

Earley Town Guide

INCLUDING STREET MAP
& INDEX



2015-2016



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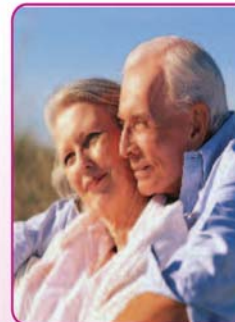
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Maiden Place Community Centre



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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- We want to keep our residents informed about what is going on locally.
- We have a Help Shop at the Town Council Offices in Radstock Lane, Earley. It stocks a wide selection of literature – including booklets, leaflets, posters, reports and other publications which give details of the Council and its services.



- There is an extensive and informative website which can be reached on www.earley-tc.gov.uk
- Further information can be obtained by e-mailing us at administration@earley-tc.gov.uk
- The Town Council supports the Mobile Information Centre which regularly provides a service from the District Centre near to the Asda Supermarket.

Correspondence for **Earley Town Council** should be addressed to:
Town Clerk – Philip Truppin, Earley Town Council, Council Offices, Radstock Lane,
EARLEY, RG6 5UL Telephone: 0118 986 8995 Facsimile: 0118 975 6681



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LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN EARLEY

Earley Town Council is your local community based council. The Council Offices are situated in Radstock Lane. Most meetings of the Town Council and its committees are held on Wednesday evenings, (Planning meetings are held on Tuesdays), full details including all agendas and minutes being displayed on the regularly updated Council Website.

Wokingham Borough Council is the Unitary Authority for this area, providing the great majority of services including schools, social services, council housing, refuse collection and management of sports centres. The Town has eight schools, one of which, Maiden Erlegh School, is a secondary school. Contact numbers are provided in the general information section.

The Town Council provides a wide variety of local services. Parks are provided at Sol Joel situated in Church Road (which has football and cricket pitches, sports courts, a skate park and children's play equipment), Meadow Park (a more traditional park with open space, play areas, formal flower beds and a wild flower meadow), Marefield Pond and Bulmershe Park which is jointly managed with Woodley Town Council. Additionally, the Town Council has recently taken over the management of the sports pavilion in Laurel Park, which has been extensively refurbished. The Council also owns and maintains a Local Nature Reserve at Instow Road. The Reserve is some 12 hectares in extent and within its boundaries is a very

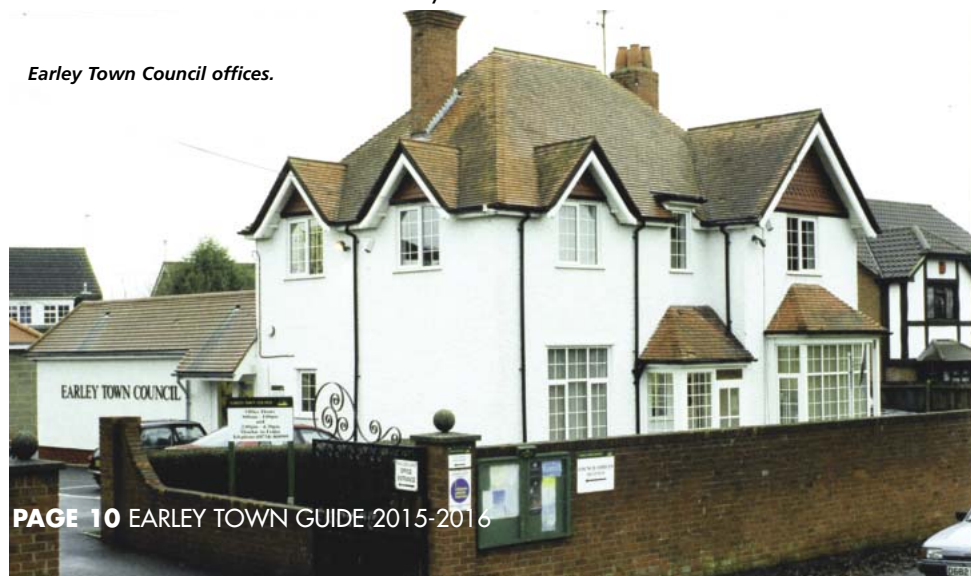
attractive lake, ancient woodlands, wildflower and butterfly areas and the Interpretation Centre.

Other facilities include the secluded Lawn Cemetery at Mays Lane which is some 12 acres in extent and is a very peaceful haven in the middle of local residential development, and enhanced with the provision of the Garden of Remembrance. There is a large and well maintained allotment site at Culver Lane that backs on to Milton Road, which benefits from a resident Horticultural Society. Any residents interested in a plot should contact the Council Offices. Also, there are two large Community Centres both available for private hire. One is at Radstock Lane and the other at Maiden Place. Both have resident Social Clubs with their own comfortable bar/lounge areas. And, lastly, the Town Council now runs two Community & Youth Centres at Centrepoint and Silverdale, having taken these over from Wokingham Borough Council in 2013.

Town Council responsibilities also include street furniture, the construction of linking footpaths, the provision and maintenance of some of Earley's street lighting and consultation on highways and all local planning applications.

Although the Town Council is an entirely separate entity there are direct links to most of the services provided by Wokingham Borough Council. There are currently 25 Town Councillors representing eight Wards.

Earley Town Council offices.



EARLEY TOWN COUNCILLORS

WHITEGATES

Munir Ahmed, 59 Chiltern Crescent, Earley, RG6 1AL (Tel: 926 6889)

Sheena Matthews, 27 The Drive, Earley, RG6 1EG (Tel: 966 2702)

Alison Swaddle, 179 Church Road, Earley, RG6 1HN (Tel: 07792 104221)

CUTBUSH

Tim Chambers, Sharmel, Cutbush Lane, Earley, RG6 4UU (Tel: 986 9117)

Pauline Jorgensen, Planters Lodge, Cutbush Lane, Lower Earley, RG6 4UU (Tel: 986 8732)

Judith Clark, 35 Kensington Close, Lower Earley, RG6 4EY (Tel: 986 6492)

HAWKEDON

Pamela Dunn, 3 Whitton Close, Earley, RG6 3UQ (Tel: 935 3194)

Michael Firmager, 46 Chilcombe Way, Lower Earley, RG6 3DA (Tel: 926 9340)

Timothy Holton, 23 Toseland Way, Lower Earley, RG6 7YA (Tel: 966 8254)

HILLSIDE

Linda Chambers, Sharmel, Cutbush Lane, Earley, RG6 4UU (Tel: 986 9117)

Norman Jorgensen, Planters Lodge, Cutbush Lane, Lower Earley, RG6 4UU (Tel: 986 8732)

Ralph Houlbrooke, 55 Falstaff Avenue, Earley, RG6 5TG (Tel: 987 4233)

MAIDEN ERLEGH

Andrew Bradley, 3 Whitton Close, Lower Earley, RG6 3UQ (Tel: 935 3194)

John Russell, 33 Allendale Road, Earley, RG6 7PD (Tel: 961 6638)

Christopher Smith, 19 Elm Lane, Earley, RG6 5UE (Tel: 07880 902322)

RADSTOCK

Melanie De Jong, 6 Conygree Close, Lower Earley, RG6 4XE (Tel: 987 1419)

Jackie Rance JP, 27 Conygree Close, Lower Earley, RG6 4XE (Tel: 921 2232)

Peter Willis, 25 Clevedon Drive, Earley, RG6 5XF (Tel: 987 3656)

REDHATCH

John Armstrong, 9 Reeds Avenue, Earley, RG6 5SP (Tel: 986 0819)

David Chopping, 13 Luckmore Drive, Earley, RG6 7RP (Tel: 926 7260)

Bill Luck, 32 Easby Way, Lower Earley, RG6 3XA (Tel: 07801 061493)

Brian Wedge, 13 Reeds Avenue, Earley, RG6 5SP (Tel: 931 0153)

ST NICOLAS

Guy Grandison, 2 Gabriels Square, Lower Earley, RG6 3WP (Tel: 986 8585)

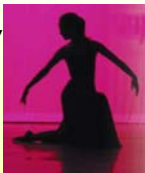
Laura Blumenthal, 17 Radstock Lane, Earley, RG6 5RX (Tel: 07947 974464)

Nicola Brock, 43 Strand Way, Earley, RG6 4BU (Tel: 07880 500372)

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ABOUT EARLEY

Earley is situated in the historic Royal County of Berkshire, on the outskirts of Reading, and has tended to become integrated into its urban sprawl, a common happening with communities on the boundaries of most towns. In fact, Earley is within the Wokingham Borough area, and not Reading. It has an elongated shape which stretches from the River Thames in the north to the M4 in the south. The population of the Town is currently estimated to be in excess of 33,000.

Geographically Earley is almost divided into three parts. It is also quite interesting to note the variations of the name of Earley present in the area, Erleigh, Erlegh and Earley. In the north, from the River Thames to the railway line we have North Earley and part of Central Earley and Maiden Erlegh (so called because it is built on the site of a large estate of that name). Stretching southwards to the M4 motorway is South Earley where the green fields area has now almost entirely given way to the new roads and houses constructed as part of the Lower Earley development.

The main shopping area, which includes an Asda Superstore, can be found at the District Centre by Chalfont Way. There are also smaller shopping parades at Silverdale Road, Maiden Place and in Wokingham Road near to the Three Tuns crossroads.



Bridge over the Loddon.

Earley's long history dates back to Roman times. In the 11th Century, the area was known as Herlei when the population was thought to be in the region of some 100 residents. There was a gradual increase over the centuries, but the first large increase occurred during the housing boom of the 1930s and 1940s by which time the population had grown to in excess of 5,000.

The origin of the name of the Town is open to interpretation. There are many place names which have either ley or leigh within them. This is an Anglo Saxon word for a wood or clearing. This could apply to any of the several spellings of the name Earley which include Erlegh, Erleigh and Earley. Er or Ear could refer to either eagles or gravel pits. Both are

possible, but birds of prey were a common sight.

Earley Town Council was the successor to the previous Parish Council and came into being in 1974. The logo was conceived and drawn originally by Paul Devonald (one of Earley's Town Councillors in the 1980s). It is a representative depiction of the sun rising over the Earley skyline. The tower of the Earley St Peter's Church is prominent.



Swans

BUSINESS PARKS AND EMPLOYMENT AREAS

Earley is a popular location for business due to its excellent road and rail communications coupled with an attractive living and working environment. A prosperous and economically vibrant area, the Town is home to service sector and leading high-tech companies including Oracle and Microsoft.

THAMES VALLEY PARK

This exciting business park has become well-established on an attractive 47 hectare development site overlooking the Thames in north Earley. It has direct access from the A329(M) via a flyover across the A4. An adjoining 33 hectare country park, including a nature reserve, complements the parkland setting of the ultra-modern offices. Existing facilities at the business park include a day nursery and a health and fitness club. Occupiers include BG Group, Oracle Corporation, Microsoft, Xansa and ING Direct.



Thames Valley Park.



Suttons Business Park.

SUTTONS BUSINESS PARK

Slough Estates has developed over 71,500 square metres of employment space at this prime location east of Reading at the junction of the A4 and the A329(M) in north Earley. It comprises a mix of modern, mostly office, premises in landscaped grounds fronting the A4 at its entrance and slightly older industrial and warehousing units, typically of around 400 square metres in size, at its western end. A key occupier is Rockwell Collins, high-tech suppliers to the aerospace industry.

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OUT AND ABOUT IN EARLEY



Maiden Erlegh Park

The Park is some twelve hectares in extent, and has been classified as a Local Nature Reserve. It is managed on the Town Council's behalf by its Park Ranger Service with the help of the Head Water Bailiff and up to ten seasonally appointed Water Bailiffs.

The Park is in several "parcels" which are described on the Interpretation Boards around the site. The Lake area, between Instow Road and Lakeside is managed under the Reservoirs Act and is inspected by a Consultant Engineer each year. Records have to be kept on water levels, and the condition of the Weir, etc., aspects which are inspected by the Engineer.

The Lake is bounded by ancient woodland and again the Council has had a hard balancing act to reconcile the needs of the population living all around the Park, many of whom use the main pathway as a thoroughfare, and the need to conserve a valuable habitat.

There have been many improvements undertaken in recent years including desilting, bankworks, pathworks and water/fish quality controls. These initiatives are ongoing, and anyone interested in becoming involved in the conservation work would be welcome to join one of the local volunteer groups. Fishing permits can be obtained from the Council Offices.

The Interpretation Centre at Instow Road provides a base for managing the Reserve and a well appointed field study centre for local students and school children. It was erected as a Millennium project, and is available for hire.

Meadow Park

The Park is some four acres plus in extent and situated between Roman Way and Meadow Road, with pathways leading in from both roads. There are extensive cultivated beds, mainly with shrubs, a wildflower meadow section, a central grassed area, an aromatic garden and two areas of children's play equipment. The Park has been extensively upgraded in an attempt to try to meet local needs.



Bulmershe Park

The Park is situated off Woodlands Avenue on the boundary between Woodley and Earley and is jointly managed by the two Town Councils. Entrance is usually gained from Pitts Lane. More of its area is within Woodley and, historically, Woodley Town Council has undertaken routine grass cutting and other maintenance, with our Council meeting a proportion of the costs each year. We now have a greater degree of responsibility since the development of our Park Ranger Service, but largely the old arrangement remains in place and works well.

Paddick Drive Open Space

This area of land consists of a large recreational area of grass and trees, and is popular with walkers, particularly dog walkers. There is a dirt based BMX Track located in the corner part of the field, which has been planted out with a variety of trees and shrubs. Recently, a Community Orchard has been established here in one corner of the field.

Sol Joel Park

The 18 acre Sol Joel Park is entirely within the Earley Town Council area, but for historical reasons, it was conveyed to Reading Borough Council by Sol Joel, and is now leased to Earley Town Council.

The Park has three football pitches, mini soccer pitches, a cricket square and a pavilion.

Several skate ramps have been provided which are suitable for rollerblading, skateboarding and BMX bikes. The equipment has recently been upgraded and added to and, more recently a Street Running (Parkour) facility has been installed. The most recent phase of improvements providing more play equipment for children, to include items for inclusive play has just been installed, and a major project to rebuild the pavilion to modern standards was completed in 2013.

The Park has been awarded Queen Elizabeth II Field status by Fields in Trust in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee year.

Radstock Lane Community Centre

The Centre is provided on a site adjacent to Radstock Primary School and immediately opposite the Town Council Offices. It comprises a main hall and a meeting room. The Earley Radstock Social Club manages the bar/lounge. On weekdays the popular Wendyhouse Pre School Group operates from the Centre.

The main hall is particularly well appointed and has a friendly atmosphere, which has made it an extremely popular venue for functions such as weddings, birthday and anniversary parties. It is also a favourite meeting point for several local organisations. Information about bookings can be obtained from the Town Council Offices.



Sol Joel Park

Maiden Place Community Centre

Rebuilt and extended in the 1980s, the Centre provides a bar/lounge which is the home of Maiden Place Social Club. The Community Centre is a very popular venue for parties and meetings and again benefits from the presence of a nursery group, Kilnsea Pre School which provides places for the under fives. In addition to the main hall and meeting room, the Centre also has a second medium size hall, the Function Room which is extremely popular with hirers. Again, bookings can be made at the Council Offices. The Centre has been much improved recently with the installation of an air conditioning system.



Silverdale Centre



Centrepont Community & Youth Centre

The Centrepont Community & Youth Centre is located in the ASDA complex, adjacent to the Lower Earley Library and opposite the Trinity Church. This Centre provides accommodation for a number of daytime community groups, for example an After School Club, the Chalfont Toddlers Group; and is also available for private hire. The Earley Volunteer Drivers' Bureau Office is located within the centre.

In February 2015, the Town Council, with the collaboration of the Just Around the Corner Organisation, has reinstated a Youth Club which takes place on a Saturday evening between 7 pm and 9 pm. As well as in-club activities, the Centre has access to the adjacent Loddon Valley Leisure Centre for use of one of its sports halls.

Silverdale Community & Youth Centre

Together with Centrepont, this facility was taken over by Earley Town Council from Wokingham Borough Council in October 2013. As well as being "home" to a number of local organisations, including Maiden Erlegh Pre-School, and a Parent & Toddler Group.

The Centre is also home to the very successful Bike Workshop which is run as a youth activity on Thursday evenings and daytime Saturdays and the Fusion Music Project which takes place on a Wednesday evening, aimed at young people who wish to play music or, indeed, who are beginners and wish to learn to play a musical instrument.

The Centre is also available for private hire and information about bookings can be obtained from the Town Council Offices.





CResCent Community Resource Centre

The Community Resource Centre is now well established. The building was designed to allow for flexible use to respond to the requirements of the community and to support its development. The success of the centre has grown through many partnerships and now provides a focal point for the community.

If you have not yet visited the Centre please do call in, its volunteers and staff will give you a warm welcome.

Training is a key activity at the centre with a diverse programme of courses including foreign languages, IT, crafts and art. These are open to all local residents. Courses to support voluntary & community groups such as first aid, food hygiene & disability & diversity are available.

Regular weekly groups are hosted by the CResCent, ranging from line dancing and yoga to blood-donation and quilting. CResCent also provides much needed accommodation for a variety of voluntary and community groups such as Earley Bus, Wokingham Resource & Opportunity Centre and the Church of Christ.

The CResCent Moon Café is open from 9:00-5:00pm weekdays and on Wednesdays lunches are served between 12:30-1:30pm.

The Centre can be contacted on Tel: 0118 921 0555 or look at the website on www.earleycrescent.org.

Waterside Centre



Waterside Centre

Many visitors to the Town do not realise that part of Earley fronts the Thames. Beyond the A3290, is Thames Valley Park, and an excellent water facility has been provided by Wokingham Borough Council overlooking the Thames primarily for rowing and canoeing. It is already well used both for local and national events. Below is a cavernous area for the storage of boats and upstairs are meeting rooms, conference facilities and a medical/first aid room which was equipped by the Town Council. On the opposite bank of the Thames, easily viewed from the balcony is a lovely sanctuary for birds, which is very popular with ornithologists.

Public Houses

Earley has a number of very popular public houses. The Earley Retreat and the Toby Carvery are in the District Centre area. There are two Public Houses, well frequented and very popular at lunchtimes, both on the eastern side of Town at The George in Loddon Bridge Road and The Poachers at Sindlesham Mill. A more recent facility is the Seven Red Roses at the Maiden Place Shopping Centre.

Chalfont Park

The second of the two Wokingham Borough owned parks within the Earley area is opposite the District Centre at Chalfont Way. The neat and well appointed park has a modern pavilion, floodlit sports courts, football pitches and a variety of play equipment.

Laurel Park

Adjacent to the Local Nature Reserve is Laurel Park, which is owned and managed by Wokingham Borough Council. Access is gained from Rushey Way via Marefield. The entrance road leads to a pavilion, recently acquired by the Town Council, with several football pitches beyond. The Park also has a well designed and maintained children's play area and a large general recreational area.

Loddon Valley Leisure Centre

Already a very well equipped sports centre, Wokingham Borough Council managed Loddon Valley Sports Centre has recently benefited from a major refit. Two well appointed swimming pools have been added to the list of available activities. Other improvements include a magnificent fitness suite. The entrance to the Centre fronts Rushey Way, near to the entrance to Asda Superstore.

Maiden Erlegh Visual Arts Centre

Based at Maiden Erlegh School, this is an adaptable space with facilities for learning and teaching Visual Arts, with sculpture and exhibition options. It also houses a dedicated exhibition area including a virtual reality exhibition kiosk funded by Earley Town Council.

The aim of this Centre is to increase participation in the Visual Arts within the local community through access to courses and workshops during twilight and evening hours, weekends and school holidays.

Courses are published, with application forms, on the school's website and are also available at local libraries and other public outlets.

Artists who would like to use the space to run classes or workshops work with the school or exhibit work either in the exhibition area or on the virtual reality exhibition kiosk may contact the School.

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RICS

Earley Map & Street Guide

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Shops

Sol Joel Park

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CHURCH ROAD

GLADRIDGE CLOSE

NUTHATCH DRIVE

WOODLEY

EARLEY STATION

GODDARD CL

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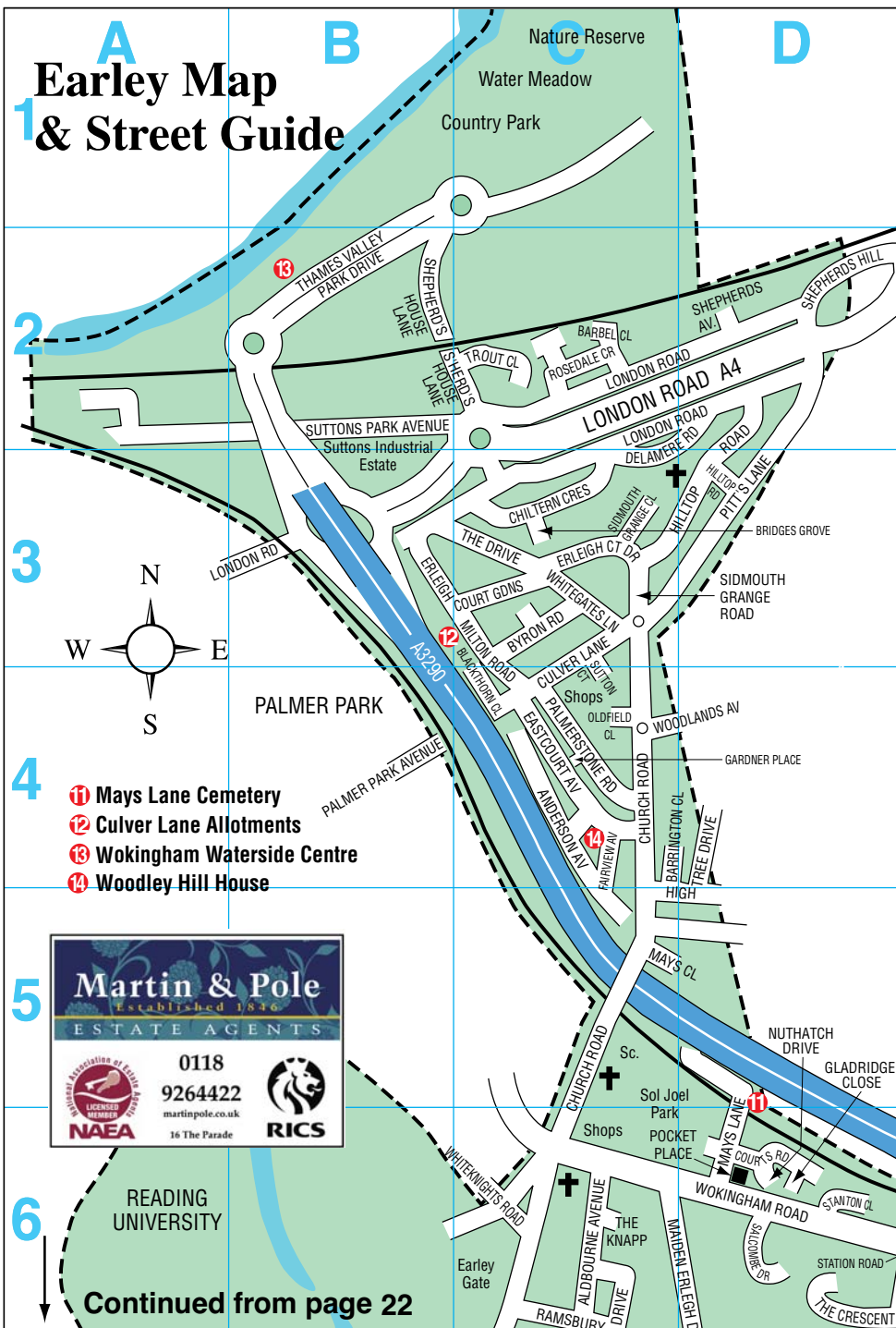
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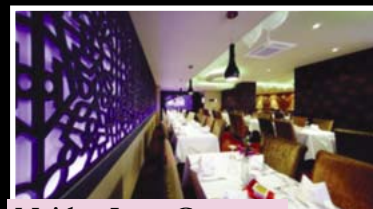
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A BRIEF HISTORY OF EARLEY

Prehistoric Earley

It is very likely that humans from the Palaeolithic period – the Old Stone Age – up to 400,000 years BC were foraging in Earley for edible vegetation and grubs and hunting wild cattle, deer and elephant. Traces of flimsy shelters made from brushwood have been found in North Earley on the site of the old Power Station at the Thames Valley Business Park. Tools from this era have been found within the Town. These early residents would have depended on the surrounding woodland for hunting and gathering of edible plants such as nuts, berries and roots. It is thought that the clearing of woodland for agriculture and the keeping of domesticated animals started in around 4000 BC, the Neolithic or New Stone Age, with the arrival of people from the Continent. Small areas of wildwood would have been cleared using stone tools. There is archaeological evidence for continued human presence during the Bronze Age and Iron Age on the site of the Thames Valley Business Park in North Earley.

The Romans and Beyond

The Romans invading England in AD 43, came to a land with fully developed agriculture and Roman artefacts have been found at a number of sites in Earley. A Saxon settlement has been discovered in Reading at the confluence of the Kennet and the Thames dating from about 600 AD.

During the Reign of Edward the Confessor the Manors at Earley were held by the Crown. The Great Survey of AD 1086 reveals that only about 20 per cent of Berkshire was wooded, and by 1200 much of the modern landscape was already recognisable. The Norman Conquest had the positive effect of increasing woodland cover to provide hunting forests with Windsor Forest extending to the Loddon.



The Middle Ages

Domesday records two manors, Erlegh St Bartholomew and Erlegh St Nicholas. The de Erlegh family held the manors c.1160 – 1362. John de Erlegh, 1292, was known as the White Knight – thus the manor of St Nicholas was renamed. The other Manor also had a name change to Erlegh Court. The Manor of Maiden Erlegh, Erley Maydens, is attested from 1502 and that it was formed out of Earley Whiteknights in the 14th Century.

The estate passed through several owners over the Centuries eventually being acquired by Viscount Sidmouth who died in 1844. The Manor remained in the Sidmouth family until the 1930's after which the estate was sold for building development.

Erlegh St Nicholas, Whiteknights, was bought by Henry de Aldryngton in around 1361. After his death it passed down the family line to the Beke family until the death of Henry Beke in 1580. By marriage to Beke's daughter Hugh Speke gained the estate. In 1606 the Spekes sold the manor of Erlegh Whiteknights for £7,500 to Francis Englefield. His nephew, also known by the same name became the owner in the beginning of the 17th Century. The Englefields were devout Roman Catholics and thus faced persecution and heavy taxes.

The estate remained in the family until the late 1700's, when they were forced to sell due to the ongoing prejudice of their neighbours.

The Marquis of Blandford, who became the Duke of Marlborough, had the parkland extensively landscaped during his ownership between 1798 and 1819. However, he ran up massive debts and his possessions were seized and sold including many of the landscape features. The impressive Manor House was demolished in 1840-41. The Whiteknights Estate of today is the home of the University of Reading which took over the site in 1947.

Much of the material contained in this brief history derives from, and is contained within

the local history book "Earley Days" which was produced by the local History Group with help from the Town Council. This first book is available on loan from local libraries. Two further books have been published, namely 'Earley Memories' and 'Suttons Seeds', available to purchase from the Town Council Offices, local bookshops and the Lower Earley library.

About Solly Joel

Solomon Barnato Joel purchased the Maiden Erlegh Estate in 1903. His generosity and lavish lifestyle has been written into the folklore of Earley. Even the current spelling of Maiden Erlegh is attributed to him. He is also believed by some to have had the Lake created, although, again, maps of the 1700's show it to be already in existence. However, the large island within the Lake can probably be attributed to him. He invested heavily in the Estate commissioning a wonderful marble swimming pool complete with fresco. The grounds were well laid out, complete with a magnificent rose garden and terracing. The Estate boasted an aviary, polo ground, cricket field and tennis courts. He also established a famous race horse stud at New Farm, which was re-named Home Stud Farm, and was situated near what is now Marefield, off Rushey Way.

A map held by the Town Council clearly shows that the Mansion stood between Silverdale Road and Crawford Close. To get to the Mansion you would have travelled from Wokingham Road along Maiden Erlegh Drive, most of which still exists today, complete with sections of Victorian fencing and the Lodge.

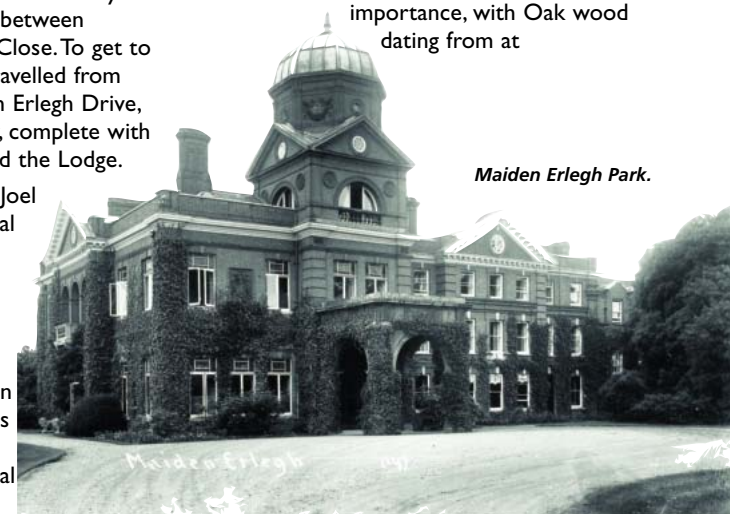
When millionaire Solomon Joel died on 22nd May 1931, the final chapter in the large estate of Maiden Erlegh was near to completion. His death and the subsequent dividing up of the 750-acre estate marked the start of the building of the town we know today. However, it was not until the Manor was demolished in 1960 that the real

growth started; the area, including around Silverdale Road to Lakeside, being of this era.

After his death in 1931, the luxurious contents of the Mansion were sold at auction. The Mansion itself became Maiden Erlegh School for Boys which flourished until 1942. In 1945 the building was sold on to the Church Army, which used it as a Training College until 1952. ICI then bought the Manor and used it as a Conference Centre and offices until 1954, when Cooper Estates Limited purchased the site. Hungarian refugees were housed there, following the Soviet invasion of their country in 1956. They were its last residents – the bulldozers starting their destruction in March 1960.

Maiden Erlegh Park

In response to the demands of local residents, Cooper Estates agreed to sell Maiden Erlegh Lake and the surrounding woodland to Earley Parish Council in return for being allowed to build on another greenfield site. As it was realised the purchase would lead to an increase in the rates, the Council held a public meeting and a referendum. With the backing of the people of Earley, the Council purchased the site for £8,500 in 1965. More recently Old Lane Wood, at the rear of Sellafeld Way, was acquired from the then Wokingham District Council, giving the Park a total area of some 24 acres. The woodlands within the Park are of great historical and ecological importance, with Oak wood dating from at



Maiden Erlegh Park.

least the 16th Century and containing some 18 indicator species associated with old woodlands. Charcoal and pollen deposits from sediment indicate that the Lake area was once wet woodland, almost certainly created by building a dam, flooding the valley bottom. This practice was commonplace from the Middle Ages to the 18th Century to create fish ponds, to provide ice and a landscape feature.

From Hamlet to Town

The population of Earley stands today at just over 33,000 in contrast to the Herlei of 1086 where the Great Survey records a population of 21 people, although it is thought likely a truer figure would be around 100. The population remained fairly constant during this period up until the time of the Black Death in 1348, which it is estimated would have reduced the population by more than half. The tax records for the 17th Century reveal only some 17 persons paying tax and thus the population seems to have remained low. In 1841 the population stood at 471 and this had grown by 1931 to 847 and to over 5,000 by 1948. The increased size of population in the 19th Century led to the Church of England making Earley a Parish in its own right, rather than being part of the old Parish of Sonning. Earley St Peter's Church was consecrated in 1844. The boundaries of Earley have changed considerably over the years as the population has increased. In the 1890's the Corporation of Reading expanded its boundary to include the area between Cemetery Junction and Church Road, whilst in the 1920's the



The Three Tuns.

boundaries were adjusted between Shinfield and Woodley.

The railway came to the Parish in 1863 when the London and South Western Railway opened Earley Station. The Great Western Railway had passed to the north of the village near Shepherds Hill, part of the infamous Sonning Cutting which claimed many workers' lives.

Maiden Erlegh Estate and Manor

Maiden Erlegh was formed out of the Manor of Erlegh St Nicholas, as a gift of land by John de Erlegh to Robert de Erlegh in 1362. Later it was transferred to a Charles Hide of Abingdon. In 1673 the estate was sold to Valentine Crome, and it then passed through several hands and at the end of the 18th Century it belonged to William Matthew Birt who was Governor General of the Leeward Islands.

In 1818 the property passed to the Rt. Hon Edward Golding, MP for Downton, Wiltshire. The Manor was purchased by John Hargreaves in 1878, Master of the South Berks Hunt, who founded a course where hunt and yeomanry races, similar to the modern hunter chases were run. The course extended over an area now covered by Hillside Road, Sutcliffe Avenue and Mill Lane. The grandstand stood on an area which is to the back of the houses in Hillside Road, opposite Loddon Junior School. Solly Joel continued to allow racing until the First World War, when the Maiden Erlegh Racecourse was demolished, the grandstand being re-erected at Newbury racecourse.

Local Government in Earley

Although Earley has been a civil parish since the middle of the last century, perhaps the really significant date in local government terms has been quite recent, when in 1974, there was extensive reorganisation of local government in Britain. Primarily, principal authorities were affected and the previous Wokingham Rural District Council became Wokingham District Council, renamed Wokingham Borough Council in 2007. Also in 1974, the Town Council as we know it today was formed.



One particularly interesting feature of the first Council meeting in 1976 was that the newly elected Councillor, Adrian Paddick, attending his first meeting and in the absence of anyone else willing to accept the post, was thrust into the role of Chairman of Council. He was to continue in this role for some years, and by the time of his death in 1997, had become the elder statesman of the Town Council, highly respected by his colleagues and by the local residents for his wisdom and calming effect on proceedings.

At the time of its formation the Town Council looked after an area with some 12,000 inhabitants. At this stage, the development of Lower Earley had yet to commence. Early meetings of the newly formed Earley Town Council were held in St Peter's Church Hall on Church Road. In 1978, the Town Council struck a deal with Maiden Erlegh School, and began to hold meetings in the staff dining room and set up an office in a converted storeroom. The Council took on its first full time Town Clerk in January 1979 when Mr Leslie Norton became Clerk to the Council.

Despite its comparatively small size, the Town Council responded positively to the challenges with which it was being faced with

the impending Lower Earley development. The Radstock Lane Community Centre was opened in 1983 and included a small suite of offices which became the Council's administrative home until its final move to Radstock House, on the opposite side of the road, in 1987. 1986 saw the building of the Maiden Place Community Centre. Initially it included a small room plus in 1987 it was decided to add a main hall, bar and upstairs room. The improvements were completed around 1989.

The two Community Centres proved to be much needed facilities. With over 6,000 houses being built on the Lower Earley development and a population expansion from c.11,000 in 1974 to some 28,500 in 1990 and an estimate in excess of 32,500 in 2002, the new facilities were essential additions to the Town's infrastructure. There was also significant activity by the Town Council during this period to try to improve facilities at Maiden Erlegh Reserve.

At the same time, the structure of the Council was gradually changing to meet the new demands. In the days of the Parish Council and immediately after 1974, the Town Council had members who were not politically labelled. Gradually their numbers



The Wilderness.

had dwindled and by the mid-1980s, all elected representatives were members of the main political parties.

The 1998 Local Government re-organisation significantly affected Earley in that the first tier authority, Berkshire County Council, became defunct as a new system of Unitary Authorities, based on the areas of the old district councils, was put into place. The changes themselves had little impact on the Town Council's work, but local government in this area has only two tiers instead of three as previously.

As the responsibilities of the Town Council increased, so the respective roles of councillors and their staff similarly changed. Mr Leslie Norton had steered the Town Council through the difficult period during the development of Lower Earley. By the time of his retirement in 1991, the Town Council recognised the need for improved administrative systems to consolidate its earlier achievements.

Leslie Norton was succeeded as Town Clerk by Mr Richard Raymond who moved here from his previous post with a large Borough Council in Essex. He retired in 2003, to be replaced by Mr Philip Truppin, who had served as Clerk to two Local Councils in Hertfordshire previously.

The Town Council is re-elected every four years and has an efficient administrative structure in place with the capability to deal

with all additional facilities now provided by the Council and to meet the increasing demands of central Government.

In 2006 the Council resolved that, henceforth, its Chairman would have the title of Town Mayor, adding status to its civic presence and representative profile in the community.

A list of Chairmen and Mayors of Earley Town Council to date is set out below:

CHAIRMEN

1974 – 1976 R R Boulton; 1976 – 1981

A C Paddick; 1981 – 1983 A W Spratling; 1983 – 1987 J Busby; 1987 – 1988

A W Spratling; 1988 – 1989 Mrs V J Santon; 1989 – 1990 D J Fruin; 1990 – 1991

P Devonald; 1991 – 1992 A W Spratling; 1992 – 1994 Mrs F M Rolls; 1994 – 1996

Mrs E Spratling; 1996 – 1998 M Richman; 1998 - 1999 Mrs E Spratling; 1999 – 2001 A D Long; 2001 – 2003 Mrs I Dowdall;

2003 – 2004 Mrs J. Shockley; 2004 – 2006 D D Chopping.

MAYORS

2006 Councillor D D Chopping; 2006-2008 Councillor N Jorgensen; 2008 Councillor AT Bradley; 2009 Councillor J Armstrong; 2010 Councillor P.Willis; 2011 Councillor T Chambers, 2012 Councillor Mrs P Jorgensen, 2013-2015 Councillor Mrs L Chambers.

Useful

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Age Concern

(Berkshire County Office) 0118 959 4242

Berkshire Women's Aid 0118 950 4003

British Telecom – General Enquiries (Freephone) 0800 800 150

Citizens Advice Bureau 0844 499 4126

CRUSE (bereavement help) 01344 411919

Daisy's Dream

(bereaved service for young people) 0118 934 2604

Earley Bus 0118 975 7320

Earley Charity 0118 975 5663

Earley Day Centre 0118 966 1010

Job Centre (Reading) 0845 604 3719

Job Centre Plus 0845 606 0234

Mays Lane Burial Ground 0118 986 8995

Neighbourhood Watch 0118 918 1644

SSAFA Forces Help 0118 969 6343

WBC Central Placement & Fostering Service 0118 974 6104

Health

NHS South Rivergate House 01635 275500

Royal Berkshire Hospital 0118 322 5111

Berkshire Disability Information Network 01344 755528

NHS Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust 0118 950 3094

Thames Valley Primary Care Agency
(Registering for a Doctor or Medical Card)

0118 918 3333

NHS 111

Red Cross
(general enquiries) 084 441 22750
(medical loan) 084 441 22750

St John Ambulance 0118 933 5500

Witness Service Reading

Magistrates Court 0118 951 3158

Local Government

Earley Town Council 0118 986 8995

Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley
Office Hours 9.00am-1.00pm &
2.00pm-4.30pm 0118 986 8995
(answerphone out of hours)

Out of hours emergencies:

Details of Voicebank No. obtainable from the
recorded message on 0118 986 8995

Wokingham Borough Council

Out of Hours Emergency Number (Highways,
Maintenance, Housing etc.) 0800 212111

Community Care Services (Childrens' Services)
0118 908 8002

Community Care Services (Adults' Services)
0118 974 6287

Community Care Services (out of hours only)
01344 786543

Wokingham Borough Council 0118 974 6000

Mobile Information Centre

• Office 0118 921 0555
• Vehicle 0796 6460 851

Police

• Emergency 999
• Non emergency 101

Post Office

• District Centre, Chalfont Way 0118 986 0529
• Maiden Place 0345 722 3344

• Maiden Erlegh, Silverdale Road 0118 966 3859
Post Office Helpline 0845 722 3344

Rail Enquiries (National) 08457 484 950

Readibus 0118 931 0000

Reading Buses 0118 959 4000

Recycling 0118 974 6000

Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages

• Wokingham Office 0118 974 6000

• Reading Office, Marriages 0118 901 5120

• Births, Deaths 0118 901 5124

Services

Gas Escapes – Transco (Freephone) 0800 111 999

Southern Electric PLC 08457 444 555

Thames Water

• General 0800 009 3964

• Water Leaks 0845 316 980

Samaritans 0845 790 9090

Showcase Cinema 0871 220 1000

Travel Shop (Buses) 0118 959 4000

Contacts

Chemists

Day Lewis Pharmacy
Maiden Lane Shopping Centre, Kilnsea Drive
Lower Earley 0118 9351848

Boots Pharmacy
4 Chalfont Way, Lower Earley 0118 931 1750

Boots Pharmacy
5 The Parade, Silverdale Road, Earley
0118 926 2146

Children

Wokingham Family Information Services
0118 908 8466

Child Minders Drop In
Centre Point, Chalfont Court,
Lower Earley
Tuesday mornings 9.30 am – 11.30 am.

Churches

Earley St Peter's (Church of England)
Parish Office 0118 966 8575

Brookside Church 0118 966 4474

Lower Earley Baptist Church
0118 935 3698

Our Lady of Peace (Roman Catholic)
0118 966 3711

Park United Reformed Church
0118 926 5003

Salvation Army Church 0118 931 0760

St Nicolas Church (C of E) 0118 966 9080

Trinity Church (Church of England,
Methodist & United Reformed) 0118 931 3124

Community

Indian Community Association
Veera Gupta
2 Norris Road, Reading RG6 1NJ 0118 961 7713

Berkshire County Blind Society
Middleton House, 5 Erleigh Road
Reading RG1 5LR 0118 987 2803

Earley CResCent Community Association,
CResCent, Warbler Drive, Lower Earley, Reading
0118 921 0555

Carers UK 0808 808 7777

Conservation

Berkshire Conservation Volunteers
Neil Frankman
PO Box 165, Reading RG6 4LD 0118 975 1528

Earley Environmental Group
Membership Secretary, Liz Wild 0118 935 2453

Park Ranger Service Earley Town Council
0118 986 8995

Wokingham Borough Council Countryside Service,
Dinton Pastures Country Park,
Davis Street, Hurst RG10 0TH 0118 934 2016

Education

Children's Services 0118 974 6105/6107

Schools – Infants/ Juniors

Aldryngton Primary
Silverdale Road, Earley 0118 926 5843

Earley St Peter's C.E. Primary School
Church Road, Earley 0118 926 1657

Hawkedon Primary
Hawkedon Way, Lower Earley 0118 966 7444

Hillside Primary
Rushey Way, Lower Earley 0118 975 5771

The Loddon Primary School
Silverdale Road, Earley 0118 926 1449

Radstock Primary School
Radstock Lane, Earley 0118 986 9050

Whiteknights Primary
Fairlawn Green, Shinfield Rise, Reading
0118 987 2588

Schools – Secondary

Maiden Erlegh Comprehensive
Silverdale Road, Earley 0118 926 2467

Bulmershe School
Chequers Way, Woodley 0118 935 3353

Adult

Woodley Hill House
Bracknell & Wokingham College
Eastcourt Avenue, Earley 0118 984 7600

Health

Arthritis Social Group Earley/Woodley
0118 977 6172

Earley and Woodley Stroke Club
K. Hutchings, 3 Gorse Drive, Woodley, RG5 4QX
0118 969 5598

Liberty of Earley House

The Manager, Strand Way, Earley RG6 4EA
0118 975 1905

Berkshire Carers Service

Suite 11, Beacon Tree Court, Gillette Way, Reading,
RG2 0BS 0800 988 5462

Dentists

Earley Family Dental Practice
268 Wokingham Rd, Earley RG6 1JS 0118 926 1655

Evergreen Centre
448 Wokingham Road, Earley RG6 7HX
0118 966 9991

Gipsy Lane Dental Practice
Dr J I Desai, 5a Gipsy Lane, Earley,
Reading RG6 7HF 0118 966 3944

The Gallery Dental Centre of Excellence
Kilnsea Drive,
Lower Earley RG6 3HD 0118 935 1505

The Beech Lane Dental Practice
Dr Patel
35 Beech Lane, Earley RG6 5PT 0118 987 2755

The Haven Dental Practice
Miss A Carter
Station Road, Earley RG6 7DY 0118 966 4919

Doctors

Brookside Group Practice
Brookside Close & Chalfont Close,
Lower Earley 0118 966 9333

Dr R K Chadha
Wilderness Road Surgery
1 Wilderness Road, Earley RG6 7RU
0118 926 1613

Elm Lane Surgery 0118 986 3683

Parkside Family Practice
Green Road Surgery, 226 Wokingham Road,
Reading RG6 7HF 0118 926 0026

Opticians

Specsavers
Unit A, Whiteknights Retail Centre, 203-205
Shinfield Road, RG2 8HA 0118 975 0360

Stephen Aberly & Partners
46 Gipsy Lane, Earley, Reading RG6 7HF
0118 935 1975

Job Hunting

Wokingham Job Support Centre
0118 977 0517

Legal/Solicitors

Berkshire Central & West Community Legal Service Partnership
Legal Services Commission
Dukesbridge House, 23 Dukes Street, Reading
RG1 4SA 0118 955 8600

The Head Partnership

Solicitors, 9 Chalfont Court, Lower Earley,
Reading RG6 5SY 0118 975 6622

Libraries

Maiden Erlegh Library
Maiden Erlegh Drive, Earley RG6 7HP
0118 966 6630

Lower Earley Library
Chalfont Close, Chalfont Way, Lower Earley
RG6 5HZ 0118 931 2150

Museums

Museum of Berkshire Aviation
Mohawk Way, Woodley 0118 944 8089

Museum of English Rural Life
* Closed for refurbishment until Spring 2016,
Shop and other facilities still open) Redlands
Road 0118 378 8660

Over 50's/Friendship Groups

Chalfont Club
Trinity Church Hall, Chalfont Close 0118 987 3755

Earley Day Centre
1 Kenton Road, Earley, Reading RG6 2LH
0118 966 1010

St Nicolas Over 50's Club
St Nicolas Church Hall, Sutcliffe Avenue, Earley
0118 966 9080

Parent & Toddler Groups

Earley Community Centre Under 3's
Earley Community Centre, Radstock Lane, Earley
0118 966 6557

Kilnsea Toddlers
Maiden Place Community Centre,
Maiden Place, off Kilnsea Drive,
Lower Earley 07754 847967

Playgroups/Pre School Nursery Units

Abbeymore Nursery (3months – 5 years)
Wokingham Road, Reading 0118 926 0000

Earleybird Pre-School
Hawkedon School
Hawkedon Way 0798 644 0308

Earley Pre-School
Our Lady of Peace Community Centre
338 Wokingham Road, Earley RG6 2DA
Ruth Choi 0793 060 2379

Kilnsea Pre-School
Maiden Place Community Centre
Maiden Place, off Kilnsea Drive, Lower Earley
0775 484 7967

Little Ducklings Day Nursery
Campbell Road, Woodley 0118 927 2822

Maiden Erlegh Pre-School
Silverdale Centre, Silverdale Road,
Earley RG6 7HS 07867 565811

Radstock School Nursery Unit
Radstock Primary School
Radstock Lane, Earley 0118 986 9050

Ryhill Pre-School
Hillside School, Rushey Way, Lower Earley
0118 975 1888

The University of Reading Pre-School
(mornings term-time)
R.U.E.S.C. 2 Earley Gate, Whiteknights, Reading
0118 378 7914

Wendy House Pre-School
Earley Community Centre, Radstock Lane, Earley
0789 003 5523

Recreation and Leisure Activities

Bulmershe Leisure Centre
Woodlands Avenue, Woodley 0118 926 8733

Earley and District Flower Club
St Nicolas Church Hall, Sutcliffe Avenue, Earley,
RG6 7JN Contact:- Joan Strong 0118 9425269

Earley Folk Dance Group
Mollie Rabbitts 0118 966 3896

East Reading Horticultural Society
Kay Bridges 0118 961 6332

Loddon Valley Leisure Centre
Rushey Way, Lower Earley 0118 931 2066

Maiden Erlegh Bowling Club
Beech Lane, Earley 0118 986 0759

Reading Film Theatre
Palmer Building, Whiteknights,
Reading RG6 6AH 0118 378 7151
www.readingfilmtheatre.co.uk

Reading Outdoor Group
Membership Secretary 0118 961 6506

**Table Tennis Club and Impact Coaching –
Our Lady of Peace**
0118 931 1142

Woodford Park Leisure Centre
Haddon Drive, Woodley 0118 921 6969

Residents Associations

Maiden Erlegh Residents Association
Secretary Brian Hackett 0118 986 1115
e-mail: ask.mera@btinternet.com

Association of Central Earley Residents
0118 926 6889 or 0795 857 2214

Email Chairman.ACER@earleyresidents.org.uk

Social Services

Wokingham Social Services 0118 974 6000

Transport

Earleybus 0118 975 7320
Earley CResCent Resource Centre, Warbler
Drive, Lower Earley RG6 4HB 0118 921 0555

Earley Volunteer Driver Bureau
Centrpoint, Lower Earley
(Voluntary Car Scheme) 0118 986 6980

Readibus
Craddock Road, Reading RG2 0JT 0118 931 0000

Wokingham Town Mobility 0118 977 0332

Veterinary Surgeons

Abbey Veterinary Group
6 Elm Lane, Earley 0118 987 1693
62 London Road, Reading 0118 987 1693
57 Colemansmoor Lane Woodley
0118 987 1693

Voluntary/Community Groups

Home-Start Wokingham Borough
(Working with Under 5's)
Shinfield Grange, Cutbush Lane
Shinfield Reading RG2 9AF 0118 988 8025

Wokingham Volunteer Centre
The Ritz Plaza, 10 Denton Road, Wokingham
RG40 2DX 0118 977 0749

Watersports

Wokingham Waterside Centre
Thames Valley Park Drive 0118 926 8280

Young People

(Earley) 1996 Air Training Corps Squadron
www.1996.org.uk 07881 913927

Youth Group, Park United Reformed Church
Pilates 0118 926 5003

Sen Tani Renmei Judo Club 0118 975 5630

Girl Guiding
Bulmershe Division and Earley District
www.girlguidingroyalberkshire.org.uk

Loddon District Scout Council
www.loddondistrict.org.uk

**Wokingham Youth Service Shute End,
Wokingham** 0118 974 6267

Youth Centres

Earley Centre Point
Youth and Community Centre
Chalfont Close, Lower Earley RG65HZ
0118 968 8995

Silverdale Centre
Maiden Erlegh School Campus, Silverdale Road,
Earley RG6 7NG 0118 966 9529

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