

NEWSLETTER

February 2020, issue 36

Parish Council matters

Firstly, an important date for your diary. The Parish Council will be holding its Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 16 April in the Barn at 7.30pm. All Purley residents are invited to hear what we've been doing and how we've spent money on your behalf. It's a chance to talk to parish councillors and ask any questions which you may have. The second half of the evening will be the time to decide whether Purley goes ahead with a Community Shop/Post Office or not. The Community Shop Working Group has done its research that they will share to help us decide. Come along and help shape the future of Purley.

Some people have been asking about the future of the café at Mapledurham Lock, closed since the end of 2018. Our Amenities Officer has contacted the Environment Agency's Estates Officer (Thames) who says that he is unable to confirm when the café will be available to re-let. However, the Environment Agency is keen for this to happen as it will greatly benefit the community. Meanwhile, if you are walking by the river and fancy a rest, The Mad Duck Café has opened behind the Purley Park Social Club on Wintringham Way.

Our younger residents may be pleased that the rocking horse in the recreation ground at Bucknell's Meadow has received some expensive loving care and is now back in action – see below for further detail. We are also planning a replacement wooden Snake Trail in Goosecroft recreation area and that should be in place in a few months.

Happy Birthday to the Purley on Thames Parish Council Newsletter! This is our 36th issue, so the newsletter has now been running for three years! We would like to thank our Assistant Clerk, Sarah, who works hard to put together news and interesting information from our village and surroundings, making the newsletter an interesting 'read'.

Sue Briscoe
Chair of the Parish Council

News from the Parish Office

Recent inspections of playground equipment had showed that the running boards on the rocking horse in Bucknell's Meadow were very worn. Unfortunately, it was not possible to repair them, they were too damaged overall, so they have now been replaced at a cost of just under £900.00.



Flood update



Blount's Meadow

Although the river level has continued to rise and fall over the past few weeks, and there was a flood warning in Purley for a few days, so far, no homes or roads near the river have flooded. The river level remains high and the Flood Warden Co-ordinator continues to monitor the situation very closely.

For information about flooding, useful links, and to find out how to contact your local Flood Warden, please see the [Flood News page](#) on the Parish Council web site.



Water behind the bund

Planning applications

Recently, we have received some queries about planning issues and applications, so we thought a brief overview of the process and the Parish Council's role might be of interest.

All planning applications are made to the local planning authority, West Berkshire Council. Before a decision is reached as to whether to approve or refuse an application, various groups are consulted and asked for input. These include the relevant Parish Council (and neighbouring Parish Council if the application is on a border), Highways, Transport, Environment Agency, etc.

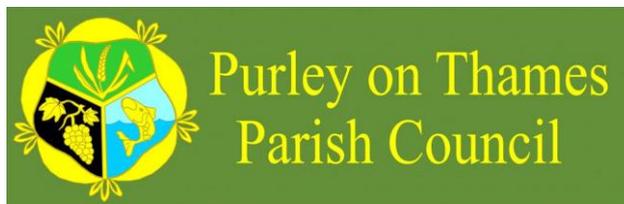
Although letters are no longer sent to neighbouring residents, an orange statutory planning notice must be displayed on the property to alert residents to the fact an application has been submitted; ideally, the notice should be visible from the highway. The notice must be displayed for 21 days during which time the public may submit comments or objections.

Purley on Thames Parish Council has a Planning sub-committee which is scheduled to meet twice each month (meetings may be cancelled if there are no applications to discuss). Members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings if they have concerns over a specific planning application.

Information about applications can be found on the [Planning pages of WBC's web site](#) and comments or objections should be submitted direct to WBC. Comments and objections received, including from the public, will be published on WBC's web site with the application.

Although the Parish Council is invited to comment on applications, it has no say in the final decision and its input is not binding upon WBC. Significant or controversial decisions may be referred to WBC's Eastern Area Planning Committee for further consideration.

For further information and advice about planning applications, see www.westberks.gov.uk



Thames Valley Police

The Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley has announced that he will be bidding for 280 Tasers, the maximum available for the Thames Valley, under a new £10m ringfenced fund set up by the Home Office as part of its drive to give more powers and tools to tackle crime.

There has already been an increase in the number of Taser-trained officers across the Thames Valley, and the additional equipment is intended to help maintain the fundamental principle of having an unarmed police force which can protect itself and the public in physically threatening situations.



Thames Valley Police (TVP) strongly encourages everyone to register their valuables with services such as www.immobilise.com and www.bikeregister.com as a way of helping identify owners of recovered property quickly and easily.

Organ donation

The law around organ donation in England is changing and, from spring 2020, all adults in England will be considered organ donors when they die unless they are in an excluded group or they have opted out. The new law will not apply to anyone under 18 years of age, people who have been resident in the country for less than 12 months, and people who lack the capacity to understand the change.

The new opt-out system is intended to help address a shortage of donors under the opt-in system, and will come into force from 20 May 2020.

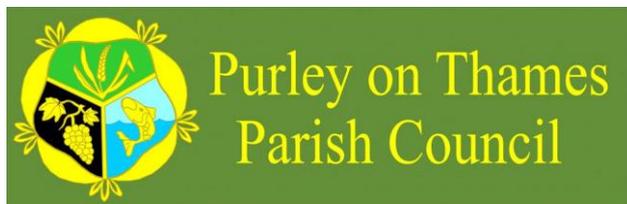
For further information, please see the web site, www.organdonation.nhs.uk/

Roads

Thames Water is scheduled to carry out some work at the pharmacy in Pangbourne, so there are likely to be multi-way traffic lights in the area from Wednesday 4 to Friday 6 March.



The next full weekend closure to continue upgrading the M4 to smart motorway will be between junctions 3 and 4 and is scheduled from 10.00pm on Saturday 7 March to 6.00am on Monday 9 March. The closure will start late on the Saturday in order to facilitate travel to and from the Six Nations rugby match at Twickenham that day.



Village matters

Sad news

We are very sad to report that two people who played an active part in the community and had been involved with the work of the Parish Council over many years died in February.

John Devine passed away at the beginning of the month. He had been a Parish Councillor some years ago, during which time he chaired the Barn Committee. As well as being a Committee Member of Purley Horticultural Society, John was also Chairman of the Memorial Hall Trustees for 15 years and was made President at the last AGM. In 2017, he was awarded Villager of the Year in recognition of his long and continuing contribution to Purley on Thames.

Equally sadly, John Murphy died later in the month after a short illness. He too was a well-known member of the community, having been Honorary Allotments Manager for a number of years, as well as being a Committee Member of Purley Horticultural Society and a Trustee of the Memorial Hall. Among his many other achievements, John wrote the history of the Memorial Hall which can be found on its web site.

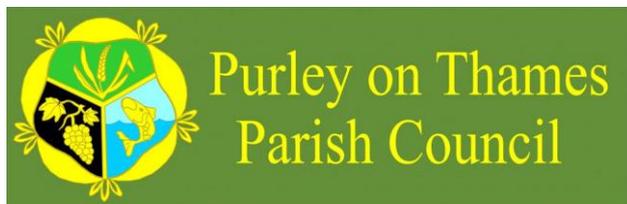
Both funerals will take place in early March.

Our thoughts are with their families; both John Devine and John Murphy will be very much missed by many.

Volunteering opportunities

If you are looking for volunteering opportunities, or perhaps you or someone you know needs help and support, then the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) in West Berkshire might be of interest to you. It provides services to the public as well as offering information and advice to groups and organisations using volunteers.

For more information, please see the CVS web site – www.volunteeringwestberks.org.uk



Bridge Drive

Purley on Thames Bridge Club and Friends of Purley Barn hosted the second annual Bridge Drive in the Barn at Goosecroft on Friday 21 February. The occasion was very well received by the 84 people who attended (making up 21 tables), and everyone enjoyed the tea and raffle, both of which were provided by members of the Bridge Club.

Over £1,000.00 was raised and will be used to help maintain and improve facilities in the Barn.

Early Years Foundation Class

[Purley C of E Primary School](#) is offering six funded places on its Early Years Foundation Stage 1 Class for children of three years old. The class will be from 9.00am to 12.00 noon on five mornings a week from September 2020.

If your child will be three years old in September and you might be interested in this opportunity, please contact the school on 0118 984 2384 or 0118 984 1315, or e-mail office@purley.w-berks.sch.uk, for more information

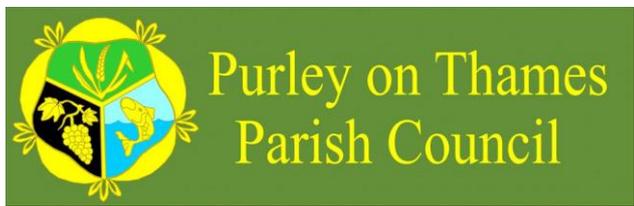
Leap years

This year, 2020, is a leap year, so a day is added to the end of the shortest month and we'll have a 29 February, meaning there'll be 366 days in our Gregorian calendar year.

The reason for this is that the Earth takes just under 365 days and six hours to circle once around the Sun; this is the tropical year which starts on the March equinox. If we had only 365 days every year, our time reckoning would gradually drift away from the tropical year, and the seasons would become increasingly out of sync; within 100 years, there'd be shift of around 24 calendar days. So, in order to keep our calendar aligned to the tropical year, an adjustment is needed, hence the addition of a day – a leap day – roughly every four years.

As the tropical year is not precisely six hours longer than a 365-day calendar year, however, a further adjustment is needed, so there are actually three criteria in the leap year rule. The year must be divisible by four, so 2016 was the last leap year and 2024 will be the next. If the year can also be evenly divided by 100, it is *not* a leap year – unless it is also divisible by 400. This means that 2000 was a leap year but 2100 will not be.

All in all, it takes quite a bit of mathematics to keep our calendar in line with the tropical year!



Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday has long been a Christian holiday celebrated in the UK. It falls on the fourth Sunday in Lent, three weeks before Easter Day, and was observed as the day on which people would visit the church in which they were baptised, their “mother” church.

More recently, it has become a day when people thank and remember their mothers, similar to the American secular holiday, Mother’s Day (which was created early in the 20th century and falls on the second Sunday in May).

This year, Mothering Sunday/Mother’s Day is on Sunday 22 March.

Local news and events

On Saturday 7 March, Berkshire Family History Society is holding a talk "Pop Pirates of the 1960s" by Tony Hadland. The event will start at 12.00pm in the Centre for Heritage and Family History on the second floor of Reading Library.

For more information, please see <https://berksfhs.org/>



The next indoor meeting of the Reading RSPB will be at 8.00pm on Tuesday 10 March in Pangbourne Village Hall. The next outdoor meeting will be on Sunday 15 March at Withymeade, a nature reserve near Goring.

Further information may be found on the RSPB’s web site - www.reading-rspb.org/



The monthly Farmers’ and Craft Markets will be held in the Barn, Goosecroft, from 8.00am to noon on Saturday 14 March - www.tvfm.org.uk/purley-on-thames/



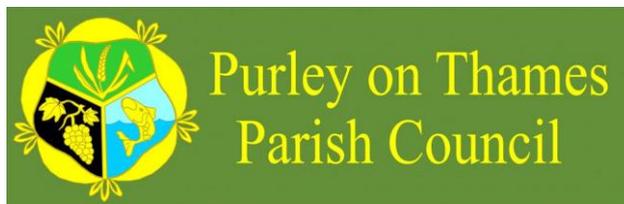
On Saturday 14 March, Village Concerts will be hosting Ma Bessie and her Pig Foot Band at St Mary’s. Doors and bar will open at 7.00pm, with the performance starting at 8.00pm.

For further information about this and other concerts, and to book tickets, please see www.villageconcerts.eu



The Goring 10km race is being held on Sunday 15 March - www.goring10k.com





Reading Green Market will be held on Sunday 15 March at The Market House, 1-2 Market Place, Reading. This is a family event which promotes accessible and affordable environmentally-and eco-friendly products.

More information is available on the market's [FaceBook page](#)



On Wednesday 18 March, Purley Horticultural Society will be hosting a talk by Graham Horn about the Kennet and Avon Canal. This will be held in the Memorial Hall on Glebe Road; doors will open at 7.30pm with the talk starting at 8.00pm.

If you'd like more information about this or any of the society's other activities, please see the web site www.purleyonthames.org.uk/phs



Sunday 22 March is Mothering Sunday/Mother's Day.



[Pangbourne and District Volunteer Centre](#) is holding its AGM at 2.00pm on Tuesday 24 March in St James Church, Pangbourne. The centre would like to have a better idea of the problems faced by people who have difficulty GETTING TO medical and professional services, and anyone with an interest in this is welcome to attend.



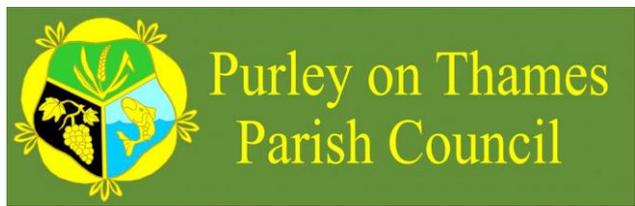
On Wednesday 25 March, Friends of Purley School (FoPS) is holding a Pamper and Prosecco Party from 7.00pm to 10.30pm in the Memorial Hall on Glebe Road. Entrance costs £5.00 per person and includes one free drink, and there will be a range of treatments available, including Indian head massage, Reiki, manicures and facials.

Tickets may be bought on the day or in advance from the shop on Colyton Way or by e-mailing FoPs – askfops@gmail.com

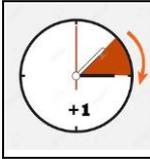


The London Landmarks Half Marathon 2020 will be run through both the City and Westminster on Sunday 29 March – for more details and how to enter, see www.llhm.co.uk/

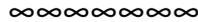




Sunday 29 March is the date we move from Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) to British Summer Time (BST, so don't forget to put your clocks forward by an hour!



The next drop-in coffee morning in the Memorial Hall will be from 10.30am to 12.00 noon on Tuesday 31 March. As always, this is a lovely opportunity to meet for a chat or play the games available. There's also a book exchange and a colouring and toy corner for children. If you need help with transport to and from the hall, please call 07729 871493.



Purley Horticultural Society's Spring Show will be held from 2.30pm to 4.00pm on Saturday 4 April at the Memorial Hall on Glebe Road.

Further information and entry schedules are available from the trading store or via www.purleyonthames.org.uk/PHS



On Sunday 19 April, Friends of Purley Barn is holding its second bluebell walk around Sulham Woods. The walk will start at 2.30pm from the car park at the Barn, Goosecroft, and is expected to take around two hours. If you'd like to join, please meet at the Barn at 2.15pm; there is a £5.00 charge which includes refreshments afterwards.



Information about these and other events may be found on the "[What's on](#)" page of the Parish Council web site - www.purleyonthames-pc.gov.uk

Contact

If you'd like to contact us, please call the office on 0118 984 4507, or send an e-mail to asstclerk@purleyonthames.net. You are also very 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.net giving the e-mail address they'd like us to use.