



## Annual Report 2021/22

This report contains a brief summary of the activities of your Parish Council over the last year and outlines how we have managed the Parish Council's finances and assets.

The Council's continuing aims are:

- to provide a safe and pleasant environment in which parishioners can live, work and play;
- to provide good facilities and services and help West Berkshire District Council to do so.



*Swans on the River*

It is our responsibility to spend wisely and obtain good value for money. This is now overseen by the newly formed Finance and Governance Committee who can announce that the audits have been passed with compliments on improvements made.

There have been a lot of changes at the Council this year. Councillors Adams, Briscoe, Houghton, Nix and Tate have retired and we have gained Councillors Abrams, Rolfe, Evans and Nyamie. We send grateful thanks to the outgoing

Councillors for their commitment and voluntary work for the Parish and welcome the new Councillors. Councillor Briscoe especially dedicated much personal time to being our Chairman for six years and we send very grateful thanks for her professionalism and commitment. She is replaced as Chairman by Councillor Langford.

There have been changes in the Office too. The Locum Clerk, Helen Broughton was replaced by our new permanent Clerk Christopher Thompson in June. The Assistant Clerk, Sarah Williams resigned in November and is replaced by Cathy Gainsford. Our thanks to Helen and Sarah and a warm welcome to Chris and Cathy who make effective contributions in many areas, but crucially with the Audit successes. We continue to benefit from the skills and commitment of Colin Moses, the Amenities Officer.



*Goosecroft Lane*

The year has been hindered by Covid-19. It began with meetings by “zoom”, moving to socially distanced actual meetings which could only take place in the large hall of the Barn which required considerable changes to meeting dates. Nevertheless, as you will see from this report, business has been as usual as possible with new equipment provided by the Recreation Committee in the lower village Bucknell's Meadow and the Barn in the upper Goosecroft area back in full use with a very entertaining “welcome back” Jazz Evening. Special thanks go to the Friends of Purley Barn chaired by Mrs Jean Chudleigh for arranging this.

The significant focus of the coming year is the Platinum Jubilee celebrations with the promise of some enjoyable and sparkling events in June and again, special thanks go to the organising committee, Chaired by Councillor Beddoes for doing this.

### Allotments



*Our Allotments*

There are 136 plots in our allotments, situated at the end of Winston Way, overlooking the Thames valley and the Chiltern hills. There are different sized plots allowing gardeners to choose an allotment that they can manage. Our allotments continue to be very popular.

### Recreation

As the “year” comes to an end the Parish Council Recreation Committee can look back on a busy period maintaining and improving Recreation facilities.

Amongst the normal general maintenance activities at the Councils' main Recreation areas (Bucknell's Meadow and the Goosecroft) there has been a major project completed at Bucknell's Meadow to replace the Outdoor Gym and provide some additional play equipment. This project was funded by a grant from West Berkshire Council (only available for a limited time necessitating a short timescale application) general public funding via the Good Exchange and donations from the Marina and Mad Duck – all of which are greatly appreciated.



*New Play Equipment in Bucknell's*

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Thankfully this year our resident sports clubs have been able to function much more effectively than in 2020/21 as Covid regulations have been eased.

The Goosecroft has been particularly busy during the year with cricket, football and tennis, as well as general leisure and recreational use of all our facilities and playgrounds. It is also particularly pleasing to see that Trentham Bowls Club has seen a resurgence in their playing membership.

Over the winter the goal posts at Bucknell's Meadow have been replaced / repositioned and the Parish Council will continue to look to enhance facilities for other sports and recreational activities.

The continued commitment of the Parish Council to cost-effectively provide excellent recreational facilities, backed by the support and hard work of resident clubs, continues to ensure that our facilities are among the best locally, resident clubs thrive and long may they continue to offer recreational opportunities to the residents of Purley on Thames.

## The Barn



*Chairman's Reception at The Barn*

The Barn was able to re-open on a phased basis in line with the gradual easing of restrictions from March 2021. It is pleasing to be able to report that it is now back to full operation, with a high number of bookings especially at weekends for children's and family parties.

We are pleased to welcome back most of our regular clubs and societies.

There are currently 3 planned large events for the Barn in 2022 – the Platinum Jubilee,

an Antiques fair in June and the return of the Christmas market in late November.

## Highways and Footpaths

The Highways and Footpath Committee are responsible for areas of Purley on Thames parish owned by the Parish Council.

We look after the Allotments, the majority of the Dog Bins replacing and emptying when needed together with making sure the Salt Bins are full for the winter months. We also look after various areas of land. Pikeshaw is one area which has a large number of trees all of which have Tree Preservations Orders on them. We therefore have to obtain permission from the tree officer at West Berkshire Council before any work can

be undertaken. Regular surveys of trees on parish owned land are carried out on behalf of the Parish Council by our tree surgeon. Any remedial work identified is actioned. In May we will be undertaking a survey for Ash die back which is becoming more of an issue unfortunately.



*Pikeshaw*

We are also in the process of working with West Berkshire Council to make the access from River Gardens into the Meadow more accessible for disabled people or those who may have walking difficulties. A survey has already been done on how to best do this and we are awaiting further information from West Berkshire as to when this work will be done. Hopefully before the end of summer.

## Planning

The Parish Council's planning committee meets every other week to consider and scrutinise planning applications in the village. The Parish Council is not a planning authority and cannot grant or refuse permission for any works. However, it can and does submit its thoughts as to any planning application in the village but does so on an equal footing to any resident of the Parish – in other words its representations carry no more weight than do any individual representations.

Occasionally, when there are larger developments, the planning committee may be able to work with developers of a site to help them understand the wishes of parishioners. Benefits can sometimes be achieved to include open spaces and protect the environment for the community.

## The Future

West Berkshire Council have not indicated that they are planning any major changes to the services they provide in the forthcoming year. However, the Parish Council may still be required to take on further responsibilities for local services. In recent years we have contributed to the cost of the 143 bus service, Pangbourne Library and the public toilets in Station Road, Pangbourne. We currently propose to maintain our support for these services next year and review them annually.

Major projects for the coming year include:

- Platinum Jubilee Celebrations – 2<sup>nd</sup> June till 5<sup>th</sup> June.
- Additional play equipment in Bucknell's, Goosecroft extension and future developments at Bucknell's.
- Full tree survey (ash dieback).

# Finance - how we use 'your' money

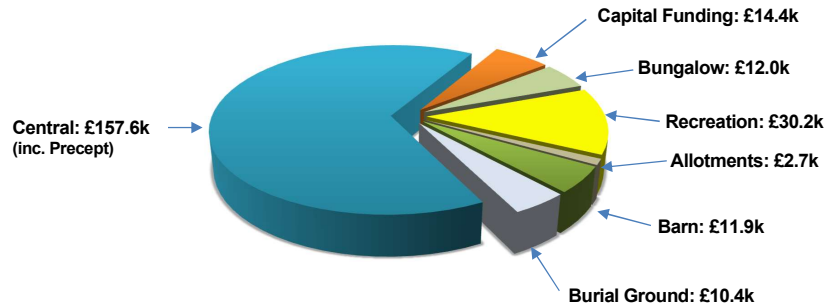
## Income & Expenditure

The Council has a responsibility to use public money wisely and carefully. Over the past year we have continued to be impacted by Covid. This has seriously reduced our ability to achieve our budgeted income and expenditure. Our forecast income of £239.2k is £31.0k below budget and our forecast expenditure of £172.3k is £137.4k below budget. This has resulted in our reserves increasing by £66.9k. As Covid restrictions are hopefully now behind us, we hope to be back to our usual income and expenditure profiles in 2022/23.

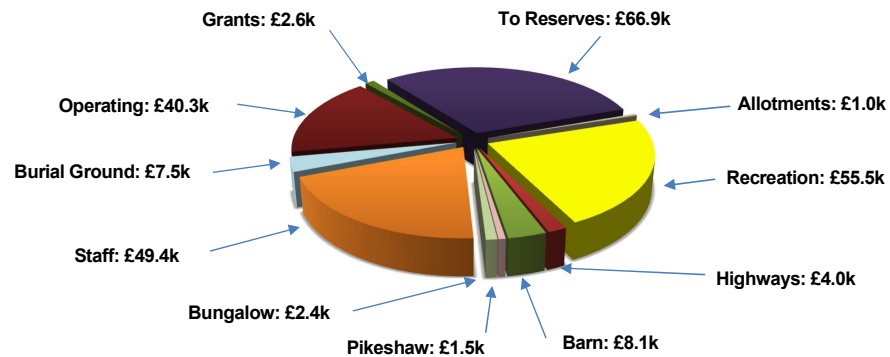
- Replacing the Outdoor Gym equipment in Bucknells £33k
- Tree management (Pikeshaws, Goosecroft, Bucknell's) £5k
- Barn flooring repairs/toilet repairs £4k
- IT equipment repairs and update £7k

These figures are provisional as at 1 March 2022, as our accounts will not be finalised until later in the year.

**Figure 1: Operating Income:**



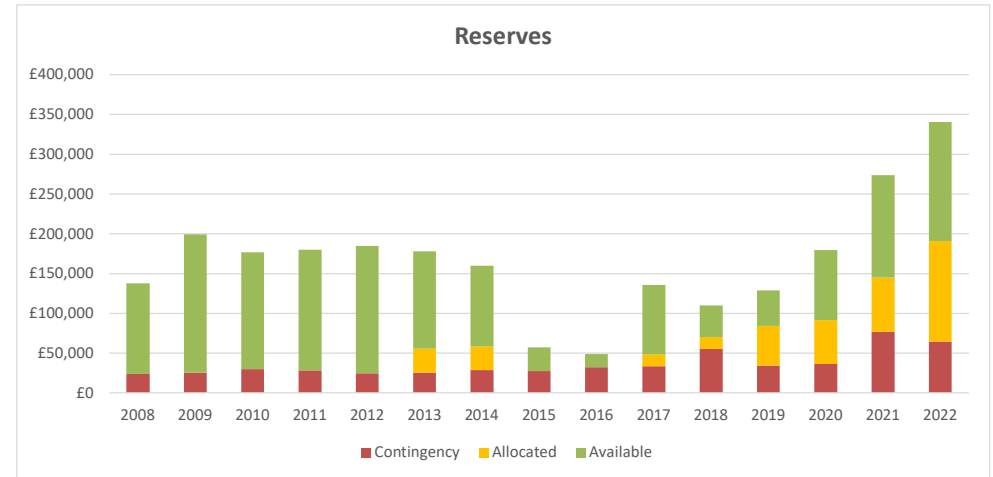
**Figure 2: Running Costs:**



## Reserves

The following chart shows how our reserves have altered over the past years. Our reserves are made up of several components:

- Contingency – reserves we need to keep as a cushion against our spending which we set at 25% of our annual forecast expenditure.
- Allocated – earmarked for specific projects. These projects could be major repairs or large infrastructure changes.
- Available – reserves we hold to enable flexibility to cater for additional opportunities and unforeseen emergencies. It includes monies ring-fenced for “open space” development.



The savings made this year have allowed us to restore some of our available reserves, depleted in previous years to fund major refurbishment work.

There is more of village interest on the Parish Council website [www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk](http://www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk)



## How to contact us

Parish Office: Telephone: 0118 984 4507  
Email: [clerk@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk)  
Write: Parish Office, Goosecroft Lane, off Beech Road,  
Purley on Thames, Reading, RG8 8DR

Website: [www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk](http://www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk) (lots of contacts and information)

Clerk: Christopher Thompson  
Administrative Assistant: Cathy Gainsford  
Amenities Officer: Colin Moses

## Opening hours












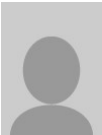
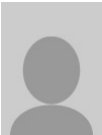



The Parish Office will now be open to the public during the following hours:

Monday (except bank Holidays) 9.30am to 2.30pm

Thursday 2.30pm to 6.30pm

Councillors can be available for consultation on Monday evenings, between 5.00pm – 5.30pm, or at other times by appointment.

## Councillors and Staff

 <b>Jane Langford</b> Chairman (via office)	 <b>Graham Rolfe</b> Vice Chairman 0118 941 7247	 <b>Martin Bishop</b> Chairman Recreation (via office)	 <b>Pamala Beddoes</b> Chairman Barn 0118 941 4186	 <b>Christine Collier</b> Chairman Highways 0118 942 2951	
 <b>Rick Jones*</b> Chairman of Finance 0118 962 3793	 <b>Rick Farrow</b> 0118 962 4577	 <b>John Chapman</b> 0118 942 6999	 <b>Rob Wallace</b> 07958 482968	 <b>George Nyamie</b> (via office)	
 <b>Maria Adams</b> (via office)	 <b>Judy Evans</b> (via office)	 <b>Vacancy</b>	 <b>Chris Thompson</b> Parish Clerk 0118 984 4507	 <b>Cathy Gainsford</b> Admin. Asst. 0118 984 4507	 <b>Colin Moses</b> Amenities Officer 0118 984 4507

\* Also our District Councillor. Our other District Councillors are Tom Marino and Andy Williamson.

## Useful Numbers

### Community Safety:

Police Non-Emergency 101  
Lock Keeper 0118 941 7776

### District Council:

West Berkshire Council 01635 551111  
West Berkshire Council emergency out of hours 01635 42161  
Streetcare 01635 519080

### Purley Barn (via Parish Office)

**0118 984 4507**

### Memorial Hall

**07772 129 187**

### Social Clubs

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

### Schools

Brookfield Specialist SEN School 0118 942 1382  
Purley C.E. Primary School 0118 984 2384  
Long Lane Primary School 0118 942 7187  
Denefield School 0118 941 3458  
Downsway Primary School 0118 942 1362  
Theale Green Community School 0118 930 2741  
Westwood Farm Junior School 0118 942 5182  
Westwood Farm Infant School 0118 942 6113

### Hospitals

Royal Berkshire 0118 322 5111  
West Berkshire Community 01635 273 300

### Doctors

The Boathouse Surgery, Pangbourne 0118 984 2234  
Grovelands Medical Centre 0118 958 2525  
Westwood Road Health Centre, Tilehurst 0118 942 7421  
Tilehurst Village Surgery 0118 945 2612  
Tilehurst Surgery Partnership, Tyler's Place 0118 942 7528

### Travel

Reading Buses [www.reading-buses.co.uk](http://www.reading-buses.co.uk) 0118 959 4000  
ReadiBus [www.readibus.co.uk](http://www.readibus.co.uk) 0118 931 0000  
Carebus 0118 930 4837  
First GW Trains [www.gwr.com](http://www.gwr.com) 0345 7000 125  
Thames Travel [www.thames-travel.co.uk](http://www.thames-travel.co.uk) 01865 785 400  
Pangbourne & District Volunteer Centre 0118 984 4586  
[www.pangbourne-district-volunteers.org](http://www.pangbourne-district-volunteers.org)