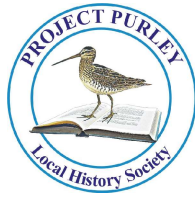


Project Purley Publication L500049



PURLEY PARISH COUNCIL



Parish Map

Introduction

Parish Councils are by far the oldest form of local government. They began as Anglo-Saxon witans in which the village folk gathered together to decide on matters which affected everyone. They were superior to manor rule in mediaeval times in that they were church based and could rule over several manors or parts of them or there could be several parishes within a manor. Their first significant role was in allocating land to tithes and they gradually picked up responsibilities for matters such as roads, policing, parish bull, and poor relief.

In the nineteenth century many responsibilities were removed, moving first to parish unions and then to county councils. Then in the late nineteenth century the civil and ecclesiastical functions were separated. The parish of Purley was unusual in that its coverage encompassed four manors. It began as a very rural parish but today most of it is very much a suburb of Reading although two of its former manorial areas retain their rural aspect.

In this little booklet we see the emergence of Purley Parish Council up to the time the author joined the council. It was originally published in five parts in the Project Purley Journals of September 2018 to May 2020.

Most of the material was culled from Parish Council minutes which were deposited in the Berkshire Record Office under the reference PAC 93/1/3. During this period the minutes were all written by hand into the Journal sized minute books until in 1967 when the clerk typed them.

In the Local History News dated Summer 2019 the parish gets a national mention:-

In The Project Purley Journal there is running a series of articles on Purley Parish Council. What might at first sight appear a dry subject, and local council minutes can indeed sometimes be a tedious source to explore, their responsibilities had huge impact on the lives of their local community so they are well worth investigating. Bus services, meals on wheels, housing, footpaths, street names - still issues that cause debate and controversy.

www.project-purley.net

Local Government

Government comes from two directions: down, from a central authority such as the King or a parliament who tell people what to do or what not to do: or up from the grass roots who decide the rules for their community. In Saxon times communities were governed by a gathering of all eligible villagers at what was known as the Witangemot or Moot which met when decisions needed to be taken. One of the key decisions to be taken every year was what crops to grow and which strips each villager would use in the Common field.

After King Edgar decreed in 939 that tithes on the fruits of the land were to go to the church, pilgrims and the poor and required each church to agree with its neighbours which piece of land went with which church it soon became clear that some sort of organisation was required which assigned roles to individuals. This was essentially the start of the Parish system which was quite different from the Manorial system. In Purley's case this meant settling the boundaries of the parish taking into account the pieces of land in which Whitchurch and Sulham had an interest. This boundary enclosed lands from four manors, Purley Magna, Purley Parva, La Hyde and Lething.

In order to allocate responsibilities an annual meeting was held around Easter time which became known as the Parish Vestry. Initially the two chief roles to be allocated were People's Warden to represent the interests of parishioners and Vicar's Warden whose key job it was to look after the parish church and represent the interests of the clergy. Gradually throughout medieval times decrees were handed down from on high for other roles to be covered. These included Constables and Tithing Men, Haywards, Surveyors of the Roads and Overseers of the Poor. In addition the running of the parish required the appointment of Clerks, Vergers and Sextons

By the 19th century there had been many changes, for instance constables were being absorbed into the police force and surveyors' duties taken over by Turnpike Trusts. The Parishes Act of 1884 was what triggered the start of the present parochial system which tends to be very confusing as it differentiated between Civil and Ecclesias-

tical functions. Parishes which started out the same soon became different as for example the order of 1897 which left odd bits of land with Sulham and Whitchurch outside the Ecclesiastical Parish but transferred most of them into the Civil Parish.

By this time there were other bodies taking over various duties. Purley was part of the Bradfield Union which administered the Poor Law. It was also part of the Bradfield Sanitary District which looked after health and sewerage matters. These had been formed in the mid 1800s and eventually overseen by Berkshire County Council formed in 1894 who took over education and highways.



Lichfield Cottage was built as the parish poor house and housed the elderly. It later became the post office.

It was replaced by the Bradfield Union workhouse in 1832 when parishes were grouped into Unions to administer the Poor Law.



The Parish Meeting

When Parish Councils were introduced in 1898 following the 1896 Local Government Act there was an option for smaller parishes to have an Annual Parish Meeting to transact business and to appoint two Overseers to look after things for the rest of the year. It was this option that Purley took and the Lord of the Manor, Anthony Morris Storer assumed the role of chairman of the meeting, continuing to exercise his dominating role until he died in 1902 after which the Rectors assumed the role of Chairman. The meetings were held regularly except in 1902 following the death of Major Storer and 1914 because of the outbreak of war.



Major Anthony Storer the first chairman of the Parish Meeting

Effectively one overseer acted as clerk and was paid an honorarium and the other represented Purley's interests on the Board of Guardians of the Bradfield Union Workhouse.

In 1927 there were considerable reforms in Local Government being debated and it was felt that it was about time Purley had its own Parish Council. This was agreed by Berkshire County Council and the new Parish Council met for the first time on Monday March 28th 1927 at the school. The Rev C H Coe was elected Chairman and Horace John Turner was appointed as Parish Clerk at a salary of two guineas per annum.

Early years 1927-1945

The new Parish Council first met at the schoolroom on Monday 28th March 1927. It comprised: The Revd C H Coe, Mr C E Hodgkin, Mr H A Tidbury, Mr H Pocock and Mr S Anderson. Two other parishioners attended as well. The Revd Coe was elected Chairman, but within days he was moved to Windsor by the bishop after some rather unsavoury events. Horace Turner was appointed Clerk at a salary of two guineas per annum. At the next meeting Miss Carsole-ss-Jones took over the chairmanship and at the following one Ernest Hodgkin was elected, but was absent at the following meeting which was chaired by Horace Pocock; but Hodgkin returned to stay as chairman until his death.

For the first 30 years there were two topics that came up at almost every meeting. Footpaths and roads. One might get the impression that every landowner was intent on obstructing or denying footpaths and Brownyard footpath was reported as having been damaged by a timber wagon. So in 1934 they produced a list of 14 footpaths and bridleways and set about convincing the County Council to agree. A need for fingerposts to direct walkers was recognised and installed in 1929 but in July it was reported that one had been sawn down. Later George Aberly from Long Lane admitted to sawing and burning it so was ordered to pay £3 to replace it. He never did! The roads were always being reported as in bad condition and needed tarring and ire was directed toward the County Council.

Houses were springing up along the Oxford Road and Long Lane and there were complaints about the poor postal service they received as the postman had to walk from Pangbourne to the Roebuck then back and up Long Lane and then back to Pangbourne with a lot of wasted mileage so after talks with the postmaster it was agreed that the area would be served from Tilehurst so the postman could walk along the Oxford Road, up Long Lane and back to Tilehurst. The end result has been the southeastern quadrant of Purley is now RG31-6 and called Tilehurst while the rest of Purley is RG8-8.



Glebe Road, Purley's first Council Houses

Gradually as the 1920s turned into the 1930s other issues arose. One key one was the building of Council houses in Glebe Road and the Parish Council were lobbying Bradfield RDC to reserve at least four of them for Purley residents.

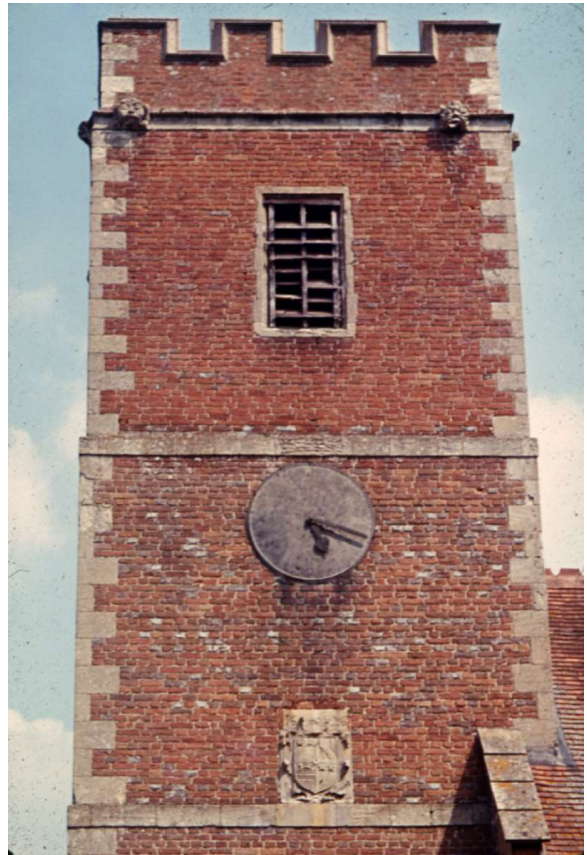
As time went by the Council were asked to nominate members to various outside positions to represent Purley and this established many connections with neighbouring parishes especially Pangbourne so, for the celebrations to mark King George V's Silver Jubilee and King George VI's Coronation, Purley joined with Pangbourne but they broke away for the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth. Purley received the money for a lifebelt from the Jubilee fund.

Among the joint enterprises was Pangbourne Fire Brigade toward which Purley paid £12/5/0 every half year with Horace Pocock serving as representative. This continued until January 1939 when Bradfield RDC took over responsibility. Two members had to serve on the rates assessment panel.

One of the odd allocations of responsibility placed on Parish Councils in 1892 was the Parish Clock. Purley's had stopped working and in 1952 they tried to get it working again. A parishioner offered to pay the cost but the then chairman, A W Bucknell objected

to the noise, claiming all that had gone wrong was that someone had stolen the lead weights. However he seems to have been over-ruled.

The first hint of war came at the meeting of 28th March 1938 when they were ordered to begin Air Raid Precautions. A Head Warden for the area had been appointed and the Council had to provide wardens. However on the 28th July 1941 all the wardens turned up at the Parish Council meeting because the Head Warden Mr Stocks had resigned and been replaced by a woman, Miss Ashloss. They demanded that the PC support them in opposing this but the Council said it was not their business, so all the wardens resigned.



The parish clock on the church tower

The second issue was the provision of a shelter which the Council wanted in the School grounds; but the rector, Revd Skuse objected and an alternative option for a hut on the River estate was ignored so the matter was dropped. However the tunnel under the Oxford Road linking the two halves of the Purley Park estate was used for the purpose. Later in August 1942 they were issued with instructions on how to welcome American troops.

The Council was very active in persuading utility companies to serve Purley. They joined forces with Pangbourne PC to get more favourable terms from the water company and did a survey of residents to try to get electricity but it took some time before enough residents agreed to take electricity before the company would lay a cable from the mill at Whitchurch.

There were many concerns about the River Estate. It was first mentioned in January 1936 when the council called for the 'camping estate' to be closed down. During the war its nature changed completely and it had become a permanent home to many people.

There was much ill feeling between older residents and the newcomers until the estate dwellers realised that, as they were on the electoral register, they could summon up enough votes to have their own parish councillors and after this relations improved markedly.

Another campaign the Council sponsored was a move to get the ferry moved closer to the lock so that Purley could be closer to Mapledurham. The matter was raised in October 1938 but this was the last thing the owners of Mapledurham House wanted. Instead soon after the ferry itself was closed.

Transport was a big issue. In January 1932 the Council were incensed to learn that the fares for the Thames Valley bus service to Oxford were the same from Reading to Pangbourne as for Reading to Purley. Complaints were made to the bus company who pointed out that fares were set by the Traffic Commissioners and a combined deputation to them eventually, in July, resulted in a slightly cheaper fare for Purley. During the war there were complaints that Purley residents were left standing in the mornings due to overcrowding

After the War 1945-1955

In September 1936 the Council had sought to buy land for a village hall but although various sites were suggested, nothing came of it. Then after the war, in June 1946, Mrs Goodman revived the idea and joined it to a need for a war memorial. This resulted in the building of the Memorial Hall. While the Council fully supported the scheme it was felt better to let the Memorial Hall committee get on with it with the Council merely nominating one member.



The Memorial Hall as built

By June 1947 the Parish Council were supporting a public telephone for the River Estate and for Bradfield District Council to improve sewage and refuse services.

The next big demand was for a recreation ground. The Revd Skuse first offered a site for the village hall in an acre next to the rectory and then extended the offer to two acres to provide a recreation field. This was rejected as being too small and land was sought both from Home Farm and Westbury Farm also from Trenthams on land adjacent to Long Lane. After much to-ing and fro-ing with the planning authority, the National Playing Fields Association and the newly formed Sports Club, it was decided to seek six acres from Sulham Estate and the Revd Wilder offered a seven year lease on land adjacent to Beech Road which was agreed. The Parish Council paid £15 for fencing (2s 7d per post) and the sports club offered to level half of it and lay it out for organised games. There were lots of arguments about whether the Sports Club should rent the pavilion from the Parish Council or take a direct lease with Sulham Estate. Eventually however it all got sorted and when the lease expired the Council bought a slightly different area of land from Sulham Estate.

Planning matters began to be considered after the 1948 Act but it was not until July 1952 that they were consulted on a number of issues eg an application to site a caravan at 17 River Gardens and for a proper caravan to replace an old van at 33 Oak Tree Lane.

Purley faced two threats during this period. First Reading Borough Council moved to incorporate Purley in October 1947, then in July 1953 Pangbourne proposed taking over the Bourne Road area. Both were vigorously opposed although the latter did succeed much later.

After the railways were nationalised in 1948, in May 1949 the Council demanded a halt be provided at Purley but the British Railways Board rejected it out of hand.

The highlight of the period however was the Coronation celebrations in 1953. Purley went it alone, turning down Pangbourne's offer. The programme approved in October 1952 included a TV relay of the coronation in the Memorial Hall, Sports events, aquatic events, a

children's tea and a bonfire at the new recreation ground. It all went off well and perhaps for the first time the parish council was seen to have moved from a small group, bitterly complaining about roads and footpaths, to an organisation dedicated to renewing, providing and enhancing community amenities



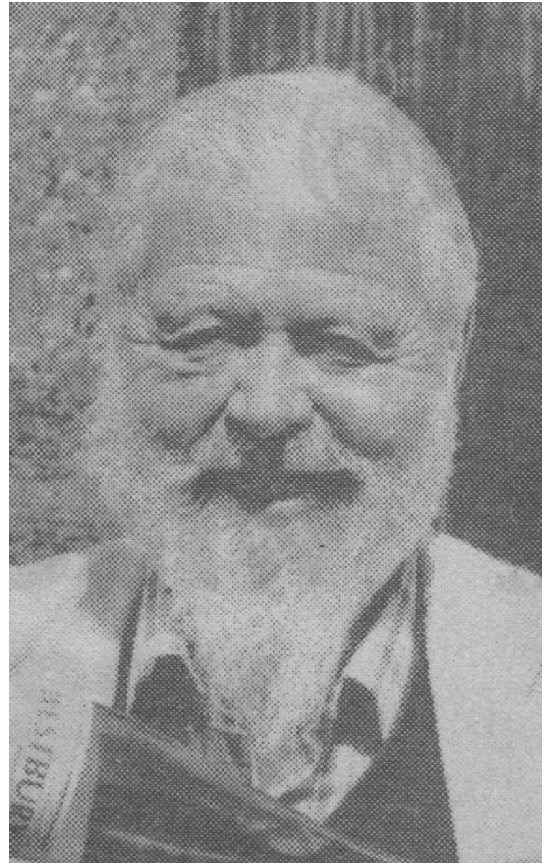
Bowling for a pig at the Coronation celebrations 1953

The John Dare Years 1955-1965

John Dare had become Clerk to the Council in 1947 and retired in 1965 after suffering a heart attack. For most of his period the Council was dominated by Bernard Theobald and Dorothy Scott-Stokes. Their meetings were mostly at the Memorial Hall but occasionally they met either at the School or Westbury Farm, the home of Bernard Theobald.



Dorothy Scott-Stokes



Bernard Theobald

As before, the question of footpaths seemed to appear on every agenda with two issues never being resolved. First the Council wanted a right of way from the Recreation Ground to Long Lane and second a local man insisted on his right to cross the recreation ground occasionally with his tractor. The County Council were chivied again and again to confirm the definitive set of footpaths across Purley and there were many meetings with Tilehurst Parish Council to agree where Purley and Tilehurst paths met.

It was during this period that street nameplates were erected. This meant that agreement had to be sought on what the actual names were. In 1964 the A329 was defined as Oxford Road (leading to Reading) from the Roebuck to Long Lane and Reading Road (leading to Oxford) from Long Lane to Pangbourne. When the Reading Road was later changed to Purley Rise this was defined as from Purley Lane to the Sul Brook leaving about five yards of Reading Road between Long Lane and Purley Lane as you will notice when you use your sat-nav.

A new school for Purley had been proposed earlier but it was not until 1962 that the County Council confirmed that Long Lane Primary School would open in 1964 and Little Heath Secondary Modern in 1962. This forced the issue about street name plates as what is now Purley Lane was generally known as School Lane and it was seen as silly to have the road running away from Long Lane School named School Road.

Bus services continued to be a problem and Thames Valley Traction were urged to run their services via the village instead of just



Long Lane School

along the A329 but it was not until June 1961 that they finally agreed. They noted that 53 buses a day went through Purley and the diversion through the village would seriously affect bus users from rural areas. Meanwhile, Pangbourne Coaches applied for permission to run via the village and around the River Estate but it is not clear whether this service actually started.

Highways was another big issue. The proposals for the Purley Pangbourne bypass were put forward in May 1961 which would have isolated most of Purley as the new road would leave the Oxford Road at what is now the Knowsley Road roundabout and return just by Purley Hall with the Pangbourne bypass running from just west of the hall to the new M4. The Council were always pressing for a 30mph limit through Purley but the County Council would have none of it. They finally agreed to a 40mph limit west of Long Lane.

Housing became another big issue. We already had Council Houses in Glebe Road and Bourne Road but this was not seen as enough. Instead caravan sites were proposed and in October 1961 Ken Venners asked for permission to site 14 and Harold Gutch asked for an unspecified number in November 1963. Councillor Dunton tried to insist that a site with less than 100 caravans was unsustainable. Eventually a third site on St Mary's Ave. (where now is Thames Reach) was chosen and all three sites were allowed.

There were numerous complaints about poor electricity supplies which was resolved by erecting a sub-station for Purley. There were continual demands for telephone kiosks and post boxes and water supply and sewage disposal problems kept appearing.

A meals on wheels service was introduced in April 1964 with the County Council providing a subsidy of 3d a meal.

After the death of the Revd Henry Wilder the Sulham Estate passed into the hands of Trustees so when the lease on the playing field came up for renewal the Council were dealing with lawyers rather than Mr Wilder. This got very acrimonious at times and the Council sought a compulsory purchase order in October 1962. Eventually however a slightly different area was agreed and the land was

purchased for £1544 in September 1964 with a loan of £5000 having been agreed in October 1963. The biggest problem however was getting planning permission.

There were several attempts to take over parts of Purley by neighbours. We resisted the attempt by Pangbourne Parish Council to take over our part of Bourne Road and an attempt by Reading to merely absorb Purley was also resisted after a public referendum in 1963. Agreements were made with Tilehurst and Sulham Councils for slight changes to borders.

The clerk's salary was increased to £60 pa in November 1964 but in March 1965 John Dare resigned after a heart attack and Ray Fulbrook was appointed in his place.

Ray Fulbrooke 1965-1967

This next part of the history of Purley Parish Council takes us from the appointment of Ray Fulbrooke as Clerk to 1967 when minutes were typed rather than being handwritten into a minute book.

A special meeting of the Parish Council was held on the 22nd March 1965 to appoint Ray on a salary of £60 pa to start on the 1st April but he actually started the day before. They also debated a gift for John Dare who had just retired due to illness after 20 years, but they could not agree to spend ratepayers money and were unwilling to make personal contributions, so they agreed to send a letter of appreciation instead.

Three topics dominated discussions in this period, the recreation ground, the state of the roads and footpaths and the opening of Long Lane Primary School.

The school had already caused a problem in that School Lane had had to be officially named Purley Lane as it now ran away from the new school. Now it was decided that the C of E school would take pupils from north of the A329 aged 5 to 7 and the new school would take that age group from south of the A329 and all the juniors. Members objected on the grounds that this would divide the parish. The County Council asked for two parish councillors to become managers of the school and Reg Marshall and N Davis were appointed on 18/10/65; but Davis resigned in February 1967 to be replaced by Bob Skerritt. The school duly opened after a delay caused by sewage problems; but it was soon realised that it was not big enough so more classrooms were needed.

This was the period when new development was taking off in the parish. Highfield Road and Orchard Close had just been completed, there were two small developments off New Hill and major developments on the Lamerton and Wakefield estates. A third major development at Purley Gardens by the Unwins had been refused and was going to a public enquiry. The name Elm Road was proposed for the lower of the two off New Hill but this was turned down by the Post Office and Hazel Road was adopted instead. The Lamerton Estate was named Cecil Aldin Drive and a plethora of names were but

forward for the Wakefield development: Isambard Brunel Road, Owl Grove, Squirrel Walk and Willowplace Walk. The postmaster Harold Gutch settled it by suggesting Nursery Gardens.

The state of the A329 and the volume of traffic was a continual source of complaint. There was an accident just west of the Roebuck due to loose shingles. Glebe Road was also often complained about and eventually the County Council agreed some resurfacing. It was decided that all street lighting would be taken over by the Highways Authority, ie Berks County Council; but a few lights were left with the Parish Council.

The Council were agitating for a 40 mph speed limit on the A329 and 30 mph on Long Lane; but both were refused. At the time the law required car lights to be left on when parked at night and numerous complaints were made about cars without lights parked on Glebe Road. This was understandable as the Council houses had no parking space.

Footpath 1 was diverted in September 1965 and Bob Skerritt agreed to sort out new signs. Work needed to be done on the surface of Footpath 5 which led south from the top of New Hill. The County Council agreed to pay half the cost; but it took a lot of prodding by the Parish Council to get the contractor to actually do the work.

It was decided that District Nurses should come under medical practices; but the Parish Council objected and wanted a parish nurse. They also wanted a doctor's surgery in the parish; but after meeting with local doctors and being told the facts of life they reluctantly agreed not to press further.

The key topic however was the new recreation ground. Six acres had been acquired roughly where the former rented site had been and there were countless arguments about layout. Mr L Trevers was appointed as architect and he suggested several alternatives which included a pavilion and levelling. The council obtained a loan of £5000 for the works but when tenders were in the lowest was £6590 and £1546 had already been spent. It took many months and a visit to Whitehall before a further loan of £3500 was agreed with the Public Loans Board.

This did not cover the pavilion however. The table tennis club wanted room for two tables and the sports clubs wanted changing facilities. Several people offered voluntary services as with the Memorial Hall but: for an unstated reason, this was withdrawn in September 1965. Then it was agreed that there would be a caravan parked on the ground to deter vandalism and it was realised that water, electricity and sewage services were required. When the sewer extension was built it stopped short of the ground as there was confusion over boundaries but eventually it all got sorted.

The levelling was completed by June 1966 and tennis courts and children's play area laid out. The field was grassed and was ready for cricket for the 1967 season and football for the 1967/8 season. A management committee was established with five parish councillors and representatives from Purley United Football club, Purley Cricket Club and the Memorial Hall

Bob Skerritt had wanted a six foot fence around the boundary; but the County Council only allowed four feet. There were problems with an access road from Beech Road and the Council wanted a footpath link to Long Lane. Amazingly planning permission was sought in April 1965 and granted in November.

Then the proposals for the Purley by-pass were published and as first proposed it ran right across the new recreation ground to join the A329 just before Purley Hall. The council objected and the line was moved further south; but then Reading Borough Council objected. Eventually of course the whole scheme was abandoned.

Towards the end of the period the council was asked to suggest a list of buildings for historic listing and numerous Tree Preservation Orders were issued. Also consultation started on what would become the 1968 Redcliffe-Maud proposals for the reform of local government. Purley was clear that it did not want to be assimilated into Reading as evidenced by a poll in 1963.

For all of this period Bernard Theobald was Chairman and John Bucknell Vice-Chairman. There was an election in May 1966 at which Dorothy Scott-Stokes did not stand, so a new council of John Bucknell, Rex Cooper, N Davis, Honor Gutch, Reg Marshall, Bob Skerritt, Bernard Theobald and Archie White took over. There were

several resignations and coptions over the years and one expulsion for non-attendance, so there were many changes to the composition of the council.

Typed minutes 1967-1973

This final part of the history of the Parish Council covers the first six years of typed minutes, to be found at the Berkshire Record Office as CPC 93/1 sections 4 to 10 and the years 1967 to 1973. For all of this period Ray Fulbrooke was Clerk and Bernard Theobald was Chairman.

Compared with previous parts the issues were mostly quite different. The only mention of footpaths concerned obstructions on Bridleway 6 (leading from Oxford Road to Fulbrooke Crescent) and the making of a public rights of way map in conjunction with Tilehurst Parish Council.

Bus services got no mention in the minutes, although there were debates about providing bus shelters and where bus stops should go. Two shelter sites were proposed, one to serve the Bourne Road area opposite Sulham Lane which was postponed and one in St Mary's Avenue (now Purley Village), opposite Lister Close which was built at a cost of £90 but has now been removed. Two bus stops on the A329 were merged (now by Nursery Gardens) and a new one by the top of New Hill for which the Parish Council wanted a lay-by.

There were continuing concerns about the size of Long Lane School, supported by Tilehurst PC as many of their children would attend. Eventually a Terrapin was obtained in 1969. There were proposals to close the C of E School but nothing happened. Attempts to recruit a crossing warden at the junction of the A329 and Long Lane met with zero response.

The big road issue was about the Purley/Pangbourne by-pass. There were proposals to provide only the Pangbourne section to which Purley objected and consideration of the whole scheme was deferred.

The Redciffe-Maud report on the future of local government was published in 1968. In 1971 after a general election the Local Government Commission proposed unitary districts with the abolition of Parish Councils. There were three proposals affecting

Purley, Plan A suggested merging Henley Borough, Henley

RDC, Bradfield RDC and a few other bits. Plan B suggested merging Bradfield RDC with Newbury and Hungerford Boroughs and RDCs and a bit of Wantage RDC. Purley PC preferred Plan A and supported Ashampstead PC's petition for the retention of Parish Councils. We finished up with plan B and a success for the petition, although Berkshire County Council was retained. The bigger threat however came from Reading who wanted to incorporate Purley; but after a poll of parishioners who voted 790 against, 158 for Reading's proposals with 10 don't know that was dropped.

There was an ongoing dispute with Pangbourne PC over the Bourne Road area which Pangbourne wanted but in July 1972 Berkshire County Council told them to forget it.

The new recreation ground came into use although there were concerns about the sharp flints that kept coming to the surface and persistent flooding. The latter was addressed by a mole drainage contract. During the summers, only Purley Cricket Club got to use the ground but the two football pitches were rented out to a number of different clubs including an under 13 club on both Saturdays and Sundays. Little Heath School made use of the ground for 2-3 years from December 1969 while their playing field was being prepared.

The pavilion took a long time to build and even more to decorate. Furniture was bought from the Wintringham Way Community Association which was closing. It was used for Parish Council meetings on the 31st January 1972 but they had to go back to the Memorial Hall when it got cold and when they installed a night storage heater it didn't work and Southern Electricity had to be called in to try and fix it.

The availability of facilities prompted the formation of new clubs. There was a tennis club, an archery club and the Sports and Social Club all emerging in 1972. Purley Rep hired the pavilion three evenings a week for rehearsals but were reminded that they must continue to use the Memorial Hall for performances. A Young People's Club was formed in October 1969 and the council gave them £20 for equipment.

Until 1967 street lighting had been a responsibility of the Parish

Council but then Berks CC took over for most of the roads and established a common time policy of dusk to 24:00 and 05:30 to dawn. Over the period lights had been installed on the A329, Bourne Road, Glebe Road, Highfield Road and a few others. This affected speed limits and the council were always pressing for a 40 mph limit on the A329 and 30 mph on Long Lane. There were lots of arguments about making up roads. The Highway Authority insisted they could not spend money until roads had been adopted and as the developer of Westridge Avenue had gone bust there were problems there. The proposals to make up Beech Road were vigorously opposed by many householders, but a compromise in July 1972 allowed a contract for £21388 to be agreed with a hammerhead serving the recreation ground.

Litter bins were acquired from April 1969 and there were complaints about dumping litter behind Highfield Road. Dogs were a problem and bye laws were adopted to try to deal with the situations. The biggest complaints came about the poultry farm which was burning chicken carcasses and Mr Keene's promises were not always implemented.

There was a move to acquire land adjacent to the church to extend the burial ground but no agreement could be reached even though the council set aside £1000. They then tried to get a compulsory purchase order but were advised that they would have to adopt the 1852 to 1885 Burials Acts and the County Council said in 1972, forget it as the legal costs would be crippling.

There was a move to protect Purley Copse with a tree preservation order but the County Council wanted every single tree and bush to be identified so the proposal was dropped. The new estate on the fringe was named Theobald Drive. In August 1972 the council agreed to support the *Tree for '73* campaign and promises of trees were received from Col Duncan, Reg Ayres, John Bucknell and others. A planting session at the recreation ground was held in March 1973.

By the end of this period the council had changed from a small group of concerned citizens to a well established local authority with a hard working Recreation Ground Committee. There were

many other issues which I have not been able to cover and fundamental changes following the 1972 Local Government Act which settled the role of Parish Councils. I had come to live in Purley in 1972 and by 1976 had joined the council so I will leave the story here.

Parish Councillors 1925-1970

				surname	forenames	reason	address	died
3	27	10	35	Anderson	S	left district		
3	27	3	27	Coe	Rev Charles Henry	left district	P u r l e y Village	
3	27	3	46	Hodgkin	Charles Ernest	retired	P u r l e y Lane	1949
3	27	7	29	Jones	Lillian Mary Carsol- ess	resigned		died
3	27	3	46	Pocock	Horace	not re-elec- ted		
3	27	10	51	Tidbury	Herbert Arthur	died		1951
7	29	3	46	Venners	Joseph Horace	not re-elec- ted	P u r l e y Rise	
1 0	35	7	42	Rain	John W	died		1942
3	37	8	41	Walden	Ronald Philip	died	O x f o r d Road	1941
8	41	10	53	Bucknell	Arthur William	died	P u r l e y Village	1953
3	46	4	54	Halsey	William John	died		1954
3	46	4	52	Haworth	Harold			
3	46	4	52	Rackliff	Thomas Jesse			
3	46	4	47	Skuse	Rev Ernest Edwin	resigned	P u r l e y Lane	
5	49	4	52	Harvey	Leslie			
5	49	4	55	Scott-Stokes	Dorothy			first term
1 1	51	4	63	Dunton	Claude Alexander	resigned		
5	52	3	57	Crossley	William A	died		
5	52	4	55	Fitchew	Peter W			

5	52	2	79	Theobald	Bernard Harold	retired	Westbury Lane	1993
1 1	53	1	56	Chamberlain	Marjorie	resigned		
5	54	2	79	Skerritt	Robert L	retired	Oak Tree Walk	alive
5	55	4	83	Bucknell	Arthur John Dimond	retired	P u r l e y Village	died
5	55	5	60	Marshall	Albert Reginald		L o n g Lane	first term
4	56	4	66	Scott-Stokes	Dorothy	resigned		
9	56	4	60	Buckmaster	Jack Travers			first term
9	56	4	60	Fisher	Reginald Albert			
7	57	4	63	Martin	David Nicholas			
5	60	7	64	Garner	James Allan	resigned		
5	60	12	65	Gillingham	Ronald Philip	deprived		
5	60	4	63	Haines	Lawson David			
4	63	5	65	Buckmaster	Jack Travers	resigned		
4	63	4	72	Marshall	Albert Reginald		L o n g Lane	s e c o n d term
5	63	4	64	Riches	Ivan Peter Edward			
6	63	2	65	Duncan	Lt Col Robert Francis Hugh	resigned	L o n g Lane	1983
1 1	64	4	69	Wren	Frederick Christopher			
3	65	2	67	Davis	Norman Henry William	resigned		
3	65	4	76	Gutch	Lucy Honor	retired	P u r l e y Rise	1994
7	65	4	66	Morris	Edmund			alive
2	66	3	78	White	Alfred Archibald	resigned	Wintringham Way	1996
5	66	4	74	Cooper	Lt Col Reginald Edwin	died		
3	67	4	69	Burt	Mary		O x f o r d Road	

5	69	4	79	Ayers	Reginald Henry	retired	Westbury Lane	died
5	69	4	74	Gear	Frank Keon		B e e c h Road	
6	72	4	79	Hutchings	Denys Arthur	retired	G l e b e Road	alive