



NEWSLETTER

May 2025, Issue 91

Introduction

Hello

My name is Graham Rolfe, and while I was born in Carmarthen, Wales, I spent the first 16 years of my life in London. At 18, I headed for the bright lights of Manchester and studied at the University of Salford, graduating with a degree in Electronic Engineering. I am now also a Chartered Engineer (CEng) and Fellow of the Institute of Engineering and Technology (FIET).

My first job was with BT at their headquarters in central London. I then moved to City of London Telephone Area where I was responsible for managing the installation team covering the square mile on the City of London. Later, promotion led to managing the provision of special services for the whole City of London Area.

It was during this time, in August 1981, that my wife, Margaret, and I moved to Purley on Thames attracted by the good transport links to London; we have been living in the same house since then.

I then moved within BT to Reading, working in the Friar Street offices where I was responsible for all customer field operations in the Thamesway District.

I left BT in the late 90's and moved to work for a Consultancy firm based in Marlow, working with a number of private telecoms companies looking at aspects of their customer service operations. This led to me becoming the Chief Technical Officer for a startup telecoms company.

Looking to keep occupied , I finished my working career as a laboratory technician at Theale Green School's Chemistry department.

I was a founder member of the Silver Surfers Computer Club that ran at the Barn for several years and introduced many to the pleasures, or not, of using a computer and surfing the internet. Sadly, after Covid , the costs of running the club became such that it was no longer financially viable. I am now the convenor for the Reading U3A Computer Club.

Eighteen years ago, I joined Purley on Thames Parish Council and over the years, have been Chairman of the Recreation and Planning Committees, Vice Chairman of the Parish Council for 6 years and Chairman of Council since May 2023. Currently, I am also Chairman of the Memorial Hall Trustees and Chairman of the Friends of Duchess of Kent Hospice.

Councillor Graham Rolfe

Local News

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](#).

Planning Applications

West Berkshire Council invites Purley on Thames Parish Council to comment on planning applications within the parish. The Parish Council's input is not binding upon West Berkshire Council, but comments may be considered in reaching a decision.

You can also see the details of any planning application via the [Planning Portal](#) on the WBC website. If you scroll down to the bottom of the Planning Portal webpage you will find a map showing recent planning applications in WBC. You can zoom in on the map to just see Purley on Thames. Also, an orange notice should be displayed at the boundary of any property/location subject to a planning application.

Any individual can comment on a planning application, both for and against, direct to WBC by [email](#).

The Parish Planning Committee meets about every two weeks. The meeting is open to the public and there is opportunity for you to comment on any particular application. To see the agenda for the next meeting, which details the planning applications to be considered, see [Planning Committee meeting](#).

West Berkshire Council has introduced a free online service to allow residents to check to see if planning permission is required for any possible building alterations. This service will make it easier for residents to understand if they need to submit a planning application for items such as solar panels, loft conversions, adding an outbuilding or

adding a dropped kerb. You can access this new service on the West Berkshire Council ["Do I need Planning Permission?"](#) webpage.

West Berkshire Council also offer planning pre-application advice service for which a fee is chargeable. More information about this can be found on the West Berkshire Council's [pre-application advice service](#) webpage.

Allotments

We currently have a very short waiting list with some plots being given up in the near future. As such if you are interested in taking on a plot and growing your own fruit and vegetables please contact Colin Moses at amenities@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk or download an application from our website and send it in to the parish office. A half plot rental is only £30 per annum, with quarter plots £18 per annum.



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 Sports Activities

Purley on Thames Tennis Club

We have 2 open days coming up: -

Sunday 12th May from 2 -4 pm – come along, meet some members, see what's on offer re social tennis/coaching and try us out.

Sunday 15th June from 10 to 3pm- we have ex Davis Cup players coming along to deliver junior/adult coaching as well as an exhibition match in early afternoon. There will be a fastest serve competition for the different ages from 1.30 to 2pm. Coaching sessions need to be pre booked and spaces allocated accordingly.

Sessions currently planned (capable of flexing dependent on individual session demands; -

10 to 10.45am – mini kids 5 to 10 years old – max 27 spaces - £3 per child

10.45 to 11.30am – teenagers 11 to 16 – max 16 spaces - £4 per teenager

11.30 to 12.30pm -social/intermediate adults – max 24 spaces - £5 per adult

12.30 to 1.30pm – team/advanced adults – max 12 spaces - £7.50 per adult

Please visit website [clubspark.lta.org.uk/Purley Berks Tennis Club](http://clubspark.lta.org.uk/Purley%20Berks%20Tennis%20Club) for more information – if you want to make a reservation for the June coaching sessions, please email amenities@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk

We look forward to seeing you on the courts

Colin Moses Chairman of Purley on Thames Tennis Club.

Repair Café



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

Local Club Events



Project Purley

VE Day 80th Anniversary in Words, Images and Music

Project Purley and other local organisations & individuals



Monday 5th May

2 00pm- 4.30pm – doors open 1.45pm

The Barn, Goosecroft

Tickets £5 per person from Marjorie Butler on 0118 941 8856 or at a Project Purley meeting

Pre-booking required

Doors open at 1.45pm and our event begins at 2pm. Discover Purley during the Second World War. Find out where spitfire parts were made in the village, how we welcomed children, families and businesses evacuated from London, how Purley Park River Estate expanded into a village within a village and read about the eventful bops in their community hall. Discover the stories of those who served in the armed forces and on the home front and our connections to the “Great Escape” and the infamous Thai-Burma Railway. Maybe you’ll find a former resident of your home served in the war?

There will be an exhibition, Pathe Film news clips, music, images and a talk, in two halves, by historian Mike Cooper on “The Collapse of Germany in 1945”. The ticket price also includes tea/coffee and cake.

The afternoon will end about 4.30pm.

Pre-booking is required as numbers are limited.





Friday 20th June – Rain or Shine Theatre Company “The Rivals”

7pm, doors open 6.15pm

The Barn, Goosecroft

Tickets £16 (adults), £8 (under 15s)

Tickets from David Downs (0118 942 4167, cash only) or the Rain or Shine ticket line (03306 600541, card only) or the Rain or Shine website www.rainorshine.co.uk (card only)

When fashionable 18th century London society comes to take the waters in the spa-town of Bath, comic confusion, daring duels and romantic entanglements abound. At the centre of it all is heiress Lydia Languish, who is determined to elope with the penniless Ensign Beverly rather than marry the eligible Jack Absolute. Come and sample the sparkling wit and whirlwind plot of *The Rivals*, a Restoration Comedy which has delighted audiences for over 250 years with its collection of comic characters, including the formidable Mrs Malaprop, a creation so famous for the way she mangles the English language that her name is now immortalised in the dictionary.

This brand-new adaptation combines Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s masterpiece with Rain or Shine’s fast and furious comic flair.

Berkshire Family History Society

Based on the second floor of Reading Central Library, Berkshire Family History Society runs a research zone there to help people research their family history. It also holds regular events both there and on Zoom, most of which are open to members and non-members alike. The Society is a registered charity (CIO) number 1204390. You can find out more about all these events, plus reserve your place, on our website: berksfhs.org

Here's a few of our events coming up in May:



On Friday 23rd at 2pm, **John Painter** is leading a tour of the **Reading Abbey Quarter** which is followed by a cream tea. The walk will explore the rich history of the Abbey Quarter, including the Abbey ruins. It will be around 90 minutes in length, and generally on flat ground. Tickets cost £10 per person and includes the cream tea. Pre-booking is required.

Image: Pathway_through_Reading_Abbey-Ethan-Doyle-White-CC-BY-SA-4.0-website



Our monthly Zoom talk is on Thursday 22nd at 2pm, Catherine Sampson will be talking about "Stories from Berkshire's Churchyards". Berkshire's graveyards are packed with history and stories. Our stroll across the county's burial grounds takes us to Basildon, Maidenhead, Longcot, Bisham and Cholsey, as we discover the cemeteries there and the occupants who link us to

some of the more poignant local and national tragedies of the

past hundred and fifty years. This will include victims of the sinking of the Lusitania and the Titanic, and their stories, and the possible murder victim of a notorious blackmailer of Britain's wealthier classes. Prebooking is required and tickets cost £5 per person.

Please see our website, berksfhs.org, for full details.

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](#) with the details.

Other Events



VOLUNTEER

**RESTLESS
DEVELOPMENT**

at the Knight Frank Schools Triathlon!

Join Team Restless Volunteers and show your support for the work that we do and all the children taking part.

When? Sunday 18th May 2025

Where? Bradfield College

What will I be doing?

No experience is needed. Just bring bags of energy and enthusiasm. You'll support us to:

- Welcome budding young triathletes and their families at Registration.
- Help triathletes during their swim, cycle or run
- Steward triathletes along the course and brief them when they arrive
- Hand out medals and sweets to our excited finishers

**SIGN UP
TO VOLUNTEER HERE**

How long do I need to volunteer for?

You can either help for the full day (8am-5pm) or half a day (either AM or PM)

We'll provide you with a free t-shirt and complementary refreshments.

What next?

Sign up today, and we'll let you know all the information you need.

Invite others to join you by sending this link to your friends and family!



Watch the event in action!

**Find out about The
Schools Triathlon ?**

Watch to learn more!

Who Are Restless Development?

We are a global charity who supports the collective power of young people to create a better world,



Got a questions, view our FAQs, or email us on volunteers@restlessdevelopment.org



@schoolstriathlon

Purley Sustainability Group

How can we be more sustainable when we go on holiday?

Purley sustainability has in the past, provided ideas and tips and hints for sustainability in the home and garden (can be found www.purleysustainability.co.uk/sustainhome), but as we edge towards holiday season, we thought we would give you some tips.

- **Making a Booking** – there are so many ways to book holidays but spend a few minutes looking at the operations and try to select tour operators that invest in the local communities and try and use sustainable accommodation. Do your research ahead to ensure you are using reputable companies.
- **Travel responsibly** - Use most appropriate method of transport - if you can, use public transport as much as possible. It may even be more fun to explore the local area using local transport or on foot once you arrive.
- **Pack Light** – check what your holiday accommodation has already provided so you do not need to take extra items, which add unnecessary weight. This may also save you money and avoid extra baggage fees. If you only take what you need, your case will be lighter, and journey will be more comfortable. Be ruthless and ask yourself – do I need ten t-shirts for a week? Do I need a litre of shampoo? Many of us will often return with half the case of clothes unworn or items not even removed from the case! Remember to pack your reusable shopping bag to use when away.
- **Try to use Environmentally Friendly Travel Products** – check the labels if you can. There are some items that are better than others.
- **Think ahead** and try to use reusable containers and bottles. Many holiday venues go through tons of disposable paper plates, cutlery, and cups – try to limit if you can.
- **Before you leave** the home, think about the Power used at home – turn off those appliances that are not in use – turn off the standby buttons, unplug the items that just display with a clock, like the microwave for example. Unplug the charger cables for safety reasons.
- **Reduce food waste** – have a good think and try and only buy what you need when away. Holidays are a wonderful time to have the treats, but it loses appeal if there are too many that end up wasted. Before you leave, try, and use up food you already have to limit food waste. There are great recipes that focus on using up “bits.”
- **When you are away**, think about limiting your energy use in the holiday accommodation – ideas may be taking shorter showers, reducing air-

conditioning use, sensible/necessary towel use, unplugging electrical items when not in use, not leaving on standby etc.

- **Recycle** when you can whilst away from home – look for the right bins to dispose of any waste.
- When away, **think about staying local** – walk to the local shops and restaurants rather than using cars. You will also be giving the local economy a bit of a boost.
- Think twice about **holiday gifts** – if a gift is necessary, could it be reusable and kinder to the environment?
- Try out **eco-friendly, outdoor activities** that can be fun and rewarding and embrace the fresh air and the views. They may even save a bit of money. Do remember to protect yourself from the sun.
- **Respect nature** – as you would do when at home, never drop litter, (always use bins or take away with you) stick to established footpaths, respect wildlife and leave nothing behind except footprints and memories.

Finally – enjoy the holiday, reconnect with yourself and travel companions, take deep breaths and enjoy the different views and perspectives. We know we cannot do everything, but small steps make an enormous difference.

Dates for the diary:

Annual General Meeting - with Wild Tilehurst - Wednesday 7th May 7pm at the Purley Memorial Hall, Glebe Road

Repair Café – Saturday 10th May 3pm to 5pm at The Mad Duck, Wintringham Way.

Recycling/ Terracycle – Sunday 11th May at 7 Beech Road.

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.



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.

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