

HOLYBROOK

SPRING EDITION



A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL

In December and January parish and town councils determine their budgets for the following financial year and the amount of Precept to be requested from the District Council towards the costs of running the local council. Holybrook Parish Councillors have set the 2009/10 Precept demand at £91,735, an increase of 0.7% on last year. This amount will be added to Council tax bills and represents a contribution of £35.08 per year for each band 'D' household in Holybrook parish. This compares favourably with neighbouring parishes.

It has always been the Council's aim that the Beansheaf Community Centre should pay for



itself, which it does each year. It is by popular decree one of the best maintained centres in the area and the hire fees received outweigh the running costs with a surplus of about £7,000 used to keep other costs down.

The major cost is that of running the parish office, with two part-time staff who, apart from normal day-to-day council tasks also manage the Beansheaf Centre and deal with all the hire, cleaning, caretaking, repairs, redecorating etc., and also do much work in relation to the annual Holybrook Festival. Those costs, together with insurance, rates, fuel and equipment amount to about £60,000, and other major areas of expenditure are on the Neighbourhood Wardens (£12,000 per year), maintenance of bus shelters (£3,000),

m a i n t e n a n c e o f playgrounds and seats (£10,000) and other community work (£15,000). You will probably have noticed that all the bus shelter roofs have just been replaced with metal ones at a cost of £5,500. The damage to bus shelters and timetables in Holybrook parish is the worst in the whole Reading Buses area.

The parish councillors are mindful of the need to keep costs down whilst delivering a good service, and we trust that this below-inflation increase will continue to give value for money. May I wish you all a very happy New Year.

Bernard Gilbert
Chairman

MARCH 2009

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Holybrook Parish Office, Beansheaf Centre, Charrington Road, Calcot, Reading RG31 7AW

Clerk to the Council: Mr David Baldock,

Assistant Clerk: Mrs Rachel Buckingham

Open to the public Monday to Friday 10am-1pm.

Viewing of planning applications by appointment only.

Tel: 0118 945 4339

24 hour answerphone.

email: holybrook

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www.holybrookparish

council.co.uk

DATES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

MONDAY 30 MARCH COUNCIL

MONDAY 20 APRIL ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

MONDAY 11 MAY ANNUAL MEETING AND COUNCIL

ALL MEETINGS IN THE BEANSHEAF CENTRE AT 7.30PM



Function and Opening Hours

The Parish office in the Beansheaf Centre is open to the public from 10am until 1pm Monday to Friday although the staff are actually there from 9am to 2pm. The staff are aware of the tendency of parishioners to call at the same time and in order to give the best possible service without interruption it would be helpful if matters of substance could be dealt with by appointment. This will enable the staff to see you privately and to give you the time that you deserve.

We are concerned that many issues are referred to the parish council which are not within its area of responsibility. For example matters relating to the Linear Park which belongs to West Berkshire Council, the state of drains and pavements, vehicles parked on the pavement, and mini-motorbikes on pavements and in the park.

The following contacts should be used as appropriate please:

Linear Park: Caroline Booth at West Berkshire Council **01635 519576** or cbooth@westberks.gov.uk

Highways matters: West Berkshire Council—Streetcare **01635 519080** streetcare@westberks.gov.uk or Highways and Transport **01635 519208** or medwards@westberks.gov.uk

Alternatively, the **West Berkshire Council office** on the first floor of Sainsbury's at Calcot is open from Monday to Friday from 10am to 5pm and from 10am to 1pm on Saturdays. District councillors hold surgeries there from 10-11.30am on the second Saturday of each month. Any West Berkshire Council matters may be raised there.

Law breaking: Thames Valley Police: PC Andy Tomlinson **07800 702416** or PCSOs Paul Tuttle **07970 145096**/Viv Joyce **07966 179382**. Alternatively contact the Neighbourhood Wardens **0118 945 5286**.



Beansheaf Project/Public Meeting

Three years ago when the Holybrook Parish Plan was prepared parishioners indicated that they wished to see increased amenities in the parish. Councillors have been looking at the possibility of converting spare space in the roof of the Beansheaf Centre for Youth—Cultural activities. However, the study has indicated that the cost would far outweigh any benefit and so the council is now looking at a possibly much larger scheme, perhaps involving new buildings.

Before anything happens however, we would like to know parishioners views on what amenities they would like to see in Holybrook. To that end we shall be holding a public meeting on **Monday 20th April in the Beansheaf Centre at 7.45pm**. Our Annual Assembly, to which all are invited will precede the public meeting at 7pm. Please come with your ideas as we want to hear from you.

New Councillor

We are pleased to welcome Mr Jerry Carbon as a new councillor for the West ward of Holybrook parish, who was co-opted on 19th January. Mr Carbon has served in the forces and is near the end of his training as a barrister.

Friends of Linear Park

Conservation and land management in the Linear Park

Many residents have noticed that over the winter months, conservation work has been carried out in the balancing ponds within the park, the reeds have been cut back and a number of trees within the ponds have been cut back and the habitat opened up. This has already had a beneficial effect, a number of voles have been sighted and a pair of snipe have also been reported. This is very important work and will help to enhance and maintain the wildlife within the park. We are hoping that such conservation work will be able to be carried out on a year by year basis. Our next community activity day will be on Saturday March 14th. It is a great day out, please come along and join us. Please telephone **0118 942 1372** or email: alison.harwood@btinternet.com **please see back page**

*I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.*

William Wordsworth

***Holybrook Festival on Sunday 28th June
between 12pm and 4pm in Linear Park***

This year’s festival looks to be a really exciting event with lots of activities already in place. There will be a fun fair, craft stalls, electric organ, dog displays and Furry Foot who will do two shows and ‘Mix and Mingle’ also a Battle of the Bands competition.

A circus skills workshop from Circus Scene will be present as well as Info—Prime Sports who will be bringing a 24’ climbing wall and archery. Students from Kickfit Martial Arts will be putting on a display. Children can have fun on a bouncy castle and Calcot Infants will be displaying their work and dancing in the park.

Come and visit the beer tent or refreshments selling tea, coffee and cakes or the ice-cream van.

There are already raffle prizes including a family ticket to the Living Rainforest, a Porsche trolley case and Warings the Bakery vouchers and many more.

If you would like to help with the festival, sponsor an event, offer a raffle prize or book a stall please telephone Rachel or David on 01189 454339 or email: holybrookcouncil@btconnect.com



*Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.*

***Reading Buses
Special Bus Services For Theale Green School
(also available to the general public)***

SERVICE s90 Purley-Tilehurst-Beansheaf— (via Beansheaf Stores at 07:46) -Theale Green School

SERVICE s92 Reading— (via Kettering Close at 7:49) - Theale Green School

SERVICE s94 Reading—Southcote—Calcot— (via Dwyer Road Boundary) - Theale Green School

S94 no longer serves Calcot Sainsbury’s

SERVICE s93 Reading— (via Dwyer Road at 7:48, Bus Link, Calcot Place Drive, Mill Lane, The Chase, Pollards Way) - Theale Green School

SERVICE s102 (Newbury Buses) Reading - Theale– Newbury

Reading Buses Tel: 0118 959 4000 email: customerservices@reading-buses.co.uk

www.reading-buses.co.uk Visit: Travel Centre at Broad Street Mall.

Bus Stops within the Parish of Holybrook

The 26 bus route runs from Sainsbury’s Calcot to Reading. There are a total of five dark green bus shelters belonging to Holybrook Parish Council.

The roads and footpaths belong to West Berkshire Council and this includes the rubbish bins next to the bus shelters and these are emptied twice a week via Streetcare. Any damage or excess litter must be reported to the Streetcare team at West Berkshire Council or the West Berkshire Council office at Sainsbury’s.



*Come and look at the daffodils
in Linear Park in March.*

Beansheaf Pre-school

The Beansheaf Pre-school based at the Beansheaf Community Centre have extended opening hours from 21st April. They are running afternoon sessions every Tuesday and Thursday from 12-2.30pm. Please contact Karen Albanese on 0118 945 4312 or 07813 875567 during Pre-school hours.



YOUR HOLYBROOK
COUNCILLORS

BERNARD GILBERT
(CHAIRMAN)

0118 941 8051

CLAIRE TULL

(VICE CHAIRMAN)

0118 941 8203

MARY BEDWELL

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VAL BETTERIDGE

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ROY BRUMPTON

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THAMES VALLEY POLICE

0845 8 505 505

COMMENTS FROM WEST BERKSHIRE COUNCILLORS



The Recession

Some of our residents may be experiencing financial problems due to the present credit squeeze. Regarding payments for Council tax or rent, the Council has issued the following statement, which I hope will be of benefit.

“West Berkshire Council recognises that changes in employment have the potential to impact upon household income and that rent and council tax may be amongst the largest items to be met from that income. We are keen to remind people that, where income is reduced, there may be some assistance with rent and Council tax through the benefits system. Even if you do not qualify for housing or council tax benefit we may be able to assist by rescheduling payments due. Anyone who is experiencing difficulty is urged to contact us as soon as possible; - delays may reduce the extent to which we are able to assist.”

Further information is available on the Council's website

www.westberks.gov.uk

or by contacting our Customer Services team on 01635 519520



Mini Motor Bikes

Moto-bikes, quad bikes and motorised scooters are causing a severe nuisance to residents and users of the Linear Park. In most cases they are being used illegally and the Police have confiscated some recently. Parents are asked not to encourage their use other than in the locations where proper provision is made.

Brian Bedwell

Balancing Ponds

Over the years the balancing ponds have been neglected and are in need of management. The work being carried out at the moment is the start of a 4 year cyclic management programme.

Ideally, to maintain the efficient function of the balancing ponds which is to capture both run-off ground surface water and excess flood water and filter out pollutants before returning the cleansed water back to the Holybrook river, the reeds and sedges should be mown and the arisings removed every year. If this is not done, the dead plant material remains in the ponds, stagnating the water, infilling the ponds and building up the sludge levels.

But—the balancing ponds have become a vital habitat to a diverse population of wildlife and to mow the whole area every year would remove this habitat and severely affect the welfare of this wildlife.

Therefore a compromise is made by cutting a different quarter of the beds each year so that over the course of 4 years, the whole area will be mown. This 4 year cycle will generate reeds/sedges of different ages. This age difference has the added bonus of increasing the diversity of habitat for the wildlife. A compost heap will be created in a specific area in the park for these arisings—again further opportunity for wildlife habitat.

By the same token, the self-seeded trees should not be allowed to grow in the balancing ponds as they too upset the balancing function. However again the resident wildlife exploit these trees, therefore the trees cannot all be removed at once but can be removed as a gradual process so that solitary trees remain at different growth stages and heights. Caroline Booth, Parks Officer, West Berkshire Council email:

CBooth@westberks.gov.uk Tel: 01635 519576