

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

Spring 2025, issue 3

The first few months of 2026 have been busy in the Parish Office – we've recruited a new member of staff, and a councillor has resigned, so it has been a time of change. We have had enquiries from potential new councillors, and hope to fill some vacancies over the next few months.

It is a statutory requirement that every parish council holds its Annual Parish Council Meeting in May each year. Ours will be on Tuesday 12 May 2026, and the first order of business will be to elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman for the coming year, otherwise, it is structured similarly to a standard Parish Council meeting.

The May meeting will also serve as the Annual Parish Meeting, which all parish councils are required to hold between 1 March and 1 June. This meeting is intended to enable the electorate in the parish to have their say, so members of the public are entitled to attend and participate.

Both meetings on 12 May will be open to the public who are very welcome to attend, although it is best to advise the Clerk in advance.



Don't forget, clocks go forward on the weekend of Saturday 28/Sunday 29 March as we move to British Summer Time.

Donations

The Parish Council has an annual budget from which donations can be made to local groups and organisations which benefit the community. The amount donated must be commensurate with the level of benefit. The following awards were made in 2025-26:

- West Berks Foodbank (2025 Hungry Holidays Scheme) - £1,000.00
- Little Heath Foundation (15 litter pickers for use by Little Heath School) - £149.25
- Tilehurst Junior Youth Club (activities and running services) - £500.00
- Calcot Schools PTFA (school allotment project) - £360.00
- Age UK Reading (support for older residents) - £1,000.00
- Cowshed (support for families during times of crisis) - £1,000.00
- Age UK Berkshire (dementia therapy sessions) - 20% discount on 2026-27 hall hires at Calcot

TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

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

Parish Councillor vacancies

In late January, Nigel Furlong-King resigned as a parish councillor. We would like to thank him for all his work while he was on the council, particularly as our Internal Control Auditor as well as in support of various working groups. We hope we might welcome him back at some point in the future.

This means we now have five councillor vacancies which can be filled by co-option. If you'd like to represent the residents of Tilehurst Parish and have a say in how we spend the precept on their behalf, do consider becoming a parish councillor. For more information about the role, please contact the Clerk by e-mailing clerk@tilehurstparishcouncil.gov.uk or calling 0118 941 8833.

New Facilities Assistant

We are pleased to welcome Mark Ilsley as our new Facilities Assistant. He joined us on Monday 2 February and is settling in well. He will be working in the office, dealing with contractors, and also supporting the maintenance officers, so it is a varied and challenging role.

Water Regulations Inspection

In late 2025, Thames Water contacted the Clerk to say it would be carrying out a [Water Regulations Inspection](#) of the halls and football changing rooms in the Calcot Centre to ensure all plumbing complied with the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) regulations. All outlets (taps, WCs, urinals, sinks, showers, etc) were checked, and a water pressure test was carried out. After the inspection, a report was issued which set out two non-compliances which had to be rectified within 21 days. There were also some advisory actions.

Although the maintenance officers were able to carry out some of the work in-house, replacing old equipment required a plumber. All non-compliance work and some advisory actions were completed within the 21 days. Thames Water conducted a follow-up visit shortly before Christmas and issued a report confirming compliance with DEFRA's regulations.

Assertion 10

From 2025-26, parish and town councils are required to complete a new Assertion 10 as part of their Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). The mandatory declaration focuses on digital and data compliance, having a fully accessible web site, and complying with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018.

This has meant the Clerk's been busy working on various policies, including Document Retention, Data Protection, Data Audit, and IT. The new/updated data compliance policies were adopted at the Parish Council meeting in February, while those relating to web site compliance went to the March meeting.

TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

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

Hall hire

Tilehurst Parish Council owns and maintains four halls in the parish: the Main Hall and Jubilee Annexe at Calcot, and the Cornwell Centre and Turnhams Farm Hall in Tilehurst. There is also a Committee Room with board room table which holds up to 25 people in Calcot.

All our halls are available for one-off hires such as parties, as well as for regular weekly or monthly bookings, and enquiries should be sent to bookings@tilehurstparishcouncil.gov.uk.

A little information about each hall, the hourly charges and the Terms and Conditions of hire may be found on our [web site](#).

Christmas collections for West Berks Foodbank

As part of its Christmas celebrations, one of our regular hirers very kindly collected donations of food to give to the [West Berks Foodbank](#) in Calcot. Similarly, a local Women's Institute also gave the foodbank items collected from its members.

The foodbank has weekly sessions in the Jubilee Annexe at Calcot from 1.00pm to 3.00pm on Mondays (excluding bank holidays). Other support and advice are also offered, for example with filling in forms or managing finances, and West Berkshire Council staff hold [Let's Talk events](#) where residents can drop in and talk about concerns, issues or questions they might have.

Refurbishment of swings, Cornwell recreation ground



Work to replace the old surface and wooden swings at Cornwell recreation ground started as scheduled on Monday 15 December 2025. Unfortunately, it was quickly discovered that additional groundwork would be needed, and that fencing between the swing and the playground would have to be removed. It was possible, however, to keep the project within budget by using the contingency and not fitting wooden edging around the new surface.

The new surface was left to settle over the weekend of 20/21 December, and installation was completed and the new swings opened on Monday 22 December.

TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

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

Calcot Park Golf Club

In January, Calcot Park Golf Club put in two planning applications for tree work. The first was to have to remove diseased and dead trees, and the second was to reduce the height and span of some further trees. Neither application required comment or input from Tilehurst Parish Council, they were simply decided by West Berkshire Council's tree officer.

A further application for seven new dwellings on West Drive was also received in January (25/02905/FUL), and the Parish Council was consulted and invited to comment. It was discussed at the February meeting, which was attended by five members of the public with concerns about the application. The application and comments can be found on [West Berkshire Council's Planning Portal](#).

Local Government Reorganisation

The government's statutory consultation on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) opened on Thursday 5 February and will be available for seven weeks. It may be [completed online](#), by e-mail to lgrconsultationresponse@communities.gov.uk, or in writing to LGR Consultation, Fry Building 2NE, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DF. The closing date is Thursday 26 March.

The consultation will help assessment of three proposals for unitary local government for Oxfordshire. Reading Borough Council's proposed boundary change to move five electoral wards from West Berkshire to Reading is not included; it will be considered only if a new Ridgeway Council, which includes West Berkshire, is agreed.

An update and some background information on Local Government Reorganisation may be found on [Tilehurst Parish Council's web site](#).

West Berkshire Council residents' survey

On Thursday 12 March, West Berkshire Council (WBC) launched a residents' survey, inviting local people to share their views on the council, its services and life in the community. This is the first broad residents' survey since 2021, and it comes at a time when national and local circumstances continue to change significantly.

It asks about residents' experiences of key services, such as waste and recycling, planning, education, social care, and road maintenance. It explores views on communication and engagement, feelings of belonging and safety, and there are optional questions on wellbeing and demographics. The findings are intended to help shape council services and priorities in the coming years as the current Council Strategy approaches its end.

The [online survey](#) takes around ten to 15 minutes to complete. It is open to all West Berkshire residents and is anonymous. The survey will close at midnight on Sunday 10 May.

TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

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

Parish Council Meetings

Tilehurst Parish Council meets on the second Tuesday of every month in the Main Hall at Calcot. The schedule for the next six months is below.

Schedule of Parish Council meetings

14 April
12 May
9 June
14 July
11 August
8 September

Meetings start at 7.30pm and generally last for about two hours. These are public meetings and residents are welcome to attend; there is a public open forum at the start, and this is when residents can ask questions or raise topics of concern. 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 a meeting 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 – www.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.

TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

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

Local information

Volunteering opportunities



Berkshire Youth needs volunteers to help deliver youth services in the parish. There are various long- and short-term opportunities, such as supporting staff running youth clubs, and helping to carry out detached youth work.

Volunteers must be over 18 years old, and all necessary checks and training will be provided. Anyone wishing to help provide youth services in the parish should e-mail admin@berkshireyouth.co.uk.

This opportunity is also advertised with the [West Berkshire Volunteer Centre](#).

∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞

A [report](#) from the national charity [Libraries Connected](#) shows that West Berkshire Libraries deliver at least £12,221 in value each year by supporting mental health and wellbeing through the provision of volunteering opportunities, helping to reduce pressure on health and social care services by offering early, low-cost support in the community.

There is a wide range of volunteer roles across Culture and Libraries, and the team is always looking for new members.

For more information about volunteering with West Berkshire Libraries and to apply, please see the [council's web site](#).

∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞

West Berks Foodbank provides emergency support to people in crisis across the district, and volunteers are at the heart of its work.



The foodbank is looking for energetic people to help in a variety of areas, including warehouse operation, foodbank drivers, or there are several roles in the six distribution centres – meet and greet, packing food parcels, listening.

Full training is given, and volunteers work together as a team.

Anyone interested in doing something positive for the community by volunteering with West Berks Foodbank can find further information on the [web site](#), or the application form is available from HR@westberksfoodbank.org.uk

TILEHURST PARISH COUNCIL

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



Calcot Infant and Junior School is always looking for local volunteers to support it. This may include listening to children read, helping with infant forest school sessions, or sharing experiences of historical events.

Anyone interested in volunteering should contact the school offices:

Infants 0118 941 8189

E-mail: office@c-inf.w.berks.sch.uk

Juniors 0118 942 8727

E-mail: office@c-jun.w-berks.sch.uk

∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞

The Public Protection Partnership (PPP) is inviting responsible young people aged 15-16 years to join its underage sales test purchasing programme, an initiative which helps protect children and young people from illegal access to age-restricted products.

The programme supports PPP's work to ensure local businesses follow the law when selling restricted items such as alcohol, tobacco, vapes, knives, fireworks and solvents. Test purchasing involves a volunteer attempting to buy an age-restricted item while being supervised by trained PPP officers. Operations take place outside school hours and are fully risk-assessed with volunteers safeguarded throughout. Volunteering can count towards community service requirements of the Duke of Edinburgh Award and similar schemes. PPP can also provide references to support job, college or university applications.

Full training is provided and volunteers may withdraw at any time.

To apply, please contact amie.norkett1@westberks.gov.uk or call 01635 519930 for an information chat about the scheme.

∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞∞

Carebus is a community charity run by volunteers, and its volunteer drivers have provided accessible, affordable transport to residents in the Tilehurst, Theale, Pangbourne area for over four decades. It has two wheelchair accessible vehicles (can be driven on a car licence), and two minibuses (require a D1 licence, usually automatic for anyone passing their test before 1997). Some drivers use their own cars, for which a mileage allowance is paid.



The team is largely made up of retirees, and jobs include taking people to medical appointments, providing transport for local clubs and societies, taking retirement home residents for half day visits to garden centres, the theatre, etc.

Full training is provided, expenses are paid, and duties can be fitted around other activities and commitments.

More detail can be found on [Carebus's web site](http://www.carebus.org), or a PDF information sheet can be requested by e-mailing info@carebus.org.