



Proudly serving the residents of Holybrook Parish since 2000

HOLYBROOK PARISH NEWS

December 2025



Thank you to everyone who completed the questionnaire, attended the public meeting at the Beansheaf Centre or drop-in session at Kennet Valley Free Church. Your participation shows how much our community cares, especially during a time of uncertainty around the local authority restructuring proposals.

The results are clear: residents expressed strong concerns regards the proposals, with an average score of 4.7 out of 5. When asked about preferred options, 73% of respondents chose the Ridgeway option, 17% selected Reading, 2% had no preference, 6% were undecided and 3% did not answer that question. It's heartening to see strong community support; the Parish Council scored 4.39 out of 5, showing residents value their local services and the role we play.

All questions raised by residents have been submitted to Reading and West Berkshire Councils. Their responses are available on our website or directly from the Parish Office. The Parish Council has also sent a letter, reflecting your views, to the Secretary of State and West Berkshire and Reading Borough Councils. Now we await Central Government's decision as to whether either or neither of the proposals will be taken further. Formal consultation is expected in spring 2026.

It was an honour for Cllr Clive Littlewood and I to attend the Remembrance Day Service at Holy Trinity Theale and lay a wreath on behalf of the Council (Photo credit: Theale Parish Council).

Looking forward, the presentation of The Holybrook Community Spirit Awards will take place at The Annual Assembly on Monday 30th March 2026 and I'm delighted to announce the launch of two new awards; the 'Blooming Beauties' and 'Photography' Competitions. Please see inside for further details and nomination form for the Community Sprit Awards (also available on our website). We will conclude our Silver Anniversary Year with a celebratory Picnic in the Park on Monday 4th May 2026.



Your feedback does matter and we have taken on board residents' request for public meetings to be held during the day, as well as evenings, and in both sides of the Parish. We'd also like to know if there's any information you'd like to see in the newsletter whether just parish news or local stories, games and puzzles, articles from connected groups...

Heartfelt thanks to all our councillors and staff for their service and work throughout the year. Despite deeply personal circumstances, their contributions and dedication have been and is beyond expectation. On behalf of our staff and councillors, may I wish you all a very happy Christmas and a healthy, peaceful New Year.

Claire Tull, Chairman

www.holybrook-pc.gov.uk

Clerk: clerk@hollybrook-pc.gov.uk. General Enquiries: admin@hollybrook-pc.gov.uk

Or, call the Parish Office on 0118 945 4339 or 07704 663397

Follow us on Facebook: [@HolybrookParishCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/HolybrookParishCouncil)

Community Litter Pick – Beansheaf Farm

On Saturday 1st November, five residents, with parish councillors, joined together to give Beansheaf a good tidy-up, collecting six black sacks of litter! Some unusual items were found, including: **Firework casings** (basketball area of Linear Park), **A baby carrier** (Torcross Grove) and **two broken recycling boxes** (Cow Lane).

It was wonderful to see neighbours coming together to make our community cleaner and safer, and have a bit of fun while doing it! Thank you to those who joined us.

The next litter pick will be in Beansheaf on Saturday 17th January — do come along, bring friends and help keep our area looking great!

Please keep an eye on the noticeboards for further dates in 2026. More volunteers are needed when we are in the eastern end of the Parish.



A Big Thank You to 1st Theale & Calcot Scout Group



We'd like to extend our heartfelt thanks to 1st Theale & Calcot Scout Group for planting a beautiful Prunus avium (wild cherry tree) at the Holymead recreation ground, with support from a volunteer tree warden from Reading Tree Wardens. Some of you were lucky enough to see the tree in all it's beauty — sadly, a brief but joyful addition to our community.



Tragically, this symbol of growth and community spirit was vandalised just a couple of months after planting, cutting short its promise and beauty. It is a sad reminder of the care our shared spaces need and the resilience of those who nurture them.

Friends Of Linear Park - Happy Christmas and New Year

Friends of Linear Park has had a busy and enjoyable year working in the Park.

We began by planting over 200 young trees (whips) in east Linear Park. Further projects during the year included creating a dead hedge (behind the garden in West Linear Park), a vegetable plot, a log walk and children's hopscotch, and, lastly, planting bulbs for the spring in the garden and around the Beansheaf Centre.



Over the summer the weather was a challenge but we managed to maintain the paths and keep the entrances clear of brambles and overhanging branches.

Our website is continually being updated with our activities including Christmas activities for the youngsters - www.folp.uk and click on 'Children's Corner'.



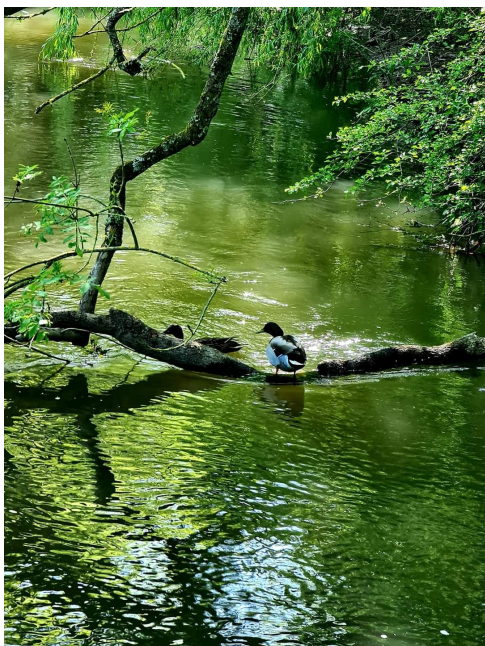
We look forward to next year, working in the Park for the community to enjoy. In the meantime, wishing everyone a Happy Christmas and best wishes for 2026.

Exciting Competitions for Holybrook Residents in 2026!

Holybrook Parish Council is delighted to announce two brand new competitions for 2026, giving everyone in the parish a chance to showcase their creativity — and win prizes!



1) Blooming Beauties: Whether it's your front or back garden, a window box or a small wildlife-friendly space at your home, we want to see your 'garden' at its springtime best. All kinds of green home spaces are welcome, from grand displays to simple spots that attract bees, birds and butterflies. Competition closes at midday on Friday 10th April. Prizes awarded at the Holybrook Silver Anniversary Event on Monday 4th May (Linear Park).



2) Holybrook Photography Competition: Capture the beauty of our parish through your eyes. There's a special category for children and teenagers, but everyone is welcome to enter, regardless of experience or equipment. Competition closes at midday on Friday 6th March. Prizes awarded at the Annual Assembly of Holybrook Parish on Monday 30th March (Beansheaf Centre).

Entering is easy! For full rules and entry details, visit: www.holybrook-pc.gov.uk and see our 'Events' section. You can also email admin@holybrook-pc.gov.uk for a copy or visit the Parish Office for a printed version. If you need any assistance with entering, please don't hesitate to get in touch — we want everyone to be able to take part.

(Photo credit: Michelle Hamadeh - Holybrook resident)

FREE Emergency at Work First Aid Training: 3 Spaces Available!

Due to the overwhelming success of the previous course, the Parish Council is delighted to offer three additional spaces on the Emergency First Aid at Work course.

Course Details

- **Date:** Wednesday 28th January 2026
- **Time:** 09:00 – 15:30
- **Location:** Beansheaf Room, Beansheaf Centre
- **Cost:** FREE for Holybrook residents (a £25 refundable deposit is required, returned on attendance)
- **Extras:** Light lunch provided; certification valid for 3 years

Topics Covered

- Managing emergency situations
- Dealing with unconscious casualties
- Burns, scalds, seizures, and more
- CPR and AED (adult)
- Heart attacks, choking, shock

This is a fantastic opportunity to gain essential life-saving skills. Don't miss out!

To Book Your Place: email: admin@holybrook-pc.gov.uk or **Call:** 0118 945 4339



12 Days of Winter Wildlife in Holybrook

This December, while twinkling lights brighten Calcot's streets, nature is putting on its own festive show! From chirping robins to darting squirrels, there's plenty of winter wildlife waiting to be spotted in our parks, gardens and hedgerows. Here are twelve to watch for this Christmas season (don't forget your camera!):



(Fieldfare

photo credit: Mr Giles - Holybrook Resident)

- 1) **Robin** – Our red-breasted festive favourite! Listen for their cheerful song in gardens or hedgerows near Linear Park.
- 2) **Blackbird** – Watch them turning fallen leaves for worms around gardens and shrubs.
- 3) **Redwing** – Winter visitors from Scandinavia; spot flocks feeding on berries in open spaces.
- 4) **Fieldfare** – Larger thrushes with grey heads. Often seen in frosty fields or perched on hawthorn.
- 5) **Blue & Great Tits** – Tiny bursts of colour hopping around feeders and holly bushes.
- 6) **House Sparrow** – Chattering in roof eaves or thick hedges, reminding us that nature's close by.
- 7) **Mallard** – Glide across ponds and streams, brightening cold mornings with their green sheen.
- 8) **Grey Squirrel** – Ever-busy acorn hoarders. Look up in mature trees along the footpaths.
- 9) **Fox** – Early risers might glimpse their russet coats crossing frosty lawns.
- 10) **Hedgehog** – Usually hibernating, but mild spells might stir one under log piles.
- 11) **Pheasant** – Vibrant flashes of colour on farmland edges at dawn or dusk.
- 12) **Holly & Ivy** – Winter's natural décor and vital food for birds.

Looking for something to do this winter? Want to take part in the Citizen Science Biodiversity Survey?

You can! simply visit our website: www.holybrook-pc.gov.uk for full details and digital form, call the Parish Council office on 0118 945 4339 to request a printed guide and survey forms, or pick up a copy of the survey form at The Parish Office, Beansheaf Centre, Calcot RG31 7AW.

Share your sightings in whichever way works best for you: online, by phone or by dropping a completed form in at the Parish Office.

Just for fun	Bloom	Ivy	H	O	L	Y	B	R	O	O	K	W	I	S	B	L	O	O	M	D	A	Q	U	D	P	O	R	O	A	N	T	H
	Dew	Mallard	I	Q	A	H	L	L	W	U	C	V	H	C	K	E	L	O	P	R	T	X	A	E	E	L	M	N	X	R	E	H
	Frost	Poppies	Y	H	E	D	G	E	H	O	G	D	J	Q	U	L	E	B	T	O	S	M	I	P	S	W	A	W	M	N	N	O
	Hedgehog	Walks	A	V	C	D	S	W	E	I	B	V	M	A	L	L	A	R	D	P	O	F	F	W	Z	V	N	O	A	W	I	L
	Holly	Winter	S	E	I	C	C	X	E	T	L	O	F	W	I	O	O	W	B	F	R	S	I	O	S	E	I	P	P	O	P	L
	Holybrook		M	N	W	I	W	I	N	T	E	R	R	O	P	L	B	D	E	X	F	V	M	N	N	O	O	R	T	V	E	Y

Your Parish Councillors

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JAGAN VEERATI:	07885 993 085		

Meetings

Parish Council meetings are open to the public*. All meeting dates are published on the Council's website: www.holybrook-pc.gov.uk and are in our noticeboards.

*subject to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960.