

NEWSLETTER

January 2019, issue 23

Parish Council matters

I hope 2019 has started well for you all!

This is a time of year when many people review the things they do and consider taking on new activities or perhaps volunteering. If you're doing this and would like to be more involved in the community – perhaps you've recently moved to the area, or have a little more spare time having retired – then you might be interested in the volunteering opportunities the Parish Council is currently offering.

As a result of the very sad and sudden death of Parish Councillor Stuart Chester, there's a vacancy on the Parish Council itself. This is an interesting and varied role which plays an important part in the future development of Purley. If you are over 18 years old and a British or Commonwealth citizen living in or within three miles of the Civil Parish of Purley on Thames, you are eligible to apply.

If you're not sure about committing that much time just now, you might prefer to become a Flood Warden. From time to time, when the "lower village" floods, the Flood Wardens don their wellies or waders and help others. It is not a difficult or dangerous role but it is a very important one to many – residents who are infirm or housebound welcome a friendly face and someone to check up on them and make sure they don't run out of food. Although we don't need Flood Wardens every year, we do need to have an organised team in place, ready to assist as and when necessary.

Our third volunteering opportunity is different again! We are currently organising a team of voluntary distributors who'll help when we have information which must reach every house in the parish. Often, there will be only one such delivery each year – that of the Annual Report in March/April – but the more people we have on the team, the fewer roads each will have to cover and the less onerous the task becomes. If you are willing to deliver to your own neighbourhood and/or to other areas of Purley, please contact the Delivery Team Co-ordinator – delivery@purleyonthames.org.uk – saying which roads you could cover.

If none of these appeals but you would be interested in becoming more involved, there are other tasks, such as replenishing the dog waste bags in the dispensers or keeping the parish notice boards up-to-date, which anyone who walks regularly might be able to take on.

If you'd like more information about volunteering in the parish, please do contact the Parish Office (contact details are at the end of this newsletter) – any help you can give will be most welcome!

Sue Briscoe
Chair of Thames Parish Council

News from the Parish Office

There have been some IT issues in the Parish Office over the past few weeks and, as a result, some e-mails might not have reached us. If you have contacted us by e-mail but have not yet had a reply, it might be worth re-sending your message.



Unfortunately, the two litter bins in Bucknell's Meadow have both now been vandalised in separate incidents. The inner linings of both bins have been damaged beyond repair so we've had to remove them from the play area.



Replacements will need to be sourced at a cost of around £600.00 – money which could have used to more positive effect elsewhere.



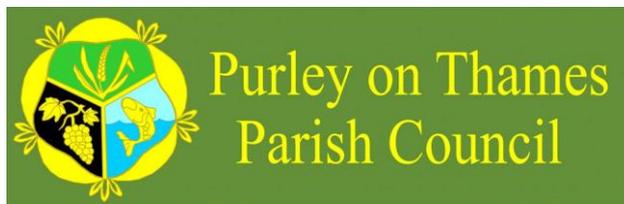
Very early on the morning of Monday 28 January, a car was driven into the wall of the Burial Ground at Goosecroft. We don't believe it was an act of deliberate vandalism, but the driver didn't stop or contact us to report the accident, they simply drove away.

As can be seen from the picture, a great deal of damage was caused, and one of the pillars and a section of wall will need rebuilding. Footage from the CCTV cameras has been passed to the police.

Allotments

The new year is the perfect time to take on new activities so, if you've ever thought about taking an allotment plot, why not sign up for one now? Working on an allotment can be hard work but it's also fun and rewarding and offers an opportunity to meet new people – and, as well as enjoying produce you've grown, there can also be health benefits.

If you'd like more information or would like to apply for an allotment, please contact the Assistant Clerk, asstclerk@purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk



Thames Valley Police

Inspector Chris Ward will be leaving Thames Valley Police in a few weeks' time and we'd like to take this opportunity to thank him for his support and involvement in community matters over the past four years.

From the end of February, Acting Inspector Alan Hawkett will be taking over leadership of the Pangbourne Neighbourhood Policing Team. He can be contacted via the team's email address, pangbournenhpt@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk.

West Berkshire Council

West Berkshire Council (WBC) put its Severe Weather Warning Emergency Protocol (SWEP) in place on 1 November 2018. As part of this, the council offers support and warm, safe accommodation to rough sleepers, particularly the small number of people who are not usually eligible for service, who choose to sleep rough, or who have previously refused support from housing services.

More information about this and the council's broader programme of activity to tackle homelessness in the district may be found at <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/article/35931>



Now that the colder weather is with us, it's worth reminding ourselves of the winter weather messages for adults and children which may be seen [here](#). Wearing layers of clothes, moving around regularly, and being sure to have plenty of hot food and drinks are all very important in looking after ourselves, and we can also help elderly or infirm neighbours do the same.



If you have a child at one of the schools maintained by WBC, you can check for closures, resulting from emergencies or industrial action as well as bad weather, on the council's web site - <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/schoolclosures>.

Annual Parish Meeting

A date for your diaries – this year's Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 15 April 2019 in the Barn at Goosecroft.

Village matters

Whitchurch Bridge

The existing 20 mile an hour speed limit in Pangbourne has now been extended across Whitchurch Bridge.

The toll bridge across the river was closed for 5½ hours on Thursday 24 January to enable WBC's highways contractor, Volker, to install the Bridge Company's traffic calming scheme. The rumble strip along the Pangbourne approach curve was renewed, road markings were repainted, and "20 mph" marks and road signs were added.

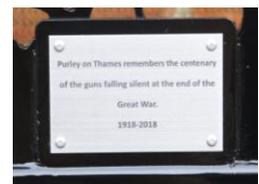
Purley Car Volunteer Service

We are sad to report that the Purley Volunteer Car Service closed in January as there were no requests for a ride to a bus stop. The grant from Greenham Common Trust will have to be repaid.

A very big thank you goes to all the people who were involved in the service and to those who have been on duty for the past several months.

WWI Armistice bench

The bench to commemorate the centenary of the WWI Armistice has now been placed outside the Memorial Hall in Glebe Road. As well as the "Lest we Forget" wording on the bench itself, there is a plaque which says "Purley on Thames remembers the centenary of the guns falling silent at the end of the Great War. 1918-2018".



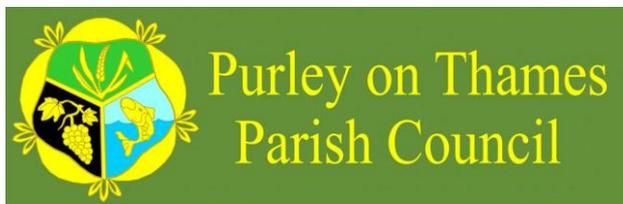
Memorial bench plaque



**David Waldock and
Catherine Sampson unveiling
the new bench**

The grand unveiling took place on Friday 25 January and was attended by representatives of the Armistice Centenary Working Group, the Memorial Hall and the Parish Council.

Many thanks go to all the individuals and organisations who contributed to the Just Giving page and made this possible – all contributions are very much appreciated.



Community Conversation

On the evening of Monday 21 January, a Community Conversation was held at Purley CofE Primary School. The event was organised by Purley Residents' Support Community (PRSC) with the support of West Berkshire Council Building Communities Team and Thames Valley Police. Six of Purley's Parish Councillors participated and supported the conversation; Chairman Sue Briscoe, Vice-Chairman Graham Rolfe, Cllr Martin Bishop, Cllr Pam Beddoes, Cllr Rick Farrow and Cllr Sarah Sinclair. District Cllr Rick Jones was also very supportive in the planning of the event and attended.



In total 30 people attended which was considered a huge success by the organisers. Susan Powell from WBC said it had been one of the best supported Community Conversations she had attended which is a big credit to the community spirit in Purley on Thames.

At the Community Conversation, residents discussed the positive things about Purley on Thames and then moved to highlight some areas they thought might be improved. A compiled report of all the comments and points raised is being collated and will be circulated to all those who attended. From this an Action List will be produced, some actions will be taken on by PRSC while others will have to be raised with other authorities.

We'll keep you updated.

Village Halls Week

Village Halls Week is an annual and national campaign to celebrate rural community spaces and the people whose time and dedication keep them going. Organised by Action With Communities in Rural England (ACRE) and the ACRE Network, the campaign runs from the 22 to 28 January each year and sees a variety of events happening across England.

This year, stand-up poet, Kate Fox, has written a piece which encapsulates the range of events and activities people may enjoy at their local Village Hall – the full poem may be seen [here](#); it's amazing how many of the things listed are available in the Memorial Hall, Church Hall and Barn!

Bridge Drive

On Friday 18 January, Purley on Thames Bridge Club and Friends of Purley Barn welcomed 84 people to the Barn at Goosecroft for a Bridge Drive. The afternoon was thoroughly enjoyed by all – as was the afternoon tea provided by the members of Purley on Thames Bridge Club.

The event raised just over £1,000.00, which will be used to improve the facilities in the Barn.



What's On page

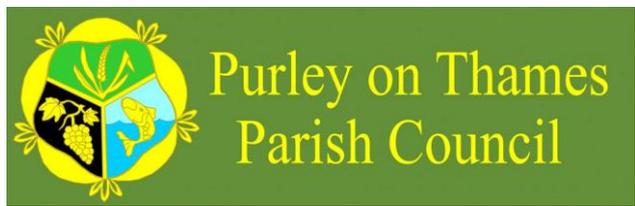
As a result of requests from those who responded to the latest Village Plan questionnaire, last year, a new "What's On" page – www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk/whats-on/ – was added to the Parish Council's web site.

Although it has at times included quite a few interesting events, recently we have received very few requests for information to be added to it. While we are very happy indeed to keep the page updated, we do need people, clubs and societies to let us know of any events they're holding locally – otherwise we simply have nothing to share.

So, if you are organising or know of any local activities or events which might be of interest to residents of Purley on Thames, please do let us know!

Local news and events

On Saturday 9 February, Village Concerts is organising a performance by James Kirby, an acoustic singer/songwriter, at St Mary's Church. Doors will open at 7.00pm with the show starting at 8.00pm. For further detail and information on how to book tickets, see the Village Concerts web site – www.villageconcerts.eu



If you're looking for something active to do, why not participate in the Run for Chocolate event at Kings Meadow in Reading from 10.00am on Sunday 10 February? You can run, walk or jog the 5km route which is open to all ages and abilities. Each participant who crosses the finishing line will receive not only a Run for Chocolate finisher's medal but also a well-deserved mug of hot chocolate (sprinkles optional).

For more information on the event and how to book, see www.runforchocolate.co.uk/reading/



From 10.30am to 12.00 noon on Friday 15 February, there will be a coffee morning at the Memorial Hall in Glebe Road. This will be a lovely opportunity to drop in and catch up with friends – or perhaps meet new friends. Coffee and a biscuit will cost £1.50 and there will also be things, such as colouring, to amuse children.

If you'd like to go to the coffee morning but aren't able to get there, please call 07729 871493 to arrange transport.



From Thursday 14 to Saturday 16 February, Broad Street Mall is hosting a Lego brick workshop in partnership with Brick Galleria and Reading Buses; the events are being held to celebrate the launch the new purple 17 bio-gas fleet of buses.

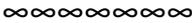
There will be four sessions on each of the three days, at 10.00am, 11.00am, 1.00pm, and 2.00pm. Each will be run by Kevin Hall, an international Lego brick artist who built a 14-metre long brick model of the River Thames. All sessions are free and will be open to 30 children or adults on a first-come-first-served basis. All those who participate will be able to take the miniature purple bus they make home with them.

Click [here](#) for more information.

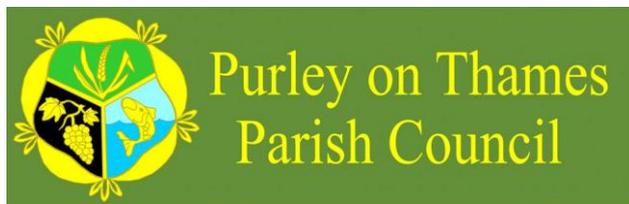


From 16 to 24 February, Basildon Park will be offering a half term trail as well as its Wild Play Trail. Trail leaflets may be bought for £2.00 from Visitor Reception.

Details of these and other half term activities may be found on the web site - www.nationaltrust.org.uk/basildon-park/features/february-half-term-at-basildon-park



Pho, a Vietnamese restaurant on King Street, Reading, has a kids-eat-free offer over half term – more details may be found on the web site www.phocafe.co.uk/kids-eat-free/



If you enjoy murder mysteries and treasure hunts, you might like to gather a team of detectives and join in “A Circus of Screams”, a live-action puzzle hunt through Reading. There are three dates – Saturday 16 February, Saturday 23 February, and Saturday 2 March – with two sessions, at 12.00 noon and 3.00pm on each day.

Full details and tickets are available [here](#).

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.