

Earley Town Council Meeting 24th September 2025

Agenda Item 8.1 - REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

Earley Bus Meeting Report – Rosemary Cook

Meeting Details:-

- Date: 13th August 2025
- Time: 2pm
- Location: Crescent Centre
- Attendees: Earley Bus Trustees

Attendees reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting, confirming their accuracy.

Matters that arose from the previous minutes were information regarding driver classifications. After contacting various organisations and Government departments, details of driver qualifications necessary (B or C sections on a driver's licence) to drive a larger minibus were officially received. Volunteer drivers over 70 years only need a class B licence to drive the bus and drivers are required to self-certify any health conditions. This information was documented in writing and recorded in the Earley Bus records. It means that a new minibus of 425 kilos with wheelchair space can be considered.

FINANCIAL REPORT : The committee has a new treasurer. Wokingham Borough Council's grant has been received (2 years worth). The new bus fund is very close to being sufficient for a new bus. Use of bus is close to pre-covid levels.

DRIVER INFORMATION: A discussion was held regarding key security and recording accurate information of trips.

VEHICLE MAINTANENCE: A safety check was done on 7th July. Doubts were raised about the dates of the fire extinguisher.

DATA: The way in which data is collected and stored needs to be reviewed. Data on the booking forms needs to be modified. This will be actioned by the committee executive.

NEW BUS: A discussion was held about a possible new bus now that clarification about drivers had been received. Pros and cons of buying versus leasing were discussed. A working group was established to consider different options.

PRESENTATION: Tony Henty was honoured for 22 years of service to Earley Bus.

CLlr Rosemary Cook
13th August 2025

Full Council – 24th September 2025

Agenda Item 9 – SULV JOINT SUB COMMITTEE

The SULV Joint Sub Committee was formed some time ago between Earley Town Council and Woodley Town Council to protect and enhance the status of the SULV, land which lies between Woodley and Earley and is made up of open green space, playing fields, woodland and allotments. The SULV is defined in Wokingham Borough Council's Managing Development Delivery Development Plan and Local Plan Update.

At its meeting on 9th July 2025, ETC agreed a request from Woodley Town Council to increase their member appointment from 2 members to 3 members. This increase would be matched by ETC, with Councillors S Jordan, S Matthews and S Newton being appointed as ETC's members.

On 1st September 2025, a meeting of the SULV Joint Sub Committee was held at Woodley Town Council with the three ETC members in attendance, along with the Deputy Town Clerk and Councillors K Gilder and J Taylor from Woodley Town Council. This meeting was the first one to be held since December 2019, so was an initial meeting to re-focus the group.

At the meeting members reviewed the Terms of Reference and gave an update on the Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) which has been drafted, consulted on and is expected to be published at the end of September 2025. There was also an update on the Highwood Conference, an annual meeting held between representatives of both Town Councils and Wokingham Borough Council.

The Sub Committee also discussed some possible ideas for the future and agreed to meet again after the publication of the Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Emma Carroll
Deputy Town Clerk

EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Full Council Meeting 24th September 2025

Item 11 – EAR MARKED RESERVES – P & R COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

At its meeting on 10th September, the Policy and Resources Committee completed its review of the Town Council's Ear Marked Reserves. The purpose of the review was to ensure that adequate funds are reserved for specific purposes thus enabling Earley Town Council to maintain standards and deliver improvements.

The Policy & Resources Committee have two final recommendations for amendments:

Maiden Place Community Centre – Doors & Windows

It was agreed that this fund is no longer required as the doors and windows at MPCC will form part of the review currently being undertaken in relation to the Net Zero project. There are sufficient funds within the Net Zero EMR to cover any replacement doors and windows that may be required.

RECOMMENDATION - The £8,705 in this EMR be transferred to the newly created *Dilapidations & Refurbishment Fund* EMR, monies which can be used across the ETC estate.

Radstock Lane Community Centre – Improvements

This EMR was originally created to fund a boiler replacement at RLCC but such work will now be covered by the Net Zero EMR.

RECOMMENDATION - The £11,095 in this EMR be transferred to the newly created *Dilapidations & Refurbishment Fund* EMR, monies which can be used across the ETC estate.

Earley Town Council
Council Meeting 24th September 2025

Agenda Item 12 - ETC CHAIRS GROUP MEETING

Notes

A Chairs Group meeting (formerly the Strategy Group) took place on 11th September 2025.

Present at the meeting were Cllr N Brock (Chair of Council and Chair of Amenities & Leisure Committee), Cllr D Hare (Chair of Policy & Resources Committee), Cllr A Neal (Chair of Planning Committee) and J Friend, Town Clerk.

Matters discussed:

1. Review of Group title, attendees, purpose

Aware there seems to be confusion on the part of some as to the role these meetings play - confirmed purpose of group is to increase/improve communication between council/councillors and Town Clerk; increase/improve knowledge on both sides; to aid agenda planning and direction. Agreed that renaming it 'Chairs Group Meeting' should further clarify its purpose. Reviewed attendees and agreed they would be the chairs of the three standing committees plus the chair of the Council (Mayor) plus the Town Clerk

2. Request for activities for asylum seekers resident at hotel

Involve had sent email suggesting that ETC could perhaps organise litter picking activities or other activities for asylum seekers resident at the hotel to aid their integration within the community. Town Clerk had responded informing them of the long-established voluntary group in Earley (EASI) who organised litter picking in the town and suggested they may like to contact them. Chairs group agreed that ETC should not step on EASI's toes and also that ETC did not have the resources to organise activities for a particular group in the community.

3. Repair Café 1st birthday

The Earley Repair Café's 1st birthday is coming up and Town Clerk plans to arrange a small, informal thank you gathering for the volunteers, to show ETC's appreciation of their work and to foster closer bonds amongst them. The ERC is still being run by ETC officers and volunteer councillors but it's now self-funding. As only a proportion of the ETC grant was used to get the project off the ground, the Town Clerk is proposing to use a small sum of money from the Environmental Projects EMR to fund the refreshments for the 'party'. The Chairs Group agreed it was a good way for ETC to say thank you and show its support for the project.

4. SJP centenary

Agreed to refer this to A & L for discussion. Council needs to decide what it wants to do to mark the occasion. History of Sol Joel is problematic by modern standards. Chairs Group will be making a suggestion that perhaps a plaque and an installation of some sort at SJP (something that residents can use, ie sundial, trail etc.) may be the best way forward.

5. MERA

Discussed the minutes from a MERA meeting which said that Cllr S Newton was ETC's representative on MERA. Town Clerk had contacted Steve Feltham and suggested that if MERA wanted an ETC representative then it could go on the council agenda and be formally agreed. Steve Feltham had confirmed MERA didn't want to do that, they wished to have a representative from the Liberal Democrats (Cllr S Newton) as this was the majority party at both borough and town level and they accepted that Cllr Newton was not ETC's representative.

6. Community Governance Review

Confirmed that update from WBC on this would go to next full council meeting.

7. ALIGN

Cllr Neal asked for ToR for this group (group of parishes monitoring LGV development progress) to go to next full council meeting.

8. Questions to WBC

Chairs Group agreed that this matter needed reviewing as some suggested questions did not seem to be reflecting ETC concerns/issues. Suggested that questions should be those arising out of council business and shouldn't be first resort, ie questions to officers and other options should be explored before public question asked at WBC meeting. Matter to go to full council meeting.

Earley Town Council

Council Meeting 24th September 2025

Agenda Item 14 - Town Plan

Introduction by Cllr Mike Smith:

The Town Plan was last updated in 2021. In January 2024, a working group was set up to review and, if necessary, to rewrite the Town Plan. The working group met several times in the spring of 2024 before Members got caught up in various all-out elections and by-elections. And there have been a few delays because of illness.

Earlier versions of the Town Plan had a Mission statement, a vision for Earley Town and six objectives. These have all been carried through with refinements into this latest draft.

An initial draft was sent to all councillors in March 2024, this contained a Vision statement and a list of actions which included target dates and indicated who might be accountable, who would be informed and consulted and who would be responsible for delivery.

There was a long pause for a variety of reasons until late September last year when input was sought from Officers. There was a further pause until February this year when it became apparent that the direction of the first draft was not entirely useful. It must be remembered that ETC has a relatively small workforce with many real time demands. That means there is limited time available to deal with preparing large projects along with dealing with day to day progress and events – many unforeseen.

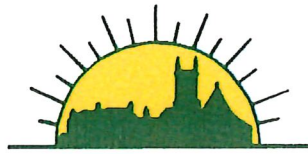
A revised draft in March 2025 still had a format that did not provide the reader with much idea of what Earley Town is and the structure of the Council, its responsibilities and facilities – in effect it lacked narrative and imagery.

A narrative introduction was created in late May and discussed with Officers in June. From that meeting, the current draft has been developed. It contains narrative about our Town, the structure, services and facilities that ETC provides along with a vision for our Town, our mission – essentially what we want to achieve and our common objectives. It also sets out our four key priorities as agreed at the budget meeting in March and ends with a short section about our residents and their representation.

An opportunity was taken at the Green Fair to ask residents to rank the objectives. That input has been incorporated.

It is not considered feasible to set hard dates for delivery of aspects listed under our priorities as there are uncertainties at the initiation stage of any project and there are limited resources in terms of both finance and staffing. The enlargement of the Cemetery is a salutary example of how every step forward can result in uncovering more difficulties and potentially run-away costs.


Appendix G contains the most up to date draft from a WG meeting held on the 11 September 2025.



EARLEY TOWN PLAN 2025

 Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Reading RG6 5UL

 administration@earley-tc.gov.uk

 0118 986 8995

 www.earley-tc.gov.uk

Introduction

This is the Earley Town Council Plan that describes some of the Earley Town Council facilities and how we wish to see our area develop over the next few years.

We hope this document gives our residents an insight to what Earley Town Council does and what it is planning to do.

By develop, we don't mean new buildings everywhere, rather, how we see improvements to our town going forward. This is within the context of what the Town Council can continue with, the good things already underway, the new areas of improvement we'd like to see and how benefits accrue to our residents.

There are three main themes to the Town Plan - enhancing our services to benefit residents, extending our youth services and dealing with the Climate Emergency. Other important themes include open and transparent government, facilitating and encouraging both inclusivity and diversity as well as encouraging civic engagement.

This should be seen as a live Town Plan, that can be enhanced, modified and extended as time goes by, with a formal review on a regular basis. In the passage of time, some items will mature or may become redundant or may require continuous effort, whilst new ideas and concepts will be incorporated.

The Town Plan should not be seen as a fixed project with complex and detailed milestones as we are dealing in real time. Demands on Council's resources, both financial and staffing are limited within the national council tax regimes. Then there are unexpected incidents and events that happen that may need to take precedence over long term items.

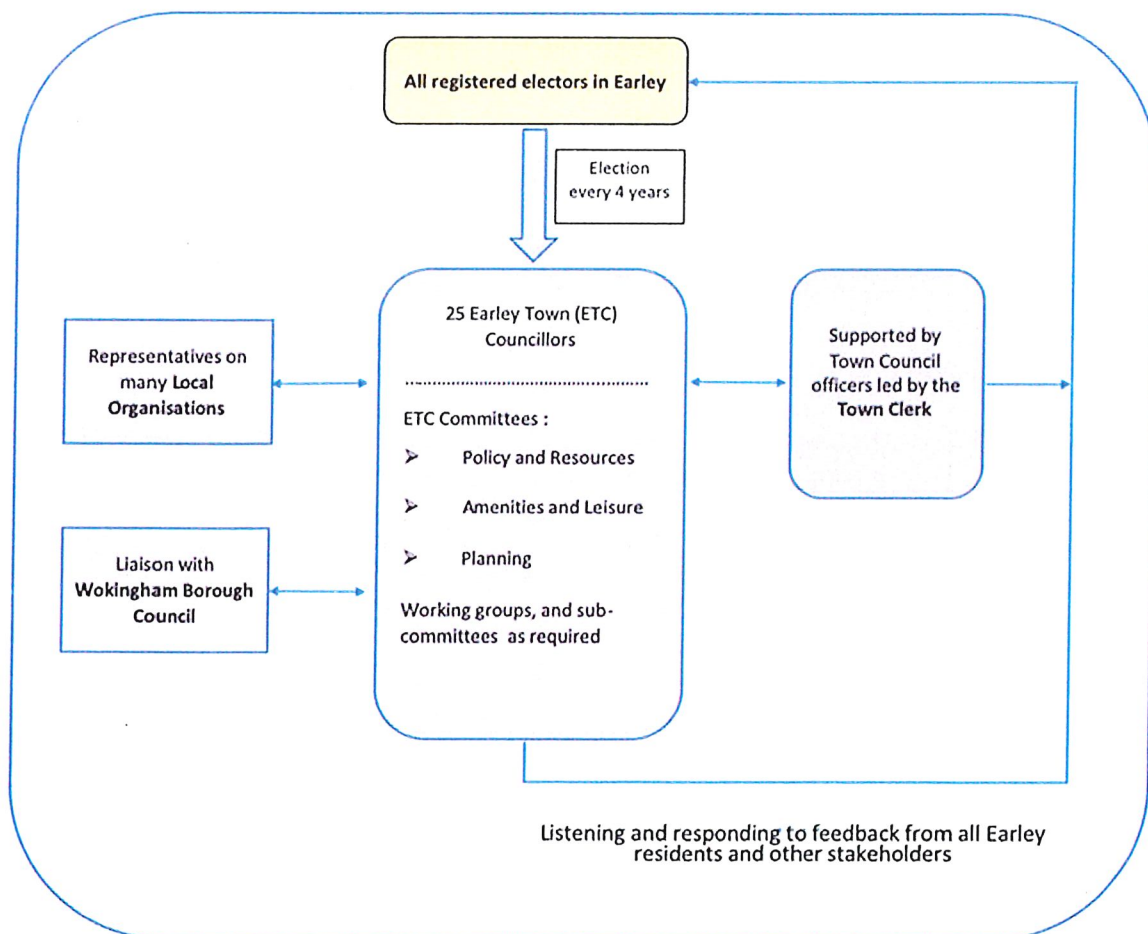
Background

The parish of Earley is mentioned in the Domesday Book when it had a population of 21. The Town Council was formed in 1974 which coincided with significant growth in housing collectively known as the Lower Earley development – at the time it was the largest housing development in Western Europe comprising approximately 6,000 dwellings. More detail can be found on the Earley Town Council website - <https://www.earley-tc.gov.uk/history-of-earley/>

In broad terms, Earley Town runs from the Thames in the North to the M4 motorway in the South and from the Three Tuns plus half the University of Reading campus in the west; then down the Wokingham Road to the George Pub and Showcase cinema beside the River Loddon in the East.

Earley now has more than 30,000 residents living in over 10,000 houses so a reasonable sized town. It has a very diverse population with approximately 22% coming from outside the UK and 36% declaring their ethnicity as something other than white according to the 2021 census.

The following diagram indicates how Earley Town Council is structured.



The focal point for the Town Council is the Helpshop and Offices in Radstock Lane. This site includes workshops and storage associated with the work of the Grounds and Ranger staff.



Earley Town Council Offices, Radstock Lane RG6 5UL

Services and Amenities

You can learn more by about Earley Town Council with much detailed information to be found on the website – see <https://www.earley-tc.gov.uk/>. The following is just a brief description.

Services We Provide

We provide a range of services from our Helpshop in Radstock Lane at the Earley Town Council Offices. The Helpshop, for example, can provide information on allotment and fishing permit bookings; details and advice on our cemetery; purchase of a range of items including garden waste and dog waste bags; details of local bus services and of bookings for our various halls for hire. A long list is provided on our website – see this link <https://www.earley-tc.gov.uk/helpshop/>

Earley Town Council is a statutory consultee for planning matters. The Town Council's Planning Committee reviews all planning applications within the Town and makes recommendations to the Planning Authority (Wokingham Borough Council). Members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings. The Planning Committee seeks to support appropriate development and to try and discourage over-development, but it can only make recommendations to the Planning Authority.

The website is a source of information on a variety of issues including What's on; consultations that may affect Earley Town, including the Town Council's responses; information on Council meetings including agendas and the minutes from past meetings; details of walks around Earley; and news items that may be of interest to residents.

The Town Council organises a range of events throughout the year including the very popular Annual Green Fair in August, the Huge Earley Litter Pick in March, the Mayor's Reception in

the early New Year plus lots of smaller activities such as nature trails, Bric a Brac tables and Macmillan Coffee mornings. In addition, Earley Town Council facilitates the Repair Café at Centrepoint Community Centre near ASDA.

Some of Earley Town Council Facilities



Bulmershe Park



Maiden Erlegh Lake and nature reserve



Sol Joel Park



Meadow Park



Radstock Lane Community Centre



Maiden Place Community Centre

Parks and Green Spaces

Earley Town operates allotments, a cemetery and is responsible for several parks and green spaces. These include the playing fields known as Sol Joel Park with its football, softball and cricket pitches, skate park and parking area, and the popular children’s inclusive play area; Meadow Park, a small, quiet park also with a range of children’s play equipment and an outdoor gym; Redhatch Copse, an Ancient Woodland with a lovely Bluebell Wood; and, the jewel in the crown, Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve including its large lake and woods, home to much wildlife and fauna. The Town Council is also responsible for the open space at Paddick Drive, along with its BMX track, and we share responsibility with Woodley Town Council for Bulmershe Park woodland.

Within Earley there are also a range of parks and spaces operated by Wokingham Borough Council which includes Laurel Park and Chalfont Park – both having changing facilities and football pitches, Carnival Field, Thames Valley Park Nature Reserve and Riverside Park (along the Loddon River). In addition, there is Swallows Meadow, the Harris Gardens and Wilderness – all owned by the University of Reading and open to the public.

There are a range of small open spaces, some with play equipment among the housing estates.

Buildings and Street Furniture

The offices are based in Radstock Lane and includes a Council Chamber and the Helpshop.

The Town Council operates three community centres: Maiden Place, Radstock Lane and Centrepoint, as well as the Interpretation Centre in the Nature Reserve. They each have various facilities, rooms and halls for hire – see the website for details.

We set up and continue to run the Earley Repair Café at Centrepoint Community Centre. This successful venture saves items from going to landfill, saves residents money and gives talented volunteers an opportunity to use and share their skills.

At Sol Joel Park we are responsible for the sports pavilion, a facility used by numerous sports teams throughout the year.

Earley Town Council owns and looks after over 50 bus shelters; and a small number of streetlights, as well as 36 noticeboards. We also maintain the benches, dog waste and litter bins within the parks and assets that Earley Town Council operates.

Vision, Mission and Objectives

Our Vision for Earley

We strive for a local community that is open, cohesive, safe and welcoming for all. We support all residents, of all ages and all abilities and work to enhance our environment. We are focused on achieving and delivering value for money for the council's services.

Mission - What we want to achieve

We will ensure transparent decision-making while preserving our town's identity and strive to facilitate a sustainable, eco-friendly community in partnership with residents, local businesses, charities, and other organisations. We will continue to work to enhance the Town Council's services and facilities to foster a safe and vibrant community for everyone.

Objectives - We will seek to:

- **Enhance Quality of Life:** We will continue to improve our services, recreational facilities, and cultural opportunities to enhance residents' overall quality of life. We will continue to protect and promote the Town's historical and cultural heritage, preserving its identity and character. Where appropriate, we will work with residents and other stakeholders to develop greater community spirit and improved physical health and wellbeing for residents.
- **Promote Youth Development:** We are Investing in youth initiatives to provide additional opportunities for leisure, personal learning and development that lead to better community cohesion, integration and opportunities for our young people.
- **Promote Environmental Sustainability, Biodiversity and Climate Emergency:** We will continue to implement policies and initiatives that prioritise the conservation and safeguarding of green spaces, natural habitats, and the environment to protect and enhance the Town's natural assets.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** We commit to on-going transparent governance, responsible financial management, and open reporting to build and maintain public trust and accountability.

- **Encourage Civic Engagement:** We facilitate open communication with residents, encourage public participation in our Committee and Council Meetings, and seek feedback to ensure the community's voice is heard in decision-making processes. We promote and represent our local community to other stakeholders and interested parties including Wokingham Borough Council, local Town and Parish Councils and education establishments such as Reading University. We also facilitate an Annual Town Electors' Meeting where the Mayor updates residents on achievements for the year.
- **Inclusivity and Diversity:** We will work to ensure all our facilities as far as possible are accessible to all. We support and promote inclusivity and diversity as well as fostering an inclusive community that respects diversity and encourages and ensures equal opportunities for all residents, regardless of their background, identity, and beliefs. We aim to build an open, cohesive, safe, and welcoming community for everyone. We support residents of all ages and abilities and work to improve our environment, ensuring council services provide value for money.

Our Current Priorities

Within the budget, which is reviewed annually and adopted in the February full Council Meeting, there are Ear-Marked Reserves. These are sums of money for specific activities or improvements that we would need to effectively save up for, sometimes over a period of years.

The priorities for the near future are:

- Enhancing the quality of life for residents.
- Development and enhancement of our Youth Services
- Promoting environmental improvements
- Open and transparent governance

Enhancing the quality of life for residents

Replace and enhance play equipment at Meadow Park

Continue to maintain and enhance Redhatch Copse

Various improvements at the Community Centres

Improve the Earley Town Council website to make it more useful to residents

Extend the cemetery provisions within the constraints of the useful land available

Maintain and, where appropriate, enhance all Earley Town Council assets.

Development and enhancement of Youth Services and provision of facilities for sport, leisure and recreation

Continue with and expand where possible our Youth Services provision including the operation of a regular Youth Club at Centrepoint Community Centre.

Open the Bike Workshop at Centrepoint Community Centre – hopefully transferring skills to the wider community, especially young people.

Provide summer holiday activities as resources permit.

Maintain, enhance and improve our play areas and sports facilities within our parks

Maintain, enhance and improve our BMX track at Paddick Drive

Continue to provide volunteering opportunities wherever possible, for example, in environmental work or at the Earley Repair Cafe

Environmental improvements

Enhance and increase biodiversity at all Earley Town Council sites

Reduce emissions from Earley Town Council buildings, vehicles and equipment, including the upgrading of heating systems and the installation of solar panels and other renewables as appropriate.

Continue to maintain, enhance and improve our community green spaces

Continue to support the Earley Repair Cafe

Green corridors – support the work of the Earley Environmental Group

Support Sustainable travel – walks and cycle paths maintenance and enhanced.

Open and transparent governance

Improve communications - Website ongoing maintenance and improvement; increased use of both physical (notice boards Earley Town Council) and electronic (social media) means of communicating with residents

Report to residents via publicising meeting agendas for full Council and all committees, inviting public questions and printing and publishing meeting minutes.

Commit to transparent governance and responsible financial management

Representation

In electoral terms, some 23,600 people were eligible to vote in 2024 according to the Electoral Boundary Commission. Earley Town Council elects Councillors on a four-year cycle with the next “all-out” election being in May 2027. Wokingham Borough Council elects on a one seat out of the three seats per ward per year cycle, with every fourth year having no elections. The next Borough elections will be in May 2026.

This Earley Town Plan was drafted by a working group of Councillors with input from Officers and was adopted by Earley Town Council in XXXX 2025.

This Plan is a live document and input and suggestions from residents , clubs, associations, congregations or any other groups are welcome – in the first instance, contact the Town Clerk by e-mail - administration@earley-tc.gov.uk or by phone - 0118 9868995.

Full Council – 24th September 2025

Agenda Item 15.2 – Loddon Garden Village Development - ALIGN

Background

In March 2025, Shinfield Parish Council suggested putting together an informal group consisting of members from Arborfield & Newland Parish Council, Earley Town Council, Shinfield Parish Council and Winnersh Parish Council, to discuss the impacts of the proposed Loddon Garden Village development.

A suggested basis for the group was to look into the idea of approaching Wokingham Borough Council to ask for a planning constraint stating that developers pay for an independent Monitoring Officer who would work with the four Town/Parish Councils. The role of this Monitoring Officer would be to ensure that key parts of any planning approval or conditions relating to Loddon Garden Village, were delivered in the manner promised and when promised.

As the outline planning application had not yet been submitted by the University of Reading, it was felt that the most appropriate representatives from Earley Town Council to attend an initial meeting of the group would be members of the Planning Committee.

On 1st May 2025, an initial meeting was attended by Councillors M Smith and A Neal, where ideas for such a working group were discussed. One of the actions from the meeting was for some members to carry out research into such a Monitoring Officer, this would then be discussed at a further meeting. Councillors M Smith and A Neal gave a verbal update on this initial meeting to the Planning Committee at its meeting on 8th May 2025.

Update

Following a slight delay, a second meeting was held on 19th August 2025, attended by Councillor Neal, the following was discussed: -

- To formalise the group into a formal monitoring board, made up of representatives from the 4 town/parish councils.
- The board to be called ALIGN (Alliance of Loddon Infrastructure & Growth Needs).
- Terms of Reference for the board to be drafted by the Parish Clerk at Shinfield Parish Council for adoption by the four town/parish councils and representative nominations be made.
- The Clerk at Shinfield Parish Council to contact WBC to set up a meeting with appropriate WBC officers to seek the gaining of WBC's support for a 'Loddon Garden Village Liaison Officer' to monitor, report and answer questions from ALIGN on the progress of the Loddon Garden Village development, as it progresses, and to send feedback to WBC.

It should be noted that the Loddon Garden Village development will take many years to build, this could be anything up to 10-15 years, if not more.

The next meeting of the group is scheduled for 2nd October 2025.

Council is asked to **RESOLVE**:

- Should ETC have a representative on the ALIGN board, taking into the consideration the commitment that will be involved over a long period of time in relation to the actual impact of the development on Earley, which will mainly be an increase in traffic.
- To review and accept the draft (v.1) Terms of Reference for ALIGN.

ALIGN – Terms of Reference – DRAFT v1
as drafted by Shinfield Parish Council

ALIGN - Alliance for Loddon Infrastructure & Growth Needs

1. Purpose

To act as the representative body for

- Arborfield & Newland Parish Council
- Earley Town Council
- Shinfield Parish Council
- Winnersh Parish Council

in respect of the development of the project known as Loddon Garden Village (LGV).

To oversee and ensure the delivery of infrastructure and obligations associated with the development, in accordance with approved plans, planning conditions and reserved matters, Section 106 agreements, and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding.

Subject to the provision of funding ALIGN may appoint a Monitoring Officer who will act independently on behalf of the four councils to promote transparency, accountability, and timely delivery of development-related infrastructure. Any such officer will have their own terms of reference in alignment with this document.

2. Scope of Responsibilities

Governance & Coordination

- Facilitate liaison between parish councils, Wokingham Borough Council, and developers.

Section 106 Oversight

- Negotiate Section 106 obligations.
- Monitor implementation of Section 106 outputs and ensure timely delivery.
- Review and respond to proposed changes to approved plans, planning conditions, and obligations.

CIL Oversight

- Ensure CIL funding is allocated to appropriate schemes within the four councils.
- Advocate for parish-led Neighbourhood Plan CIL projects.
- Ensure CIL raised in the four councils is spent locally or if elsewhere only by agreement by ALIGN.

Funding in General

- Infrastructure funding must be used to mitigate development impacts within the boundary of the four councils.

Reporting

- Provide Annual Reports to the parish councils detailing progress, risks, and recommendations.

4. Key Principles

- **Terms of Reference:**
 - Each individual council will obtain formal agreement from their respective council before the Terms of Reference become applicable to ALIGN

- **Collective Decision Making:**
 - In general, decisions shall be made by agreement of those attending a meeting.
 - If a more formal vote is required, Each of the four councils will have an equal vote.
 - In the event of a tie Arborfield & Newland (as the host parish for LGV) shall have a casting vote.
 - A formal vote will be required to:
 - Vary the Terms of Reference
 - Dissolve or change the constitution of ALIGN

- **Transparency:**
 - Meetings of ALIGN shall not be open to the public.
 - However, ALIGN members shall report back to their respective Full Councils meetings to ensure transparency for fellow members and their residents.
 - Reports should be included in the respective council's Minutes

- **Communication to the Public:**
 - Any formal communications to the public should be agreed by all four councils before it is issued
 - Unless agreed that there may be local variation of the communication it should be issued in full using the agreed text for the communication

- **Meetings Structure:**
 - ALIGN shall meet monthly on ____TBC____ at ____TBC____
 - There will be no meeting in August each year

Full Council Meeting – 24th September 2025

Agenda Item 17 – Service to Earley Awards

Background

In recent years, the number of Service to Earley Award nominations being received has reduced and often come from the same sections of the community as previously. Despite advertising the awards widely on noticeboards, website, social media, there appears to be limited public interest in submitting nominations.

Review

The Service to Earley Awards Working Group met to review the current policy and discuss ways in which the awards could be made more attractive to residents, more focused on community and perhaps a little less formal. The aim is to encourage more people to feel that they are able to, and would want to, make a nomination.

The Working Group reported to the Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 10th September 2025 that they had considered the following as part of their review: -

- **What other Town/Parish Councils are doing**
Some Town/Parish Councils have awards with numerous categories, this is perhaps something which could be considered for ETC in the future.
- **Rewording of the current Service to Earley Award policy**
The working group agreed that some of the current wording in the policy was quite formal and that by rewording parts of the policy and making the overall tone more informal, more residents may be encouraged to nominate.
- **Service to Earley Award – the name**
The working group agreed that it wouldn't be feasible to make any significant change to the name of the award at this time because of the current award display board, which has three spaces left. However, by adding the word 'community' this may help clarify the meaning of the award.
- **Introducing a 'Good Neighbour' award category**
The working group agreed that adding a 'Good Neighbour Award' category would be a good way of encouraging residents to nominate those who do neighbourly deeds that often go unnoticed and that this could be easily implemented for 2025.

Following the Working Group's review, the Policy & Resources Committee recommendations to Full Council are that: -

- 1. The name of the awards is changed to 'Service to Earley Community Awards'**
- 2. A new 'Good Neighbour Award' category is introduced**
- 3. The revised Service to Earley Community Awards policy (see draft policy) is adopted.**

Members to **RESOLVE** as appropriate.

Emma Carroll, Deputy Town Clerk

EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Service to Earley Community Awards Policy

OVERVIEW

Earley Town Council is keen to recognise and celebrate the positive and often unnoticed voluntary work undertaken by individuals within the Earley community.

CATEGORIES

Service to Earley Award is an annual award, given by the Town Council, to honour a person who has made, or is making, significant voluntary contributions to the Earley community through their time, actions, talents and dedication.

The Good Neighbour Award is an annual award, given by the Town Council, to honour a person whose actions, help and/or support, have made a positive difference to the life or lives of others in their neighbourhood.

ELIGIBILITY

Any person who gives their time to volunteering or helping within the Earley community may be nominated except where that volunteering is part of their employment or they are a current Earley Town or Wokingham Borough Councillor.

CRITERIA

Service to Earley Award

The Service to Earley Award will recognise an individual who has made, or is making, a significant voluntary contribution to the community. Nominations will be judged by using appropriate criteria. These include, but are not limited to, how the nominee has demonstrated:

- sense of purpose
- inspiration
- inclusivity
- innovation
- lasting impact

Good Neighbour Award

The Good Neighbour Award will recognise an individual who offers acts of kindness, care or support to others, such as offering a helping hand, running errands, offering companionship etc, in their own neighbourhood or community demonstrating they:

- think of others
- spirit of selflessness
- community spirit

NOMINATIONS

A nomination period of six weeks (September – November), will be advertised via the Earley Town Council website/social media, on all Town Council noticeboards, in the Lower Earley Library and by word of mouth. Nomination forms will be available to download from the Earley Town Council website.

Any resident of Earley, including Councillors, may nominate a person for an award by completing a nomination form and returning it to: - Town Clerk, Earley Town Council, Council Offices, Radstock Lane, Earley, Reading, RG6 5UL or by emailing it to townclerk@earley-tc.gov.uk before the end of the nomination period. Nominations for the Service to Earley Award and the Good Neighbour Award category should include supporting testimonials or other evidence to support the nomination.

SELECTION

An award panel comprising of five Earley Town Councillors shall review all nominations and make an award recommendation to the November Council Meeting. This shall be considered as a Part 2 Item.

If, in any given year, the panel concludes that there have been no nominees who unequivocally meet the selection criteria, it shall recommend that no award be made that year.

Soon after the November Council Meeting, the successful nominee(s) will be informed of their award and asked if they are prepared to accept it.

Awards will usually be presented at the Mayor's Reception in the New Year.

The names of recipients will be recorded on the Service to Earley Award Board on display at the Council Offices.

Policy Adopted – 24th September 2025

Policy to be reviewed – August 2027

**Earley Town Council
Council Meeting 24th September 2025**

Agenda Item 18 - PROFILE OF EARLEY

Councillor Al Neal's request that the Town Council consider taking measures to raise the profile of Earley has been considered by all three standing committees, all of which have expressed support in principle. Councillor Neal's report:

Raising the Profile of Earley

Why should Earley raise its profile?

- The parliamentary constituency name now includes Earley
- National news about the MP often mentions the constituency name
- With local government reorganisation happening, more visibility of the town will help prevent it being lost in some future structure
- A higher profile among residents will give more weight to preserving the town's identity in a new local government environment
- Anecdotal reports from residents report a low profile of Earley Town Council

How to raise Earley Town Council's profile -

Distribute a printed, Earley newsletter to all households

- Many residents don't know what the Town Council does
- Some residents, even if on-line, prefer to use printed media, containing useful telephone numbers etc.
- WBC have stopped distributing their newsletter
- We could engage with community in putting a newsletter together with a call-out for photographs and stories
- If scheduled for Autumn 2026, there is time to do it and it's not an election year for the town

How to raise the Earley profile externally?

Upgrade and expand the town's boundary signage

- There are only 4 boundary signs. Pitts Ln, Loddon Br, Elm Rd, Lower Earley Way eastbound
- 3 of the existing signs still refer to Wokingham District
- A 5th sign disappeared from Lower Earley Way westbound sometime after 2009
- There are many major routes into Earley that have no boundary sign e.g. Sutton Seeds, 3 Tuns, Pepper Ln, Woodlands Av, Kennetmouth path, Earley Station, A329(M) etc.
- With local government reorganisation, it is an opportunity to remove the top tier branding from the boundary signs, as is being done by Wokingham Town (see below)



The town profile can be raised by using its logo/emblem (see below) with a welcome message



Feedback from discussions:

- Support for 'Welcome to Earley' signs – suggest we obtain costings from Wokingham Borough Council
- Should there be strap line on the sign (instead of, ie 'please drive carefully')
- Support for an ETC newsletter
- Newsletter to start off as an annual one?
- To be made available in electronic format – printed version to be available for collection in Helpshop, doctors' surgery, library etc

4. Earley Town Council

Warded	Councillors	Electors	Major Development	Election Date	Area
Warded	25	24,041	No	2027	Map 4.1

Earley Town has three borough wards: Maiden Erlegh & Whitegates, Hillside and Hawkdon and is in the Earley and Woodley Parliamentary constituency. It has borders with to the east with Sonning, Woodley and Winnersh and to the south with Arborfield and Newland, and Shinfield its boundary to the west is the borough boundary with Reading.

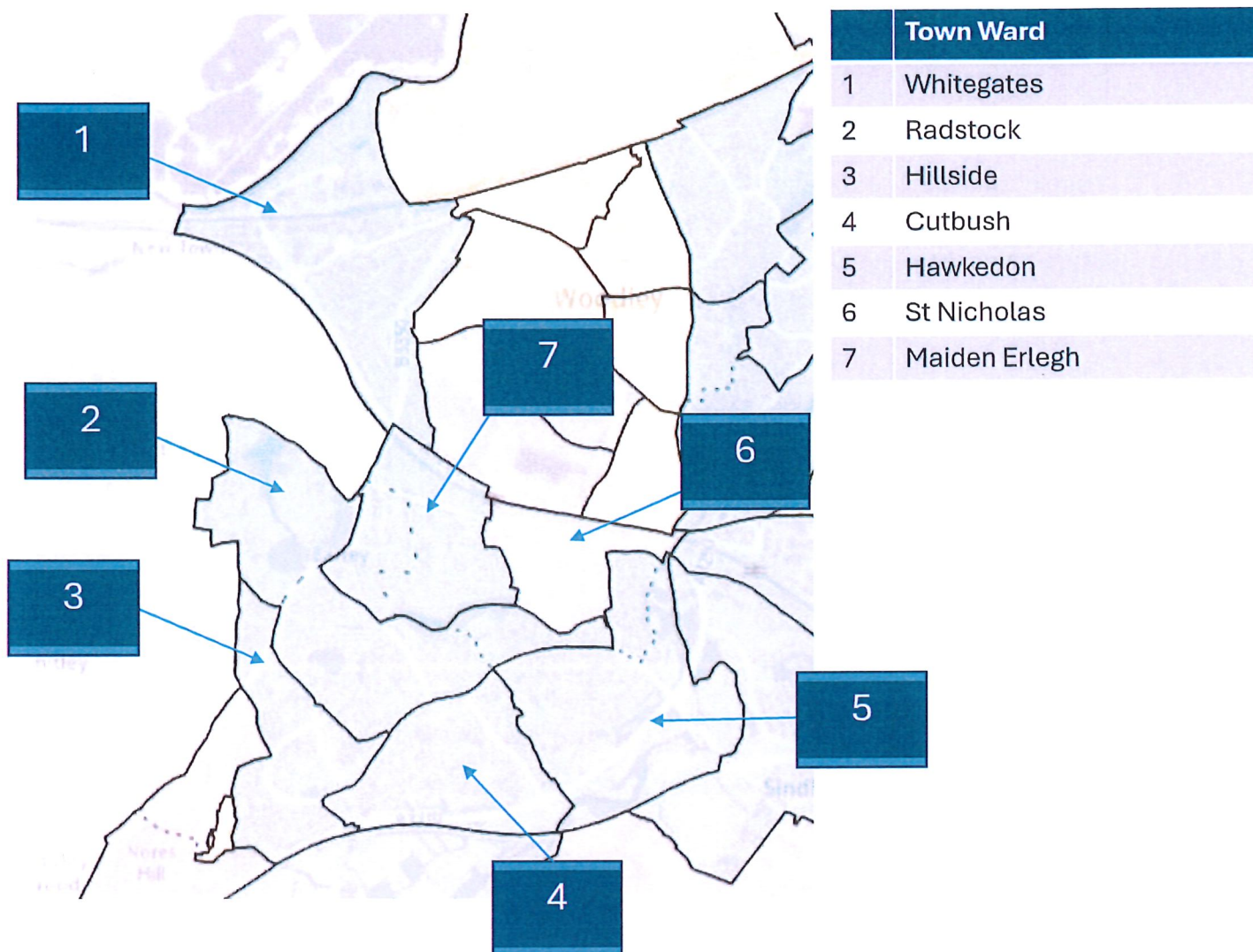
Map 4.1 – Earley Town Current Town Boundaries



Earley Town has 7 new wards because of the 2024 LGBCE review: Cutbush, Hawkdon Hillside, Maiden Erlegh, Radstock, St Nicolas and Whitegates. See Map 4.2 Earley Town Current Ward Boundaries.⁵

⁵ https://www.lgbce.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-11/si_2023-1271_-_the_wokingham_electoral_changes_order_map.pdf

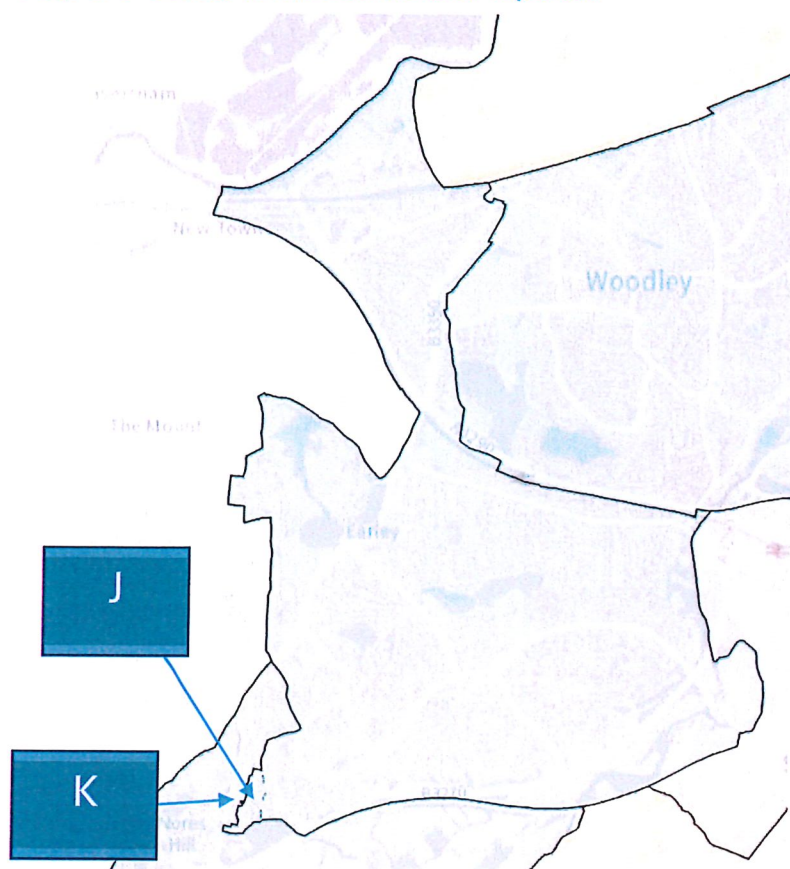
Map 4.2 – Earley Town Wards Current



There were 22 submissions related to Earley Town. Five of these proposed boundary changes discussed at A.5 and A.6. 17 submissions supported the current boundary.⁶

⁶ Available at https://engage.wokingham.gov.uk/uploads/1ba91d5f-d055-4eda-ad80-789fdd759f73/phase_file/file/5599278e-f5e0-493a-a454-e5354608a7e3/Community_Governance_Review_-_initial_consultation.pdf

Map 4.4 – Earley Town Boundaries Proposed



There was one suggestion to change the name of the Council to “Earley and Lower Earley Town Council”. None of the other 19 respondents suggested a name change.

Decision 1.1 The working group recommends no change to the name of Earley Town Council

One submission suggested a reduction in the size of Councillors to two per ward. To ensure electoral equality this would require redrawing ward boundaries. Based on the current 7 wards, this would result in a Council size of 14 Councillors.

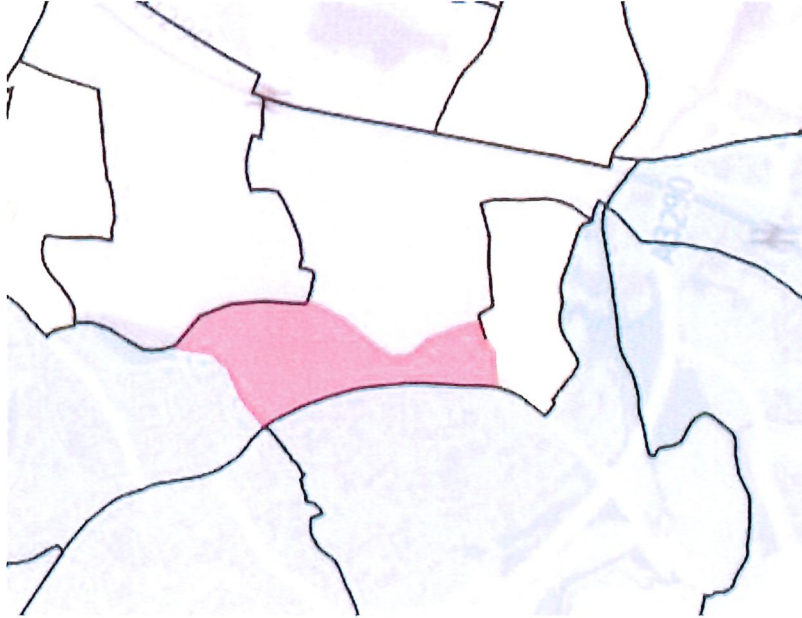
Decision 1.2 The working group recommends the size of Earley Town Council remains at 25 Councillors.

The Council received 3 submissions relating to warding arrangements (one impacting the size of the Council). The Earley Town Council submission, see Community Governance Review initial consultation p57⁷, details the proposed rewarding of the Town Council as illustrated in Map 4.4. One submission suggested that there was a need to redraw the ward boundaries to ensure electoral equality for Redhatch ward.

⁷ Available at https://engage.wokingham.gov.uk/uploads/1ba91d5f-d055-4eda-ad80-789fdd759f73/phase_file/file/5599278e-f5e0-493a-a454-e5354608a7e3/Community_Governance_Review_-_initial_consultation.pdf

p26. This relates to a ward in the current scheme that will be replaced by the LGBCE warding arrangements that will come into force at the 2027 election.

Map 4.3 – Polling District EHEc



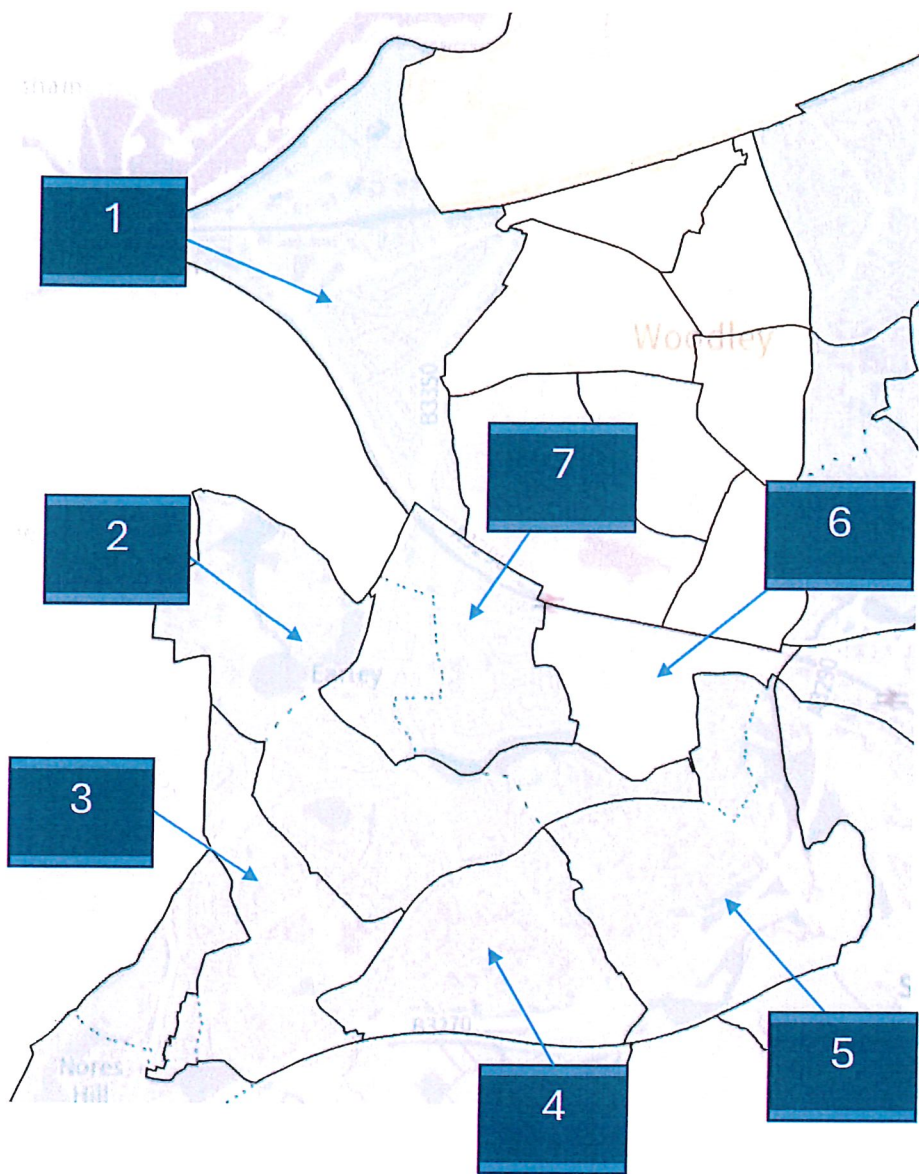
This proposal creates an issue with the borough ward boundaries. The new town ward boundary of St Nicolas would include parts of the Hillside, and Maiden Erlegh & Whitegates Borough Ward. For this reason the working group proposes leaving the warding arrangements as per the LGBCE recommendations except in relation to Hillside where the Area J and K are incorporated into the wards. As these changes are made within five years of the LGBCE they will require their approval. See table 4.1 for impact on electoral equality.

Table 4.1 – Earley Town Wards Electors and Councillors

Ward	Current Electorate	Proposed Electorate	Councillors	Current Councillors per Elector	Proposed Councillors per Elector
Cutbush	3800	3800	4	950	950
Hawkedon	4007	4007	4	1002	1002
Hillside	2959	3163	3	986	1054
Maiden Erlegh	2940	2940	3	980	980
Radstock	4447	4447	5	889	889
St Nicolas	2114	2114	2	1057	1057
Whitegates	3278	3278	4	820	820

Decision 1.2 The working group recommends no changes to the LGBCE warding arrangements except the inclusion of Map J and K into Hillside Ward

Map 4.5 – Earley Town Wards Proposed



Town Ward	
1	Whitegates
2	Radstock
3	Hillside
4	Cutbush
5	Hawkedon
6	St Nicholas
7	Maiden Erleigh

Earley Draft Recommendations

The parish name remains as Earley Town Council

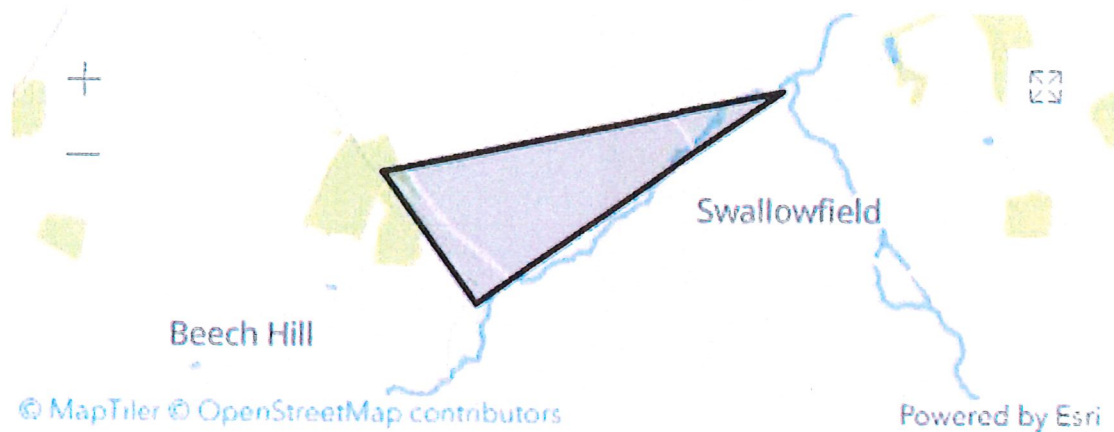
The number of parish Councillors remains as 25 (unchanged)

The parish remains warded, and the wards are redrawn as per Map 4.5 resulting in reallocation of Councillors as per Table 4.1.

The ordinary year of election remains as 2027.

The external boundaries of the parish are changed to incorporate Area J and K as per Map 4.3

Please show us what you would like changed on the map.



The working group believes that this comment relates to the Borough Ward boundaries around Spencer's Wood and is outside of the scope of this review. The working group would be keen to further explore this proposal if it relates to the boundaries of the Parish Councils.

Decision: The working group recommends no change to the Swallowfield and Shinfield boundary.

5. Shinfield and Earley

There was a submission suggesting that Noth Shinfield (north of the M4) should be part of Earley. (p8-12 Community Governance Consultation initial consultation). There was a submission suggesting alignment between Earley Town and Shinfield Parish boundaries with Borough Ward Boundaries in relation to Ryhill Way. This change was suggested by one respondent. Of the other 19 respondents to the consultation 15 supported the current arrangements.

Map J



One respondent suggested that the area North of the M4 be moved to Earley Town. Another respondent agreed this area was not part of Shinfield but suggested that it was made part of Reading (this is outside the scope of this review and powers of Wokingham Borough Council).

Map I



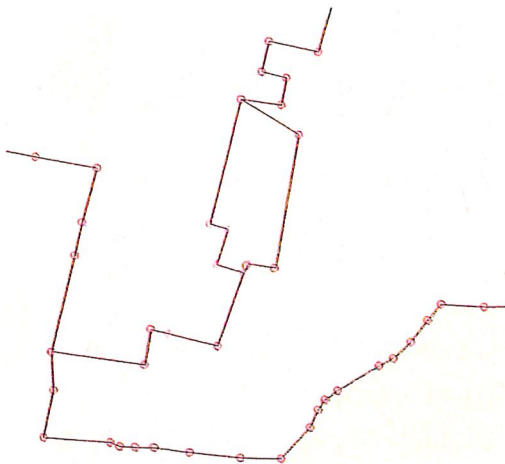
Earley Town Council addressed the issue in their submission (p57, Community Governance Review initial consultation) and were in favour of no changes to the boundary. Shinfield Parish Council are not recommending any changes to their boundaries. (p29, Community Governance Review initial consultation). Earley Town Council subsequently suggested a boundary that included moving properties in Ducketts Mead and Pearman' Corpse. See Map R. This would create an anomalous boundary with the Borough Ward of Hillside. The working group followed the logic of the LGBCE review that the area in Map J was part of Earley and should be moved.

Decision: The working group recommends the movement of the areas Map J from Shinfield into Earley.

The working group identified that numbers 12-18 Wilsford Close were not moved by the LGBCE and that this was an oversight given that their access point is common to the rest of Wilsford Close and is aligned with Ryehill Way. If adopted following consultation this would need LGBCE approval to Shinfield to Earley Borough Ward. If we moved them in the CGR we can then recommend to the LGBCE that they make an amendment).

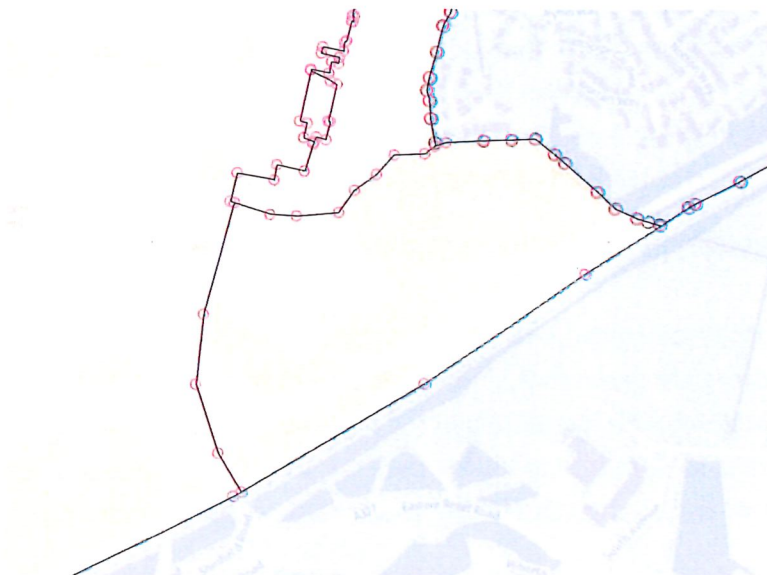
This proposal would create an anomalous boundary with the Borough Ward boundaries that without change would necessitate a polling district for this area. If the proposal is adopted following the conclusion of the CGR the Council will write to the LGBCE requesting that this change is reflected in the Borough Warding arrangements. It will be for the LGBCE to decide, following the receipt of proposals, if a related alteration should be made and when it should be implemented.

Map K



Decision: The working group recommends moving the boundary so that the area in Map K is moved from Shinfield Parish Council to Earley Town Council

Map R



6. Woodley and Earley

There were 30 submissions related to Woodley and Earley that supported the existing boundaries. Both Woodley (p30, Community Governance Review initial consultation) and Earley Town Council (p57, Community Governance Review initial consultation) supported the current arrangement. There were 3 submissions that suggested moving the Whitegates area, north of the A329m into Woodley. (p8-12, Community Governance Review initial consultation)

Decision: The working group recommends no change in the Woodley and Earley boundary.

The suggestion to move this area into Reading is outside the scope and powers of the Community Governance review.

7. Wargrave and Twyford

There were 11 submissions received related to Wargrave and Twyford. 9 submissions supported the current boundaries (one is covered by 13. below). There was one submission that suggested moving the boundary of Wargrave to align with the A4 Bath Road. The submission suggested that the road was a “natural obvious boundary” and that “[some people] were surprised that the boundary was not already the A4.” (p8-12, Community Governance Review initial consultation)

Other issues outside the scope of the review

During the consultation a number of other issues outside the scope of the review were highlighted, most notably involving the external boundaries of the Council. Bracknell Forest Council in the south east of the Borough and Reading in the west of the Borough. Wokingham Borough Council lacks the powers to change these boundaries. The working group is aware of the government's announcements on local government re-organisation and should a situation arise in future, the working group would support an early Community Governance Review to address the cross-boundary issues identified by this review.

Section C - Summary of Working Group Recommendations

Details of Impact by Council

Council	Boundary	Name	Size	Warding Arrangements
Arborfield and Newland Parish Council	Changed	No Change	No Change	Unwarded
Barkham Parish Council	Changed	No Change	No Change	No Change
Charvil Parish Council	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change
Earley Town Council	Changed	No Change	No Change	Altered Boundary
Finchampstead Parish Council	Changed	No Change	No Change	No Change
Hurst Parish Council	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change
Remenham Parish Council	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change
Ruscombe Parish Council	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change
Shinfield Parish Council	Changed	No Change	Increase from 15 to 18	Altered Boundary
Sonning Parish Council	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change
Swallowfield Parish Council	Changed	No Change	No Change	Altered Boundary
Twyford Parish Council	No Change	No Change	No Change	Altered Boundary
Wargrave Parish Council	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change

Details of Boundary Changes

Ref	Boundary Area	Effective Date
1	The working group recommends no change to the Wokingham and Wokingham Without boundary	No Change
2a	The working group recommends moving the Boundary so that the area in Map G is moved from Barkham to Arborfield	1 st April 2026
2b	The working group recommends moving the boundary so that the area in Map E is moved from Finchampstead to Arborfield	1 st April 2026
2c	The working group recommends moving Map D from Finchampstead to Swallowfield.	1 st April 2026
2d	The working group recommends moving the boundary so that the area in Map F is moved from Swallowfield to Barkham	1 st April 2026
2e	The working group recommends moving the boundary so that the area in Map H is moved from Barkham to Finchampstead.	1 st April 2026
3	The working group recommends moving the Boundary so that the area in Map C is moved from Finchampstead to Wokingham Without.	1 st April 2026
4	The working group recommends no change to the Swallowfield and Shinfield boundary.	No Change
5	The working group recommends moving Map J and K from Shinfield to Earley	1st April 2026
6	The working group recommends no change in the Woodley and Earley boundary.	No Change
7	The working group recommends no change in the Wargrave and Twyford boundary.	No Change
8	The working group recommends no change in the Twyford and Ruscombe boundary.	No Change
9	The working group recommends no change in the Winnersh and Arborfield & Newland boundary.	No Change
10	The working group recommends no change in the Winnersh and Wokingham boundary (Morris Close).	No Change
	The working group recommends no change in the Winnersh and Wokingham boundary. (Simon's Lane)	No Change
11	The working group recommends moving the boundary so that the area in Map B is moved from Wokingham to Finchampstead.	1 st April 2026

Details of Internal Changes

Ref	Change	Effective Date
1.1	The working group recommends no change to the name of Earley Town Council	No Change
1.2	The working group recommends the incorporation of Map J and Map K into the Hillside Ward.	Next scheduled election
1.3	The working group recommends the size of Earley Town Council remains at 25 Councillors.	No change

Appendix B - Revised number of properties and electors.

Council	Current Properties	Proposed Properties	Change	Current Electorate	Proposed Electorate	Change
Arborfield and Newland	1,315	1,507	192	2,345	2,638	293
Barkham Parish Council	2,457	3,235	778	4,068	5,045	977
Charvil Parish Council	1,194	1,194	0	2,478	2,478	0
Earley Town Council	12,338	12,442	104	23,556	23,768	212
Finchampstead Parish Council	5,715	4,772	-943	10,588	9,311	-1,277
Remenham Parish Council	267	267	0	379	379	0
Ruscombe Parish Council	578	578	0	925	925	0
Shinfield Parish Council	7,838	7,734	-104	13,677	13,465	-212
Sonning Parish Council	662	662	0	1,294	1,294	0

Appendix E - Implementation Timetable

Town and Parish Council	Last Election	Next Election	Amended Election
Arborfield and Newland Parish Council	2022	2026	No Change
Barkham Parish Council	2023	2027	No Change
Charvil Parish Council	2024	2028	No Change
Earley Town Council	2023	2027	No Change
Finchampstead Parish Council	2024	2028	No Change
Hurst Parish Council	2024	2028	No Change
Remenham Parish Council	2022	2026	No Change
Ruscombe Parish Council	2024	2028	No Change
Shinfield Parish Council	2023	2027	No Change
Sonning Parish Council	2023	2027	No Change
Swallowfield Parish Council	2022	2026	
Twyford Parish Council	2023	2027	No Change
Wargrave Parish Council	2022	2026	No Change
Winnersh Parish Council	2023	2027	No Change
Wokingham Town Council	2023	2027	No Change
Wokingham Without Parish Council	2023	2027	No Change
Woodley Town Council	2023	2027	No Change

RECORD OF COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCES - 2025/26

NAME OF COUNCILLOR	COUNCIL					AMENITIES & LEISURE					PLANNING										POLICY & RESOURCES							
	05	07	09	11	02	03	05	07	10	01	03	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	01	02	03	04	06	09	11	01	03
R. AHLAWAT	✓	✓																										
A. BASSETT	✓	✓				B	✓																✓					
A. BRADLEY	✓	✓				✓	✓																					
N. BROCK	✓	✓				✓	✓																					
R. BROWNE	✓					✓																						
R. COOK	✓	✓					✓																					
M. DE JONG	✓										B	✓																
J. EASTWELL	✓	✓																										
D. HARE	✓	✓																										
T. HOLTON	✓	✓																										
M. IYENGUNMWENA	✓	B									B	✓																
S. JORDAN	✓	✓																										
P. JORGENSEN	✓	✓																										
I. KHAYINZA	✓																											
G. LITTLER	✓	✓																										
A. LONG	✓	✓																										
T. MAHER		✓				✓																						
S. MATTHEWS	✓	✓				✓																						
A. NEAL	✓	✓																										
S. NEWTON	✓	✓																										
A. NEWTON		✓																										
B. OWEN	✓	✓																										
H. SARASAN		✓																										
C. SMITH	✓	B									B	✓																
M. SMITH	✓	✓									✓	✓																

R = Representing Town Council B = Attending Borough Meeting ✓ = In Attendance F = Attending Fire Authority Meeting A = Approved Leave of Absence
 (shaded cell denotes non-representation on Committees)

ORDERS FOR PAYMENT - BY BACS TRANSFER

Appendix M

Number	Supplier	Purchase Description	Amount
8116	Anglia Sign Casting Limited	Bronze Plaque Cemetery	£104.30
8117	Claire Connell	Internal audit services year ended 31 March 2025	£280.00
8118	GLS	Hand towels - various sites	£69.58
8119	GLS	Heavy duty bin bags - various sites	£119.94
8120	IT QED	Monthly 365 subscription 21.08.25 - 20.09.25	£56.95
8121	Pindar Creative	Earley Town Maps	£178.08
8122	Premier Office Supplies	White Copier A4 paper & Diary	£100.98
8123	Proludic	SJP Play Equipment Repairs Gyroscope/Rodeo Board	£553.36
8124	Select Environmental Services	MPCC Waste collection July 25	£170.21
8125	Select Environmental Services	CP Waste collection July 25	£43.38
8126	Select Environmental Services	RH Waste collection July 25	£32.09
8127	Select Environmental Services	General Litter Waste collection July 25	£630.64
8128	Select Environmental Services	RLCC Waste collection July 25	£45.78
8129	Southern Maintenance Solutions UK Ltd	Repair pipework leak MPCC 11.08.25	£209.10
8130	Southern Maintenance Solutions UK Ltd	Investigate and repair leak IC 14.07.25	£90.00
8131	Tradepoint B&Q	Trowel & cement Cemetery, screws & batteries MELNR	£112.40
8132	Tradepoint B&Q	Maintenance various materials Cemetery & SJP	£252.46
8133	Travis Perkins	Barrier fencing & string line	£40.79
8134	Travis Perkins	Cement & Ballast Bulk Bag SJP Football Goalpost sockets	£141.82
8135	Watco UK Ltd	Repair concrete Cemetery	£173.46
8136	Web Marketing Matters	Monthly website support & Maintenance Aug 25	£216.00
8137	William Luck	Planning Professionals Services Aug 25	£394.80

Total: £4,016.12

Date Prepared: 04/09/2025

IMPREST ACCOUNT - Reimbursement Vouchers 1099 - 1103

Vouchers between 28th August 2025 - 12th September 2025

Number	Details	Amount
1099	Damage Deposit Refund JS	£50.00
1100	HMRC PAYE/NIC Sept 25 Payroll	£13,656.03
1101	LGPS Pension Contributions Sept 25	£14,642.39
1102	Salaries Sept 25	£35,089.40
1103	Damage Deposit Refund RH	£50.00
	Total Payments	<u>£63,487.82</u>