

# NEWSLETTER

December 2025, Issue 98



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



## Introduction

As we approach the end of the year, the Parish Council would like to share a few updates and reminders about local initiatives, opportunities, and community events.

### Small Grants Scheme 2025/26

Purley on Thames Parish Council is pleased to support local groups and organisations through our Small Grants Scheme for 2025/26. Grants are available to help fund projects, initiatives, or essential equipment that benefits the community.

Funding is limited, so please provide as much detail as possible about how the grant will be used. If your request includes multiple elements, please itemise them – partial funding may be available if the full request cannot be met.

Before applying, check the Grants Policy to ensure eligibility. Completed forms and supporting documents must be submitted by **31 January 2026**.

For more information or to apply, contact the Clerk or visit: [www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk/grants/](http://www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk/grants/)

### Allotments - Register Your Interest

Our allotments continue to be a popular way for residents to grow their own produce and enjoy time outdoors. The current waiting list is short, and we are always keen to hear from residents who may be interested in future vacancies. Whether you are an experienced gardener or just starting out, the allotments offer a rewarding way to connect with nature and meet fellow community members.

If you would like to be added to the waiting list or simply want to find out more about what's involved, please get in touch with the Parish Council. We would love to help you get growing!

## **Christmas Market: Join Us for a Festive Day Out!**

We are delighted that the Friends of Purley Barn Christmas Market will be returning this year. The market will take place on 29th November from 10.30am to 3.30pm, and feature a wonderful selection of stalls, festive refreshments, and even the chance to feed a reindeer. It's always a lovely way to mark the beginning of the festive season, and we hope to see many of you there.

I would like to remind all our readers that we do not publish a January Newsletter.

On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to wish all residents a peaceful festive season and a happy, healthy New Year.

*Sharon Way*

*Clerk, Purley on Thames Parish Council*

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## **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](#).

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### **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.

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## **PSG Orchard update**

Around 25 residents gathered in the Memorial Hall on 15th November to hear an update on the Purley Sustainability Group's orchard project in Bucknell's Meadow. Although this project has been in motion for some time, we are thrilled to be moving into the next and very exciting phase, which we hope you and others will be part of. The group heard from Sean Morris, a passionate expert from Blewbury, who generously shared his experience and insights. His talk helped everyone understand what to expect as the orchard develops—and why patience will be key to its long-term success. During the meeting guests also enjoyed some excellent fruit cakes—an early taste of the treats we can look forward to once the orchard is flourishing and producing fruit in years to come.

The meeting was filled with enthusiasm and a strong sense of shared passion for the orchard's future. Residents viewed artists' impressions of the site's future development, a model of the orchard, and information about the fruit trees already purchased.

We are aiming to get planting on 6th December at 10am in Bucknell's Meadow - subject to the delivery of the trees and the weather of course.

Volunteers of all ages\* are warmly welcomed at this event—whether to dig, measure, serve refreshments, or simply provide moral support.

During the meeting, PSG took the opportunity to thank everyone who has helped bring the project to this point. Grants from Purley Parish Council, Purley Park Trust, Veolia, Pangbourne Rotary, along with generous private donations, have made this work possible, supported by the expertise and enthusiasm of many volunteers.

Any queries, please do not hesitate to contact [info@purleysustainability.co.uk](mailto:info@purleysustainability.co.uk)

\*Children must be accompanied by an adult.



## 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](mailto:clerk@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk)

## Local Sports Activities

### Purley on Thames Cricket Club Walking Cricket (the Potterers)



The Potterers were launched in May 2024, with the purpose of offering a form of low impact exercise and social interaction for all over 55 years of age.

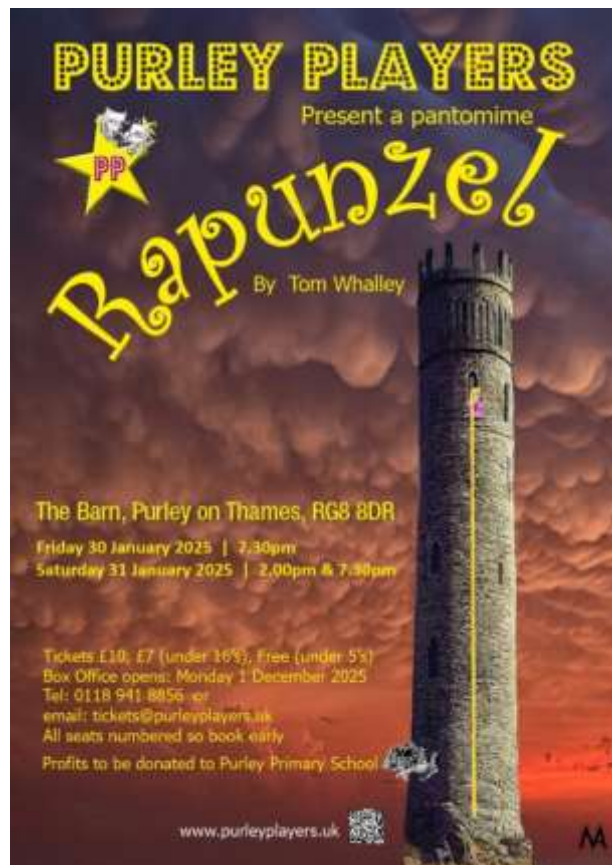
The ethos being L.I.F.E. (Longevity, Inclusion, Friendship and Exercise) and run weekly sessions (indoors in autumn and winter, outdoors throughout spring and summer) as well as friendly matches against other Walking Cricket teams.

Throughout 2025 we have continued to grow and expand our activities - running a Ladies Taster course, social activities including attendance at several Festivals (including the National Walking Cricket Festival at Worcester).

If you want to get involved (or just want to know more) contact Karen on 07849203780

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## Local Club Events







**CHRISTMAS MARKET**

**SAT 29th NOVEMBER 2025**

**10.30AM - 3.30PM**

**FREE ENTRY**

**AT PURLEY BARN and PSSC,  
GOOSECROFT, PURLEY ON THAMES RG8 8BW**

Santa & his Reindeer - Christmas stalls  
Cake - Mulled wine - Refreshments - Games  
Live Music from Pangbourne Silver Band  
Silent Auction - Grand raffle

In aid of Friends of Purley Barn

In association with:

## Other Events

**West Berkshire LIBRARIES**

**Weekly Rhymetimes in all  
West Berkshire libraries**

We have free Rhymetimes for under 5s in all our libraries during term time. Babies and older children welcome too. No need to book – just come along and join in the fun!

- Burghfield Common Library**  
Every Thursday throughout the year, 10.30-11am
- Hungerford Library**  
Every Wednesday throughout the year, 10-10.30am and 11-11.30am
- Lambourn Library**  
Every Friday throughout the year, 11.30am-12pm
- Mortimer Library**  
Tuesdays in term time, 2.30-2.50pm
- Newbury Library**  
Every Tuesday throughout the year, 11am-11.20am
- Pangbourne Library**  
Thursdays in term time, 10-10.30am
- Thatcham Library**  
Mondays in term time, 10-10.20am  
Fridays in term time, 11.15-11.35am
- Theale Library**  
Wednesdays in term time, 11-11.30am

[www.westberks.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/libraries)

**West Berkshire COUNCIL**



## **Friday 9th January 2026 – Rain or Shine Theatre Company “Agatha Appleton and the Peril of the Pyramids”**

7pm, doors open 6.30pm

The Barn, Goosecroft

Tickets £15 (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](http://www.rainorshine.co.uk) (card only)

The Rain or Shine Theatre Company are back, once again hosted by Project Purley.

It's the early 1930s and librarian Agatha Appleton finds herself embroiled in a hilarious Egyptian adventure that will test her courage, her wits, and her heart. Can our hero outsmart her enemies and uncover the mysteries of the ancient world? Or will she fall victim to the deadly traps and curses that guard the Mummy's tomb?

From the team that gave you 'Around The World in 80 Days' and 'Sherlock Holmes and The Music Hall Mystery' comes a good old-fashioned slice of Archaeological adventure heavily laced with our trademark silliness. Join Rain or Shine this Winter for an evening of side-splitting spills and thrills in a theatrical tour-de-force for all the family.

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## Berkshire Family History Society

The Society offers a varied events programme for its members and non-members like. Our face-to-face talks programme will move to their new venue of the Abbey Baptist Church in Abbey Square, Reading (back of Reading Central Library) from January. Here are a few events coming up. Full details of all can be found at <https://berksfhs.org/>

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



### **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> December – 2-3.15pm – Online Talk “Christmas Crackers” by Dr Janet Few - £5 - pre-booking required**

Get into the Christmas spirit with this look back at Christmases past by veteran historian, Dr Janet Few. From Advent to mince pies and mistletoe to yule logs. What are the origins of the traditions that make up our modern Christmas?

This talk takes us on an alphabetical journey of many aspects of Christmas celebrations and considers how our ancestors may have observed Christmas in the past.



### **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December – 2 – 4pm – Online Family History Advice Clinic – FREE - pre-booking required**

Are you just getting started in family history and wanting guidance as to how to proceed? Or are you stuck at a particular “brick wall” and need some help?

These popular family history advice sessions are online, using Zoom. Sessions are 1:1, free of cost and are available to members and non-members alike. You’ll receive help from our experienced research assistants. We’ll provide whatever help and suggestions that we can within the time frame and book a follow-on session with you if needed. Four, 25-minute, 1:1 slots are provided.



### **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January – 2.30pm – Talk - “The Story of Woodley Aerodrome” by Dr Richard Marks - £5 (includes tea or coffee) – pre-booking or pay at the door (venue: Abbey Baptist Church, Abbey Square, Reading, RG1 3BE)**

Join us for a captivating journey into the skies as we explore the remarkable history of Woodley Aerodrome - once a quiet field, later a powerhouse of British aviation. Discover how this Berkshire airfield became home to Miles Aircraft, trained

wartime pilots and even hosted secretive test flights that shaped the future of flight. Image: Alan Wilson, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

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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.



# 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 20<sup>th</sup> 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*