



Press Release

Town Hall
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Title: Local residents are recognised with Civic Awards from the Town Council

Embargoed: N/A

When: 26 January 2024

Where: Wokingham Town Hall

What: Civic Award Ceremony

Each year, the Town Council looks for residents who deserve recognition for their outstanding achievements and support of others in Wokingham. We look for those who have worked to make Wokingham a truly welcoming and inclusive town, provided exceptional service to their family or community, added to the cultural life of the town, or found ways of making us a more environmentally friendly and sustainable town.

This year, we have seven worthy Civic Award winners, who have touched the lives of others and worked to make our community stronger.

The awards were presented by the Town Mayor Cllr Sally Gurney at an evening ceremony on Friday 26th January 2024.

The Council is delighted to announce this year's worthy recipients:

Alan Jeffries: Nominated by Keith Thorne and Sheila McKeand for his volunteering work at Cockpit Path Community Garden, Wokingham in Bloom (including Link to Nature), Link Visiting Scheme as a driver and with the Community Apple Press.

Alan is described by those who nominated him as warm hearted, practical and generous in time and spirit. He brings his practical skills to every project he gets involved with, and his passion for gardening and brightening up public spaces shines through. Alan is a real people person too. He loves connecting with others, bringing joy, respite or sense of achievement through his work on Cockpit path and other gardening projects and his work with The Link Visiting Scheme in Wokingham. Sheila McKeand said; 'Alan is one of the 'unsung heroes' in the volunteer world. He

simply gets on with what is needed and supports others to achieve the aims of whatever project he is involved in.'

Andy Goffin: Nominated by Lyn Baily, Ian Grange, Rob DuGard and Tim Hanton for his volunteering work at the Wokingham Lions Club (including being a Past President and Vice), Wokingham Festival, Building for the Future, JAC and the Emmbrook Residents Association.

Andy can be found front and foremost or working diligently behind the scenes at many of the local organisations, charities and events within Wokingham. He is described as someone who gives selflessly to support others, always the first to volunteer, and community focused. Andy has worked tirelessly with others to ensure huge events like May Fayre, Wokingham Festival and Winter Carnival are a credit to our town, fundraised across all the Wokingham Lions events both large and small to ensure local charities are supported, and worked across a number of local organisations supporting disadvantaged children and those with additional needs. Being a real team player, Andy has a flair for engaging with others, wanting the best outcome for everyone. Lyn Baily said, 'He is the embodiment of what a good citizen should be and a credit to our town.' Tim Hanton said, 'Andy is a very humble and modest person with the highest integrity, and he has the highest respect for all people he comes into contact with.'

Jane Scholey: Nominated by Stephen Preston and Clare Randell and John Thomas, for her volunteering work and contribution to Wokingham in Bloom both through leading the Friends of Howard Palmer Gardens volunteer group and Link to Nature.

Jane's passion for gardening and nature comes to the fore in all projects that she is involved with. Her involvement and leadership role in Howard Palmer Gardens has led to her going on to develop the hugely successful Community Garden at Wokingham Fire-station following the concept of re-use and recycle. Fellow Wokingham in Bloom volunteer Stephen Preston said, 'Jane has the drive, vision, horticultural skills, personality, and a good sense of humour that has enabled her to change spaces for the better for the whole community to enjoy.' Jane's direction and involvement with the Link to Nature project with the Link Visiting Scheme has given many of the Link's senior friends a lovely new nature-based hobby too. Jane regularly grows plants from seed for all of her volunteering projects, producing hundreds that are distributed and nurtured by their recipients. From working with Jane on the Link to Nature projects Clare Randall said, 'Jane has an impressive gardening knowledge, a practical mindset, and a loving nature that inspires others to get involved.'

Lucy Martin: Nominated by Sam Sudlow and Linda Miller for her tireless voluntary work with Wokingham Foodbank as an Operations Manager.

As a volunteer Operations Manager at the food bank, Lucy gives over 75 hours a month to oversee many of the day to day processes and strives to make sure that the experience of the client is at the forefront of operational decisions. Fellow volunteer Sam Sudlow said, 'Lucy displays tremendous empathy for the people the foodbank supports. She really senses how our clients could be feeling when attending the foodbank and understands the wide range of emotions displayed. She has an amazing ability to listen, not judge, and make sure that people walk away feeling they have been heard and treated with dignity.' Since the start of the pandemic and with the cost-of-living crisis we are all experiencing, Lucy has stepped in to take on a wider role and had the vision to adapt services to suit client's needs. She makes sure there is sufficient stock in the warehouse to fulfil food parcel requests, has been key in establishing a food parcel delivery service for local residents in need, and works hard to try and make attending a foodbank a less daunting experience for people.

Please note Lucy was unable to attend the ceremony and so the Town Mayor presented her award to her personally at the Wokingham Foodbank.

Mary Paul: Nominated by Sheila McKeand and Clare Randell for her ongoing volunteering work she dedicates to Cockpit Path Community Garden (having established it 10 years ago), the Community Apple Press and to Wokingham in Bloom including Link to Nature.

Mary is described as community focused, bringing energy and inspiration to other volunteers and all those who benefit from her activities. Mary's involvement in Wokingham in Bloom encompasses many projects. Mary is one of the founders of Cockpit Path Community Garden and has been instrumental in setting up the Community Apple Press which not only produces delicious juice, which Mary pasteurises and shares out to all, but helps reduce local apple waste too. She has also been involved in the Community Garden at Wokingham Fire Station as well as the Link to Nature project in conjunction with The Link Visiting scheme. Clare Randall said, 'Mary makes a real difference to those around her, her energy and kindness shine through in every meeting, phone call or work party.'

Pauline MacBrayne: Nominated by Janet Gordon and Sue English for her boundless volunteering for so many years for the Wokingham Horticultural Association, Wokingham in Bloom, Arborfield Flower Club and the Salvation Army.

Pauline has been nominated for her work with and support of the Wokingham Horticultural Association and its members. Jane Gordon describes her as; 'a do-er. Extremely practical and excellent at focusing on the finer detail of organising events. She loves to make people happier and to enjoy the activities they are involved in. Pauline is empathetic, a listener and offers wise counsel. She is sensitive to the concerns and worries of others and discreet in the ways she helps them.' Pauline is a long-standing member of the community. Her unflagging energy, warmth, empathy, and organisational skills make a huge contribution and difference to the lives of people across the town. No job is too big or too small and Pauline uses her skills to help Wokingham in Bloom, to run wreath making workshops with elderly and vulnerable members of the community, works on events with Wade and The Salvation Army, and at her Church. Having volunteered for over 45 years, Pauline may well have been behind many a local event or activity within the town. Janet Gordon said, 'Pauline is an unsung hero who simply, and without a fuss, gets on with things and tries to juggle her time to meet everyone's needs.'

Roger Ford: Nominated by Martin Nowell and Paul Giles for volunteering as a driver at the Wokingham Volunteer Centre, undertaking repairs and maintenance at Helen & Douglas House, volunteering at WADE, visiting care homes with his dogs, Wokingham cycling club and litter picking.

Some people have helping others in their nature. Roger is a shining example of this. He doesn't always need to be asked, as he spots opportunities to help others naturally. He is approachable, friendly and kind, helping out across a number of charities within the town. Roger is a driver for Wokingham Volunteer Service taking local people to hospital appointments, a helper and in-house volunteer handyman building shelving units and storage solutions at Helen Douglas House, a litter picker and Wokingham Cycling Club lead rider. Paul Giles said, 'Roger leads rides every Sunday, helping many new riders gain confidence and be safe. He's such a lovely character, everyone loves his rides.' In his 'spare' time Roger can be found taking his two gorgeous dogs to care homes and Wade Day Centre for cuddles and a chat. (The dogs that is, not Roger!). Martin Nowell said, 'Roger is willing to help in any situation and a great communicator, especially with older people.' Paul added, 'I expect there's not a single day of the week that he's not doing something for the people of Wokingham. I am so proud of Roger; he's become like my new Dad.'

Quotes:

Cllr Adrian Mather (Chairman of Civic Committee) commented: "Wokingham Town Council Civic Awards are highly regarded and longstanding, being awarded from 1997 to amazing individuals in our community. As Chair of the Town Council's Civic Committee, I am constantly amazed at the voluntary contributions made by so many unsung heroes each year. Usually, these people quietly carry on these good works in an unassuming way without seeking recognition or reward and bring untold happiness and relief to many of our residents. Whether help is given through creating an environment in which to thrive, bringing families together, putting on events for

the community to enjoy or offering a helping hand to those who need it, we thank you! We have so many dedicated and selfless people working for the benefit of our community on a day-to-day basis, and it is a great honour to recognise them each year through the Civic Awards ceremony. Volunteering is a great thing to do and brings more rewards than money can achieve.”

Town Mayor Cllr Sally Gurney commented: “The Civic Awards are our way of saying a warm “Thank you” to Wokingham’s unsung heroes. These incredible individuals go the extra mile to make our town a better place through their selfless acts, and our community is enriched by their presence. All our winners are truly special people and are part of the heart and soul of our town.”

About WTC

Vision: To enhance Wokingham Town for all current and future residents and businesses.

Wokingham Town Council comprises twenty-five councillors who represent the four wards of the town: Emmbrook, Evendons, Norreys and Wescott.

The Town Councillors are elected every four years. Each year the Council elects one of their members to be the Town Mayor and Chairman of the Council.

The Council delegates much of its business to the following committees:

- **Amenities:** Responsible for the Council's facilities such as parks, allotments, buildings, markets, and playgrounds
- **Arts & Culture:** Encourages, supports and, in conjunction with other organisations, delivers artistic and cultural events to users of the town centre.
- **Civic:** Makes decisions on matters relating to the Mayor’s Civic involvement with the Town Council. These include Civic Events such as Civic Awards etc.
- **Finance & Personnel:** Controls the finances and general administration of the Council. This committee also administers the allocation of grants to local charities and community projects.
- **Planning & Transportation:** This committee acts as a consultative body on Planning Applications, Development Proposals and Transport issues.

The Full Council meets at least five times a year. Council meetings are open to the public.

The agendas and minutes can be found on the Town Council's web site at

www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk.

For general information please telephone the Town Council on 0118 978 3185.

For more information, please visit www.wokingham-tc.gov.uk