



HOLYBROOK PARISH NEWS

October 2026

Dear All,



Following the long summer, I'm very much looking forward to forward to the rich, colourful palette of Autumn. The return to lower temperatures also means we can complete some of the foliage and tree management works that started in the spring. The Council is committed to reducing the parish's carbon footprint, largely achieved by protecting and enhancing our natural environment. A mature tree can absorb roughly 40–50 lbs of CO₂ per year, and oaks are very good at this, so whilst we want to manage overgrowth into gardens and footways, we also want to balance planting to sequester CO₂ and provide naturally cooling, diverse habitats.

Congratulations and thanks to The Friends of Linear Park and West Berkshire Council (WBC) for their continued hard work maintaining the Linear Park and ensuring that it retains its Green Flag status for a consecutive 17 years, while remaining such a wonderful community asset.

In August, we walked the parish with the Principal Engineer for Traffic and Road Safety to review issues including road markings, safety, signage, parking and overgrown foliage. The action list is long, but work has already begun.

Some works are the responsibility of Highways, but many can be done more quickly by working with residents and community groups. The Community and Environment Committee will lead on these, and residents are encouraged to use WBC's Report a Problem page and copy us in if you believe any paths or potholes are hazardous and need urgent action.

Our Councillor spotlight returns this month, featuring Andrew Griffin. He shares insight into his life as a Holybrook resident, his experience since joining the Council, and his thoughts on future community projects and development.

Lastly, on Sunday 8th November, Holybrook Parish will be represented at the annual Remembrance Sunday events by taking part in the parade and the laying of a wreath at the service at Trinity Church, Theale. Residents are welcome to attend this remembrance service, held with thanks to those who gave their tomorrows for our today.



Best wishes,

Claire Tull, Chairman

Contact Us

www.holybrook-pc.gov.uk

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HOLYBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

Community Litter Pick 2027

Dates for your diary

- Saturday 16 January 2027
- Saturday 6 March 2027
- Saturday 29 May 2027
- Saturday 10 July 2027
- Saturday 19 September 2027
- Saturday 13 November 2027

Meeting point:
Usually Beansheaf Community Centre.
Sometimes the Fords Farm area.
Exact details will be shared before each event.

Everyone is welcome
Come along, meet neighbours and help keep Holybrook tidy.

Updates via parish noticeboards, newsletter, website and Facebook

Parish Updates

Final Litter Pick of the Year – Saturday 14 November

Our last Community Litter Pick of 2026 takes place on **Saturday 14 November**. Everyone is welcome to join in for a couple of hours of fresh air, conversation and community care. The meeting point will be confirmed and shared across our usual channels.

Speed Watch – Volunteers Needed

We're still looking for volunteers to support the Community Speed Watch initiative. If you'd like to help make our roads safer, even an hour now and then makes a real difference. Feel free to get in touch if you'd like to be involved.

New Toddler Swings at Holymead Playground

The toddler swings at Holymead Playground have now been replaced and are back in safe working order. Families can make full use of them again, just in time for the cooler autumn days.



Meet Your Councillor

Our second Meet Your Councillor profile introduces **Andrew Griffin**, who reflects on his early months on the Council, life as a Holybrook resident, and his thoughts on future community initiatives. Here are a few highlights from our interview.

HPC: What is it like to be a resident in Holybrook?

AG : My wife and I moved into the Parish over twenty five years ago with two preschool aged children. From that day we loved the people around us, the beautiful parks, waterways and the great transport links. I can confirm that the Parish looks even more appealing now than in 2001. We now have a cafe in the Park and well maintained pathways.

HPC: How are you finding being a Councillor so far?

AG: I joined the Council in April 2026 and was immediately struck by how friendly and welcoming the Councillors and Parish staff were. Since then, I've been getting involved in the Council's work across the Parish, from Burghfield Road to the M4. It's been rewarding to give something back to our community, and I've learned a great deal about how local government works and how decisions shape our area.

HPC: Thoughts for the future community projects and development

AG: I'm very passionate about where we live, and I'll be getting more involved in projects and activities that support the well-being and safety of all Parish residents. We already have some great schemes, such as the regular litter pick and the excellent work by the Friends of Linear Park. I believe the way forward is to protect what we have and continue building on it.



Community Effort Sustains Linear Park's 17-Year Green Flag Status

Much to our delight, Linear Park has once again been awarded the Green Flag for 2026-27. The Friends of Linear Park are proud to have been a part of the work to achieve this. We know there are others also putting in effort, great and small, to keep the park clean and tidy. Thank you all for your invaluable help.

The arrival of the new flag coincided with a visit from our local MP, Olivia Bailey. We described our volunteering activities in the park and took the opportunity to invite her to hoist the new flag in front of the community centre.



With summer over and rain returning, we have at long last been able to start creating a wild flower border. It is adjacent to the nursery school play area on the west side of the park, and we hope this brings an extra dimension of interest.

Do visit our website for more about our activities, and if you would like to join our Tuesday working group, do get in touch!

www.folp.uk | hello@folp.uk



Mr Magpie

Supporting Local Wildlife

Members of staff and a local resident recently helped an injured magpie found hopping around the Beansheaf Centre. It couldn't fly and had lost one of its limbs, so they took it

straight to the vet. Beansheaf Pre-School also offered some food and comfort while help was on the way. Sadly, the magpie didn't survive, but it's a clear reminder to look out for wildlife that may be hurt or struggling. If you find an injured animal, please help safely or contact the local RSPCA: rspcaoxfordshire.org.uk.

For more on our biodiversity efforts, please visit HPC's website.



There are currently FOUR vacancies on the Parish Council

If you are interested in more information on this rewarding and important role, please contact the Parish Operations Manager/ Clerk on: **0118 9454 339** or **07704 66 33 97**.
Or via clerk@holymbrook-pc.gov.uk

Your Parish Councillors

CLAIRE TULL: 0118 941 8203
(Chairman)

KAREN ALBANESE: 07854 804 616
(Vice Chairman)

ANDREW GRIFFIN: 07367 586 515

CHARLIE CROAL: 07855 749 876

HARISH MISTRY: 0118 945 5830

JAGAN VEERATI: 07885 993 085

MARY BEDWELL: 0118 942 0196

MAURICE MOORE: 0118 941 0027

OLA SALAU: 07737 820 017

RICHARD SOMNER : 07836 208 382

VIVEK SHARMA: 07500 921 236

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 in the Council's noticeboards.

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

Community Soup Lunch at KVFC

Did you know that Kennet Valley Free Church (KVFC) holds a community soup lunch on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month, from 12 noon to 13:30?



Everyone is welcome to drop in, enjoy some lunch and have a chat in a friendly community setting.

Venue: KVFC, Carters Rise, RG31 7YT.

Nature Walks across West Berkshire



© WBCS

West Berkshire Countryside Society (WBCS) shares ideas for walks, nature activities and accessible routes across the district, with a full diary of autumn walks available at

www.westberkscountryside.org

Autumn Notes for Holybrook

As we settle into October, there are plenty of small, enjoyable ways to connect with the season and support local biodiversity. Here are a few ideas that fit well with family time, half-term activities and the changing landscape around Calcot and Holybrook.



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- **Make the most of fallen leaves:** Instead of clearing every leaf, keep a small pile in a corner of the garden. It creates shelter for insects and helps hedgehogs as they start looking for cosy spots.
- **Enjoy the pumpkins of the season:** Carving is fun, but the leftovers can be useful too. Pumpkin pulp and skins break down beautifully in compost and help enrich the soil for next year's planting.
- **Try a half-term nature scavenger walk:** Local green spaces are full of things children love to spot at this time of year - different leaf shapes, berries, fungi, birds. It's a simple way to get outside without

needing a big plan.

- **Add small touches for winter wildlife:** Leaving seed heads standing, topping up bird feeders and keeping a shallow water dish outside can make a real difference as temperatures drop.
- **Get creative with upcycled Halloween costumes:** Old clothes, cardboard boxes and fabric scraps can become brilliant costumes. It's fun for children and reduces waste.

These small seasonal habits help keep our green spaces lively, support local wildlife and give families easy ways to enjoy autumn together.



The Garage Kiosk is open daily this autumn, serving cosy drinks and seasonal favourites from **9am–4pm (10am–2pm on Mondays)**.

It's a welcoming stop for morning walkers, commuters and families enjoying Linear Park — a place to pause, warm up and take in the changing season. You can call ahead on **07724762572** if you'd like your drink ready when you arrive.

