



## ***Account of Purley on Thames***

### **Chronicles 1960-1969**

#### ***1960 - 8/9 Eliz II***

Approximately one third of the dwellings on the River Estate were connected to the new water supply and Bradfield RDC served notices under the Water Act 1935 requiring all the others to connect

Following elections the new Parish Council comprised Messrs BH Theobald, CA Denton, AJ Bucknell, Martin, RL Skerritt, Garner, Haines, and R Gillingham and Miss D Scott-Stokes.

Pangbourne Parish Council were organising a grant to Nurse Haslan, the District nurse who had just retired. Purley Parish Council agreed to launch an appeal and by October the fund had reached £60

There was a proposal to build 40 houses at the Carlton Nursery

#### ***1961 - 9/10 Eliz II 1961***

Purley Hall was sold by the Wilders to Major and Mrs HWO Bradley.

A service of exorcism was held at Purley Hall to rid it of supposed ghosts

The village pond was filled in. The pond had become silted up and a new drainage system was laid across it destroying its ability to hold water. It was situated at the North West corner of the junction of Mapledurham Drive and Purley Village Bradfield RDC were considering purchase of a site in Purley for about 50 caravans.

Mr. G.Griffiths of Berks CC Highways Department came to the Parish Council meeting of 18th April to tell them about the improvements to Long Lane. The total costs were estimated at £30,000. It had once been only a cart track and now it would be made into a highway with an overall width of 36 feet and a carriageway of 24 feet. All the costs would have to be borne by the rates as it was unclassified and did not qualify for a Ministry grant.

At the Parish Council meeting on 18th April the Parish precept was set at £100 for general expenses and £40 for lighting for the year ending 31/3/62

The Parish Council on 8th May agreed to support the application of Pangbourne Coaches to run a bus service through Purley

Harold Frederick Hawkins was inducted as Rector of Purley on 1st June

At its meeting on 27th June the Parish Council agreed to press ahead with the purchase of the playing field and the District Valuer was asked to provide a valuation

The Parish Council on 27th June decided to press for the return to duty of a village constable

An application to site 14 caravans by Mr Ken Venners was opposed by the Parish Council at a meeting on 10th July

The Berkshire Education Committee applied to use the Memorial Hall as a classroom. They were intending to open Little Heath Secondary Modern School in 1962 and Long Lane Primary School in 1964 to cater for the 7 to 11 year olds. The Parish Council representative on the Memorial Hall committee was instructed to support the proposal at the Parish Council meeting on 10th October.

### *1962 - 10/11 Eliz II*

At their meeting on 20th February the Parish Council noted with regret that the Chief Constable had written to say he was unable to find any one to control the crossing at the Cross Keys to see the children across the road

Bradfield RDC formed a committee to look after the interests of old persons. Purley was represented on it by Mr Dunton who was chairman and Miss Wilton who was secretary

At its meeting of 30th May the Parish Council complained about the activities of ice cream salesmen in the village

The precept for the year 1962/63 was set at £200 for general expenses and £50 for lighting at the Parish Council meeting of 6th June

At its meeting on 6th June the Parish Council was asked to support the Downs Preservation Committee who were objecting to the planned motorway to be built across the Downs

The bus shelter at the top of New Hill which had been erected in memory of Mr. W.A.Crossley was taken over by the Parish Council at their meeting on 11th September. They agreed to get it repaired

At the same meeting Bob Skerritt reported that all sign posts to indicate public footpaths had now been erected

The Sul Brook had eroded the bank at the junction with the Oxford Road by the Chain Arches bridge. The Parish Council on 11th September decided to ask Thames Conservancy to repair it as it was hazardous. At the next meeting it was reported that The Thames Conservancy had denied responsibility

At the Parish Council meeting on 30th October it was decided to go ahead with a Compulsory Purchase Order for the playing fields access as Mrs Roseuarn had refused to answer letters from the District Valuer. They had previously agreed to accept the terms offered by Mr. Moon for the land

The sewage scheme for Purley was approved by Bradfield RDC

### *1963 - 11/12 Eliz II*

Following elections the new Parish Council consisted of Miss D. Scott-Stokes, Messrs A.J.Bucknell, A.R.Marshall, J.A.Garner, R.J.Skerritt, Buckmaster, Riches, R. Gillingham, B.Theobald, and Col RFH Duncan. Bernard Theobald was elected Chairman at the first meeting.

At the Parish Council meeting of 29th May the County Council's plans for reconstructing the Oxford Road from Long Lane to Purley Rise were considered (S4-5/63)

Concern was expressed by the Parish Council that footpaths 1 and 2 were not open and it was advised by Berks CC that legal powers under the 1959 Highways Act section 116 may have to be resorted to.

Thames United Football Club asked permission to use the recreation ground for the 1963-64 season

There were complaints about a fly nuisance on the South side of the Oxford Road in May, the main complainant being a Mr Koessler. It had reached such a point by October that the MP Sir Anthony Hurd was to be contacted

It was proposed to set up a caravan site on St Mary's Ave. The Parish Council asked that before this was done mains drainage should be provided. It was finally given planning permission for 75 vans. The land was reported by Bradfield RDC as being vulnerable to flooding and would have to be made up. As it was adjacent to the proposed mains sewer it would be connected to mains drainage

The Parish Council was asked by the Berkshire Archivist to put its records into the Berkshire Record Office. The Parish Council felt that it had not been in existence long enough for there to be any interest in its records.

The Parish Council asked Berks CC if it was prepared to defend Purley against the proposed encroachments by Reading Borough. Also the Council decided to organise a poll of electors on the question and 2000 voting slips were to be printed.

Pangbourne Parish Council proposed taking over the Bourne Road end of Purley

The Parish Council complained to Bradfield RDC that after 12 years from the promise of mains drainage still nothing had happened. The estimate of cost had gone from £32,000 to £160,000. Bradfield RDC replied that the scheme would be started in 1964 and completed within 18 months. It would serve 1372 properties and the delay was caused by tardiness by the Ministry in giving approval

Trenthams and Mr Kirton were asked by the Parish Council if they would be prepared to donate land for a footpath on the South side of the Oxford Road from Long Lane to Purley Rise.

The loan of £5000 for the playing field would require repayment with 5.75% interest ie £321-17-6 pa over 40 years. Compensation for the six acres of land would be £1500 and surveyors fees would come to £43/1/-

An association of parents was formed to press for the proposed new school in Long Lane. The Parish Council supported this move by sending a telegram to the Ministry of Education and letters to interested authorities

Lewis Rawlins of Kennel Cottages died on April 29th aged 83

122 yards of 4 inch diameter water mains were laid to serve the new White Lodge Estate, and for the first time the Medical Officer of Health was able to report that there were no houses in Purley not connected to mains water

In the election for Bradfield RDC on November 14th Bernard Theobald (Independent) polled 360 votes and was elected. Reg Marshall (Liberal) polled 161 votes.

### ***1964 - 12/13 Eliz II***

There were further complaints about the voltage of the electricity supply made at the Parish Council meeting in January

The bus service along Long Lane was approved after public notice. This was the Thames Valley service 19 which terminated in Highfield Road. It began operations on 23rd May in conjunction with Reading Transport.

The precept for 1964-65 was set at £400 for general expenses and £80 for lighting at the Parish Council meeting in February

A 40 mph restriction was approved on the Oxford Road from the top of New Hill to 300 yards west of Westbury Lane

The A329 from the Roebuck to Long Lane was officially named Oxford Road and from Long Lane to Pangbourne it was officially named Reading Road. These names were merely extensions of the road names used in Reading and Pangbourne respectively. Bradfield RDC was asked by the Parish Council to erect name plates

House numbering on a number of roads was requested by the Parish Council. These were Reading Road, Oxford Road, Long Lane, Beech Road, Westbury Lane and Glebe Road. Only Oxford Road (part), Long Lane and Glebe Road were in fact numbered at this time.

It was announced in April that the Pangbourne Telephone Exchange is to go automatic in January 1966

Mr Garner resigned from the Parish Council in July and Mr F.Wren was co-opted to take his place in September

A mortgage of £1544 was taken out to pay for the new playing field

Work finally started on the new Purley sewerage scheme in August. It was expected to be completed in February 1966. The main sewer was to be connected to the Pangbourne Sewage Disposal Works

The bazaar on November 28th raised £163 towards the costs of £200 required to repair the Church

Mrs Pryor sold the old rectory to the Council who intended to turn it into old peoples flats

### *1965 - 13/14 Eliz II*

The Sunday School went on an outing to the pantomime in Oxford on January 6th

Col Hugh Duncan resigned from the Parish Council in February

The Parish Precept was set at £200 for general expenses and £100 for lighting at the Parish Council meeting on 18th Feb.

John Dare the Parish Clerk had had a heart attack and resigned with effect from 1st April. Ray Fulbrooke was appointed as his successor at a salary of £60 pa.

Mr Buckmaster resigned from the Parish Council in April as he was leaving the area. He was replaced by Mr Eddie Morris who was co-opted on 21/6/65

The Thames Vale Singers gave a concert including excerpts from Mendelssohn's Elijah in aid of the Church repair fund on 10th April

The split in catchment areas for the infants between the C of E School and the new school in Long Lane was agreed to be the A329

The improvements for the recreation ground were contracted to Messrs Grimshaw, Kinnear Ltd for £6590. It was noted that loan approval only to £5000 would be required as a mortgage for £1544 had already been taken up. Work had started on levelling the ground by early September

The Reading Borough proposals for extending its boundaries were rejected by the Parish Council and they issued a press statement

The Westwood Farm Pre-school Playgroup started at the Memorial Hall

Footpath no 1 was diverted with effect from September 10th.

The first two Parish Council managers for the new Long Lane School were appointed on 18th October. They were A.R.Marshall and N.Davis.

Plans for the new pavilion were approved but work had to be deferred because of curbs on public expenditure. The chairman of the Parish Council was deputed to visit the appropriate government department to press for an exception to be made. Planning permission was eventually granted in November but the loan sanction was not approved until December, despite the council's representations to Whitehall. When it was received the Council decided not to take it up until the contractor asked for his money.

Elm Road was suggested as the name for the new road off New Hill

The church Bazaar on 27th November raised £153-10-6

Mr R.Gillingham had failed to attend six Parish Council meetings and the clerk was asked to ask him formally to state his intentions. He failed to reply and he was removed from office on 20th December

The precept for 1966-67 was approved at £750 for general expenses and £100 for lighting at the Parish Council meeting of 12th December

100 yards of water main were laid to serve houses in New Hill

The Brownie pack transferred to Pangbourne as most of the girls lived in Pangbourne. A Guide company was reformed in Purley

### ***1966 - 14/15 Eliz II***

Mr Archie White was co-opted to replace Mr R.Gillingham on the Parish Council on 17th Jan

The conditions of Glebe Road and Beech Road were reported to the Parish Council as being bad and an approach to the County Council was made to have them made up

Purley United Football Club asked for permission to use the recreation ground from August 1966. The Parish Council at its meeting on 17th January considered the request but felt that the newly sown grass would not stand playing on yet and there was no playing accommodation. At its next meeting in February it informed the club that permission had been refused.

A bylaw to prohibit noisy hawking was being considered (S4-1/66)

The name 'Elm Road' had not been approved by the GPO and so 'Hazel Road' was substituted

The new primary school in Long Lane was finally opened on April 25th with 55 pupils. Its opening had been delayed because the sewerage system had not been finished. A second stage was due to start before March 1967 and would include a new classroom and a kitchen

The final part of Orchard Close is to be made up

The contractor for the recreation ground finally asked for a payment in March and the clerk to the Parish Council was given the go-ahead to take up the loan from the Public Works Loan Board

A Tree Preservation Order for trees on the Melville Nurseries site was approved in March, and further Orders relating to the Garden House Nurseries and Belleisle were approved the next month

The Thames Vale Singers gave a performance of Stainer's Crucifixion in aid of Church funds on April 2nd. It raised £21-14-0

Following elections the new Parish Council consisted of Mrs H. Gutch, Messrs AJ Bucknell, R Cooper, Davies, ARMarshall, RL Skerritt, BH Theobald and AA White

There was a scare that the proposed Purley Bypass would cut through the new recreation ground but when the proposals were examined in more detail the Parish Council found that revisions meant that the alignment would carry the road to the south of the ground.

The new estate being built on the site of Lamerton was to be named Cecil Aldin Drive, the Parish Council decided at its meeting on 20th June

A public enquiry was to be held over the Bradfield RDC refusal to grant planning permission to David Unwin for a Marina in Purley Gardens

The name Nursery Gardens was recommended by the GPO for the Garden House Nursery site. The Parish Council had suggested Isambard Kingdom Close, Owl Grove, Squirrel Walk or Willowpine Walk

Spencer King Norman was buried on July 4th aged 85

At the Parochial Church Council meeting of September 26th it was reported that the History of Purley Church is being reprinted

Sarah Ann Brown of Long Lane (aged 100) and Herbert Hearne (aged 88) were buried on September 29th

The equipment for the childrens play area at the recreation ground was ready for use by November

Mark Skidmore (aged 83) was buried on November 10th He had been a member of the PCC for many years

Emily Lily Gilland (aged 88) was buried on December 8th after a long illness

It was recommended that a caretaker be installed at the recreation ground in a caravan and thus a septic tank, mains water and electricity would be needed

Professor St Joseph of Cambridge University took a series of aerial photos of Purley and observed crop marks of two conjoined circles, a rectangular enclosure and a curvilinear feature on land between Purley and Pangbourne north of the A329

308 yards of water main were laid to serve the new Nursery gardens Estate and 809 yards for the Lamerton Estate. There had been contamination of the borehole in Pangbourne but this had been treated by chlorination

Sewage disposal for 30 houses in Purley was reported as being inadequate

Three caravan sites were noted in Purley by the Public Health Inspector. These were in Nursery Gardens (J M Wakefield - 15 vans); Colyton Way (Mrs M Burrige - 3 vans) and River Gardens (Mr S Brown - 2 vans). Another private site for 20 vans was closed during the year. The new Council site on St Mary's Avenue had still not opened although the site had been filled and levelled in 1964. It was now proposed to provide sites for 86 vans, each standing having its own WC, Water point, store shed and electricity supply. A communal block would provide showers, bath and laundry facilities

### *1967 - 15/16 Eliz II*

The new schedule of listed buildings for Purley was received by the Parish Council

Albert Archibald Smith aged 80 yrs was buried on Jan 4th after a long illness

Mrs Amy Pocock died aged 87 on Jan 27th. She had been in charge of the Post Office (Lichfield Cottage) until around 1957. She had been renowned as the owner of a cat which was a village character and lived for 21 years.

Mr N.Davis resigned from the Parish Council as he was going to live abroad. Mrs N. Burt was co-opted to take his place in March

At the Parish Council meeting of 17th April, plans for a new cedar type pavilion at the recreation ground were presented. A further report on costs was requested

A Tree Preservation Order in New Hill was confirmed

It was hoped to sell the large grounds of the Rectory and build a new one as a road is to go through. This was the rectory on the site of what is now Allison Gardens

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At the PCC meeting on 6th July it was agreed to spend £272 on urgent repairs. The largest items being the church tower and roof. It was also agreed to install a lightning conductor to the tower at a cost of £65. After consideration of electric heating it was decided to convert the solid fuel boiler to oil at a cost of £350 and increasing the running costs from £35 to £40 pa. No new kerbstones would be permitted on graves after December 1967 to facilitate grass cutting.

Mrs I.Nowell left Purley C of E school to become deputy head of Beechwood County Infants School, Woodley. She had been headmistress since January 1959. She was succeeded by Mrs M.Hodgson as from September whose husband was headmaster of Calcot School

Cecil Aldin Drive was built by Crestmount Construction and named after the artist who had died in 1935

New water mains were laid as follows:- Nursery Gardens Phase I (208 yds) , Phase II (104 yds), Peterhill nurseries, Long Lane (480 yds), The Thatch (Long Lane) (278 yds), Home Farm (336 yds) and Lamerton Estate (809 yds). 11 existing houses were reported as not having mains water

A scheme for surface water drainage in Purley had been submitted to the Ministry for approval. It was hoped to include the scheme in the capital works programme for 68/69

14 of the caravan sites had been started on and it was expected that they would be ready for occupation in January 1968

Lister Close was named after Lord Lister in his centenary year. His great niece had lived at the Old Rectory which had formerly occupied the site. The council made six inspection visits to the poultry processing station during the year. It processed approximately 104,000 birds of which about 2% (8300 lbs) had been rejected as being unfit for human consumption

### *1968 - 16/17 Eliz II*

The Old Rectory was demolished. It had a large roof well with a gutter to allow water to drain off. This had been used as a nest by a muscovy duck when the house was left unoccupied. The gutter became blocked and the well filled with water. The result was that the ceilings below collapsed and the house became uninhabitable.

New water mains were laid in Purley as follows:- New Hill I (170 yds) Development at Long Lane (198 yds), Old rectory (Lister Close) (494 yards) New Hill II (51 yds)

In the latter part of the year Mr Keen's old poultry packing station was reopened by a number of Pakistanis who slaughtered 1700 birds for Halal meat. They expected to do 600 per week in future

### *1969 - 17/18 Eliz II*

The Sunday School outing was a coach trip to Littlehampton costing £1 for adults and 15/- for children. This included tea at a restaurant en route

The Reverend Harold Hawkins resigned as Rector and retired to live in Pangbourne

The old rectory (Allison Gardens) was sold in September

The church bazaar on November 15th raised £121

Mains water was brought to the church. A tap was installed under the yew tree to serve the churchyard

Three store rooms were built at the Memorial Hall. The Thames Vale Singers paid £100 for theirs and the Playgroup contributed to a second.

New water mains were laid in the village as follows:- The copse estate (540 yds @ 4in) Rectory Road extension (48 yds @ 4") Development at Long Lane (67 yds @ 3in and 97 yds @ 4 in) Winchcombe (Oxford Road) (72 yds @ 3 in, 86 yds @ 4 in), St Mary's Church (73 yds @ 4 in)

K1960 – 16/5/2008



