



NEWSLETTER

April 2026, Issue 101

Introduction

Welcome to this edition of the Parish Council newsletter.

We hope you find the updates below helpful and informative, and we encourage all residents to take part in local events and stay involved in our community.

Annual Parish Meeting

Residents are warmly invited to attend the Annual Parish Meeting, which will take place on Tuesday 28 April at 7pm in the Large Barn at Goosecroft.

This meeting provides an opportunity to hear about the Parish Council's activities over the past year, how local services and facilities are being managed, and to ask questions or raise any matters of interest.

We are also pleased to welcome our guest speakers:

Cllr Jeff Brooks, Leader of West Berkshire Council

Cllr Justin Pemberton, Portfolio Holder, West Berkshire Council

They will provide an update on Local Government Reorganisation.

Water Main Improvement Works – Now Complete

Many of you will have noticed the recent water main improvement works at Goosecroft, which are now complete and full access to the site has been restored.

The works were necessary to upgrade the existing water supply, which had become outdated. The new system will provide a more reliable supply to the various buildings and facilities, helping to support the site well into the future.

Thank you to everyone for your patience and understanding while the works were carried out, particularly during periods of restricted access.

Sharon Way

Clerk, Purley on Thames Parish Council

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.



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

Purley
Horticultural Society

Spring Show

Sat 11th April 2026
2:30 - 4:00 pm

Purley Memorial Hall
Glebe Road

Entry schedules available from Trading Store or
via www.purleyonthames.org.uk/PHS/

Project Purley



Images of Purley: Recent finds an illustrated talk by Catherine Sampson

Friday 17th April

7.30pm

The Large Barn, Goosecroft, Purley on Thames

Members free, non-members £5

Project Purley's archive contains a variety of items, everything from pottery sherds to documents and maps. It documents and preserves the "past" and also the "current" for future generations. This talk focuses on the images and in particular, the most recent "finds" – everything from long gone shops and, businesses to social events. All reveal aspects of Purley's history.

Guests and visitors very welcome. Membership of the Society costs just £26 for two people at the same address or £18 for one person and lasts until the end of December 2026.

Purley on Thames Women's Institute

March 2026

We were pleased to welcome a very good number of members and guests to our Annual General Meeting on 11th March. The meeting began with our usual singing of 'Jerusalem'. Although synonymous with the Women's Institute, it is optional and not all groups begin by singing Jerusalem. This rousing start to our monthly meetings links us to our national organisation and also to all the good works of the women that came before us.

Our President, Marilyn; Secretary, Alison; and Treasurer, Pat presented the annual reports to the members, and it was good to hear summaries of a very successful year. In line with procedure, the current committee then resigned, and the ballot papers for the election of the new committee were presented.

Sadly, Marilyn and Alison had both taken the decision to resign from the Committee this year after graciously giving so much time to our group. The members presented flowers, and Marilyn and Alison were thanked so much for their invaluable contributions to the group. They may think they will have more time, but we know where they live!

Over a very tasty interval of cheese and wine, members took part in a secret ballot to decide upon the new president, and Debra Jennings was duly elected. Debra made a short speech, thanking Marilyn and the members. Pat Roper, who has performed a tremendous job as treasurer, agreed to continue in this role, and the members were extremely pleased and grateful for this. Finally, the committee has appointed Jacquie Powell as secretary for this coming year. Very grateful thanks to Rita, our Teller, and to the members for a very successful and enjoyable meeting.

Looking forward, we have a trip to Lower Bowden Manor next month and a shared Pang Valley W.I. event coming up, as well as our Berkshire A.G.M. at The Abbey School.

Our speaker next month is on the subject of fitness, and we shall be welcoming Ben to guide us. This will be on Wednesday, 8th April, at the Memorial Hall and potential members are very welcome to come along. We hope to see you there!

Jacquie Powell

Secretary. jacquie@purleyonthameswi.org.uk

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

VILLAGE
SINCE  2015
CONCERTS

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

Danni Nicholls
Saturday 25th April 2026



Singer-songwriter Danni Nicholls' style has been described as "smoky soul, folk-pop and heart-wrenching alt-country, all in a rich voice" & she has recently received three consecutive America Music Association UK award nominations. Over the past few years, Danni has played shows with the likes of Shakin' Stevens, Lucinda Williams, Sturgill Simpson, The Secret Sisters and notables. and been invited to perform at festivals around the world including Cambridge Folk, Folk Alliance International and AmericanaFest, Nashville.

"One in a Million" – Maverick Music Magazine



Luke Concannon
Saturday 2nd October 2026

Lead singer and co-writer with No1 chart act Nizlopi (best known for the JCB Song) who deeply influenced a young Ed Sheeran; Luke is now a solo artist and Songwriting Coach, helping songwriters realise their full potential as artists making a positive difference in the world. Having previously hosted one half of Nizlopi (John Parker who played double bass with Chris Fox), we are super excited to welcome Luke Concannon to Village Concerts in October 2026!

*"Luke is one of my three main heroes along with Van Morrison and Damien Rice" —
Ed Sheeran*

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

Events with Berkshire Family History Society

As usual, events are open to members and non-members alike. Full details of all can be found at <https://berksfhs.org/> and you can also book tickets here. Berkshire Family History Society CIO is a registered charity, number 1204390.



Image courtesy of Jim Bradshaw (cropped)

Thursday 16th April 2.30 – 3.45pm – Talk – “The Shops, Trades and Businesses of Pangbourne” by Ellie Thorne - £5 – pre-book or pay at the door, Abbey Baptist Church, Abbey Square, Reading RG1 3BE

Discover Pangbourne’s varied shops and businesses in this image rich talk and how they have changed over the last two centuries.



Monday 20th April 2 – 4pm – Online Advice Sessions – Free – pre-booking required (Zoom)

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, 1:1, free of cost and 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 slot are provided.



Image: Irid Escent, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons (cropped)

Thursday 23rd April 2 – 3.15pm – Online Talk – Stories near your feet in Reading Old Cemetery with Prof. Yota Dimitriadi - £5 – pre-booking required (Zoom)

From grand Victorian monuments to forgotten unmarked graves, each plot in Reading’s old cemetery holds a story. Hear about the cemetery, its occupants and how the Reading Old Cemetery Undertaking Project is remembering them.



**PURLEY
SUSTAINABILITY
GROUP**

**Wild
Tilehurst**




Toad Patrol Talk and Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 15th April 2026

7.00pm – 9.00pm

The Memorial Hall, Glebe Road, Purley on Thames, RG8 8DP

Hear stories from the Orchard, celebrate past achievements, and discover exciting plans for future projects. We'll also be joined by Wild Tilehurst, who will be sharing insights about their Toad Patrol work — all while you enjoy cheese and wine

 www.purleysustainability.co.uk
 info@purleysustainability.co.uk
 Facebook – Purley Sustainability Group

www.wildtilehurst.org.uk

All welcome

PLACES AVAILABLE

NURSERY CLASS (3+)
 MON&TUES 8.50-3.20
 THURS AND FRI 8.50-1
 RECEPTION CLASS:
 SEPTEMBER 2026

PURLEY C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL
 LEARN TO LOVE, LOVE TO LEARN

JOIN THE PURLEY SCHOOL FAMILY

Visit our small, nurturing village school - where every child shines.



purleyschool.co.uk 0118 9842384
office@purley.w-berks.sch.uk
[purleyceprimaryschool](https://www.facebook.com/purleyceprimaryschool)



Purley Sustainability Group

Supporting School Students Through Practical Skills

Recently, PSG had the pleasure of spending time at Little Heath School working with Year 9 Technology students on a woodwork activity focused on creativity, reuse, and practical skills.

The session centred on using reclaimed materials and everyday items to create something useful, encouraging students to think carefully about how objects that might otherwise be thrown away can be given a new purpose. After just two hours of teamwork and creativity, the students had successfully built benches that will soon be used in the school's new garden.

The first part of the session focused on tool safety, with students learning how to handle tools responsibly and why safety is so important when working with equipment. It was encouraging to see how quickly the students took these lessons seriously and supported one another in using the tools properly.

Another important theme of the day was collaboration. Students shared ideas, helped each other solve problems, and celebrated the progress of their projects together. It was wonderful to see how teamwork not only made the work easier but also made the whole experience more enjoyable. There was even a little friendly competition along the way.

Activities like this help young people develop practical skills, creativity, and an appreciation for sustainability — values that sit at the heart of what PSG is all about. By learning how to reuse materials and work safely with tools, students build confidence while also understanding the importance of caring for the resources around them.

It was a rewarding experience to be part of the day and to witness the enthusiasm and imagination the students brought to their work. We look forward to returning in a few weeks to work with them again.

PSG would also be delighted to support similar activities in other schools, so please do get in touch if PSG can help.

Dates for the diary:

Repair Café – Saturday 11th April 3pm to 5pm at The Mad Duck, Wintringham Way.

Recycling/ Terracycle – Sunday 12th April at 7 Beech Road.

Toad Patrol Talk with Wild Tilehurst and PSG AGM – Wednesday 15th April 7pm at the Memorial Hall, Glebe Road, join PSG for Cheese and Wine.

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 events.

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