

**PURLEY on THAMES PLATINUM JUBILEE TREASURE HUNT**  
**created on behalf of Purley Pathfinders Ladies Walking Group.**  
**[www.purleypathfinders.co.uk](http://www.purleypathfinders.co.uk)**

The ladies of Purley Pathfinders find they return home after weekly walks not only fitter, but also more knowledgeable as points of interest are pointed out along the way. Join us as we celebrate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee by completing this Treasure Hunt . Designed as a village walkabout, participants can spot clues highlighting the history of Purley on Thames, stretching back beyond Her Majesty's Coronation in many instances. Although the description starts at Goosecroft, the Hunt can be started at various points, and along the route there are two play parks and a cafe which may prove useful! Enjoy!

1. At Goosecroft :- Can you identify this building?



*It started life down near the Church alongside the original Manor House. It was moved to the Trentham site and in WW1 was used as a remount depot where horses were kept before being sent to take part in the war. In the 1990's it was moved again to this present day site at Goosecroft.*

Enter the building to find a copy of a painting showing the horses inside it as described above. The original painting can be found in the Imperial War Museum. Can you see which local man painted it?

2. Leave Goosecroft down the entrance track to the road and turn right to follow Beech Road to the main road. There is a garage opposite. What is it called now?

*This was called Purley Garage, a firm of precision engineers where, during World War 2, parts for Spitfire fuel tanks were made.*

3. Turn right along the pavement, crossing over the end of Sherwood Rise. *The main road beside you was the turnpike road between Wallingford and Reading.* As you walk a few paces more can you see something which would tell travellers how far Purley is from Oxford, Wallingford and Reading. Sadly hard to decipher now but you may be able to see how far you are from Reading?



4. Retrace your steps noting the white building on your left. *The Storer family lived in the Manor House, mentioned above, near the Church. They owned a lot of land in Purley including land by the main road. Their fortune, perhaps controversial nowadays, came from two sugar estates in Belleisle, Jamaica. The white building was known as Belleisle Farm. The site was later taken over by the civil engineering company, Trentham who, amongst other projects, built the Ford plant at Dagenham. After Trentham went in 1989 the white building became flats.*

Turn left up Sherwood Rise. The above information may give a clue as to the source of the name of the road off to the right.

5. Turn left into Bowling Green Lane and follow the road around, noting the road name link to Trentham.

Can you see where this is positioned?



*Pangbourne.*

*This club was founded in 1957 in the grounds of Trentham by G. Percy Trentham as a form of corporate entertainment and for the benefit of employees. The Trentham site was sold for housing in 1989 but luckily the club was retained for Purley residents. The club badge has, at the top, four woods and a jack. The two trees represent Berkshire Oak and Willow. King John stands to one side and a Berkshire stag on the other. The blue at the bottom represents the nearby River Thames and the book is Wind in the Willows written by Kenneth Grahame who lived in nearby*

6. Continue into the walkway at the end of the cul de sac to reach Long Lane. Cross straight over into the road opposite. What is its name? It is named after a local artist who specialised in drawing animals, especially dogs and horses -maybe a clue to point one? Follow the road as it curves around, bearing left to leave via an alleyway to reach another alleyway. Turn left to reach the main road. Cross and walk down New Hill to the railway bridge. *The old railway bridge was replaced in recent years so it is difficult to see the railway line. The railway came to Purley in 1840. If you could see the arches of the bridge you will notice they are different sizes. This is because the original bridge was built to accommodate broad gauge but new tracks were laid to standard gauge.*

7. Cut through into footpath on right into Primrose Close. Turn left and follow the pavement round to find a footpath to the left. Go along here to the road. Turn right. *As you pass the end of Colyton Way look along it to note the postbox's smart Jubilee topper.* Continue along the road, St Mary's Avenue, and enjoy the scarecrows as you head for the Church. Enter the churchyard via the lychgate. Can you see to whom there is a memorial plaque on the lychgate?

Take the path to the left and pause at the grave where railings protect it on two sides. This is the Canning Tomb but can you see which Canning? *The Canning in question was the 6th cousin of George Canning who holds the record for serving as a British Prime Minister for the shortest period - from April 1827 until his death from pneumonia in August 1827. It is unusual in that the family were Catholics but this tomb lies in a protestant graveyard.*

Look up at the Church tower. Can you find the coat of arms and see the date upon it? *This is the coat of arms for Oliver St John Viscount Grandison. The tower was erected in the same year as on the coat of arms, which was when Grandison's nephew was Lord of the Manor of Purley Magna.*

If the Church is unlocked go inside. It holds several fine memorials. Can you find this one to Anne Hyde and her child dated 1632? *Here we find a bit of a Royal connection as she was the first wife of Edward Hyde who later became first Earl of Clarendon. He remarried and fathered the Duchess of York and was Grandfather of both Queen Mary 11 and Queen Anne.*



8. Leave the Churchyard and turn right, bearing right into Waterside Drive. Follow it round to leave between the barriers and turn right. Soon take the footpath along the alleyway known locally as Cali's Alley. *Cali Bratamus was a local character, possibly originally from California, hence the nickname Cali, but some say he was Canadian. He did lots of activities with the youngsters of the village including building a pirate ship which was ceremoniously sunk in 1953 as part of the Coronation celebrations!*

At the bottom of the alleyway turn left along the riverbank. Can you see how far you are from the Wild Wood? The route continues on to the river meadow but there is the opportunity to take a detour to the left to visit The Mad Duck cafe which opened in 2019. Here you may like to treat yourself to tea, cake, hot or cold food, or why not create an ice cream at the ice cream bar! Also duck food can be bought for 50p a bag ready for the next stage of the Hunt.

9. Walk beside the River Thames on the footpath through the meadow. Note the Church and Mapledurham House on the opposite bank. On reaching the gate to the lock pop in if you wish, although for now the lock is nowhere near as picturesque as it was when our long serving lock keeper, and first winner of the Villager of the Year Award, George Fielder was in charge. You may wish to walk through the lock to take a look at the new Fish Pass. Return to the gate from where you head up the side of the meadow to exit through the gate onto Mapledurham Drive. Along on the right you will pass the playground. *In the 1970's the population in Purley was rising significantly so the Parish Council was keen to add more recreational facilities. A local landowner agreed to sell this plot of land for £10,000, which was below the market value for agricultural land at the time. It became a Recreation Ground named after the land owner. What was his name?*

10. At the top of Mapledurham Drive turn right along Purley Village. Fields of Home Farm are on your right but can you see a clue as to where a farm originally stood? As you reach the older properties of the village can you spot this one?

It is the oldest property in the village. One of the plants gives away its name.



Next can you spot this cottage? Like the last one, it has been extended. It was formerly home to the village school Headmistress, Mrs Tidbury. *The school was built in 1872, generously financed by the Rev. Richard Palmer.*

What is the name of the cottage bearing a green plaque?

*Built in the mid 17th century, several stories are linked with the cottage such as tunnels leading down to the Thames used by smugglers, and others involving headless horsemen! These stories are believed to be myths but the cottage must have seen plenty of history unfolding during its many years. Infact, a musket and sword were found buried in the garden, probably dating back to the Civil War!*



11. At the end of the village bear right to walk along the bridleway. This pleasant path has lovely views to the right across fields towards the hills above Mapledurham on the other side of the river. To the left, beyond the pasture, and down in a cutting, runs the Great Western Railway. *In 1965 the people of Purley lined the side of the railway when the train carrying Sir Winston Churchill's coffin passed through Purley on the way to his final resting place.*

On reaching the allotments carry on along the bridleway until the next bridge is reached. Here turn left up the road, over the railway bridge, and turn left into Glebe Road. As the road bends to the right you will reach the Memorial Hall. *This hall is a memorial to the villagers of Purley who lost their lives in both World Wars. Its building is a testimony to the great determination of the villagers, for the money needed was raised, and much of the building work involved completed, by the locals. Events raised enough to buy the plot of land in 1947 for £120. In November 1948 £1,100 raised meant the foundation stone could be laid and building began. Many villagers helped where they could, with the women painting and making morale-boosting cups of tea. The hall was finally finished in 1953, the year of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth 11 - an amazing achievement!*

12. Continue up to the main road, turn left then cross to walk up the alleyway named Goosecroft Lane and so back to Goosecroft. *All fields tend to be named and the Recreation Ground is on a field which was known as Goosecroft which was an enclosed space used for exercising geese!*

I hope that on this walk/hunt around the village you have enjoyed learning about some of its history during this historic year. All information is believed to be correct but I apologise if you feel I have got any details wrong. For more history of the village Project Purley have a great resource in Archives on their website.

Nicki Woodward. [www.purleypathfinders.co.uk](http://www.purleypathfinders.co.uk)