



NEWSLETTER

August 2025, Issue 94

Introduction

Hello

My name is George Nyamie, I was born in London, I spent the first 11 years of my life on a farm in Devon and then returned to London. I studied at the University of London, graduating with a degree in Computer Science. I also hold a PGDip in "Business administration and Finance" and "Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector".

In 2017, my partner 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 have worked for over 4 decades in the IT sector, 15 years of which were spent in the IT sector of the City of London Banking arena. The remaining years were spent working for Cloud and Internet Service Companies.

Nearly 4 years ago I joined Purley on Thames Parish Council, I have been Chairman of the Planning Committee since May 2022 and Vice Chairman of the Parish Council since May 2023.

In my spare time I enjoy running and keeping fit in the nearby countryside. I have been a Marshal for many Park Runs, and I can often be seen running through the village. I also play the violin, (not very well).

Councillor George Nyamie

Local News

Purley's Milestone

It is great to see that the Parish Council has recently paid to have Purley's historic milestone renovated. The "before" and "after" photographs show just how much a transformation has been achieved, the lettering now clearly visible. The work was carried out by Simon Gibbins of Infinite Memorial Maintenance. For those who haven't noticed it before – it stands on the grass verge in front of Bowling Green Farmhouse, on the south side of Purley Rise.



Before



Afterwards

But what of its history?

Firstly, it's worth noting that the milestone is probably not in its original position. Old maps indicate that it was originally sited approximately opposite, on the north side of Purley Rise.

It is one of eleven surviving stones marking the distance to Reading, Wallingford and Oxford which survive along the route of the former Shillingford, Wallingford and Reading Turnpike Road. This ran from Shillingford to Reading, via Wallingford and Pangbourne. These were originally spaced a mile apart and so other milestones existed, but have since disappeared, including one which used to stand near to the Roebuck Inn. The nearest surviving one now to Purley's is at Pangbourne. They are all the same shape – semi-circular solids on square prisms, the tops of the stones being inclined planes. The distances between Reading, Wallingford and Oxford is shown in cut lettering painted black against a white background.

The turnpike road system aimed to substantially improve the road network across the country and to keep it well-maintained. The Shillingford, Wallingford and Reading Turnpike was one of thousands of turnpikes each established by separate Acts of Parliament in the 1700s which gave authority to individual turnpike trusts to collect tolls in exchange for the provision and maintenance of their stretch of road.

The Shillingford, Wallingford and Reading Turnpike was the only turnpike to affect Purley. It was established in 1763 under the name of 'The Shillingford, Wallingford and Reading Road Company'. Each of the villages through which it passed had a share, and as Purley had 1 mile, 7 furlongs and 27 chains out of a total length of about 18 miles it thus owned about one ninth of it. When the turnpike was created, the existing road was said to be "in a ruinous state, narrow in many places and incommensurate to

passengers” and the trustees were empowered to repair and widen the road and to build a bridge at Shillingford to replace the hazardous ferry. It seems that they did not jump to carry out their responsibilities, because when the Act was renewed 21 years later, the road was still in the same poor condition and the bridge at Shillingford was non-existent. However, by 1805 and the next renewal, the Act was for “repairing the road ... and repairing the bridge” – so progress had been finally achieved.

The main source of income for each trust came from the collection of tolls, and toll gates were set up at Pangbourne Lane (near Battle Hospital in Reading), Pangbourne, and Winterbrooke (Cholsey) as well as at Shillingford Ferry (later bridge). The gates were leased out to the highest bidder who then attempted to collect sufficient tolls to pay his rent and leave him with a good profit.

At first the turnpikes enjoyed a period of prosperity – often referred to as the “golden age of coaching”. This period of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has been immortalised in the writings of Charles Dickens and in countless Christmas cards. However, the arrival of the railways spelt doom for the stagecoaches and turnpike trusts. Reading Station on the Great Western Railway opened in 1840 and within a couple of years many of the coach companies in town had ceased operating. Travel by railway had become fashionable, mainly because it was cheaper and quicker. The turnpikes responded by reducing their rates, but to no avail and eventually they went out of business. The Shillingford, Wallingford and Reading Turnpike was turned into an ordinary highway in 1875 and the trust wound up. Purley then had 2,486 out of a total of 28,092 yards and received £41 15s 5d out of the £472 final assets. In 1888, the Local Government Act finally gave the responsibility for maintaining main roads to county councils and county borough councils.

In Purley, the A329 follows the route of the original turnpike for most of its path, except for the section from New Hill to the Roebuck. It originally ran fairly straight from the Roebuck to Long Lane, but when Wyatt came to advise on a new mansion for the Storer family about 1800, he advised building it on the line of the turnpike and diverting the turnpike to the south so that it was out of sight of the house. This was duly done and the road adopted roughly its present alignment leaving the old route redundant.

This article is largely based on research carried out by John Chapman and the late Jean Debney.

By Catherine Sampson

A Palace Invitation

My daughter, Danyelle Tovey, was recently honoured with a very special invitation to a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, where she had the opportunity to meet Their Majesties the King and Queen. This invitation came after being nominated by members of the community in recognition of her outstanding contributions.

The invitation was extended by Mr Andrew Try, Lord Lieutenant for the Royal County of Berkshire, on behalf of His Majesty the King. The event was held to celebrate and acknowledge those who have made significant contributions to the field of Education and Skills—wonderful people like Danyelle who dedicate their time and energy to supporting their communities.

Danyelle and her husband, Nathan, had a truly unforgettable day at the Palace. The setting was magnificent, and the buffet was both plentiful and delicious, adding to the joy and grandeur of the occasion.

Over the years, Danyelle has raised thousands of pounds for the community and has worked tirelessly to organise and run a wide range of events. These include fetes, the Purley Fireworks, the Tour de Purley Cycle Challenge, the Christmas Market at the Barn, and many other successful fundraising initiatives.

Her generosity and community spirit have been evident throughout her life—she began organising events at the age of just 7, starting with a bring-and-buy sale in our neighbourhood.

I am, of course, incredibly proud of her and deeply grateful that her efforts and dedication have been recognised in such a meaningful way.

By Angela Grindley

Perhaps you would like to submit an article to recognize the life or contribution of someone who lives in the village? Contributions to our monthly newsletter would be welcome and published when space permits. Please forward it to [The Editor, Cathy](#). Please check that the person is happy to have any article you write published.

New black bin collections start from 22 September

From Monday 22 September 2025, West Berkshire Council will be introducing three-weekly black bin collections as part of our ongoing efforts to:

- Encourage more recycling
- Reduce waste
- Protect vital local services

They know changes like this take some adjustment, but we are implementing support for residents:

- Collection calendars and information leaflets will be delivered to households between 25 August and 5 September - please do look out for these in your post.
- Households with larger families or medical needs can apply for extra black bin space.
- Parents can request free real nappy starter packs and cashback to reduce nappy waste.
- They will be providing practical support and information on how to make the most of the recycling services we provide.

Please note: your collection day will not change, and communal bin stores (e.g. for flats) will not be affected.

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.



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 Club Events

Project Purley - VJ Day 80th Anniversary Meeting

Project Purley's face-to-face meetings in The Barn resume on Friday 19th September at 7.30pm with our VJ Day 80th anniversary evening. This will be a simplified version of May's VE Day 80th anniversary event, with a fish and chips supper, a small exhibition, and a talk by Dr Richard Marks titled "Over the Kwai: The Story of the Burma-Siam Railway in World War 2". Non-members are very welcome. Pre-booking is required as we need to order in the fish and chips.



To cover costs there will be a charge of £7 per member and £12 per non-member – this includes the fish and chips (or vegetarian equivalent – please ask at the time of booking). For details of how to book – see the end of this article.

Image: Adam Jones, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Over the Kwai: The Story of the Burma-Siam Railway in World War 2

During World War 2, the Japanese Army built the Burma-Siam railway to supply their armed forces with men and material for the fight against the British and Allied military ranged against them. This was no ordinary railway. It was built through almost impassable terrain and requiring some ingenious feats of engineering. It was also constructed by forced labour who endured barbaric working conditions. This talk will look at why the Japanese needed to build the railway and why they treated prisoners of war in the way that they did.

At least two Purley men died in prisoner of war camps in the Far East during the Second World War, one of whom, Edward Reed, ended up as forced labour on the Burma-Siam Railway. So, this talk has deep local resonance for us. Edward lived on Glebe Road with his parents and siblings, and sang in the choir at St Mary's Church. He served with the Royal Engineers in the war and his unit was one of those protecting Singapore, believed by many to be impregnable. After a prolonged assault, Singapore fell to the Japanese in February 1942 and Edward was one of about 80,000 British, Indian and Australian troops who became prisoners of war. They joined 50,000 taken prisoner by the Japanese in the earlier Malayan Campaign.

Like thousands of others, Edward was forced to build the Burma-Siam Railway. He died at the Kanyu no 1 Camp on the 12th of June, aged just 27. We will remember Edward and the rest of Purley's wartime community with a small exhibition on the 19th.

To book your place at September's VJ event – please email Jean Chudleigh at jeanchudleigh@btinternet.com.

Berkshire Family History Society

The Society has a number of events coming up in August, two of which are highlighted here. Events are open to members and non-members alike. Full details of all of our events can be found at <https://berksfhs.org/>

Berkshire Family History Society CIO is a registered charity, number 1204390.

Tuesday 12th August – 10.30am - Katesgrove Walkabout with guide Terry Dixon - £5 – pre-booking required

- Bricks, Iron, Sails, Education, Potts & a Meadow



Join Terry Dixon for this walk through Katesgrove, bounded in the north by the Inner Distribution Road, the east by London St and Whitley St, to the south by Waterloo Rise & on the west by the River Kennet. We will cover its history, culture, heritage, industry, people, places, Victorian brickwork, schools & so much more! The walk will end at the Hook and Tackle pub where you can stay for lunch, a drink and a chat, should you so wish.

Image: Kenet Arms, Reading, Graham Horn (cropped)

Thursday 28th August – 2pm - Online Talk “The Extraordinary Life of Vice Admiral Sir John Lawson” by Gill Blanchard - £5 – pre-booking required



John Lawson (1615-1665) is a forgotten hero of the English Civil War: He was an ordinary merchant seaman who navigated his way to become a Vice-Admiral; surviving political intrigue, exile, and imprisonment. Despite his republican beliefs he helped ensure the restoration of the monarchy, for which he was knighted. Lawson's subsequent actions, including establishing a defensive harbour in Tangier, locates his tale within the wider context of England's transformation into a global political and economic power.

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@berksfhs.org) with the details.



PSG PURLEY SUSTAINABILITY GROUP

OUTDOOR COMMUNITY LUNCH

SATURDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER | 12 NOON ONWARDS
MEMORIAL HALL, GLEBE RD, PURLEY ON THAMES

Purley Sustainability Group are delighted to invite you to join us for a community lunch before the Purley Horticultural Show*. We will serve dishes created using produce grown on our allotments.

You can learn more about PSG and see the allotments.

*Show starts at 2.30 pm

www.purleysustainability.co.uk
info@purleysustainability.co.uk

Donations welcome to support other local projects

 Please walk or cycle as **parking** is limited

 If able, please bring a picnic blanket/chair and a reusable cup

PHS Gardening Club & Purley WI

Late Summer Show

Saturday
6th September 2025
2:30 – 4:00pm

(after the PSG Community lunch in the Memorial Hall grounds)

Open to the public
Refreshments available

Purley Memorial Hall
Glebe Road

Show schedules/entry forms available via
www.purleyonthames.org.uk/PHS/
 Closing date 2nd September

Anyone who is a resident of the areas covered by Purley Horticultural Society or a member of Purley Horticultural Society or Purley WI can enter the show, provided they are amateurs, who garden or undertake cookery or handicrafts for pleasure and enjoyment and not for their livelihood. The Show Schedule provides a guide to the rules of entry.

Other Events

**PURLEY
SUSTAINABILITY
GROUP**

Note: this event is
weather dependent

BAT WALK

THURSDAY 18TH SEPT

Join PSG and Wild Tilehurst

All are welcome on this family-friendly guided walk to learn about the bats in the area around the River Thames.

We will have bat detectors with us so we should be able to hear some of the bats.

 **7.00pm – 8.00pm**

 **Meeting Place: Outside Bucknell's Meadow, Mapledurham Drive, Purley on Thames**

Wear comfortable shoes and bring a torch

EMAIL: INFO@PURLEYSUSTAINABILITY.CO.UK TO CONFIRM YOUR PLACE

WWW.PURLEYSUSTAINABILITY.CO.UK

**PURLEY
SUSTAINABILITY
GROUP**

**PSG A12/K4
WINSTON WAY
ALLOTMENTS**

ALLOTMENT

Would you like to join us?

We're seeking volunteers to help maintain and grow our allotments, and we'd love for you to be a part of this exciting project!

Whether you're a gardening pro or just starting, there's a place for you.

We're seeking assistance with planting, weeding, watering, and harvesting fresh produce. It's a great way to learn new skills, be social, keep active and enjoy the outdoors.



What's In It for You?

- Fresh, organic veggies to take home.
- The opportunity to learn about gardening and sustainability.
- A sense of connection with your community.

CONTACT ALI ON 07941514052 OR
JULIE ON 07786 270458
WWW.PURLEYSUSTAINABILITY.CO.UK
INFO@PURLEYSUSTAINABILITY.CO.UK

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