

NEWSLETTER

September 2018, issue 19

Parish Council matters

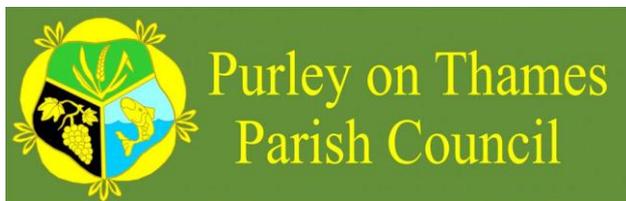
Earlier in the year we asked for nominations for Purley's Villager of the Year 2018. This award recognises any parishioner for making an identifiable, individual contribution to all or part of the community over a year or more. It's intended to thank those who contribute to the "greater good" of Purley on Thames. A number of nominations were received and a panel of local people selected the winner. I am now pleased to announce that the 2018 Villager of the Year is Christine Mackie.

Christine was nominated as someone who has contributed to improving the lives of many in Purley. Although most of Christine's work has its roots at St Mary's Church, she has also supported people of any faith or no faith. She set up and ran Oasis, a group for mums and their pre-school children, and also helped at the baby clinic in the church hall. St Mary's is a part of Reading Foodbank and Christine's efforts to ensure local families in need received food aid have been invaluable. She's also been a regular volunteer at Purley Park Trust, working with the residents. Overall, Christine has been a kind and supportive friend to many and recognition of this is well-deserved. She will be presented with her award at the Chairman's Reception in October.

Our other "good news" is that the Purley on Thames Village Plan is now finished and, when it's been approved by West Berkshire District Council, will be distributed to every household in Purley. Thank you to those who have already offered to help deliver the Village Plan – if anyone else would like to volunteer, please contact purleyvillageplan@gmail.com.

Each home in Purley will receive a hard copy of the Village Plan free of charge. Local companies are advertising in it, and are paying for inclusion via the Good Exchange, formerly Greenham Common Trust. All the payments are being match-funded and the money raised is going towards covering the costs of printing. If you feel that you too would like to make a contribution, please go to app.thegoodexchange.com and search for Purley Village Plan – the amount you give will be matched. Thank you.

Sue Briscoe
Chair of Thames Parish Council



Community Conversation

District Councillors and our MP, Alok Sharma, have recently been approached by a number of residents who are concerned about the current level of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and minor crime in the Purley. This is particularly in the lower village and at the Goosecroft Recreation Ground.

Two initiatives have been immediately started. WBC and police have met with a representative group of residents to begin the process of “community conversation” – a series of sessions where villagers work with relevant agencies to devise an action plan that both residents and agencies perform to try and address the problems. Also, Alok Sharma MP organised a public meeting on 20 September, with the council and police in attendance, to allow people to air their views, raise particular issues they have experienced and get them noted for action. Hopefully these two initiatives will merge to form a good plan of action.

At the public meeting, many other issues were raised, not all to do with ASB and crime. Parking and speeding were also raised frequently as worrying residents.

Councillors and council officers will work to support the community in the conversation events and follow up, and the issues raised at the public meeting will be included in the discussions and actions. We clearly need to analyse the root causes of the problems, as well as trying to reduce the impact of the symptoms being displayed. The aim is obviously to get to a position where people feel safer and more assured.

Rick Jones
Parish and District Councillor

West Berkshire Council

Electoral Registration Forms were sent out several weeks ago and, although many people have already responded, over 34% of the forms have yet to be completed and returned.

Information from the forms is used to keep the electoral register up-to date and to ensure that all who are entitled are registered. Completing the form is not only important, it is a legal requirement. If no response is received, WBC is legally bound to send out at least one reminder, so please do make sure your completed form is returned as soon as possible.

Replies may be submitted on the paper form, online, via text or by telephone. If you have any queries about returning your form, please call the helpline on 01635 519464 or e-mail electoralservices@westberks.gov.uk

Travellers

Unfortunately, there is still a very high level of traveller activity in the area. Last week there were caravans on the A329 by Norcot Roundabout, and also an incident at Brock Keep in Reading when an art exhibition had to be cancelled because a small group of travellers set up camp in the car park and were reported to be “intimidating”.

On Friday 21 September, a large group of caravans moved on to Pangbourne Meadows. Pangbourne Parish Council served notice on the travellers on Saturday, and they had moved on by noon on Sunday, following which there were reports of an unauthorised camp on the Engfield Estate in Tidmarsh – notice was served and the travellers left on Tuesday.

This is thought to be a different group of travellers from the one in the Pangbourne and Tidmarsh with Sulham last June, and there have been unconfirmed reports of some aggressive behaviour, so please do be cautious if you are in the area.

A new height-restricting barrier has now been fitted at the entrance to the Goosecroft Recreation Ground, and it will be deployed to prevent unauthorised access by travellers. The Parish Council is, however, aware of the need to allow permitted use of the facilities – users of the Barn, playground, recreation areas and Burial Ground, as well as deliveries and members of Purley Sports and Social Club, all need to be considered.

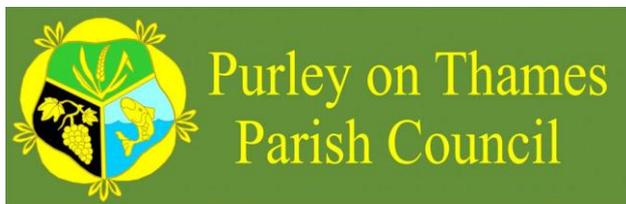
New height-restricting barrier on Goosecroft Lane



Allotments

The office has been very busy over the past month or so and, unfortunately, it has not been possible to send out all the invoices for annual rent of allotment plots yet. If you are an allotment holder, please bear with us, invoices will be sent out as soon as possible.

Also, as a reminder, if you’re interested in taking on an allotment, please contact the Assistant Clerk.



Scam mail

Royal Mail is trying to raise awareness of scam mail in the local community.

Scam mail is illegal, targets the most vulnerable in society and can be very distressing. Typically, it involves professional fraudsters sending convincing letters designed to trick people out of money or valuables. Scam mail is not normal advertising mail and can include bogus competitions and fake prize draws. Most of it originates from overseas which makes it hard to detect, but Royal Mail is working with other national and international postal operators to share intelligence and take steps to prevent scam mail entering the UK. It is also working with postmen and women, industry partners and law enforcement agencies, including Trading Standards, to tackle the problem.

Anyone can be a recipient of scam mail. If you are concerned that someone you know is receiving large amounts of post and is sending money in response to it, you can report it by:

- writing to Royal Mail at FREEPOST SCAM MAIL, enclosing any suspicious items;
- calling the Royal Mail Scam Mail Helpline on 0800 0113 466; or
- e-mailing scam.mail@royalmail.com

For more information on scams and how you can be involved in preventing them, please visit www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk

Centenary of the WWI Armistice

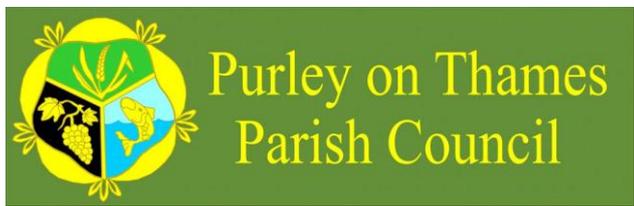
To mark the Armistice Centenary, some special events are being planned in Purley on Thames, and a programme of activities will be delivered to each household by early October.

The first event will be held by Singing for Fun in St Mary's Church on Friday 5 October at 7.30pm. A poignant Memorial Trail (self-guided with instructions) will lead residents through the village and events are also planned for the half-term week.

On the weekend of 3 and 4 November, the Parish Council is sponsoring "Purley Remembers the First World War", to be held in the Barn at Goosecroft. It will include a range of talks, exhibitions, workshops, stands, and a display of the poppies made by local groups, schools and people.

On Armistice Day, 11 November, a Service of Remembrance will take place at 10.30am in the Memorial Hall and, in the evening, Purley will join the National Tribute by gathering at St Mary's Church from 6.30pm as Purley hears The Last Post at 6.55pm, lights a Beacon and rings the church bells for peace.

Additional details about the events and activities may be found on a page on the Parish Council website - www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk/armistice-centenary-events/



Village matters

Volunteering opportunity

Friends of Purley School (FOPS) is currently looking for new committee members and volunteers. Without the help and support of parents, grandparents, carers and local volunteers, FOPS could not continue to raise funds to enrich the education of children at Purley Primary School.

The FOPS committee for the coming academic year will be elected at the AGM on Thursday 4 October.

If you might be interested in becoming a committee member, or if you are able to give some time to help on an event sub-committee (such as the School Fete Sub-Committee), please contact askfops@gmail.com for further information.

Local news and events

The 2018 Reading Town Meal will be held in Forbury Gardens from noon to 4.00pm on Saturday 29 September. The first of these events was held in 2011 and, so far, they've been an amazing reflection of food donated by growers and allotment holders in and around Reading, and cooked by students at Reading College. There are also stands, stalls, and activities. For more detail, see the web site - www.readingtowntmeal.org.uk/



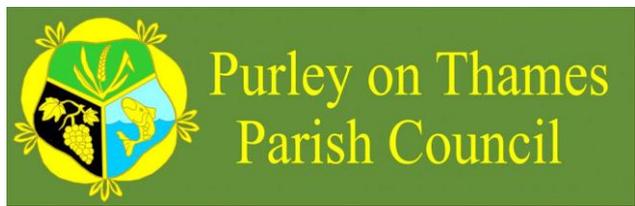
This year's Henley Literary Festival is set to be the biggest yet as it expands to nine days for the first time. Over 150 events will take place across Henley from Saturday 29 September to Sunday 7 October. The Henley Children's Literary Festival will run concurrently.

The full programme and details of how to book tickets is available on the web site - <https://henleyliteraryfestival.co.uk/>



Fans of *Midsomer Murders* might be interested in the Midsomer Walking Tours which start in The Argyll Pub, Henley-on-Thames; as well as seeing sites where the series was filmed, an insight will also be given into Henley's history. Each gentle walking tour takes around an hour and starts at 11.00am every Saturday until 27 October (inclusive). Tickets are still available and may be booked [online](#).





Friends of Purley Barn is holding its Quiz Night from 7.30pm to 10.30pm on Friday 5 October in the Barn at Goosecroft. As always, the proceeds raised will go towards supporting the Barn.



West Berkshire Museum in Newbury is hosting quite a few interesting family events in October – westberkshireheritage.org/whats-on/christmas-family-craft-workshop



Didcot Events Food Festival (organised by a 2013 Great British Bake Off quarter finalist, Christine Wallace) is on 27 October - www.didcotevents.co.uk/didcot_food_festival.html



On Sunday 4 November, Purley Primary School Parent Teacher Association (FOPS) will be holding its annual Thameside Firework Fiesta by Mapledurham Lock. The display over the river will be provided by Illusion Fireworks, and there will also be hot food, a licensed bar, and glow novelties. FOPS would like to thank everyone who is supporting the event, including Mapledurham Estates and Tim Metcalfe. All proceeds will go to Purley Primary School.

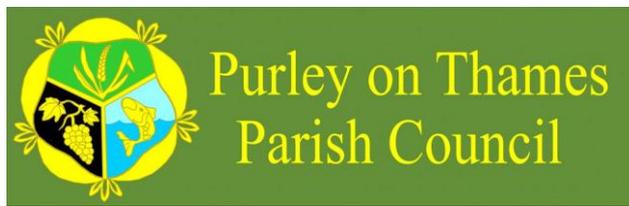
Gates will open at 5.30pm and the fireworks will start at 7.00pm. Subject to the weather, it is hoped to have some parking available in the field at the top end of Mapledurham Drive, but walking or using public transport are strongly encouraged.

Tickets will be available online at www.thamesidefireworkfiesta.org from the beginning of October, or they may be bought from Purley Primary School office, Barn Owls Day Nursery and the shop on Colyton Way.

Buy in advance to take advantage of discounted ticket prices!



For information about other local events, please see the “What’s On” page of the Parish Council web site – www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk/whats-on/



Contact

Further information on matters raised here and other local issues is available on the Parish Council web site – www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk.

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.