



Council Report for June 2025

Written by your local Conservative team to keep you up to date.

Councillor Clive Hooker, Downlands Ward

West Berkshire Council

Council

Council met on 10 July to discuss:

- Adoption of the West Berkshire Local Plan Review (LPR) 2023-2041

Papers and a recording of the meeting can be found [here](#).

The next meeting is on 17 July.

Executive

There was no meeting of the Executive this month.

The next meeting is on 3 July.

Leisure and Culture

Summer Reading Challenge



The Story Garden Summer Reading Challenge 2025 starts this month for 4-11 year olds!

Residents can visit their local West Berkshire Library and start the challenge for free. Read six library books from 1 July to 15 September and collect some brilliant rewards along the way. Everyone who completes the challenge will receive a Story Garden medal and certificate.

WBC have also got different challenges for younger children under four and anyone over 12, so there's something for the whole family to enjoy this summer.

New SEND soft play sessions

Starting this week, Northcroft Leisure Centre are introducing inclusive sessions at their brand new soft play area, designed especially for children with additional needs, aged one and over, and their families. The sessions will run:

- Monday: 5 - 6pm
- Wednesday: 1 - 2pm
- Saturday: 3 - 4pm

These sessions offer a calm, safe and welcoming space with reduced capacity - perfect for movement, sensory play and family fun in a relaxed environment. Adults go free and children spaces are available from £3.50.

Shaw House Summer Fair

Enjoy the beauty of summer at Shaw House at the Summer Fair on Sunday 20 July, 11am-4pm. Browse over 60 local stalls located on the Great Lawn and enjoy refreshments from the café, bar and caterers. For younger visitors there will be creative crafts, face painting, a magic show from Mr Muddle and a bouncy castle.

The National Animal Welfare Trust will be hosting a dog show with categories including Perfect Puppy, Golden Oldie and Radiant Rescue.

Tickets cost £2 for adults £2 and £1 for children (entry is free for children aged 3 years and under).

Archaeology Talk



Archaeologist Julian Richards has spent over 50 years bringing the past to life for audiences with a wide range of ages, experience and abilities. In this talk at Shaw House on Thursday 24 July, 7-8pm, he will explore the ways in which archaeologists tell stories, with the ultimate aim of exploring the past. Drawing on his experience of working with blind adults and children with additional educational needs Julian will explain how individual challenges can help develop different ways of seeing the past.

Doors open at 6pm and the café will be open serving light refreshments. Tickets are £5 per person and will be donated to a charity of the speaker's choice.

Public Protection

Why Dogs need to be chipped

The Public Protection Partnership's Animal Warden Team is responsible for dealing with stray dogs. It is a legal requirement to microchip dogs and to keep the information up to date, failure to do so can result in a fine. A microchip, about the size of a grain of rice, is implanted under a dog's skin and contains a unique ID number. This number can be scanned by vets or animal wardens to help reunite lost pets with their owners, speeding up the process and reducing costs to the owner.

In the UK, 90% of dogs are now microchipped. Despite this, 14% of dog owners remain unaware of the legal requirement.



Unlike collars or tags, which can fall off or be removed, a microchip provides permanent identification. It also helps reduce the number of unidentified dogs in shelters, which currently house around 100,000 dogs across the UK.

Microchipping is quick, safe, and inexpensive. Just as importantly, it offers peace of mind. Residents should make sure to keep contact details up to date in the microchip registry.

Environment

Recycling drop-in sessions

Following the success of the May recycling drop-in sessions, WBC will be holding further sessions throughout July. Join us to:

- Learn how to recycle more and waste less,
- Get tips on sorting household waste,
- Ask questions about the new collection schedule,
- Pick up free recycling resources such as recycling boxes and caddy liners.



Recycling drop-in sessions

We're holding drop-in sessions to support our residents to recycle more and to answer your questions.

Pangbourne Library Tuesday 1 July - 10:30-13:30	Thatcham Library Monday 14 July - 09:30-12:00	Waitrose (Thatcham) Friday 25 July - 13:00-17:00
Newbury Library Wednesday 9 July - 10:00-13:00	Hungerford Library Wednesday 16 July - 09:30-12:00	Mortimer Library Saturday 26 July - 10:00-12:30
Lambourn Library Thursday 10 July - 15:30-17:30	Theale Library Wednesday 23 July - 14:00-17:00	
Waitrose (Newbury) Friday 11 July - 13:00-17:00	Burghfield Library Thursday 24 July - 10:00-12:00	

www.westberks.gov.uk/rubbishandrecycling

Drop-in anytime - no booking needed! Let's work together to keep the community clean, green, and sustainable

Garden Waste due for renewal



The new subscription period starts on Monday 25 August 2025 and will run until Sunday 23 August 2026. Full details can be found [here](#).

Transport

Tap on and off now available

Paying when boarding buses in Newbury and Thatcham has become easier as Newbury & District bus routes recently joined Reading Buses in having tap on, tap off enabled.



It is the quickest and easiest way to pay when boarding the bus as residents will no longer need to choose the best ticket for a trip - it will automatically calculate the price, capping the price at the daily rate. It is important to ensure that Residents tap off when leaving the bus to ensure that residents don't get charged more for the trip than expected.

Residents will still be able to purchase tickets from the drivers with cash or contactless payment. Residents can also purchase tickets on the Newbury & District app and smartcards can also still be used.

A34 Closures

National Highways will be resurfacing sections of the A34 northbound between Beedon and West Ilsley. To do this, they will close the A34 northbound from the A34/M4 J13 Chieveley Interchange to the A4185 Chilton

Junction, near Didcot, Oxfordshire. Weekend closures are necessary because of the depth of resurfacing needed in some sections.

[Weekend closures](#)

9pm Friday 4 July – 6am Monday 7 July

9pm Friday 18 July – 6am Monday 21 July

[Diversion for motorway traffic](#)

The diversion route is long, but it is the most suitable option for both car and HGV drivers. From M4 Junction 13:

- travel east along M4 to Junction 8/9
- exit at junction and travel north on the A404(M)/A404
- at M40 Handy Cross roundabout take first exit onto M40 northbound
- continue on the M40 to Junction 9
- exit at Junction 9 for the A34

Unfortunately, this diversion is only suitable for those who can drive on a motorway. For example, it is not suitable for learner drivers, moped riders, and people driving agricultural vehicles.

[Diversion for non-motorway traffic](#) – unsuitable for large vehicles in some areas: from the A4, take the A338 and then the A417.

[Bikeability summer holiday courses](#)

Bikeability is the leading cycle training program designed for today's roads. It teaches practical skills for safe cycling and builds confidence to enjoy the benefits of riding a bike. Cycle training is important as it enables children to develop the skills needed to cope with moving traffic and to become aware of other road users.

There are currently spaces this summer on the following sessions:

- 1 August (morning) Kennet Leisure Centre
- 1 August (afternoon) Kennet Leisure Centre
- 4 and 5 August Cotswold Sports Centre
- 6 and 7 August Hungerford Leisure Centre
- 27 August (morning) Hungerford Leisure Centre
- 27 August (afternoon) Hungerford Leisure Centre
- 28 and 29 August Cotswold Sports Centre
- 1 and 2 September Hungerford Leisure Centre

Courses cost £20 and are suitable for children aged 10-17. All the courses are run by DBS checked, fully-qualified Bikeability instructors. Bikes must be fully road-worthy and the right size. Instructors have the right to refuse training if a bike is deemed unsafe.

Residents can book [here](#).

[Current Consultations](#)

- [Draft Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment Document 2025](#) – Closing 13 July
- [A proposal for two new unitary Councils - Oxford and Shires, and Ridgeway](#) – Closing 16 July
- [West Berkshire Bus Service Survey 2025](#) – Closing 31 August
- [Extension of pedestrianisation hours for Newbury Town Centre from 10am-5pm to 10am-11pm trial \(Ref: 009194HH\)](#) – 19 November

- [Springfield Primary School - School Streets Scheme](#) – Closing 2 December

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