



Purley on Thames Parish Council

NEWSLETTER

December 2018, issue 22

Parish Council matters

Parish Office hours over the Christmas period

The Parish Office will be closed from Friday 21 December until 9.30am on Thursday 3 January 2019 when it will open at 9.30am as normal.

This means neither officers nor councillors will be available during public hours on Monday 24, Thursday 27, and Monday 31 December. Officers will, however, be monitoring e-mails and telephone messages over the Christmas period in order to deal with anything urgent.

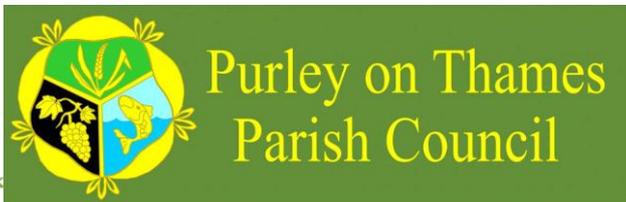
*The Parish Councillors and Officers wish
everyone in Purley on Thames a
Happy Christmas and
all the very best for the New Year!*



Parish Council elections

Although councillors may be elected or co-opted to fill spaces between election years, next year – May 2019 – is when the next full Parish Council election will be held. Very sadly, there is currently a vacancy for a councillor on Purley on Thames Parish Council which will need to be filled at the elections. An advert and more information will be issued in the New Year.

If you might be interested in standing as a Parish Councillor at the elections in May, please e-mail either the Parish Council Chairman - sue.briscoe@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk - or the Clerk - clerk@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk



Purley on Thames Parish Council

West Berkshire Council

This year, West Berkshire Council (WBC) is running a recycling collection for real Christmas trees, even for those residents who do not subscribe to the garden waste service. If you have a real Christmas tree, you can simply leave it with your recycling on the scheduled collection day up until Friday 18 January 2019. All pots, decorations, and lights must be removed from the tree.

2018/19 Christmas and New Year collection dates will be as follows:

Monday 24 December will be collected as normal on Monday 24 December

Tuesday 25 December will be collected on Thursday 27 December

Wednesday 26 December will be collected on Friday 28 December

Thursday 27 December will be collected on Saturday 29 December

Friday 28 December will be collected on Monday 31 December

Monday 31 December will be collected on Wednesday 2 January 2019

Tuesday 1 January will be collected on Thursday 3 January

Wednesday 2 January will be collected on Friday 4 January

Thursday 3 January will be collected on Saturday 5 January

Friday 4 January will be collected on Monday 7 January

Monday 7 January will be collected on Tuesday 8 January

Tuesday 8 January will be collected on Wednesday 9 January

Wednesday 9 January will be collected on Thursday 10 January

Thursday 10 January will be collected on Friday 11 January

Friday 11 January will be collected on Saturday 12 January

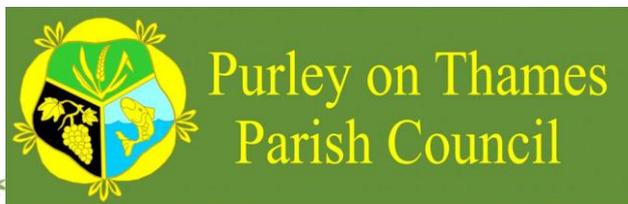
Collections will return to normal from Monday 14 January 2019.

Purley Post Office

At around 9.40am on Thursday 6 December, a large amount of cash was stolen from the Post Office on Purley Rise when two men who claimed to have a gun forced a member of staff to the floor and demanded the keys to the safe – fortunately, the staff member was not hurt.

A description of the two men can be found [here](#).

If you were in the area around that time on 6 December and saw anything which might help the police investigate, please call 101 quoting the reference 43180373065. Alternatively, reports may be made anonymously by calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.



Parish Council Grants

The deadline for grant applications is 31 December 2018. All applications will be considered by the Grants Advisory Group in January 2019, and a recommendation will be made to Council for approval at its February meeting. Applicants will be contacted after that and advised whether their application has been successful, and Grants payments will be made by the end of April 2019.

The criteria and an application form are available on the Parish Council web site - <http://www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk/grants-for-201718/>

In unusual circumstances, grants may be awarded outside of the usual process, provided there are sufficient funds in the allocated budget. One such grant was awarded at the December meeting of the Parish Council, when it was agreed that the "Purley Residents Support Group" may have up to £200.00 to spend on producing a flyer to be delivered to all households in Purley on Thames. The grant was made outside of the usual process as the flyers need to be delivered before the end of January 2019. Look out for your flyer, it should be delivered early in the new year!

Since being awarded the grant, the group has, however, succeeded in raising funds independently and will actually need only around £30.00 to help with the cost of the flyers for its first event in January 2019. This leaves £3,980.00 in the grant "pot" for 2018/19 (although not all the money has to be allocated).

Salt bins

Now the weather's becoming colder, please do contact the Parish Office to let us know if you notice the salt in any of the bins needs topping up.

Tilehurst station

For some time now, users of Tilehurst station have been raising a need for better access at Tilehurst station, and Great Western Railway (GRW) has now included the station in its bid for government money from the Access for All fund.

The Access for All fund was launched in 2006 and has installed accessible, step-free routes at over 200 station, while around a further 1,500 stations have benefited from smaller scale access improvement.

The bid for improved access at Tilehurst, particularly for the disabled, elderly and those with young children, is being formally supported by the local MP, Alok Sharma.

More information may be found in [this article](#) by the Reading Chronicle.



Village matters

Volunteering opportunity

From time to time, some roads and houses in the lower village flood. When this happens, the volunteer flood wardens put on their wellies or waders and help people cope with the situation. Those who are unsteady on their feet or housebound really welcome a friendly face and someone making sure they don't run out of food.

Our weather is notoriously changeable so it's hard to predict when flooding might occur – floods certainly don't happen every year but, when they do, they usually last a week or two so it's important to have plenty of wardens available to help as and when needed. It's not a difficult or dangerous role but it is an important and rewarding one, and it's something you can do to help in the community.

If you would like to know more or are interested in joining the volunteer flood wardens, please contact the Parish Office.

David Briscoe
Flood Warden Co-ordinator

Bench to commemorate the WWI Armistice

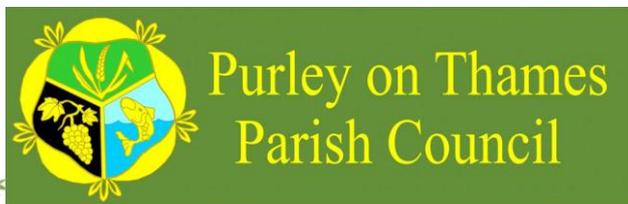
Many thanks to everyone who made a donation through Crowdfunding for a "Lest We Forget" bench to mark the centenary of the ceasing of hostilities at the end of the First World War.

The money has been raised and the bench is now on order. It will be located at the Memorial Hall in Glebe Road, and we'll give further updates early in 2019.



Cash back scam

Problems have been reported recently of cash back amounts being added to people's shopping bills, particularly in larger stores. If you're using your credit card to buy supplies and presents over the Christmas period, it's worth checking the receipt to make sure no extra amounts have been included.



Community Conversation

On Monday 21 January, Purley Residents Support Group, in conjunction with West Berkshire Council and Thames Valley Police and with the support of the Parish Council, will be holding a Community Conversation at Purley Primary School between 7.00pm (please arrive by 6.45pm) and 8.00pm. This event offers an informal but structured meeting where residents can identify the issues they care about in the village including what they are proud of and what they think could be better. A number of residents have raised very particular concerns about witnessing drug dealing in the lower village and they will have the opportunity to raise this issue with the authorities directly on 21 January.

Residents in the lower village will receive flyers through their doors for this initial event but residents from other areas of the village are welcome to attend. For more details, email PRSCPurley@aol.com

Feeding swans

“Bin the bread” was a highly successful campaign launched by the charity, Swan Lifeline (www.swanlifeline.org.uk/), in the aim of discouraging people from feeding bread to swans. Unfortunately, one effect of this was to make many people simply stop feeding swans and other waterfowl at all, with the result that there’s been a dramatic increase in underweight and dying birds around the area, as well as increased in numbers of starving swans wandering on to roads in search of food.

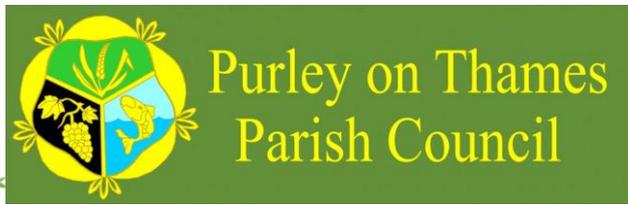
The Swan Support rescue centre in the Thames Valley (www.swansupport.org.uk/) and the Queen’s swan guard are now asking that the public starts giving bread to swans again. They say there is “no good reason” not to and, although bread’s not the ideal food, it will do no harm in moderation and will certainly be better than feeding them nothing at all.

Of course, swans (and ducks and geese) do ideally need a variety of foods to keep them fit and healthy, and other suggested foodstuffs include wheat, leafy greens, dried grass, grains and cereals, frozen peas, porridge oats, and swan food or pellets.

If you don’t have any of those to hand, though, bread (fresh, not stale or mouldy) might not be the healthiest choice but it will at least keep them alive, particularly over the cold, winter months.

So, next time you go to the river, why not take some food for the birds with you. Let’s hope feeding swans and ducks will once again become a pastime enjoyed by many families.

More information about this issue may be found [here](#)



Drews the Ironmongers, Caversham Road

It's with sadness that we share the news that Drews will be closing after Christmas. The announcement on the company's Facebook page - www.facebook.com/DrewsTheIronmongers - said "We are sad to tell you that we will be closing the store after Christmas. We have traded in Reading for 87 years but unfortunately the costs of running a "bricks and mortar" retail store in a world now dominated by internet merchants mean that it is no longer a viable business. We are closing with the loss of 26 jobs."

Any remaining stock is discounted, and the first of the fixtures and fittings were also put up for sale in late November.

Local news and events

Reading's first Living Advent Calendar started on Saturday 1 December with Flashmob Carol Concerts at various venues around the town, followed by Pop-up Music Culture at two locations in the afternoon. There will be different events ranging from singalongs to craft workshops, from wicked and naughty shows to traditional family entertainment and festive shopping experiences every day until 24 December. The events are free although there will be the chance to buy a ticket for the Living Advent raffle – all money raised will be given to three local charities, Homestart, Readifood and Reading Samaritans.

More information about the events and raffle are available on the web site - <http://www.magicalreading.co.uk/project/readings-living-advent-calendar/>



Information about local events may be found on the "What's On" page of the Parish Council web – www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk/whats-on/

Contact

Please see the Parish Council web site – www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk – for more information on local issues,

To contact us, please call 0118 984 4507, or e-mail asstclerk@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk. You are also welcome to come and see us during the following office public hours:

Monday	2.30pm to 6.30pm
Thursday	9.30am to 2.30pm



If you know of anyone who might like to receive this Parish Council Newsletter, please ask them to notify asstclerk@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk giving the e-mail address they'd like us to use.