

NEWSLETTER

April 2019, issue 26

Parish Council matters

Last month, I explained the procedure for the Parish Council elections which take place every four years. We were due an election this year but, as there were 13 nominations for 13 seats, all nominees were appointed uncontested. This means the Parish Council now comprises: Gordon Adams, Bill Ayling, Pam Beddoes, Martin Bishop, Sue Briscoe, John Chapman, Christine Collier, Rick Farrow, Rick Jones, Neil Haughton, Jane Langford, Bernard Nix, Sarah Sinclair. Sub-committees and chairmen will be agreed at the first full meeting of the new Parish Council in May.

Normally, April and May are when the Parish Council asks for nominations for Villager of the Year. This year, however, we feel it may be time to rethink this award, perhaps on occasions giving it to groups rather than individuals. Let us know your thoughts on this by e-mail and I will update you when we have decided what to do.

Sadly, over the past few years, we've seen an increase in anti-social behaviour in Purley. Too often there have been incidents, often in the recreation areas, the results of which can be very costly, both in terms of unbudgeted repairs or replacement of damaged items, and in terms of officers' time. Already this year, there's been a spate of willful damage – the police are aware and, hopefully, by the time you read this, the young people involved will have been apprehended.

It would be a great help if anyone who sees anything happening which doesn't seem right would please contact the police. If a crime is actually in progress or it's an emergency situation, this should be reported to 999; otherwise, if a crime has occurred, property has been damaged, or there's suspected drug dealing or use, call 101 (there's a charge of 15 pence for each 101 call from landlines and mobiles). Alternatively, non-urgent incidents can be reported via the web site – www.thamesvalley.police.uk – or by e-mail to the neighbourhood policing team – pangbournhpt@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk. Reporting all incidents means the police can focus their patrols on areas of particular concern. Please help them to help us.

Sue Briscoe
Chair of Thames Parish Council

West Berkshire Council

From Monday 1 April, Padworth Household Waste Recycling Centre will be open from 8.00am to 6.00pm, seven days a week; this is part of a pilot scheme running until 30 September. The centre now accepts general rubbish and bulky waste. For more information see the web site – www.westberks.gov.uk/recyclingcentres

News from the Parish Office

Towards the end of March, a parishioner kindly rang the Parish Office to let us know they'd found a Colyton Way street sign which had been dumped in the wooded area near the swings at Bucknell's Meadow.

A few days later, the Clerk and Amenities Officer went to retrieve the sign ... but couldn't find it. Instead, they discovered a five-bar metal gate! With help from Councillor Martin Bishop, the gate was moved to a safer place. It had apparently been taken from the entrance to one of the fields, letting out cows which had then strayed onto a protected wildlife area. Happily, on this occasion no long-term damage was done.



Meantime, the missing Colyton Way sign seemed to have been returned to its rightful place. Over the next few weeks, however, various problems were reported of damage to road-name signs, and we have now contacted West Berkshire Council asking for repairs be carried out.



The next (equally unexpected) challenge to present itself was the finding of a burned-out car on Purley Village, near the end of Mapledurham Drive, on the morning of Friday 29 March.

This turned out not to be an act of vandalism as was at first feared; it was simply that the car's owner, having had a minor accident on Thursday evening, managed to push the car to the roadside where he left it overnight. Later that evening, however, the car burst into flames – it's thought an electrical fault was the cause.



Unfortunately, there was a great deal of littering over the long weekend at Easter – thank you to everyone who helped clear it up.

In the hope of encouraging people not to litter the area, the Parish Council has agreed to have a 1,100 litre trade wheelie bin installed near Mapledurham Drive again this year. It will be in place from 10 May until 10 September and will also be used by the volunteer litter-pickers who help clear Bucknell's Meadow, Blounts Meadow and along by the river.



An additional litter bin is also going to be installed at Mapledurham Lock. Although the Parish Council is buying and installing it, the new lock keeper has very kindly agreed to make sure it's emptied.



We're very sorry to have to report that there's been a range of vandalism and antisocial behaviour over the past few weeks, including:

- Perspex in the notice board at Pikeshaw was broken and the framework damaged – cost of repairs £90.00;
- Dog bag dispenser on the footpath between the village and the allotments was dug up and thrown into the field – cost of repairs £50.00;
- Litter bin at Bucknell's Meadow was set alight – fire brigade called out;
- Youths were seen starting a fire in the trail at Bucknell's Meadow – police called out;
- The handles of the small spring motorbike at Bucknell's Meadow were broken – the handlebars have been removed for safety, and cost of repairs is £90.00;



Fire damage and litter by anthill climber

- Over the Easter Bank Holiday weekend, the wet pour around the anthill climber at Bucknell's Meadow was set on fire – this, and noise issues, were reported to the police.

This is the third time the surface has been used for setting fires and the surface has been damaged each time. Until now, our contractor has not charged for making the repairs, but this time we have been quoted £135.00 for the work.

If you see or hear any suspicious or antisocial behaviour, please do contact the police – the more reports they receive, the more likely they are to come out to an incident.



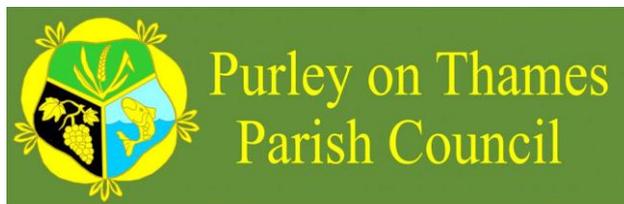
The Parish Council has agreed to Purley on Thames Cricket Club attaching some low white fencing to the barrier at the edge of the playing area at Goosecroft. This is intended to protect the feet of people outside the social club and the pavilion from being hit by low balls hit in that direction.



So, next time you visit Goosecroft, you'll see some new white picket fencing between the Pavilion and the upper playing field.



The ten Parish Council noticeboards around the village have become very popular indeed; so much so, that we are now having to restrict poster sizes to A5 in order to fit as many as possible!



Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on the evening of Monday 15 April in the Barn at Goosecroft and was well attended, with over 40 parishioners present.

At the meeting, the Chairman of the Parish Council, Sue Briscoe, presented the Annual Report. She noted the sad passing of Cllr Stuart Chester last October, saying that his contribution and sense of humour were greatly missed. Cllr Briscoe also reported the resignation of the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Graham Rolfe, in February this year. Cllr Rolfe had resigned over a point of principle, and his departure had been met with great sadness by the Council. His going had, however, led to the start of a review of Council practices which will include the areas raised by former Cllr Rolfe.

Cllr Briscoe's presentation also covered the work of the Council over the last year, and gave a summary of future projects.

Questions were received about the proposed extension to the Goosecroft Recreation Ground, overgrowth on village roads, and the possibility of a cycle route between Purley on Thames and Pangbourne.

After refreshments provided by the WI, Dr Jane Sellwood, Chairman of Reading U3A, gave a presentation explaining how new groups could be set up, how the membership structure worked in Reading, and how locations were chosen to be easily accessible by public transport. She said Purley residents would be made to feel very welcome if they chose to join one of the Reading U3A interest groups. More information about U3A can be found on the web site www.readingu3a.org.uk.

Mapledurham Lock

A new lock keeper has been appointed. His name is Paul Brunger and, although he's already working every day, he's not yet moved into the cottage.



We've been advised by the Environment Agency that its Waterways Team acts as custodian of the café at the lock, and is currently assessing the property in order to determine what works to undertake before putting the café on the market to rent.

Timescales aren't yet known as to when the café might be re-let and re-opened.

Allotments



Damaged notice board

During the extremely windy, stormy weather we had around the middle of last month, the notice board in the allotments was blown over and seriously damaged. Both wooden support posts were broken and, with more strong winds forecast, Graham Chapman, the Honorary Allotments Manager, felt it best to remove what was left completely so as to prevent it causing damage to people, cars, allotments or plants.

Graham then took on the task of constructing a new, more stable notice board, replacing the posts and strengthening the board before adding cork for the drawing pins to be stuck into.

All in all, as you can see from the photograph, he did a lovely job and there is now a very smart and functional notice board at the allotments. Thank you, Graham!



New allotment notice board



The first of the year's assessments of the condition of all the allotment plots will be carried out by the Honorary Allotments Manager and the Amenities Officer in the next few weeks.

Thames Valley Police

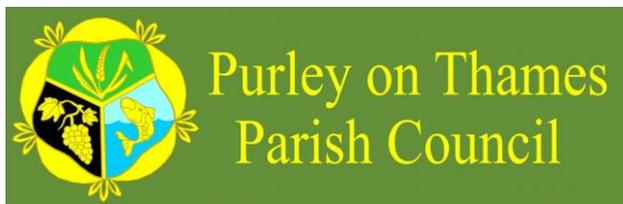
Thames Valley Police's new chief constable took up his post on Monday 1 April.

John Campbell has been deputy chief constable since 2015 and has 30 years' experience across three different police forces. He has said that one of his aims is to prevent crime, particularly against vulnerable people.



In early April, a team with a Speed Indication Device (SID) spent a morning in St Michael's Road, Tilehurst. In one hour alone, 15 drivers were caught doing more than 30mph – one was doing over 40mph – and all will be sent warning letters. In early May, a team with a speed gun will be operating in Tilehurst, and on-the-spot tickets will be issued.

If you're concerned about speeding in Purley and would be interested in joining the team of trained SID volunteers, please contact the Parish Office.



Road Closures – A34/M4 Junction 13 Chieveley

We've been advised that Kier Highways (on behalf of Highways England) will be carrying out maintenance work at the Chieveley junction over the spring and summer. The work will include repairs and refurbishment of the bridge and resurfacing the road around the junction 13 roundabout, and junction 13 will be completely closed for several weekends. The information we've been given is as follows.

M4 Junction 13 Bridge Refurbishment – the M4 westbound carriageway will be closed between the slip roads from 10.00pm to 6.00pm for five nights from Sunday 21 April.

The M4 westbound carriageway will also be completely closed between the exit and entry slip roads at junction 13 on the following weekends:

- From 10.00pm on Friday 26 April to 6.00pm on Monday 29 April;
- From 10.00pm on Friday 10 May to 6.00pm on Monday 13 May; and
- From 10.00pm on Friday 17 May to 6.00am on Monday 20 May (this is a contingency and is subject to change).

During the closures traffic will be diverted off the M4 via the exit slip road and sent across the junction to rejoin the M4 via the entry slip road.

Following these closures, there will be a series of ten overnight closures to reinstate the joints between the slip roads. We have not yet been given the dates.

M4 Junction 13 Surface Reconstruction - the whole roundabout at junction 13 will be closed:

- From 10.00pm on Friday 7 June to 6.00am on Monday 10 June;
- From 10.00pm on Friday 14 June to 6.00am on Monday 17 June;
- From 10.00pm on Friday 21 June to 6.00am on Monday 24 June;
- From 10.00pm on Friday 28 June to 6.00am on Monday 1 July;
- From 10.00pm on Friday 5 July to 6.00am on Monday 8 July;
- From 10.00pm on Friday 12 July to 6.00am on Monday 15 July; and
- From 10.00pm on Friday 26 July to 6.00am on Monday 29 July (this is a contingency weekend and is subject to change).

Signed diversions will be in place, primarily via the A4 between junction 12 (Theale) and junction 14 (Shefford Woodlands). While the roundabout is closed, the Moto Service Area and Hilton Hotel may be accessed only from the A34 northbound carriageway.

Significant delays are expected during these closures, and drivers are advised to avoid this route if possible, or to allow extra time for their journeys.

The above dates might change due to bad weather but confirmed dates for the weekend closures will be advertised along the M4 and on the Highways England web site. If you'd like further information, please call 0300 123 5000 or e-mail info@highwaysengland.co.uk.

Village matters

“What’s On” event, Saturday 6 April

On Saturday 6 April, Purley Residents Support Committee organised an event to show how many interesting activities are available in the area.

The event was held in the Barn at Goosecroft and was organised with the full support of the Parish Council as it was intended to help fulfil an action from the latest Village Plan. There were around 20 stands representing a wide variety of Purley’s clubs and societies – from cricket to family history, from scrabble to bowls – as well as those from nearby villages.

Entry was free and the event was well attended; we hope many residents now have a better idea of the range of clubs and societies there are locally.

If you are looking for things to do in and around Purley, do keep an eye on the noticeboards around the village, and also the web site “What’s On” page.

Purley Horticultural Society Spring Show, Saturday 6 April



Despite the best endeavours of the weather to foil the show by bringing on daffodils rather early and tulips a bit late, Purley Horticultural Society (PHS) held a very good Spring Show at the Memorial Hall in Glebe Road on Saturday 6 April. It was well attended by the public who were able to participate in the raffle and to enjoy tea and home-made cakes.



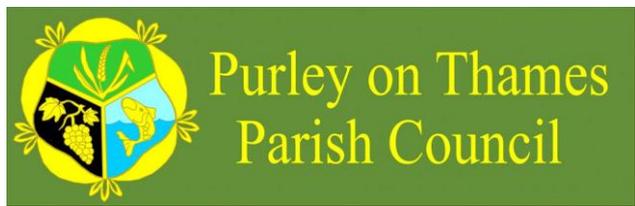
**Spring Farm
Perpetual Cup**



**George Critchell
Memorial Cup**

Congratulations to everyone who competed (all who entered won something). The Spring Farms Perpetual Cup for the overall points score was won by Nancy Massie, while the George Critchell Memorial Cup for the best exhibit in the daffodil and narcissus classes was awarded to Paul Humphreys.

Purley Horticultural Society



Bluebell walk in Sulham Woods, Sunday 5 May

On Sunday 5 May, Geoff Chivers of Friends of Purley Barn (FOPB) will lead a bluebell walk around Sulham Woods. The walk should take no more than two hours and we hope there'll be a variety of wildflowers to see and, perhaps, some deer as well. Most of the walk will be on level ground, but please do wear suitable footwear and bring a bottle of water – and a camera/mobile phone!

At the end of the walk, tea and cakes will be served in the Barn – the cost of this is included in the small charge of £3.00 per person, payable on the day (there's no need to book). The money raised will be put towards improving the facilities in the Barn.

If you'd like to join Geoff, please meet at 2.30pm in the Barn car park at Goosecroft, ready to walk along Beech Road to the woods and see some of the beautiful countryside on our doorsteps, while raising funds for a much-loved community facility.

Friends of Purley Barn

Local news and events

The early May Bank Holiday is on Monday 6 May and , so there are quite a few events in the area over that weekend.

Mapledurham Food Festival will be held from Saturday 4 to Monday 6 May – more information and ticket booking may be found [here](#).



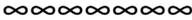
This year's Thames Path 100 (TP100) will start at 9.30am on Saturday 4 May. The event is organised by Centurion Running and the 100-mile course follows the route of the River Thames all the way from Richmond in South West London to the centre of Oxford.

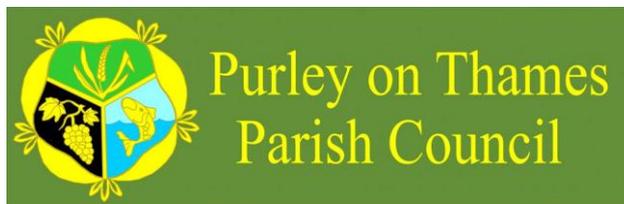
Runners must finish within a 28-hour time limit, so by lunchtime on Sunday. As Purley is roughly the halfway point, there could be participants in the area from Saturday afternoon.

More information about the event may be found on the [web site](#).



From 1.00pm to 5.00pm on Saturday 4 May there will be a Fun Day on the Village Green, Eastfield Road in Whitchurch-on-Thames. There will be children's entertainment, stalls, barbecue, bar, tea and cake tent, and live music and the money raised will go towards funding the Whitchurch Pre-school.





On Sunday 5 May, Friends of Purley Barn is holding a Bluebell Walk in Sulham Woods. The walk will start at 2.30pm from the car park at Goosecroft and will last around two hours. The cost is £3.00 per person, including refreshments afterwards.

See the item "*Bluebell walk in Sulham Woods, Sunday 5 May*" above for further detail.



Also on Sunday 5 May, there will be a new beer and music festival at Woodcote Primary School. There will be children's activities, such as face painting, a bouncy castle, stalls and games, as well as a bar selling real ale, craft beers and gin, a barbecue, and local bands will be playing live music. The event will start at 3.00pm and finish at 9.00pm. Tickets cost £5.00 and all proceeds will go to the primary school, Woodcote Pre-school and the Cabin Pre-school. To book, see www.woodcotebeerfestival.co.uk.



Hedgehog Awareness Week runs from 5 to 11 May. It's a national event organised every year by the British Hedgehog Awareness Society (BHPS). Its aims are to highlight problems hedgehogs face and to show people how they can help them. This year, the charity is asking people to make space for hedgehogs to live in their gardens; this could be a wild area or log pile, or there's a free, downloadable plan for building a more formal hedgehog home [here](#). More information and ideas are available on the [BHPS web site](#).



From 9.30am to 11.30am on Saturday 11 May, Purley Horticultural Society (PHS) will have bedding and vegetable plants for sale in the car park of the Memorial Hall, Glebe Road.

Otherwise, the PHS store in the Memorial Hall car park will be open from 10.00am to 11.00am on Saturdays and Sundays until the end of October, and on Wednesdays from 5.00pm to 6.30pm from now until June.

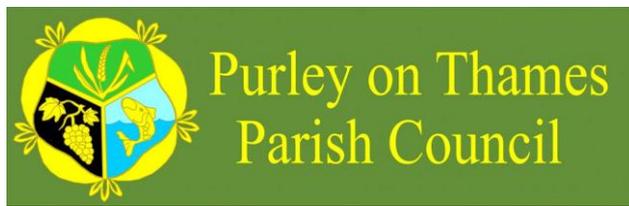


On Sunday 12 May, Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice is holding a Forget-me-not walk at Beale Park to celebrate the lives of those who are gone but not forgotten. The walks start at 11.00am (registration from 10.00am) and will go through secluded woodland and along the banks of the River Thames. There's a choice of 10km or 5km (with a fun children's trail) and the money raised will go to help the hospice continue to provide care for local people.

Tickets cost £15.00 for adults, £7.50 for children, or a family ticket costs £42.00 – the price includes entry to Beale Wildlife Park and Gardens for the whole of that day.

To register, please click [here](#) or call 0118 9550 433.





This year's Tour de Purley is being held from 8.30am on Sunday 19 May in Bucknell's Meadow. It is a sponsored cycle ride organised by local volunteers to raise money for Purley Primary School. There's a number of different cycle routes to choose from and, for younger children, there's the Scootathon and short cycle loop around the village.

More information and ticket booking are on the web site, www.tourdepurley.co.uk, or if you have any queries you can e-mail the organisers at tourdepurley@outlook.com



The Spring Bank Holiday is on Monday 27 May, and this year's Reading Carnival is due to be held that day. The event's organised by Reading Caribbean Cultural Group and, after the colourful procession through Reading, the family-friendly carnival is held in Prospect Park, Liebenrood Road.



For information about these and other events, please see the "What's On" page on the Parish Council web site – 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.