

HOLYBROOK PARISH NEWS

Proudly serving the residents of Holybrook Parish since 2000

February 2026



Here we are, February already, the Year of The Horse has started at a gallop! There's a sense of positivity with new beginnings on their way; bulbs pushing through and more bird chatter than I've noticed before. As an urban area, protecting and enhancing our wildlife is one of our top priorities. Please can I urge everyone to take part in our biodiversity survey as the more information we have, the better we can serve our environment—visit our website for details: www.holybrook-pc.gov.uk.

Reflecting on what makes our parish special, I have been inspired by the kindness, resilience and community spirit shown by so many residents - whether through volunteering, supporting neighbours or simply taking pride in the place we all call home. These small, everyday actions are the foundations of a strong parish and this is why we feel it important to recognise those who do so much for so many through our Community Spirit Awards. The nomination forms were in our last newsletter or can you complete an online nomination via our website.

Looking ahead, the Parish Council remains committed to listening, improving local services where we can and supporting initiatives that bring people together. We may be a small community but our collective voice and impact becomes much more powerful when we work together. This is reflected in many ways such as funds raised for Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day, the attendees at each of our litter picks and the residents who take time to attend our council meetings.

As we move into spring, I encourage everyone to stay engaged, share ideas and take part in parish life in whatever way suits you. Together, we can continue to build a parish that is welcoming, forward-looking and proud of its roots. Talking of which, the Annual Assembly of Holybrook Parish is on Monday 30th March at which we have a fabulous, local keynote speaker (see inside the newsletter for more information).

On Monday 4th May we will be celebrating 25 years of Holybrook Parish with an exciting event in Linear Park. We do hope that you can join us!

Thank you for your continued support and I wish you all a positive, bright and uplifting start to 2026.

Claire Tull, Chairman

Discover Local Support with the West Berkshire Directory

Looking for local services, activities or support in West Berkshire?



The West Berkshire Directory is a single, easy-to-use online guide for residents of all ages which includes information on:

- Community groups and leisure activities
- Support to live independently
- Care options and services for carers
- Childcare, SEND support and family activities.

You can search by category, use filters or type what you're looking for into the search bar to quickly find relevant services nearby. Explore the directory at: <https://directory.westberks.gov.uk/>. If you don't have digital access or would like help printing information from the Directory, please contact: 0118 9454 339.

Help Protect our Parish's Heritage!

The Parish Council is making applications to the Heritage Forum to help safeguard some of Holybrook's most cherished sites.

Linear Park is the first focus, with features that, we believe, make it worthy of listing:

- **20 Trees Orchard:** Planted in 2020 to mark the Council's 20th anniversary.
- **Jubilee Wood:** Planted in 2012 to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee.
- **Battle of Agincourt Tree:** Commemorates the 600th anniversary of the battle.
- **The 21 Oaks:** Memorial to the 21 local men who fell in WWI, now with a 'Tommy' figure and bench.
- **Water Pump:** Dating back to 1832, now in the Sensory Garden (already listed in its own right).
- **Ancient Hedgerows:** Along the edge of the Holy Brook.
- **Cobnut Walk:** Planted in 2003 to celebrate the area's cobnut heritage.



At the same time, the Council will also apply to list the Covid-Memorial trees on Underwood Road and the Pill Box on the Fairfields estate. Have you visited these local assets? Please do take the time to check them out.

We'd love your help! If you know of any historic sites, trees or landmarks in the Parish that are not already listed—or have old photos or stories—please share them. Whilst the Council doesn't decide what gets listed, every suggestion will be considered and,

where appropriate, a listing application will be made. When our applications are due to be heard by the panel, we will inform residents via our socials, website and noticeboards.

Interested in local history? If you'd like to start a local history group, get in touch, we may be able to help you get started.

Let's work together to recognise and protect our Parish's unique history!

Calcot Infant and Junior School — Happy New Year!

We have many exciting activities planned for the spring term, including school trips to London and Cotswold Wildlife Park, sporting events, choir concerts and productions in Years 1 and 3. We are also beginning preparations for Sports Week in May: if you run a local sports club and would like to offer a taster session during Sports Week, please contact the school office using the details below. All sports will be considered, as we are keen to give children new and exciting opportunities.

We are always looking for local volunteers to support our school. This may include listening to children read, helping with infant forest school sessions, or sharing experiences of historical events. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the school offices: Infants 0118 941 8189 Email: office@c-inf.w-berks.sch.uk. Juniors 0118 9428727 Email: office@c-jun.w-berks.sch.uk.

Daylight Saving

Don't forget; the clocks go forward by one hour at 1am on 29th March



Contact Us:

www.holybrook-pc.gov.uk

admin@hollybrook-pc.gov.uk

clerk@hollybrook-pc.gov.uk

bookings@hollybrook-pc.gov.uk

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Friends of Linear Park - Welcome to 2026

A new year in the park, combined with a fresh fall of snow, created a perfect winter wonderland for those brave enough to wrap up warm and venture out to enjoy the seasonality of the park.



The new accessible path, at the edge of the football field in the west of the park, running from the car park to Fairfields, has been especially welcome. In addition, the grass path leading from Fairfields into the park has been laid with wood chippings, providing a cleaner and more practical access route.



Recently, a large bough fell from the willow tree near the Beansheaf Centre. Following inspection, the tree was deemed unsafe and had to be felled. The logs were left on site, with 15 used to create a balance-run row for youngsters but it is great that adults have also been spotted giving it a go! Smaller logs were cut and arranged into a hopscotch trail in the woods, and a stack of split logs has also been left for future use. The remaining branches were put through a chipper, with the resulting chippings spread along the woodland paths (as mentioned above). Nothing has gone to waste.

Hazel and willow in the park have also been coppiced, sparking creativity within the group. This has led to the making of woven hurdles and, taking skills one step further, decorative finials for the tops.



As always our contact details are:- email: hello@folp.uk website: www.folp.uk

January Litter Pick Success and New Parish Bins

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to the amazing volunteers who participated in our first litter pick of 2026.

9 wonderful volunteers, including parish councillors, came together to help keep our parish clean and beautiful. 11 bags of litter were collected. Litter around the Fairfields Estate was particularly high. West Berkshire Council was approached to install a bin here. The request was refused, so the Parish Council is now investigating a suitable location for a bin to help reduce litter on this site. The Parish Council is also seeking to install a further new bin on Charrington Road.



Fundraising Thanks

A huge thank you to our staff, Councillors and Centre hirers, particularly Beansheaf Pre-School and Beavers, for supporting Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day in December. Together, we proudly raised £102.00.



Our Parish Council team brought festive spirit to the December full Council meeting by donning their Christmas jumpers and accessories. Meanwhile, the 1st Reading YMCA Beaver Scouts turned their December Beansheaf Centre session into Christmas-themed event. Thanks to everyone who participated and made it a success.

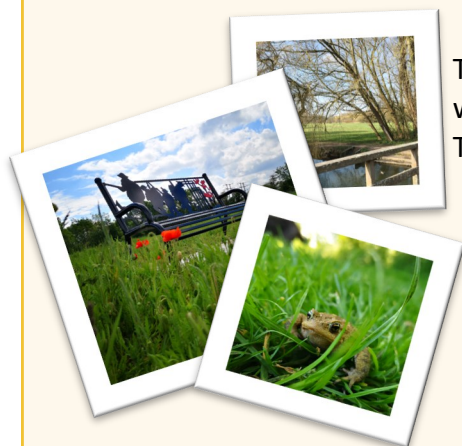
Thank you also to everyone who bought a poppy in November your support of the Royal British Legion is much appreciated.



Holybrook Parish

Annual Assembly

Monday 30th March 2026



The Holybrook Parish Annual Assembly is just around the corner and we'd love to see you there! This year's theme, 'Celebrating Community Through Photography', highlights the creativity and natural beauty of our parish while bringing everyone together to celebrate what makes Holybrook special.

Unlike regular Parish Council meetings, the Annual Assembly is a meeting for parishioners; it's your chance to hear what's been happening in Holybrook over the past year, ask questions, share your thoughts and celebrate our community.

Doors open at 6:00pm, Beansheaf Community Centre, giving you the opportunity to arrive early, grab a drink and a biscuit, and enjoy some relaxed time catching up with neighbours, local groups and parish councillors. Whilst you mingle, don't forget to vote for your favourite entry in our Photography Competition - showcasing the beauty and hidden gems of Holybrook Parish across three categories: *Our Parish Through Young Eyes*, *Hidden Gems of Our Parish* and the *People's Choice Award*, which will be decided by you, the attendees. Winners in each category will receive a £50 voucher.

At **7:00pm**, settle into your seat for a short presentation from your Council Chairman, who will share highlights of the Council's work over the past year and outline plans for 2026/27.

We are also delighted to welcome keynote speaker Mike Green, an experienced, Holybrook-based, commercial photographer. Mike will share practical tips for capturing stunning photos—particularly of the natural world. His insights are sure to inspire budding photographers and nature enthusiasts alike!

The Assembly will also feature our Community Spirit Awards, celebrating the individuals and groups making a difference in Holybrook. Winners of the awards and the photography competition will be announced during the event, giving us all the chance to recognise and celebrate the amazing contributions within our parish.

We look forward to welcoming you on Monday 30th March



Electric Vehicle Charging for Homes Without Driveways

West Berkshire Council has received funding from the Department for Transport to help residents, without off-street parking, charge electric vehicles safely near their homes. The funding will support the installation of recessed cross-pavement charging channels, allowing charging cables to run beneath the footway. Trailing charging cables across pavements is not permitted and **is an offence under Section 178 of the Highways Act 1980** due to the risk of obstruction and injury to pedestrians.

Residents will only need to fund the channel installation, if their location is suitable, and some households may be eligible for additional Government grants towards a charge point. Applications and further details are available on the West Berkshire Council website (<https://www.westberks.gov.uk/evguidance>).