

NEWSLETTER

October 2017, issue 8

Parish Council matters

As Autumn is the time for tidying up your garden, please could I ask you to check any trees or shrubs which may be overhanging your boundary onto a pavement or road? We receive frequent complaints that it is difficult to walk on our pavements because of foliage encroaching from adjacent properties. Some of our local road signs are also hidden by trees. West Berkshire Highways department has told us that they cannot cut back plants that originate in a private garden so please check you don't have any offending trees!

And now, some good news regarding recreation space! Over the last thirty to forty years, the population of Purley on Thames has increased faster than the Parish Council could provide recreation space. We are now pleased to announce that, thanks to the co-operation of Sulham Estate, agreement has been reached for the Council to lease another six acres adjacent to the present Goosecroft Recreation Ground. We have just about to submit a planning application for change of use for this land from agricultural to recreation and hope that if all goes well we will be able to provide another two football pitches or another cricket ground within about two years. I will let you know how we progress with this.

Sue Briscoe
Chair of Purley on Thames Parish Council

Chairman's Reception

The 2017 Chairman's Reception was held in the Small Hall of the Barn at Goosecroft on the evening of Monday 23 October.

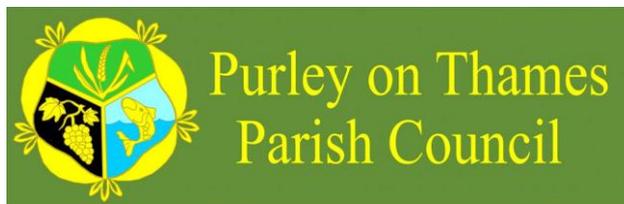
This year's event was extremely well attended perhaps because of the huge popularity of John Devine, the well-deserved recipient of the 2017 Villager of the Year award; the committees of both Purley Horticultural Society and Purley Memorial Hall were present to see Sue Briscoe present John with his award.



New Amenities Officer

Welcome to Colin Moses, who joined us as Amenities Officer for the Parish Council on Monday 23 October. Like the Clerk and Assistant Clerk, the Amenities Officer is a part-time role based in the Parish Office – although you might well also see Colin out and about checking playground equipment, footpaths, and so on.

If you'd like to speak to any of the officers, our contact details are at the end of this Newsletter.



Pikeshaw

Pikeshaw is a small “wild” area of woodland owned by the Parish Council and intended for peaceful leisure of all local residents. It is kept as natural as possible and small wildlife is encouraged to flourish in its environment. Pikeshaw is bounded by Orchard Close, Highfield Road, Apple Close, The Hydes and Huscarle Way. Footpaths also form part of the boundary and one of the three entrances is from Footpath 5/Huscarle Way.

It’s been a busy few weeks at Pikeshaw. In late September, just after last month’s issue of this Newsletter had been sent out, we had a call from a parishioner letting us know there was a homeless man living by Pikeshaw Woods. The man was quickly reunited with his family, but there was a great deal of rotting food, human waste and general litter left all around the area; the situation wasn’t helped by people using the general mess as an excuse to fly-tip. We reported the problem to West Berkshire Environmental Health, but most of the debris was cleared by the Amenities Officer.

Also at Pikeshaw, during high winds a branch from one of the trees fell into a neighbouring garden – happily, no damage was done but we did have to arrange for the fallen branch to be removed and also for work to be done to make other branches on the tree safe.

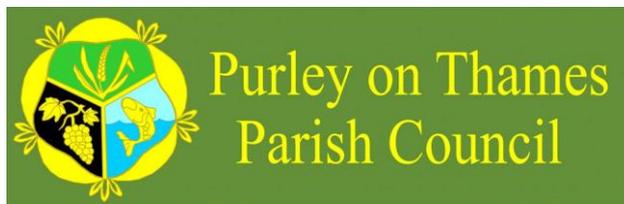
Although the woodland at Pikeshaw is owned by the Parish, all the trees in Pikeshaw are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) issued by West Berkshire Council (WBC). This means the Parish Council has to manage the trees via a tree surgeon who assesses and monitors them regularly, and carries out work as necessary. The tree surgeon had to inspect the damaged tree and make a recommendation to WBC and only after WBC had agreed the work could the risky branches be made safe.

If you have any branches from Pikeshaw trees overhanging your garden, you can apply to WBC direct for permission to cut them back. The Tree Protection Officer is Arthur Cullen – arthur.cullen@westberks.gov.uk – but, please note, trees must not be touched before the necessary permissions have been granted.

Allotments

All the 2017/18 invoices for annual rent of allotments have now been sent out, and payments are coming in.

This year, we’re in the very unusual situation of having one or two empty half plots at the allotments! This is a golden opportunity for anyone who’s felt the appeal of “The Good Life” and would like to try growing their own fruit and veg. If you’re interested, please contact the Parish Office for further information.



Barn kitchens

Work on fitting the new kitchen areas in each hall of the Barn has been completed. The walls and woodwork – including the new stable doors – have also been painted so the serveries are looking very smart indeed now.

Thank you to everyone involved in organising this work.

Thames Valley Police

Thames Valley Police has advised that, at this time of year when the clocks go back, there is typically an increase in the number of homes broken into and burgled. The basic advice is to:

- Close and lock all doors and windows when going to bed;
- Register your valuables with www.immobilise.com and keep valuables out of sight;
- Invest in a light timer switch to make it less obvious when you're out;
- Receive crime updates by signing up to www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk



A summary version of the Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley's new Police Crime Plan has been published. It details the five strategic priorities for policing and crime for the next five years.

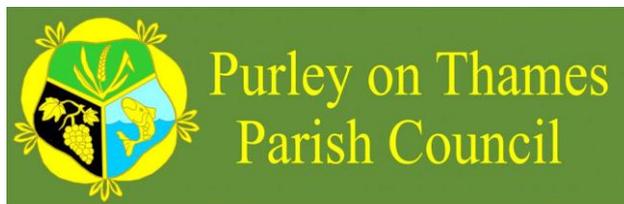
The summary is available under "Useful Links" at the bottom of the home page of the Parish Council's web site - <http://www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk/>

M4 Junctions 12 to 13 Bridge Refurbishment

Maintenance work to bridges which carry the M4 over the B4009 Hampstead Norreys Road near Hermitage, Brocks Lane near Frilsham, and Burnt Hill Road has started. This means there will be full closures of the M4 east and west bound carriageways between junctions 12 and 13 from 9.00pm on Friday to 5.00pm on Monday on the following weekends:

Friday 24 to Monday 27 November 2017;
Friday 8 to Monday 11 December;
Friday 15 to Monday 18 December;
Friday 12 to Monday 15 January 2018;
Friday 19 to Monday 22 January (contingency).

There will be a clearly signed diversion via the A4 (through Newbury, Thatcham and Woolhampton), but significant delays are likely over these weekends. Further information is available on the Highways England web site – www.highways.gov.uk/roads – and queries should be made to 0300 123 5000, e-mail info@highwaysengland.co.uk.



Village matters

Purley Primary School

Purley on Thames Church of England Primary School - www.purleyprimaryschool.co.uk - is seeking someone with strong business links and connections to the local economy to become a new governor. School governors play a vital part in developing communities and Purley Primary School is a growing school with an exciting future. The governing board is professional and committed, and its key aim is to meet the needs of all children as individuals. A wide range of training is available through West Berkshire Council as well as support from existing governors.

If you are interested in this opportunity, have time to attend meetings (roughly two per half term) and occasionally visit the school during the day, please contact Fran Jones, Clerk to the Governors - fjones@purley.w-berks.sch.uk - or ring the school office on 0118 984 2384.



On the evening of Sunday 5 November, there will be a Firework Fiesta by Mapledurham Lock. The event is being organised by Purley Primary School Parent Teacher Association (FOPS) with support from members of the local community, including Tim Metcalfe and Mapledurham Estate, and all proceeds will go to Purley Primary School.

Further information and tickets are available online at www.thamesidefireworkfiesta.org

What's On in Purley on Thames

A new "What's On" page has been added to the Parish Council web site; it's on the drop down menu under the "Local Information" tab at the top of the site - the link is <http://www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk/whats-on/>. This page is intended to list events taking place in and around the village - it may not be used to advertise businesses.

Contact

For further information on matters raised here and other local issues, please see the Parish Council web site – www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk.

If you would like to contact the officers, you are welcome to come and see us during office public hours: Monday from 2.30pm to 6.30pm; Thursday from 9.30am to 2.30pm. Alternatively, our telephone number is 0118 984 4507, or you may e-mail us:

- Clerk – clerk@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk
- Assistant Clerk – asstclerk@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk
- Amenities Officer – amenities@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk