

TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

Serving the Communities of Birch Copse, Calcot, Denefield and Westwood

Tel: 0118 941 8833

E-mail: clerk@tilehurstparishcouncil.gov.uk

www.tilehurstparishcouncil.gov.uk

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2026, issue 4

The summer months are generally quieter for some – but not all – aspects of work in the Parish Office.

Many of our hirers are term-time only, so the halls have fewer bookings during school holidays. This doesn't mean time off though, as it makes the summer a very good time to catch up with internal jobs, such as repainting and deep cleaning.

Our outdoor spaces and recreation grounds, on the other hand, are usually much busier over the summer holidays as more young people and families enjoy spending time outside. As a result, there's a great deal more littering, all the bins need emptying more often, and there's often also an increase in fly-tipping and dumped rubbish.

That said, the weather also plays its part and, so far this year, fewer people than usual seem to have been out, probably because of the extremely high temperatures.

We did, however, have an incident a few weeks ago when someone using a portable barbecue started a fire on Calcot recreation ground. The fire was near the Sainsbury's petrol station and the Royal Fire & Rescue Service attended very quickly. Barbecues are never permitted on our recreation grounds, and the very dry conditions this year make their use even more risky than usual.

Football pitches

As a result of the ongoing very hot and dry weather, it is likely that the start of the football playing season will be deferred. It has been suggested that the Reading and District Sunday League intends putting back the first games from the beginning of September to the beginning of October, but this has yet to be confirmed.

We are considering setting up a new, temporary pitch at Calcot. The potential site is being measured and checked to make sure no drains, etc, would be affected, and costs are being investigated to help assess if this would be feasible.

Our pitches are fully allocated for the 2026-27 season, but anyone wishing to know more about pitch hire in 2027-28 should e-mail bookings@tilehurstparishcouncil.gov.uk.

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Recreation grounds

Car parks

Recently, we have had a few calls from people who've found themselves locked in the car parks at Turnhams Farm and Cornwell recreation grounds. It should be noted that these car parks are for hall hirers' use only, they are not for general public use and hirers will lock the gates when they leave at the end of their bookings.

Anyone whose car is locked in on a weekday should call the Parish Office on 0118 941 8833 and we'll arrange for someone to come and open the gate. Drivers of cars locked in at weekends will find an emergency telephone number in the notice board outside each hall – we are not able to guarantee, however, that someone will be available to open the gate before Monday morning.

Household waste and fly-tipping

There is a growing problem with residents and companies filling our large bins at Cotswold recreation ground. Where possible, we contact the people responsible to point out the bins are for our use, not for general household or building waste and, recently, the maintenance team managed to stop someone putting their rubbish in the bins.

Incidents of fly-tipping have also continued to increase, and in late July, a rattan sofa was dumped in the gazebo on Calcot recreation ground – the team had to cut it up and put it in the bins (the parish van is not permitted to access West Berkshire waste and recycling centres).



As we pay for our bin collections by weight, the cost of clearing up fly-tipping and paying for other people's waste quickly becomes expensive.

Dogs

Over the past few weeks, we have received a number of complaints about dogs and dog mess on our recreation grounds.

It seems a few residents using the recreation grounds have felt threatened when other people's dogs run towards them or jump up at them. The recreation grounds are open for all to enjoy, and we would ask that dog owners – and everyone else – are considerate and mindful of other users.

There have also been reports of dog mess being left on recreation grounds. This is not only a potential health hazard, particularly for small children, it is unsightly and gives problems to our grass cutting and grounds maintenance contractors. Unfortunately, we are not able to have "poo patrols" to ensure the recreation grounds are kept clear. Instead, we rely on dog owners acting responsibly, keeping an eye on their dogs, and clearing up after them.

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Hildens Drive play area

Sadly, the resident who was opening and closing the gates to Hildens Drive play area is no longer able to continue – the Parish Council would like to thank them for their help, and we wish them all the very best.



The play area at Hildens Drive lies behind the parade of shops and has two entrances, both on Foxcombe Drive. The gates on these entrances need to be locked overnight in order to prevent instances of antisocial behaviour taking place.

We are now seeking volunteers willing to lock the gates each evening at dusk (by around 5.00pm in winter and 8.30pm in summer), and to unlock them at 7.00am each morning.

Anyone interested in helping secure the play area and preventing antisocial behaviour should please contact the Parish Office. This is quite a commitment, so the responsibility could be shared if more than one person volunteers.

Refurbishment of swings at Cotswold recreation ground

The swing seats in the play area were vandalised leaving the seats cut and damaged. The annual Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) report also showed excessive wear to the chains, shackles and connections. New parts were ordered but there was a delay in delivery, so the old seats had to be removed to prevent their being used.



The replacement parts arrived in late June, and the maintenance officers painted the chains before fitting the new seats – by the time they had finished, there was a queue of children waiting to use the swings!



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Members' Bid applications

West Berkshire Council generally holds two rounds of Members' Bids each year, one in spring, the other in autumn.

This year, in spring, there was a maximum of £4,000.00 (to be match-funded by the Parish Council) available to each district councillor, and Cllrs Stewart and Taylor offered to put their whole allowance towards projects in Tilehurst Birch Copse ward, ie at Calcot or Turnhams Farm recreation grounds.

The application, which was submitted by the deadline of Monday 25 May, was successful so £8,000.00 Members' Bid funding was available for:

Calcot recreation ground: Replacing the wooden train with a multiplay unit for toddlers

Turnhams Farm recreation ground: Replacing two springers

Four contractors were invited to quote, and it had been intended to select one at the Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 14 August. Unfortunately, the meeting had to be cancelled as a quorum was not present, so the item has been carried forward to the September meeting.

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A second Members' Bid application was submitted for projects in Tilehurst and Purley ward (ie at Turnhams Farm and Cornwell recreation grounds), and the three district councillors all agreed to commit all or part of their allocation - £4,000.00 from Cllr Lewis and £3,000.00 each from Cllrs Kandor and Langford. However, the Clerk did not hear whether the bid had been successful and, when she queried this, it seemed the application had not been included for review at the panel meeting. A special meeting to rectify this is being arranged by West Berkshire Council, and we hope to hear soon whether the funding will be made available.

Highways authority

Over the past few months, we have received quite a few complaints about hedges outside residential properties being overgrown and blocking paths and pavements. West Berkshire Council, as the highways authority, is responsible for contacting homeowners to ask them to cut back overhanging boughs and hedges.

Similarly, there have recently been issues with dog waste bins not being emptied. Although the Parish Council owns and empties the bins and dog bins on our recreation grounds, the bins on the highway are owned and maintained by West Berkshire Council, the highways authority.

Any issues with plants from gardens blocking pavements or with bins, etc, on the roads can be logged on the "[Report a problem](#)" page of the West Berkshire Council's web site.

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Local Government Reorganisation

The government has announced that, from 1 April 2028, seven existing councils across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire are to be replaced by three new unitary councils:

- Ridgeway Council – West Berkshire Council and most of the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts
- North Oxfordshire Council – covering most of the existing Cherwell and West Oxfordshire districts
- Greater Oxford Council – covering Oxford and its immediate surroundings

No changes to the border with Reading were proposed as part of the reorganisation.

Further information about Local Government Reorganisation, the three councils model, and intended timescales may be found on the [3Councils web site](#).

Youth services

Since 2022, Tilehurst Parish Council has engaged Berkshire Youth to deliver youth services in the parish. Provision started with a junior youth club and detached youth work and, over the next few years, expanded to include sports in the park in school holidays, Kicks/football sessions in term time, and a second term-time youth club for an older age group.

Over the past year or so, however, attendance started to decline. In 2025-26, sadly, numbers at the two youth clubs remained low, so it has been decided to combine them and have only one youth club from 6.30pm to 8.30pm on Thursday evenings (term time only).

Similarly, attendance at Kicks sessions at Cotswold Sports Centre also dropped so, in early 2026, it was decided to cancel the sessions for the time being. The situation is under review, and it is hoped that Reading Football Club might run some sessions from September.



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YOUTH CLUB

For ages 11 to 17 years

6.30–8.30pm on Thursdays
(term-time only)

From 10 September

in the

Jubilee Annexe, Calcot RG31 4XD

£2.00 per session (first session is free)

Arts and crafts, outdoor sports,
table football, PS4, board games,
baking, pool table, and more ...

THE BERKSHIRE YOUTH NETWORK
e-mail – admin@berkshireyouth.co.uk
website – www.berkshireyouth.co.uk

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Parish Council Meetings

Meetings of Tilehurst Parish Council are held on the second Tuesday of each month in the Main Hall at Calcot.

Schedule of Parish Council meetings

8 September
13 October
10 November
8 December
12 January 2027
9 February

Meetings start at 7.30pm and generally last around two hours. They are open to the public so residents are welcome to attend; there is a public open forum at the start, when questions can be asked or topics of interest or concern can be raised. For the rest of the meeting, members of the public may observe but not take part in discussions. It is recommended that anyone wishing to attend contacts the Clerk in advance by e-mailing clerk@tilehurstparishcouncil.gov.uk

Agendas and minutes of meetings may be found on the Parish Council's web site – [Meetings, Agendas & Minutes - Tilehurst Parish Council](#)

Parish Councillor vacancies

This means we currently have six councillor vacancies which can be filled by co-option.

Anyone interested in representing the residents of the parish and having a say in how we spend the precept on their behalf should contact the Clerk for more information about the role by e-mailing clerk@tilehurstparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Contact

The Parish Office is open to the public during from 9.00am to 3.00pm on weekdays (except Bank Holidays), and residents are very welcome to come in to discuss any questions or issues they might have.

The office address is: Highview, Calcot, Reading RG31 4XD

Telephone number: 0118 941 8833

Web site: www.tilehurstparishcouncil.gov.uk

Hall and football pitch enquiries should be sent to bookings@tilehurstparishcouncil.gov.uk

If you know anyone who would like to sign up to our newsletter, please ask them to contact sarah@tilehurstparishcouncil.gov.uk giving the e-mail address they'd like us to use.

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Community information

School term times

As the school summer holidays gradually draw to an end, we thought a list of school term dates for the rest of this year might be helpful:

Term	Dates
Autumn 2026	Starts: Wednesday 2 September (fixed inset day)
	Half term: Friday 23 to Friday 30 October
	Ends: Friday 18 December
	Christmas: Monday 21 December 2026 to Monday 4 January 2027

Greenfest 2026

From 10.00am to 5.00pm on Saturday 24 October, Greenfest 2026 will be held at St Bartholomew's School, Newbury RG14 6JP.

Entrance is free and there will be stalls and talks giving advice and guidance on ways to grow your own food, reduce waste, improve home energy efficiency, reduce carbon usage, as well as how to support local wildlife. There will also be food and drinks stalls, as well as children's activities.



Weekly Rhymetimes

Burghfield Common Library
Every Thursday throughout the year, 10.30-11am

Hungerford Library
Every Wednesday throughout the year, 10-10.30am and 11-11.30am

Lambourn Library
Every Friday throughout the year, 11.30am-12pm

Mortimer Library
Tuesdays in term time, 2.30-2.50pm

Newbury Library
Every Tuesday throughout the year, 11am-11.20am

Pangbourne Library
Thursdays in term time, 10-10.30am

Thatcham Library
Mondays in term time, 10-10.20am
Fridays in term time, 11.15-11.35am

Theale Library
Wednesdays in term time, 11-11.30am

West Berkshire Libraries offer free Rhymetimes sessions for under fives in all libraries. There is no need to book, and babies and older children are also welcome.

Although some sessions run throughout the year, others are term-time only. The list to the left gives the times dates and locations of sessions.

Further information may be found on [West Berkshire Council's web site](#).

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National Year of Reading

The [National Year of Reading 2026](#) is a year-long initiative run by the Department for Education and the National Literacy Trust. It is aimed at helping tackle the decline in reading among children, young people and adults, and reading challenges were held over the summer months. Other activities and events include:

Free reading sessions and support are offered to children in primary schools nationwide. This is done through Schoolreaders, a charity with a network of dedicated volunteers. Information on how to volunteer or donate can be found on [the Schoolreaders website](#).



West Berkshire Libraries and [Everyone Active](#) have launched a new Library Bookshelves scheme in Cotswold, Kennet, Hungerford and Willink leisure centres. The initiative operates on the simple principle of “Take a book, enjoy it, and return it when you've finished” and is intended to make reading more accessible by providing books and library information in places where families and visitors regularly spend time.



In October, a [Take 10 to Read](#) campaign will encourage people of all ages to read for just ten minutes a day to experience the wellbeing effects, boost their mood and relax.

Wellbeing Walks

Free, regular Wellbeing Walks (formerly Walking for Health) are offered across the district. The walks are suitable for beginners, are led by trained volunteers and some stop at a café for coffee afterwards. There is no need to book, and the walks are all intended to be accessible on foot or by public transport.

Further information may be found on [West Berkshire Council's web page](#), and on the [Ramblers web site](#).

