



Annual Report 2012/13



St Mary's Church

This report contains a financial summary and brief directory as usual, but this year we have devoted the rest of the document to the provision of a special report.

The Purley on Thames Village Plan was first published in late 2004, over eight years ago. It was prepared by a wide group of people especially coming together for the project, and with the help of a further army of volunteers delivering and collecting questionnaires and

performing many other logistical tasks. Since then, it has provided an essential guide to the Parish Council as we strive to improve services and facilities.

We are now at the end of the Plan. All the actions proposed at that time have either been completed or have proven to be not possible within any foreseeable timeframe.

This publication aims to summarise what has been achieved over those eight years. A full, more detailed, report can be viewed on the Parish Council website, www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk.

The Council will, this year, decide how to prepare the next strategic plan for the village, and will almost certainly call again to residents for help in producing it.

I would like to take the opportunity again to thank our staff, especially our Clerks, the Councillors, many volunteers and contractors, and also West Berkshire Council, Neighbourhood Wardens and the Police. All these people help to provide services for us, or help to maintain the village facilities and assets in good order.

Rick Jones, Chairman

Services and Facilities



Ball Play Area

The Plan called for improvements to sports, leisure and play facilities, especially for older youth, greater access to adult education, a Farmer's Market, better litter management and waste/recycling services. Also to promote and encourage Youth activities.

- Bucknell's Meadow Recreation Ground has been enhanced with the Outdoor Gym and the new All-weather Ball Play area, aimed at older youth and adults.
- We now employ a full-time caretaker for the Goosecroft Recreation Ground, have an excellent ground management scheme, and the formal sports facilities there are now a very good standard for local clubs.
- New play equipment and tables installed at both grounds
- Boules piste introduced near Mapledurham Lock
- Astroturf pitch to be provided by West Berkshire Council (WBC) at Denefield School campus.
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- The 'Silver Surfers' organisation now offers Computer education and Tai Chi classes, aimed mainly at older residents
- College-run classes at the Barn were tried but could not be sustained. However, adult education is available at centres near Reading and in locations in West Berkshire, and this is supplemented by that provided by local community groups.
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- A regular Farmer's Market has been running in Purley for several years now.
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- In conjunction with West Berkshire Council (WBC), recycling services to Purley have improved dramatically.
- Many more litter bins and dog litter bins have been installed around the village, and are emptied on a regular basis, and our Neighbourhood Wardens help to identify issues and clear fly-tipping, graffiti, dangerous rubbish, and discourage dog-fouling.
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- With support from our Neighbourhood Wardens and huge effort from the Purley Park Social Club and volunteers, a very successful Youth Club has been established at the club.
- The Council is still looking for a suitable site to install a Youth Shelter in the lower village.
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- The Barn continues to provide a lovely venue for events and meetings in the village, utilising both the halls almost continuously now. The



The "re-clad" Barn

dedicated committee and staff managing the community centre have made major improvements to heating, seating, floors and, in the last year, external cladding draught- and sound- proofing to make it even more fit for purpose.

Highways and Transport

The Village Plan set objectives for more traffic measures to support a safer environment; to create a cycle path through the village and make pavements wider; to press for improved bus services.

- Traffic calming measures in Long Lane have been installed and refined
- Many roads have been re-surfaced over the past five years
- 30mph speed restriction introduced along the A329 through the village
- 20mph speed restriction introduced through the old village and past the Infant School
- Parking controls put in place and further refined. On-going work to iron out the remaining issues continues.
- The pavement between Purley and Pangbourne has been cleared and made wider.
- Pedestrian ways over New Hill and Purley Lane bridges have also been widened.
- The cycle path is on WBC's 'intended' list, but has proved too expensive for current budgets – we live in hope!
- Bus services to and from Purley were considerably improved in the years following 2004. They are monitored with WBC, because financial pressures on bus companies mean that they change services. At present, both Reading Buses and Thames Travel provide regular and reliable services for Purley.

Policing, Law and Order

Actions from the Plan included – active support for the NAG (Neighbourhood Action Group, a forum of neighbouring parishes and agencies working together to improve community safety and crime), and Neighbourhood Watches; consideration of the use of Street Wardens; improve the community's feelings and perceptions of safety and crime.

- The Parish Council is an active member of the NAG, and spends a lot of time monitoring and acting with others to reduce Anti-Social Behaviour and crime, road safety and community safety generally.
- The Neighbourhood Wardens scheme was introduced four years ago and has proved to be very successful in helping the village. It remains the Council's intention to support and fund this scheme.
- The Council has used all the publicity means at its disposal to inform residents as much as it can, and we believe that Purley is, and feels, a safe and pleasant place to live and work.

Communication:

Plan actions were to generate better communication of events and issues, and encourage a sense of belonging; to create a Parish Website; to publish a Parish Directory and a welcome pack for new residents.

- The Council uses the Parish News, noticeboards and web site to inform as much as possible, and offers its facilities to local community groups to advertise and notify parishioners.



New website

- Our parish website was originally launched in 2006, and has now been brought up to date. The new site was launched in January 2013, and contains much more information about Council business, local information, events and news. It is accessible at www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk/.
- Council business is now more accessible and transparent to residents through published material and much more available at the Parish Office. The office also has copies of many information leaflets that can inform both new and established parishioners.

Development Issues:

The Plan called for the creation of a Village Design Statement to act as a guide to future housing and business development in the village.

- Although not a VDS in itself, the 2004 Plan did contain some key elements of design that have been used since.
- We have now established a full Planning Committee to consider planning applications, which meets on the 1st and 3rd Monday evenings each month, who review all planning applications and development proposals. The committee tries to apply the Plan elements in advising WBC before they make their planning decisions.
- A VDS was not completed, due to the 'whole village' effort required by the format. Now in any case, the VDS has been superseded by another form of planning, which the Council does intend to initiate by 2014, if possible.

The past year and the next year:

We must congratulate the people in the village - many of them - who organised our four days of village celebrations for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. They were led by the Jubilee Committee, who did



a marvellous job. So many villagers and visitors really enjoyed themselves and were full of praise for such a mammoth community event. It showed and reinforced the strength of community spirit that we have, and made us all proud to live in Purley.



New Hill Bridge replacement

□ We expect Network Rail to visit us again in 2013, both to start the installation of infrastructure for the upcoming electrification along the railway cutting, and also to effect major repairs to Purley Lane Bridge. The latter will entail the closure of Purley Lane for a considerable time, and require traffic diversions again. Blame Brunel for making us a railway village as well as a river one!

- The specific projects that have been highlighted in this report should not detract from our normal day-to-day work in maintaining the village's assets in good order for everyone. You will see in the following Finance page, that most of our spending is directed to this end, and that is also most of our work focus through the year.
- We have started a rolling programme of noticeboard replacement which will become evident soon, with a new board at Mapledurham Drive. We will install and monitor this to see how well it stands up to weather and vandalism, and if successful, other old boards will gradually be replaced to support our commitment to keep you informed – this old form of communication is still evidently popular.
- There is much emphasis these days on encouraging and supporting a healthy life style. Purley is now very well endowed with club organisations and facilities to choose from. Formal sports at Goosecroft, new facilities at Bucknell's Meadow, Bowling and Boules in the village, etc. There are some excellent walks around the area, and we are investing in mapping technology which we hope will enable residents and visitors to view them better. We are working with WBC to provide a safe and accessible circular route also for people with mobility problems, and will make a route map available when that is complete, hopefully in the late Spring of 2013.
- We cannot include everything in this report. Please if you have any questions or comments for us, contact our Clerk at the Parish Office either by calling in (during public openings times – see inside back cover), telephone, email, or through the new web site.



Football at Goosecroft

Finance - how your money is used

Although many costs continue to rise, the Council managed to hold general expenditure to below the maximum budget, and also below 2011/12, at around £124,000. However, income has also come under real pressure, which forces us to set a slightly higher precept for 2013/14. We still believe that we provide value, at just under £43 per household for the year. Amounts mentioned below are provisional, as our accounts are not finalised until the summer.

Figure 1: Income:

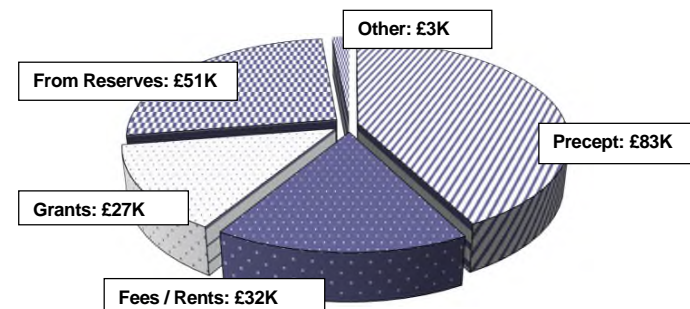
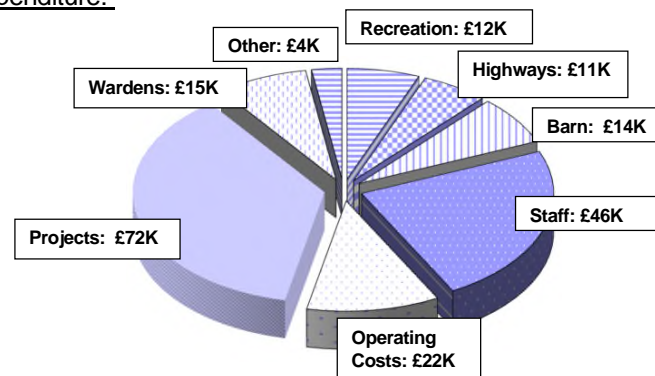


Figure 2: Expenditure:



Expenditure by the committees is all directed towards the day-to-day maintenance and management of Parish assets and provision of services. We use Reserves to fund capital spending on improvement projects, and these were heavily used this year on the Barn and in Bucknell's Meadow. However, we always apply for supporting grants from other funding bodies as well, which helps to supplement money collected from the precept (householders). Full accounts can be viewed at the Parish Office, or on the web site when published.





How to contact us

Parish Office: Telephone: 0118 984 4507
 Email: clerk@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk
 Write: Parish Office, Goosecroft Lane, off Beech Road, Purley on Thames, RG8 8DR
 Website: www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk (lots of contacts and information)
 Clerk: Janet Field (Mrs)
 Assistant Clerk: Jean Chudleigh (Mrs)

Opening hours

The Parish Office is open to the public during the following hours:
 Monday (except bank Holidays) 2.00pm to 7.00pm
 Thursday 9.00am to 2.00pm
 Councillors are available for consultation on Monday evenings, between 6.00 – 7.00pm, or other times by appointment.

Members

 Rick Jones Chairman & Highways 0118 962 3793	 Bernard Nix Vice Chairman & Barn 0118 942 1067	 Rick Farrow Recreation 0118 962 4577	 Graham Rolfe Planning 0118 941 7247	 Bill Ayling 0118 941 9437
 Pamela Beddoes 0118 941 4186	 Anne Bolland via office	 Sue Briscoe 0118 945 6085	 John Chapman 0118 942 6999	 Christine Collier 0118 942 2951
 Gill Goodchild 0118 984 1248	 Neil Haughton via office	 Tim Metcalfe* 0118 942 8001	 Janet Field Parish Clerk 0118 984 4507	 Jean Chudleigh Asst Clerk & Barn Manager 07917 453187

* Also our District Councillor, along with David Betts (07917 697933).

Useful Numbers

Community Safety:

Neighbourhood Wardens 0118 945 5286
 Police Non-Emergency 101
 Lock Keeper 0118 941 7776

District Council:

West Berkshire Council 01635 424000
 WBC emergency out of hours 01635 41261
 Streetcare 01635 519080

Purley Barn

Barn Manager 07917 453187

Goosecroft Caretaker

07901 640517

Social Clubs

Purley Sports & Social Club 0118 984 3061
 Purley Park Social Club 0118 942 7047

Schools

Purley C.E. School 0118 984 2384
 Long Lane Primary School 0118 942 7187
 Denefield School 0118 941 3458
 Westwood Farm School 0118 942 5182
 Westwood Farm County School 0118 942 6113

Doctors

Pangbourne Medical Practice 0118 984 2234
 Tilehurst, Overdown Rd 0118 942 5432

Travel

Reading Buses 0118 959 4000
 Readibus 0118 931 0000
 Great Western Trains 08457 000 125
 Thames Travel 01491 837 988
 Pangbourne & District Volunteer Centre 0118 984 4586