue 6	5pm	Executive
Wed 21	7.30pm	Council
Thur 29	6.30pm	Overview & Scrutiny Commission

## March

Tue 12	5pm	Corporate Parenting Advocacy Panel
Mon 18	5.30pm	Bracknell Town Centre Regeneration Committee
Tue 19	5pm	Executive
Thur 21	6.30pm	Planning Committee

Details correct at time of going to press.



Bracknell  
Forest  
Council



## Sleigh your Christmas waste and recycling



**Compared to the rest of the year, we produce 30 per cent more waste at Christmas in the UK. Here are a few things you can do to keep control of your waste.**

Cllr Helen Purnell, executive member for environment and community cohesion, said:

“With the extra amount of waste we create at Christmas, what better time to knuckle down on your recycling efforts? One of the biggest issues we still face is food waste. By only buying what you need and using any leftovers, we should be able to minimise the amount of food we are wasting. If you do have bits that need to be disposed of, make the most of our food waste recycling service and we can turn it into something useful, like energy or fertiliser.

“We often use a lot more paper at Christmas, so make sure you do the scrunch test and if it stays in a scrunched ball, recycle it in your blue bin. You could even choose to wrap your presents in cloth and eliminate paper completely. There are lots of alternatives to have a more sustainable Christmas.

“Let’s keep up the momentum and not let our standards slip over the festive season.”



**Christmas cards** - why not make your own cards this year using old recyclable materials? Avoid using any ribbons, glitter or bows that can’t be recycled. Hold onto this year’s Christmas cards and reuse them as tags or cards for next year.



**Empty glass bottles** - These can be recycled at your local bottle bank, or at Longshot Lane or Smallmead recycling centres. Glass bottles no longer need to be separated by colour, you can mix it up and they will be collected.



**Wrapping paper** - Double check that every part of your present wrapping is recyclable before putting it in your blue bin. Remove all sticky tape and embellishments. Wrapping paper must be non-foil to be accepted, do the scrunch test to make sure. If you scrunch it and it remains in place, then it’s OK to recycle.



**Food waste** - In order to prevent food waste, only buy the amount of food you need. Love Food Hate Waste has a portion calculator that can help. Leftovers can be frozen and reused at a later date, or anything that can’t be reused can be disposed of in your food waste caddy.



**Packaging** - Delivery boxes should be broken down and recycled. Bubble wrap and plastic film cannot be recycled in your blue bin but can be taken to your local carrier bag collection point at the supermarket.



**Batteries and electricals** - These should not be disposed of at home. They should be taken to your nearest recycling point. Household batteries can be taken to most large supermarkets and also our local recycling centres.



## Christmas and New Year collection changes

Collections will continue as normal up to and including 22 December.

Normal collection day	Revised collection day
Monday, 25 December	Wednesday, 27 December
Tuesday, 26 December	Thursday, 28 December
Wednesday, 27 December	Friday, 29 December
Thursday, 28 December	Saturday, 30 December
Friday, 29 December	Tuesday, 2 January
Monday, 1 January	Wednesday, 3 January
Tuesday, 2 January	Thursday, 4 January
Wednesday, 3 January	Friday, 5 January
Thursday, 4 January	Saturday, 6 January
Friday, 5 January	Monday, 8 January
Monday, 8 January	Tuesday, 9 January
Tuesday, 9 January	Wednesday, 10 January
Wednesday, 10 January	Thursday, 11 January
Thursday, 11 January	Friday, 12 January
Friday, 12 January	Saturday, 13 January
All collections will resume as normal from Monday, 15 January.	

## Garden waste collections



Please note, there will be no garden waste collections after Friday, 22 December as the collection vehicles will be supporting the additional seasonal waste and recycling. Collections will resume from Tuesday, 9 January 2024.

## Christmas trees



Christmas trees will be collected as garden waste if cut up and put in your brown bin/council garden waste sack. Please ensure the lid/sack is closed and all decorations and lights are removed. Any trees not in a closed brown bin/council garden waste sack, or sacks that have not been booked will not be taken.

Alternatively, you can book a bulky collection to have Christmas trees removed or take them to Longshot Lane Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC). For information on the site and any restrictions, please see: [www.re3.org.uk](http://www.re3.org.uk).

During the winter months, our crews often start work in the dark. Please make sure your bins are left in a visible position, on time, to reduce the risk of missed collections.





**DID YOU KNOW THAT  
13% OF THE WASTE IN  
OUR GREEN BINS IS  
FOOD WASTE, WHICH  
SHOULD BE RECYCLED?**

**IF THIS WASTE WAS  
RECYCLED IN YOUR FOOD  
CADDY, IT WOULD SAVE  
GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS  
EQUIVALENT TO TAKING  
765 CARS OFF THE ROAD  
FOR A YEAR.**

# **PUT YOUR WASTE IN THE RIGHT PLACE**

**USE YOUR CADDY  
TO RECYCLE  
FOOD WASTE**



**SCAN THIS QR CODE  
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