



## Annual Report 2025/26

This report contains a brief summary of the activities of your Parish Council over the last financial year and outlines how we have managed the Parish Council's finances and assets. Join us at the meeting to find out more, ask questions and have your say.

### Annual Parish Meeting Tuesday 28 April 7pm

at the Large Barn, Goosecroft,  
Purley on Thames

#### Guest Speakers

Update on Local Government Reorganisation by:  
Cllr Jeff Brook, Leader of WBC  
Cllr Justin Pemberton, WBC

2025/26 has been a year when a number of the plans made over previous years have started to be implemented.

#### Thanks

First of all the Council would like to thank our three officers; Sharon Way (Clerk) for her support of the Council's activities, Cathy Gainsford (Admin Assistant) for her support to the Planning Committee and Colin Moses (Amenities Officer) for his support of the Barn & Burial Ground and Village Amenities Committees.

Martin Bishop has stepped down from his roles as Parish Councillor and Chairman of the Recreation Committee. I would like to thank him for his time and commitment in ensuring that local residents and visitors have access to a range of sporting and recreational facilities and activities. We are pleased that he continues in the role of Hon. Ground Manager, where his expertise remains invaluable.

The Parish Council would also like to extend our thanks to all the clubs, societies and venues that provide the events that make Purley on Thames such a lovely place to live.



*Purley Village*

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## Major Activities

- A major project was to replace the single domestic supply that fed the whole of the Goosecroft site with a new water supply pipeline that would better serve the increasing demands of the site.
- After some delay we have signed a lease for the additional land to the south of the existing Goosecroft area.
- We are now seeking grants to provide the additional sports facilities to the new area.



***The Milestone  
Before & After***

And we refurbished our village milestone.

*Graham Rolfe  
Chairman of Council*

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## Recreation

The Recreation Committee has had a busy year with a number of significant changes and improvements.

The routine testing and maintenance of playground equipment has confirmed that no areas above low risk have been identified. The oldest playground equipment remains the climbing frame in Bucknell's Meadow, and a replacement will need to be considered in 2027/28.

The Purley Sustainability Group (PSG) has begun the first tranche of planting a community orchard in Bucknell's Meadow, comprising 13 fruit trees, including apple, pear and plum. Further planting will take place in the autumn. The PSG held a wassailing celebration in the spring, which was well attended by villagers and the Scouts.

The Goosecroft Ground Extension Project is progressing well. The lease for the land has now been agreed with the landowner. A working group has been established, bringing together all relevant sporting organisations to explore potential funding and planning opportunities. A major upgrade to improve the water supply and pressure across the entire Goosecroft site has been completed. Following discussions with the Berks and Bucks Football Association regarding funding for the Goosecroft Project, a potential funding source has been identified. This could provide up to £8,000 per annum to support enhanced maintenance of the existing football pitches.



***Planting Fruit Trees at Bucknell's***

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We will continue to support the development of the sport and recreation clubs, with a particular focus on provision for women and girls. Congratulations to Walking Cricket, which is now well established and highly successful.



**Walking Cricket – Men’s & Ladies teams**

*Judy Evans*  
*Chairman of Recreation*

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## **Allotments & Village Amenities**

### **Allotments**

Purley on Thames is very lucky to have their very own allotments, the setting is fabulous with views over the surrounding countryside, with bird song and lots of friendly faces.

Allotments are surprisingly important to local communities; they’re much more than just a plot of land for growing vegetables. They play social, environmental, and even economic roles for many of the people using them.

Our allotments bring people together. They create a shared space where local people can interact, exchange knowledge and build friendships across age groups and cultures.

Working on allotments encourages physical activity and time outdoors, which benefits both physical and mental health. Many people find gardening relaxing and therapeutic; it can reduce stress and improve overall wellbeing. To be able to eat and share the fruit and vegetables you grow must bring so much satisfaction.



**Our Allotments**

More recently, the hedges down at the allotments have been cut back, providing an even better view of the local countryside. A new gate was fitted, this is higher than the last one and hopefully, a deterrent to those who are tempted to climb over it. Fencing has been replaced as have the dripping/leaking taps.

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Purley Primary School have their own small plot at the allotment. A wonderful sight watching some of the children being instructed on how to plant potatoes.

An allotment supports learning beyond the classroom.

Digging planting and watering keeps children active outdoors, helps improve coordination, strength, and overall fitness- without it feeling like “exercise”.

Have you thought of having your own plot, there are a few vacancies, contact the Parish Office and they can talk through the process, cost, availability etc.

An allotment may not change your weekly shop, but it might just change how you feel about the food you eat, time and yourself.

### Litter Picking

The PSG continues to support the village, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of March they will have had their yearly litter pick. Last year they collected over 20 bags of rubbish, will they collect even more this year?

This type of activity is very worthwhile, when local people take part they feel a responsibility for their area, this often leads to a better upkeep of the local area, including reporting of hazards that could affect the community in general.

### Litter/Dog Bins

We have 52 bins sited at various places across Purley, they are emptied weekly, some twice weekly.

### Pikeshaw

This public open space continues to be maintained by the Parish Council, recently we have had issues of fly tipping, rubbish which the council have had to pay to have removed. This area is a beautiful open space, full of trees and shrubs for us all to enjoy.



Pikeshaws

### Speeding

The speed limit in the village is 30mph, something that we all need to remember.

*Maria Abrams*

*Chairman Highways & Footpaths*



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# The Barn & Burial Ground

## Barn and Burial Ground Committee Performance Report April 2025 to March 2026



*The Barn setup for a Wedding Reception*

The Barn and Burial Ground are managed by the Purley on Thames Parish Council to provide affordable facilities for the Village.

I am pleased to report that Barn occupancy by regular weekday clubs is full and that weekend one-off bookings have increased since the previous year.

These facilities are not intended to make vast profits, but obviously it is prudent not to make a loss so that standards can be maintained. I am therefore also pleased to report that a modest profit has been made by both the Barn and Burial Ground facilities, while considerable improvements have been funded and made.

Forward budgeting is planned to keep costs to a minimum and controlled, subject, of course, to the Country's overall economic climate.

### Improvements to The Barn in the Year April 2025 to March 2026

- An additional lit storage facility has been added and the compound area fenced and tidied. Feedback from Barn users has been positive.
- New double-glazed windows have been installed in the Barn. This was much needed as when the old windows were removed, they were found to be in a poor state.
- The cupboard doors in the Large Barn have been repainted. This low-cost remedy has greatly improved the look within the Barn.



*New Storage Facility*

### Planned Improvements to The Barn in the Year April 2026 to March 2027

Funding has been allocated and match funding grants identified so that the Barn Committee may purchase new furniture including chairs, multipurpose screens, tables and table-tidy trolleys.

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## Improvements to The Barn in the Longer term:



*The Barn*

Aspirations are to:

- Improve the lighting in the large Barn
- Review of the PA facility in the Barn
- Keeping the Barn in good condition – application of a preservative coat every 5 years
- Keep the internal decorative standard high.

Detailed funding has yet to be identified for some of these activities.

## The Friends of Purley Barn (FOPB).

I offer grateful thanks to Angela Grindley FOPB Chair and her wonderful team who have raised money to help and support the Barn. So far recently they have supplied:

- new window blinds have been installed to improve the overall venue;
- sundry cutlery, crockery, glasses and kettles;
- a highly successful Christmas Market, complete with Fr and Mrs Christmas, a local Band, Purley Singers and reindeer.

For this we thank Charlotte Allum who for the first time Project Managed the event with help from her many friends.

I am grateful to the Clerk and to Martin Bishop for accompanying me on regular “Burial Ground Tidy” visits.

*Jane Langford*

*Chairman of Barn & Burial Ground*



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## Finance & Governance

The committee meets every month to review current and forecast performance against the budget and to review certain items required by law. It also regularly reviews and makes recommendations to make sure the internal rules and processes of the Council are working efficiently. A major role is to assist the other committees with their planning for long term and large budget items which may be outside the level of their usual annual budget.

### **Finance - how we use 'your' money**

- **Income & Expenditure**

The Council has a legal responsibility to use public money wisely and carefully.

Inflation had started to fall over the year from to 4.5% to 3.75% but recent events may see rates increasing again and the overall picture is one of continued financial turbulence.

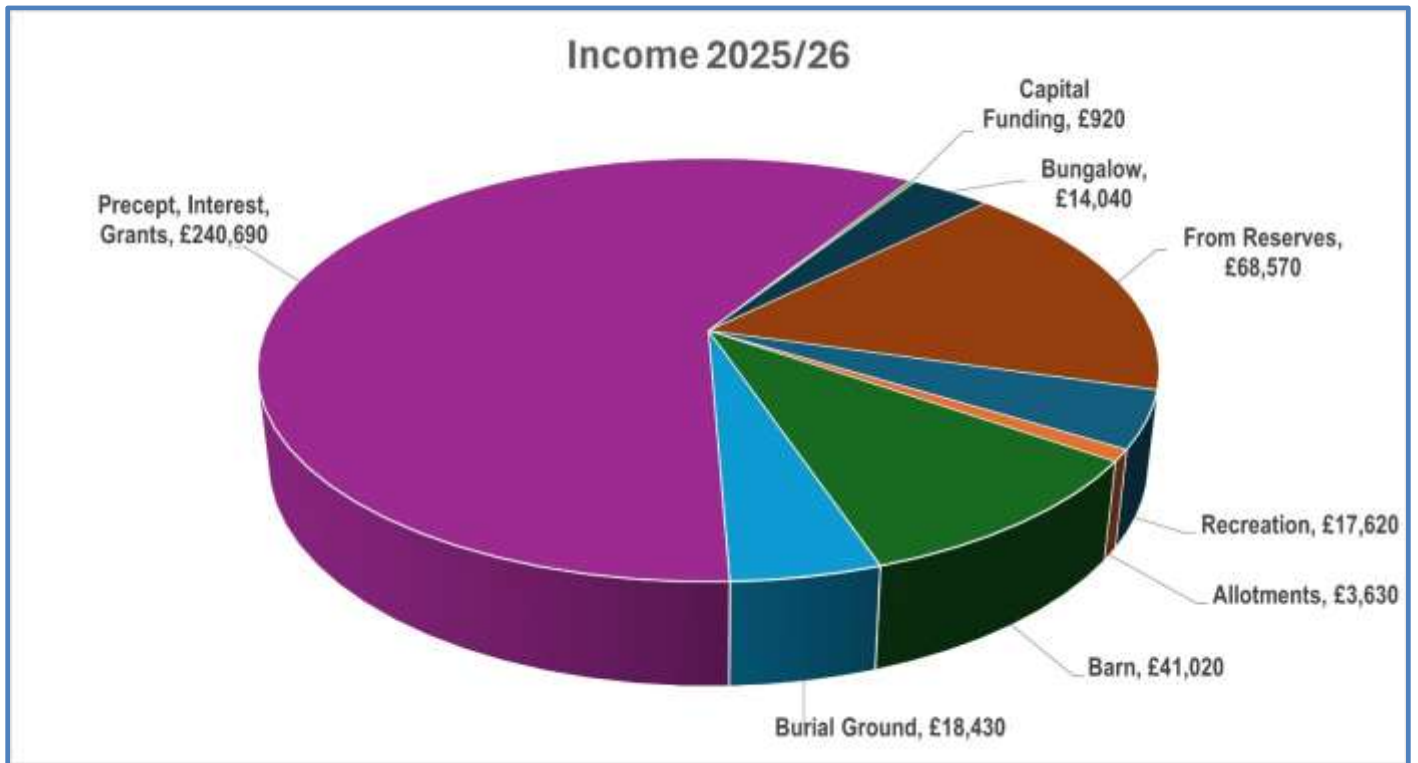
In our budget last year we forecast that outgoings would exceed income by approx. £22,521. Our current forecast for year-end 2025-26 is a much larger overspend of approx. £68,570 due to expenditure on the new water supply Goosecroft. While forecast outgoings (£376,090) are over budget, income has been higher than budgeted by £6,000, largely due to higher than forecast Barn & Burial Ground receipts.

In 2025-26 there was an increase in the precept from £180,000 to £190,000 - an increase of 5.45%. Although inflation is lower than last year, we are still seeing increases of over 5% in construction and maintenance contracts. Therefore, for 2026-27 we have raised the precept to £200,000 which amounts to an annual increase for a band D householder of £5.80, an increase of 6.27%.

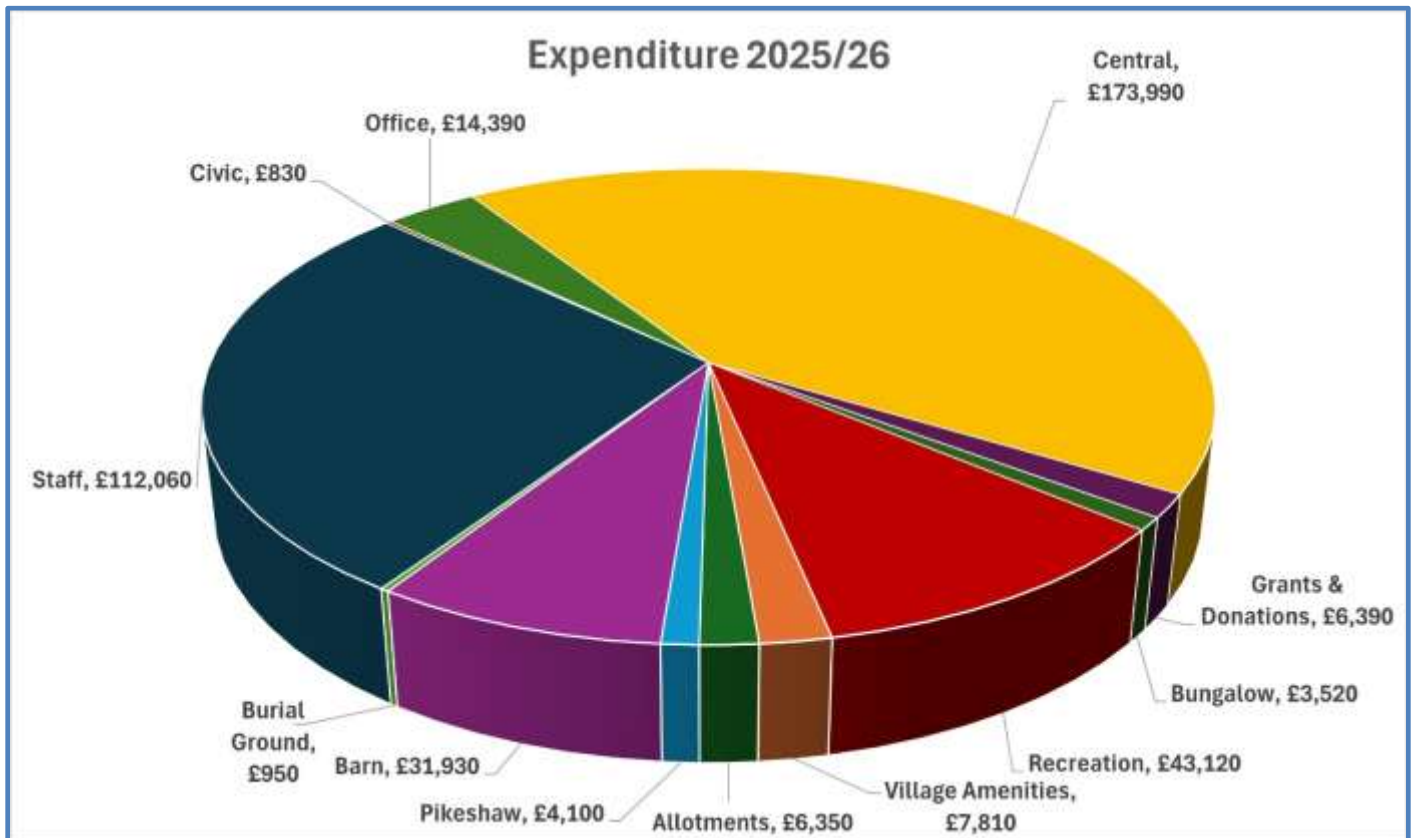
In 2026-27 we forecast to spend £331,080 against a forecast income of £314,605 with the shortfall being met with £26,475 from reserves

These figures are provisional as at 28 February 2026, as our accounts will not be finalised until later in the year.

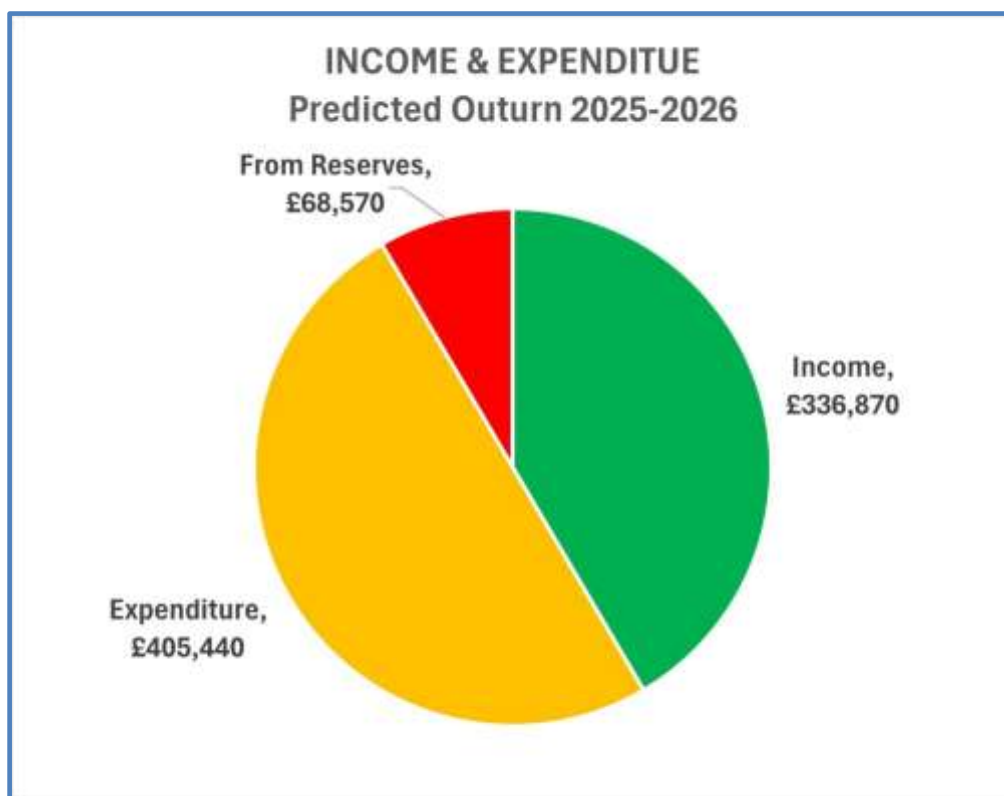
**Figure 1: Operating Income 2025-26:**



**Figure 2: Expenditure 2025-26:**



**Fig. 3: Income & Expenditure 2025-26**



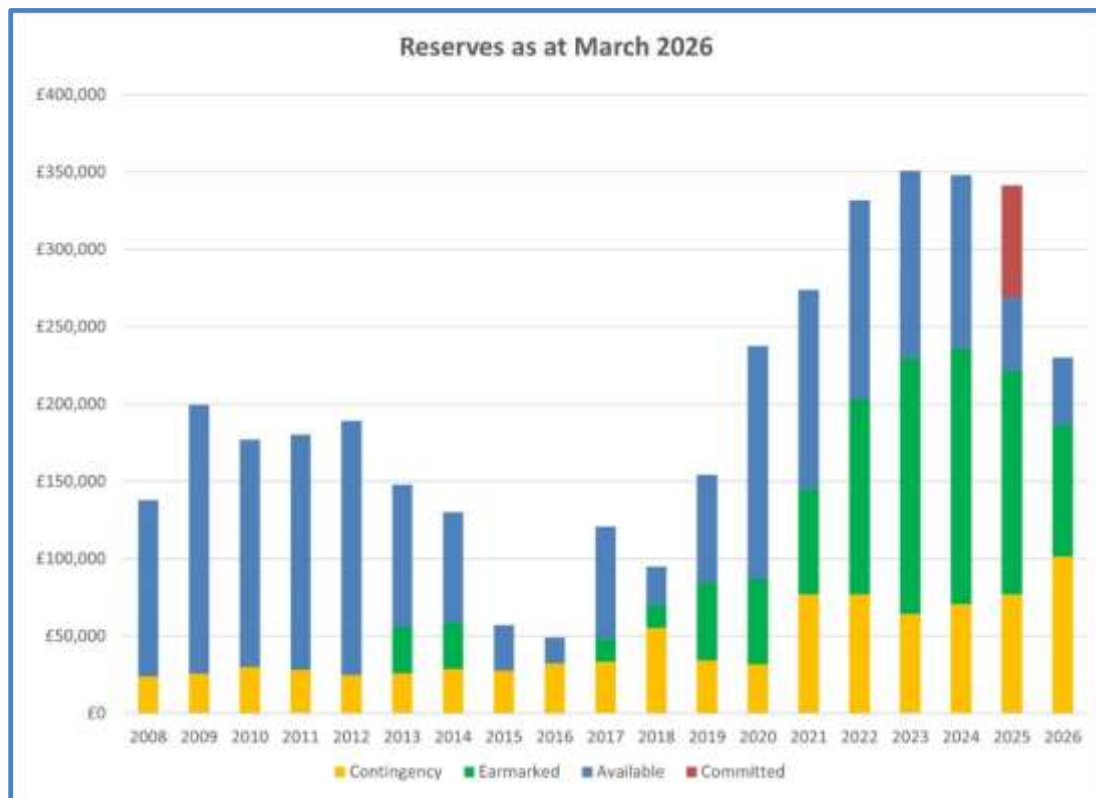
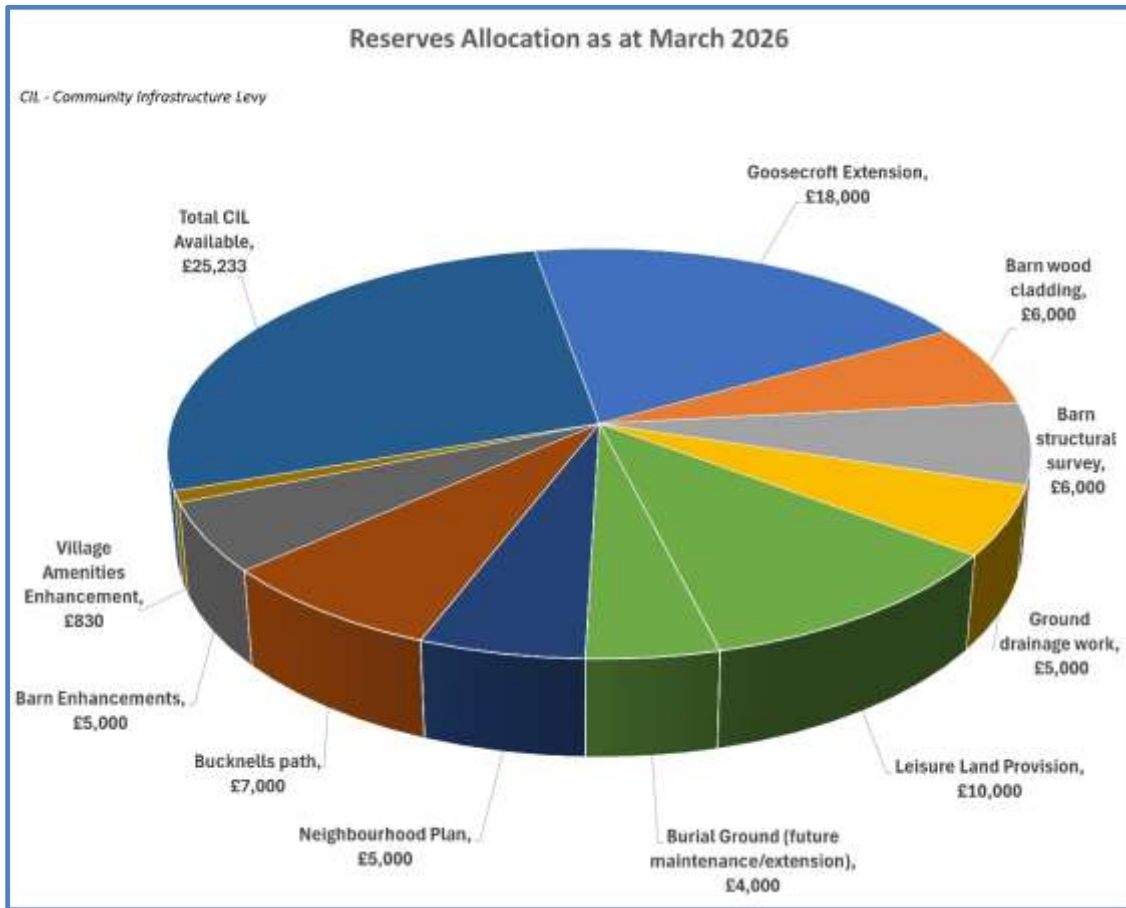
- **Reserves**

The cost of upgrading the Goosecroft water supply has had a major impact on our reserves. To some degree the impact has been reduced by underspending in other areas. While we have completed part of the Goosecroft expansion plans, there is some work that still needs to be undertaken such as providing some additional parking. This will require careful management of reserves and cash flow.

Internally, our committees are now looking at 10 year period to assist in managing reserves and finances.

Our reserves are made up of several components:

- Contingency – reserves, which we set at 25% of our annual forecast expenditure, needed to keep as a cushion against our spending.
- 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 long term projects, additional opportunities and emergencies. It includes monies ring-fenced.
- Committed – funds on projects which are contracted or about to be contracted but not yet invoiced.



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

*Rob Wallace*  
 Chairman of Finance & Governance

## 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 8BW  
Website: [www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk](http://www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk) (lots of contacts and  
information)

Clerk: Sharon Way  
Administrative Assistant: Cathy Gainsford  
Amenities Officer: Colin Moses

## Opening hours


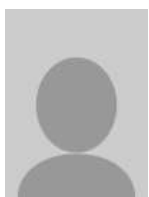
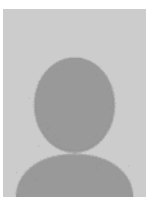

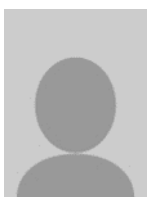





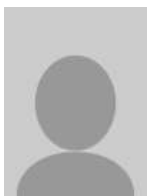
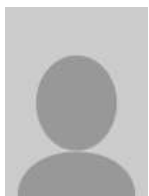
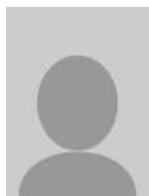



The Parish Office is now open to the public during the following hours:

Monday (except bank Holidays) 9.30am to 2.30pm

Thursday 2.30pm to 5.00pm

Councillors can be available for consultation on Thursday evenings,  
between 4.00pm – 5.00pm, or at other times by appointment.

## Councillors and Staff 2023/24

 <b>Graham Rolfe</b> Chairman 0118 941 7247	 <b>George Nyamie</b> Vice Chairman (via office)	 <b>Judy Evans</b> Chairman Recreation (via office)	 <b>Jane Langford*</b> Chairman Barn (via office)	 <b>Maria Abrams</b> Chairman Highways (via office)	
 <b>Rob Wallace</b> 07958 482968 Chairman Finance	 <b>Pamala Beddoes</b> 0118 941 4186	 <b>Gerald Sillitoe</b> (via office)	 <b>Virginia White</b> (via office)	 <b>Alex Benedict</b> (via office)	
 <b>Larry Grady</b> (via office)	 <b>Angie Grindley</b> (via office)	 <b>Vacancy</b>	 <b>Sharon Way</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 Janine Lewis and Paul Kander.

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## Useful Numbers

### Community Safety:

Police Non-Emergency	101
Lock Keeper (no permanent attendance)	0118 941 7776
Env. Agency General Enquiries (River Thames)	03708 506 506
Emergency/Incident Hotline	0800 80 70 60

### District Council:

West Berkshire Council	01635 551111
West Berkshire Council emergency out of hours	01635 551111
Streetcare	01635 519234

**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 6113
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	<a href="http://www.reading-buses.co.uk">www.reading-buses.co.uk</a>	0118 959 4000
ReadiBus	<a href="http://www.readibus.co.uk">www.readibus.co.uk</a>	0118 931 0000
Carebus		0118 930 4837
First GW Trains	<a href="http://www.gwr.com">www.gwr.com</a>	0345 7000 125
Pangbourne & District Volunteer Centre		0118 984 4586
	<a href="http://www.pangbourne-district-volunteers.org">www.pangbourne-district-volunteers.org</a>	