

NEWSLETTER

December 2024, Issue 87



**We wish all our readers a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year**



Introduction

“They should do something” – a phrase you hear all too often. When I became a councillor, I discovered just who “they” are and what “somethings” need to be done. Parish councils are the lowest level of administration and deal with the most minor items. It’s playgrounds, open spaces, allotments, halls, local liaison. It all sounds very mundane – and it is.

But.

In time, I realised that a good parish council provides the backbone of the local community. We provide the places for other local groups and individuals to use. We help them plan what they want to do. We facilitate events. In Purley we provide a wide set of public spaces – the Goosecroft for football, tennis & cricket, Trentham’s Bowling Club, the impressive play area at Bucknell’s Meadow. We also have the Barn – a stunning and much-admired facility that’s heavily used, Purley Sports & Social Club and the Burial Ground. We are very lucky.

Coming from the private sector what strikes you is how long it takes to do anything – years in many cases. This all requires commitment and planning. Purley is in a much better position than many other councils. The introduction of a full-time Clerk three years ago, firstly Chris Thompson and now Sharon Way, has made an enormous positive difference to continuity and administration. The office has also been strengthened and works wonders. We have a full set of 13 Councillors, and we all try and work together. We are non-political, at least at parish level. The amount of effort and unremitting attention to detail put in by the staff and the councillors amazes me.

I’ve lived in Purley for over 40 years, and still work as a geo-scientist in oil exploration. Outside work, we do a lot of walking, and I’m also a volunteer for the Outreach Post Office at the Barn and treasurer of the Community Shop team. For the first 30 years I spent a lot of time commuting and wasn’t involved. Four years ago, working from

home, I had time to join the Council. I now chair the Finance Committee and the Emergency Group. I am also on the Recreation and Village Amenities Committees.

The Finance Committee is relatively new, and we aim not only to monitor current finances but also at long- and medium-term costs and plans. These days any new project or maintenance costs a small fortune – these must be planned and funded well in advance. The Emergency Group supports the Flood Wardens and other local bodies – it’s mainly a liaison body but we were a major source of local information in the January 2024 floods.

Sometimes it’s hard to see the benefits – but when you see the 2022 Jubilee events (all organised by local people) many of them on Parish property with council assistance, the way everyone pulled together during the floods or watch families enjoying themselves at Bucknell’s then it’s all worth it.

Councillor Rob Wallace

Local News

Purley Park Trust: A Local Gem Changing Lives in Our Community

Nestled in the heart of Purley-on-Thames, Purley Park Trust is a charity that, while not widely known, is making an incredible impact on our local community. Providing award-winning, 24/7 care and support for over 70 people with a range of disabilities—many with profound needs—Purley Park Trust is dedicated to ensuring that its clients have the best possible quality of life.

The Trust offers more than just essential support. The passionate and dedicated staff strive to create a true sense of home and belonging for each client, promoting not only wellbeing but also opportunities for enrichment and engagement. Every client receives individualised care and support to help them live as independently and joyfully as possible.

Beyond this, Purley Park Trust is deeply rooted in our community. The charity prioritises employing local people, supporting local businesses, and actively participating in community events. However, like many charities, Purley Park Trust faces funding limitations, and this is where they’re hoping the local community can step in to help.

Opportunities to Support Purley Park Trust

Purley Park Trust would love to partner with local businesses, organisations, and community members in a variety of ways to help sustain and grow their impact. Here are some ways that individuals, companies, and groups can get involved:

- 1. Become a Sponsor:** Purley Park Trust is looking for local businesses to become “Charity of the Year” sponsors. Sponsorship opportunities offer great visibility for

businesses, including logo placements on the Trust's website, shoutouts on social media, and acknowledgments at community events. Sponsors have the chance to make a real difference in the lives of people in their own community.

2. Fundraise Through Events: Whether it's running a marathon, hosting a quiz night, or organizing a charity bake sale, every little bit helps! Individuals or groups interested in organizing a fundraiser can reach out to the Trust to discuss ideas and receive promotional materials to support their efforts.

3. Volunteer or Join Our Team: Purley Park Trust regularly invites local volunteers and team members to assist in special projects and client activities. Volunteering offers a unique opportunity to experience firsthand the incredible work done by the Trust, as well as a chance to make a direct impact on the lives of clients.

4. Donate Raffle Prizes and Hamper Items: The Trust frequently holds raffles and events for the benefit of staff and clients, and they welcome donations of items suitable for raffle prizes or hampers. Local businesses can support these initiatives by donating products or gift vouchers, which help raise funds and bring joy to clients and staff alike.

5. Connect with Schools and Universities: Schools, colleges, and universities are encouraged to get involved through community service days, fundraising events, or educational partnerships. Students have the chance to learn, volunteer, and contribute meaningfully, and their involvement is highly valued by Purley Park Trust.

6. Spread the Word: Sometimes, support is as simple as sharing the message. Purley Park Trust encourages everyone to follow them on social media, share their posts, and spread the word about the fantastic work being done.

Let's Work Together for a Brighter Community

Supporting Purley Park Trust is more than charity work—it's about strengthening the fabric of our community. Every donation, volunteer, or sponsorship helps Purley Park Trust continue to provide exceptional care and opportunities to those who rely on their support.

For donations or more information, you can reach Purley Park Trust at:

Purley Park Trust
12 Huckleberry Close
Purley-on-Thames, Reading, Berkshire RG8 8EH
Tel:0118 942 7608

Email reception@purleyparktrust.org

If you're a local business or community member, consider making Purley Park Trust your charity for the year. Together, we can make a lasting difference in our community.



Operation Grotto - Winter Burglary Campaign

Now is a good time to remind the community around some simple tips to help protect themselves becoming a victim of a burglary.

Top tips to remember:

- *double check you've locked all your doors and windows before leaving*
- *keep bags and keys away from your letterbox or cat flap*
- *use a timer to automatically turn lights on*
- *double-lock any door*
- *make sure that any valuables are out of sight*
- *don't leave car documents or ID out*
- *in the evening, shut the curtains and leave lights on*
- *set your burglar alarm*
- *make sure the side gate is locked*
- *lock your shed or garage and make sure you bike is locked to a robust fitting bolt inside*

Check out more tips on our website  www.thamesvalley.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/protect-home-crime/

Purley Sustainability Group

We spend much of the year wanting it to be another season, and Christmas planning seems to be starting earlier and earlier, but it is a reality, it's now just around the corner! It should be a season for company, family and friends, peace and calmness, but often it's the reverse! PSG thought they would share some ideas to try and make it a reality and be a little bit more sustainable.

Make your own Christmas presents

The pressure is on from all the retailers, the TV and the internet to spend. spend. spend. Instead, how about having a go at making something. Perhaps you have some craft things lying around waiting to be used or take a walk and use some things from nature to turn into a unique present or decorations.

For those wannabe chefs and bakers amongst you, perhaps you can make some edible gifts? Perhaps join PSG on their wreath making workshops? Check out

<https://www.purleysustainability.co.uk/booking>

Offer the gift of time

Perhaps you can walk a dog, babysit, doing some ironing for someone less able? This has huge benefits and very sustainable.

Become a supporter

Instead of buying a gift, perhaps offer a gift that keeps giving and continues to support the environment or the area around us, there are many options, but some examples may be:

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/membership

www.wildlifetrusts.org/wildlife-trusts-membership

www.rhs.org.uk/join www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/support-us/join/

www.bbwt.org.uk/join/bbowt-standard-membership-form

Shop local this Christmas

If you do need to buy gift, think about shopping locally to save fuel and gives the independent businesses the support they need – remember to take your own bag of course. Can your food shopping be done locally? We have some great local shops in our area that offer interesting and unique options.

Use more sustainable wrapping

Tons of wrapping paper will be purchased and thrown out as much of it cannot be recycled (due to glitter and shiny bits). When wrapping, consider using recycled paper or get crafting with plain brown paper or leftover newspaper. Fabric is another way to wrap your gifts.

Support wildlife

Cold weather can make it hard for wildlife. Consider helping wildlife out by setting up a bird table and put out high-fat foods (sunflower seeds, peanuts, bird feed) for robins and other garden birds to keep them warm during winter nights. Remember to keep tables clean and topped up and away from predators. Keep clean water for drinking and bathing – the wildlife will appreciate this.

If your garden plants have fruit, berries, hips, seeds and nuts, they'll be a larder for birds - holly, hawthorn, ivy, rowan, honeysuckle and dogwood all provide tasty treats or attract tasty insects. Don't keep your garden too tidy – some mammals will be using leaves for warmth and shelter.

Be mindful

Whilst many of us try to make Christmas restful, it can be stressful with pressure of gift-giving, shopping and travelling. Be gentle to yourself, take yourself out for a mindful walk in our area – we are so close to nature with Sulham woods and the Thames on our doorsteps. Take the time out – take a deep breath of fresh air, focus on your breath, look around and enjoy the sounds of nature.

Refuse, reuse, recycle

The festive season is a time when we increase our waste with food, packaging and wrapping paper. A lot of packaging will be thrown away and not recycled, and the total amount of waste created at Christmas is estimated to exceed an incredible 5 million tons!

Consider reducing the mountain of food we see at this time of year – this saves money, reduces waste, and saves the packaging which is often astronomical. Can you make your own goodies that often taste better? Experiment with new recipes to use up food that would otherwise be wasted. Remember to leave some freezer space spare for any leftovers.

Use the food waste provision we have available, or if possible, compost what you can't use and use it on your garden later in the year, completing the cycle and returning the nutrients to nature.

Perhaps reduce unnecessary packaging, reuse existing materials, and try to ensure what we do throw away is properly recycled. Check out www.purleysustainability.co.uk/recycling for more information about options in West Berkshire.

You never know what you can find in charity shops - often worth a visit – the perfect gift may be there waiting! Perhaps consider buying a useful and sustainable gift – for example a reusable cup, or bottle, beeswax wraps, bird tables, bird feeders etc.

PSG would like to thank everyone who supported us over the year, and we look forward to seeing you in 2025.

Purley Sustainability Group (PSG) is a community sustainability group for Purley on Thames. We are passionate about enhancing community wellbeing through projects that bring people together to improve our local environment and encourage sustainable living.

For more information:

www.purleysustainability.co.uk

info@purleysustainability.co.uk

Facebook – Purley Sustainability Group & Purley on Thames Repair Café

Please do get in touch if you want to learn more or become a volunteer at the allotments, or at the repair café or want to subscribe our newsletters and keep abreast of our events.

Reporting problems

West Berkshire Council deal with the resolution of all sorts of problems from potholes, dog fouling, streetlights, graffiti, etc. You can report any issues that you have online via the WBC website. Just follow this link: [Problem Reporting](#).



From Your Parish Office

Don't forget the team in the Office are happy to help where we can. Office opening hours are now:

Monday 9.30 am – 2.00 pm

Thursday 2.00 pm – 5.00 pm

(except for Bank Holidays)

However, it is a good idea to phone ahead if you want to see someone to avoid a wasted visit in the event of the team having other commitments.

Alternatively, you can telephone on 0118 984 4507 or email the Clerk at clerk@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk

Local Events

Purley Barn Bridge Club

The social club that plays bridge Club



Come up to the Barn in Goosecroft Lane at 9 40 on a Friday morning for a pleasant game of bridge with our friendly members from round and about. We play an informal format which means that you play with different players and soon get to know the other club members. There is a half time break for a chat, cuppa tea or coffee and snacks when you can relax, make and renew friendships, talk bridge or just chat



No previous experience is necessary (although knowledge of basic card play would be a help). The first two sessions are free, and coaching is also available for those who would like to take their bridge skills to a higher level. For those who want a more competitive format we have regular duplicate sessions on Tuesday evenings online. You log in, meet and greet your partner and the other

players and the software does the work as you relax with your favourite drink and nibbles. No need to brave the cold dark evenings.

Two pairs playing bridge online from home

The club's Christmas lunch session is on Friday December 13th with bridge in the morning and then a festive lunch followed by optional bridge in the afternoon, so why not come along for a trial session the week before, or after? Bridge is well known to be an invigorating hobby. It gets you out, you make new friends and exercise your memory and other cognitive skills. What's not to like? So, give yourself an early Christmas present and join the club. Ring Martin on 07746 680183 or visit: www.bridgewebs.com/purleybarnbridge/



See you up at the Barn!

We would like to provide information of any activities that local clubs or societies are undertaking within the village or that might be of interest to residents of Purley on Thames. These can be regular or one-off events. If you would like us to include a bit about your event, please email [Cathy our Administrative Clerk](mailto:Cathy) with the details.

Other Events

Wreath Making / Table Decoration Workshops



PSG are proud to hold workshops on:
Saturday 7th December 2024

**At - 4.00pm - 6.30pm
Or - 7.00pm - 9.30pm**

At: The Memorial Hall, Glebe Road, Purley on Thames



To book a place:
Visit: www.purleysustainability.co.uk/booking

Or email: info@purleysustainability.co.uk

Stating your preferred session and any dietary requirements




Payment will be required in advance.

THAMES VALE SINGERS
Present
A Christmas Celebration


Friday 13th December
St Mary's Church, Purley

Saturday 14th December
The Barn, Purley



Tickets £12.00, £6.00 under 16s
On sale from: Tuesday 5 November 2024
From: 0118 942 4372 or
email: tickets@thamesvalesingers.org.uk or online
www.ticketsource.co.uk/thames-vale-singers
(booking fee £0.50)

Doors open 7.00pm
concerts start 7.30pm



www.thamesvalesingers.org.uk

VILLAGE



CONCERTS

St Mary's, Purley on Thames RG8 8BJ
7pm Doors & Bar, 8pm Music



James Kirby Saturday 30th November 2024

Having experienced a packed audience & a standing ovation at previous Village Concerts, we're delighted to welcome back acoustic singer / songwriter James Kirby, as part of his World Tour! His beautiful & melodic songs captivate audiences of all ages and, with his unique style of guitar playing and beautiful vocals, he is not to be missed! Only a few tickets left – book soon!

“Beautifully written songs” – BBC Radio Merseyside

Thomas Heppell & Band Saturday 8th February 2025



Back by popular demand, we're delighted to be welcoming Thomas Heppell back – and this time he's bringing his brilliant band with him!

Thomas, now based in Windsor, plays Blues, Jazz and also his own compositions. He has been playing guitar and singing for over 10 years, and has performed with Chicken Shack, been on The Voice and performed at festivals such as Swanage Blues and Broadstairs Blues Bash.

Having performed at various events and venues in Berkshire and beyond, Thomas Heppell band are known for their energetic live performances!

“Thomas has the old school acoustic blues guitar sound down and it's evident he is a writing and singing natural!” – Mike Mayfield

Tickets: Earlybird Adult £12, Youth £8; Full-price Adult £15, Youth £10
www.villageconcerts.co.uk



PURLEY LITTER PICK

Saturday 4th January 2025 at 11 am

PSG hope to see as many volunteers as possible for the Purley Litter Pick. We will try and cover as much as Purley as we can.



MEET

The Barn,
Goosecroft,
Beech Road

WEAR

Warm clothes,
strong shoes and
gloves.

BRING

Any litter pick
equipment you
may have, and we
will supply some
grabbers and bags.

info@purleysustainability.co.uk

Rain or Shine Theatre Company presents

Murder Most Wilde

Friday 6th December 7pm start (doors open 6.30pm)

The Barn, Goosecroft, Purley on Thames RG8 8BW

(VERY) LOOSELY BASED ON LORD ARTHUR SAVILE'S CRIME

MURDER MOST
Wilde

Rain or Shine Theatre Company

"Ridiculously brilliant"

"Pure Genius"

"Fantastically Funny"

THE BARN, PURLEY-ON-THAMES
Goosecroft Lane, Purley-on-Thames, Berkshire, RG8 8DR //wounds.rewarding.salads

Friday 6th December at 7:00pm

Tickets: £14.00 adult, £8.00 child (under 15)

Tel: 01189 424167 / 03306 600541

www.bit.ly/wilde-purleybarn

* refreshments available * doors open 6.30pm * in aid of Local Charities *

www.rainorshine.co.uk - theatre@rainorshine.co.uk

Following their highly successful summer tour of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the Rain or Shine Theatre Company is back in Purley on Friday 6th December with "Murder Most Wilde", a new adaptation of Oscar Wilde's comic and quirky tale "Lord Arthur Savile's Crime". This is a delightfully silly Victorian comedy chock full of muddled murder attempts and comic confusion, suitable for all ages. The performance is organised, as usual, by Project Purley.

Meet Lord Arthur Savile – he has riches, the best of health, complete happiness and is engaged to marry his beautiful fiancé Sybil in just three weeks' time. But his future mother-in-law

invites a fortune teller who reads his palm, exclaiming "I see blood on your hand". The scene is set! Lord Arthur now believes he is destined to commit a murder, and to avoid any intrigue or inconvenience to his bride to be, he decides to perform the dastardly deed before the wedding takes place. With murder in the offing, his hilarious attempts to avert disaster are more hindered than helped by various servants assorted relatives passing anarchists and a strong sense of upstanding Victorian duty.

Which method will Lord Arthur choose, to whom? and will he succeed? Our scene is set for an evening of outstanding comedy, suspense and intrigue!

Tickets cost £14 adult and £8 child (under 15). Book your tickets now with David Downs on 0118 942 4167, on the ticket line number (card only) 03306 600541, or via Rain or Shine's website www.rainorshine.co.uk



Tilehurst Drop-in Centre and Foodbank

St. Joseph's Hall
Berkshire Drive
RG31 5JJ

needs more of the following in
date non-perishable items:

Hot Chocolate	Honey	Custard	Sweets	Mayonnaise
Bachelor's potato and leek soup packets	Packet soup	Tinned spam/ corned beef / hot dogs	Tea	Coffee
Sugar	Peanut butter	Biscuits	Baby wipes	Toilet rolls

If you have any items you can donate (ideally with a long use-by date), please take to the Mad Duck Café or the Beech Road Book Box . Thank you so much for helping others.

Adult Social Care

Are you an adult or caring for an adult who needs
support to stay independent, safe and well?

Do you need advice and information about what care
and support is available to live the life you want?



If so, contact our Adult Social Care team:

Tel: 01635 503050

Email: adultcare@westberks.gov.uk

Website: www.westberks.gov.uk/adultcare



Care for Adults -
West Berkshire
Council



The West
Berkshire
Directory

 West Berkshire
COUNCIL

Repair Café



You can find further information regarding dates and times for the [Repair Café/Other Events](#) and [Recycling](#) on the PSG website.

If you have feedback to give Your Parish Council or wish to provide an article on what interests you: an item or person of interest, a plea for a Charity or not-for-profit business but not a commercial business, your input would be most welcome, subject to editorial rights. It would be very helpful, if possible, if you could supply any copy in Word (12 pt Calibri) and/or picture format. Submissions as pdfs may be rejected. Please email your copy to [Cathy](#) by close of play on the 20th of the month.

Many thanks - Editor

Purley on Thames Parish Council does not take responsibility for articles provided by non-Council Members and would encourage you to go to the website for the article provider and check dates, times and details.

Purley on Thames Parish Council is not responsible for the content of third-party websites.

The Editor is Cathy Gainsford – Administrative Clerk, Purley on Thames Parish Council