



Council Report for January 2025

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

Cllr Dominic Boeck, Aldermaston Ward

West Berkshire Council

Council

There was no meeting of Council this month.

The next meeting is on 27 February (Budget).

Executive

Executive met on 12 December to discuss:

- Financial year 2024/25 Quarter Two Capital Financing Performance Report (EX4514)]
- 2024/25 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter Two (EX4517)
- Contract for Award Under Delegated Authority from Executive (EX4583)
- Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report 2023-24 (EX4598)
- Care Leaver Annual Report 2023-24 (EX4643)
- Early Response Hub Annual Report 2023-24 (EX4639)
- Commercial Property disposal - Units 1 and 2 Cleveland Gate Retail Park, Guisborough (EX4635)
- Risk Management Strategy (EX4547)
- 2024/25 Performance Report Quarter Two (EX4541)

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

The next meeting is on 13 February.

Environment

New Kerbside Recycling

An expanded kerbside recycling collection service has started last month.

In response to public feedback, certain plastic pots, tubs, and trays can now be included with your regular recycling - making it easier than ever to recycle everyday items.

Alongside plastic bottles, cans, and aerosols, residents can now recycle



items such as clear yoghurt pots, spread tubs, clean ready meal trays (without film lids), and fruit punnets (without film lids). Communal bin users can also dispose of these items in the red-topped wheelie bins.

To ensure recyclability, please rinse items and remove any plastic film and lids before placing them in your recycling bag. Need more space? Squash plastic bottles to make room.

WBC are pleased to be able to launch this new service over a year ahead of the Government's Simpler Recycling deadline, thanks to the work the waste team have done in partnership with Veolia.

Together, let's reduce waste, enhance recycling, and create a brighter, greener future for West Berkshire.

Safe disposal of vapes

Last September saw the introduction of kerbside battery collections - it is great to see residents now using this service. WBC would like to remind residents to please NOT place batteries (INCLUDING VAPES) inside any of their bins.

Residents just need to follow these simple steps:

- Batteries: Veolia's collection team will collect the most common household batteries, including D, C, AA, AAA, AAAA (1.5-volt), A23 (12-volt), PP3 (9-volt), CR2032 (3-volt), and LR44 (1.5-volt).
- How to recycle: Place your used batteries in a clear bag, like a freezer or sandwich bag, and simply place it on top of your black wheelie bin on collection day. The new waste collection vehicles have special compartments designed just for these batteries, ensuring they are safely recycled.
- Safety first: Please remember, batteries should never be placed inside your wheelie bin. Doing so can cause them to ignite during the waste compaction process, posing a significant fire hazard.
- Exceptions: While the team will gladly collect most household batteries, there are some exceptions: Car/moped batteries, lithium-ion (Li) power tool batteries, and vapes, should continue to be taken to household recycling centres at Newtown Road, Newbury, or Padworth. To schedule a visit, book an appointment online.

Health and Wellbeing

Pharmacies

West Berkshire has the fewest pharmacies in the country – on average there is one for every 10,000 people.

WBC are currently working to assess needs for the coming years and residents can help by sharing their experiences of using pharmacies in West Berkshire. Public views are very important as they will help to understand the needs of the District, and this will help shape future pharmacy services in the area.

Residents can find out more and complete the survey before 16 February [here](#).

Children and Education

Safeguarding Children

Private fostering happens when a child under 16 (or 18 if disabled) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or close relative for more than 28 days. Examples include:

- A child living with a friend's family due to a family breakdown.
- Children sent to the UK for education or medical care while their parents remain abroad.
- Teenagers staying with their boyfriend or girlfriend's family.

These arrangements are not uncommon, but they are often hidden. As a community, we can help identify these situations to ensure children receive the support and protection they deserve.

WBC are hosting a Private Fostering Awareness Seminar on Tuesday 11 February from 3:00pm-5:00pm in the Chandos Room at Shaw House. This free session is open to professionals and others in the community who may come across private fostering arrangements. Attendees will learn how to identify children in private fostering arrangements and report these cases to the local authority effectively.

If you are aware of a private fostering arrangement, call the team on 01635 503090 or email child@westberks.gov.uk.

Culture and Leisure

Shaw House Tudor Garden

A new Tudor Garden will be created on the front lawns at Shaw House, with thanks to funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

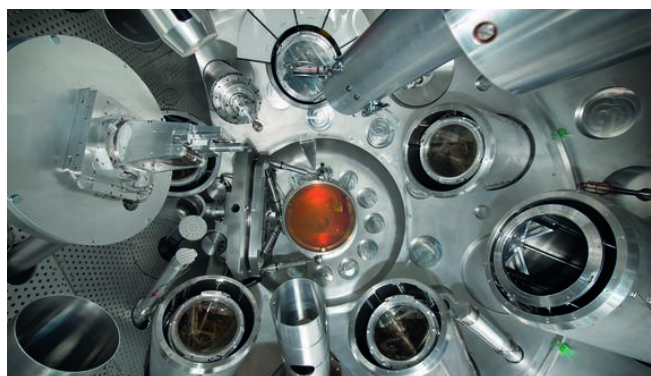
The garden will be created using a mix of low maintenance hedging, flowers and herbs to create a symmetrical design in the style of a Tudor knot garden (more detailed images available soon!). The fully accessible garden will also feature raised beds and seating to enjoy the views of Shaw House.



Landscape work started this month and the wonderful team of volunteers will then begin planting ready for public opening in Spring 2025.

Please note, access for visitors with disabilities, wedding cars and pedestrians will still be available during this period.

AWE Exhibit



West Berkshire Museum has lots of exciting exhibitions, including an interactive exhibition to mark 75 years of Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) by exploring their work and fascinating Education Collection of artefacts.

For 75 years, AWE has protected the United Kingdom through nuclear science and technology. They are also one of the largest employers in West Berkshire, operating out of Aldermaston and Burghfield. At these sites, warheads are designed and manufactured for the Continuous at Sea Deterrent, alongside services to prevent nuclear threats.

West Berkshire Museum is open from Wednesday to Sunday, 10am – 4pm. Entry is free but donations are welcomed.

Squash Courts Return

Kennet Leisure Centre squash courts are back

The newly refurbished squash courts at Kennet Leisure Centre are ready for players to enjoy!

The upgrades have given them a fresh, modern look, ideal for those looking to perfect their backhand.

Whether you are a seasoned player or just starting out, now is the perfect time to grab your racket, book a session, and enjoy the improved facilities.



Current Consultations

- [Proposed School Term and Holiday Dates for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2026/27](#) – Closes 28th February 2025
- [Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment 2025](#) – Closes 16th February 2025
- [Draft Prohibition of Driving Order \(2025\) on Bastion Street, Shaw-cum-Donnington](#) – Closes 13th February 2025
- [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Thematic Review \(2025\)](#) – Closes 13th February 2025
- [Draft Prohibition of Driving Order \(2025\) on Kings Road, Newbury](#) – Closes 6th February 2025