Birlingham Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 18 March 2020

at Birlingham Village Hall

Councillors:

Councillor Aston, Byrne, Cook, Luff and Yates

Present:

June Hiden (Clerk). No Public Attended

Welcome

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were tendered by Councillor's Griffins and Porter who were self-isolating due to Covid-19 and these were accepted. Apologies were received from District Councillor Davis who was attending a Special Council meeting and then an Executive Board meeting. Apologies were given from the Lengthsman and the Footpath Warden.

2. Declaration of Interest

a) Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
b) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
d) Written requests for the Council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) are to be with the Clerk at least four clear days prior to a meeting.
e) Dispensation forms have been received from all Councillors for the term of office ended May 2024.

Note: Councillors who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or Other Disclosable Interest which falls within the terms of paragraph 12(4) of the code of conduct, must leave the room for the relevant items. Failure to register or declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest may be a criminal offence.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2020, a copy of which has been circulated to all Councillors, was agreed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

Democratic Opening

The meeting was adjourned for public question time. The Chairman has been asked a question regarding First Aiders which apparently relates to the Diocese setting up a Parish Continuity Plan. The Parish Council were not in a position to answer if any parishioners were qualified. Nothing further to report.

4. Progress Reports

a) Footpath Warden:

   i. Footpath 517 (between Peacock Barn and Pig Sty) stile repaired – by landowner.

b) Tree Warden: No report.

c) District Councillor:

i. Due to the Coronavirus non-essential meetings are being cancelled but the Executive Board and Full Council are continuing to meet at present.
ii. Wychavon District Council are about to offer the CEO role to someone.
iii. Wychavon District Council are looking at telephone conference meetings should these be required as we move forward.
iv. All our budgeting has been completed but now we have to do all we can to keep small and large businesses moving.

d) County Councillor:

i. Support via a grant of £250.00 for the Cuppa & Chat Group, possibly for a Victory in Europe Cuppa & Chat, or a Christmas one.
ii. SmartWater support of £500.00.

Correspondence dated 17 March 2020 states "*Grateful thanks for the very generous grant from Councillor Hardman. Our intention is to hold an extra special Summer Cuppa & Chat and a Christmas Party. We hope to canvass the opinions of the folk at the next Cuppa & Chat as to how it could be best utilised.*"

e) Clerk - See ***Appendix 1***
Information from the Lengthsman is included.

5. Planning

a) Planning applications pending – none

b) Applications granted

i. 19/02661/HP – the Old Laundry, Broadway Road, WR10 3AF
First floor front extension over existing footprint

Approved 23 January 2020

Birlingham Parish Council comments: Provided the views of the neighbours are fully taken into account and given sufficient weight, the Parish Council do not have any objections to the application. We feel the scale of the extension is modest and in keeping with the rest of the house.

ii. 20/00145/LB – Hills Cottage, Upper End WR10 3AA
Demolition of existing single storey rear extension. Partial demolition of single storey side extension and replacement. Internal modifications.

Approved 16 March 2020

Parish Council comments: Birlingham Parish Council has no comment on the application.

iii. O20/00108/HP – October House, Broadway Road

Redevelopment of garage and sheds including removal of existing stables and garage extension

Approved 17 March 2020

Parish Council comments: Birlingham Parish Council rely on the Planning Officer to ensure appropriate materials and design detail is specified. Further, to the extent that it is possible, that the use of the extension is specified as garage use. Subject to the above the Parish Council would support the proposal.

c) Enforcement – none.

6. Financial Matters

a) The Accounts for year end 31 March 2020

i) Bank balance is £6,378.84 as at 28 February 2020.

ii) Receipts –

i. £135.00 – Worcestershire County Council (December Lengthsman)
ii. £872.00 – Wychavon District Council (bench)
iii. £135.00 – Worcestershire County Council (January Lengthsman)

iii) Payments: –

i. £292.50 - L Lengthsman November 2019
ii. £135.00 – Lengthsman December 2019
iii. £560.00 – Clerk's pay – October, November, December 2019
iv. £140.00 – Clerk's PAYE – October, November, December 2019
v. £104.28 – Clerk's expenses – October, November, December 2019
vi. £120.00 – BVH charges for Ordinary meeting dates (7pm to 9pm) 2020/2021
vii. £40.00 estimate – ICO (Reference ZA239574 start date 10 March 2020 and end date 9 March 2021)

b) Payments for consideration –

i. £135.00 – Lengthsman January 2020
ii. £165.00 – Lengthsman February 2020

c) Transfer of £1000.00 from current account to savings account was actioned at the bank on 18 February 2020.

A further £50.00 needs to be actioned from the savings account to the current account with reference to the £50.00 recharge invoice for the election administration.

7. Litter Pick

The date agreed for the Litter Pick was agreed as Saturday 21 March 2020 which coincided with the 'Keep Britain Tidy' campaign. However, due to safety concerns the Great British Spring Clean is postponed until 11-27 September 2020 when it is hoped to bring communities back together to clean up.

Councillors agreed that the Litter Pick should be postponed until further notice. Clerk to notify Wychavon District Council.

8. Date of Annual Parish Meeting

No decision was made on the date or venue at this time.

9. Cycle / footway

Chairman's communication is in Clerks Report. Defer until a future meeting.

10. Councillors' reports and items for next agenda

Updates on:

SmartWater
There is funding available from the Police and Crime Commissioner and the County Councillor. Councillor Aston to action a spreadsheet and source the money available where necessary.

Dog Fouling
The feedback for obtaining advisory signs as per the style in Lower End is positive.
Councillor Byrne to price up for 10 signs and update on progress.

Millennium Bench
The £872 from Wychavon District Council for the bench has been drawn down.
Councillor Cook has actioned the removal of the bench from around the tree. Further progress is ongoing.

VE Day Celebrations
Councillor Luff attended the public meeting for the proposed VE Day celebrations. At this time due to Covid-19, the commemorations will not be able to go ahead.

Budgeting Meeting
Councillor Griffins attended a presentation on 29 January 2020.

Notes as follows:

I attended the presentation at County Hall. Whilst interesting it was a broad-brush report on the current year's budget key points and the very provisional figures for 2020/21 which were to be presented to Cabinet the following day. The key points were:-

Overall position

The current year's budget is £330.4m and £344.9m for 2020/21. During the current year there was a fear that there could be a shortfall, but this should be eliminated by the end of the year.

Social care

In the current year expenditure on adult and children's care amounts to £14.1m and £7.7m respectively. In 2020/21 there will be increased expenditure to cope with the ever-increasing demand.

Roads

There is to be £37.5m to be expended in the next 3 years on roads, footpaths, flooding projects and growing the local economy.

Trees

150,000 trees are to be planted in the county.

Generally, there is a rolling review of all expenditure, overheads and contracts with service suppliers. The savings in the current year should be in the region of £10m. Furthermore, Council are looking to government for a national long-term solution to the ever-increasing cost of care.

Supporting the community by the Chairman

The Chairman said that the main discussion for the evening must be the current Covid-19 situation, what has happened in the last few days and the effort needed to assist villagers. Members had agreed to go ahead with the meeting so that support can be put in place for those vulnerable residents who are going to have to self-isolate. Several residents have already volunteered to collect prescriptions and shop for food for those unable to get out but there needs to be a way to coordinate this effort. There was much discussion.

Councillor Aston will action a WhatsApp closed group called Birlingham Volunteers for a small number of volunteers, who could co-ordinate further assistance if needed. It would be kept simple, avoids use of paper and seemed to be the system to progress. The Volunteer Group is set up with good intentions and volunteers made aware of the social distancing and Government advice/guidelines. The WhatsApp Group will be removed from any contact when the situation changes.

Chairman has spoken to Steve Morris today about setting up a simple notice board/online forum which does not need registration and can be put on the Birlingham Website.

The Birlingham News will publish the action decided in a summary by the Chairman. This reaches 90% of residents and the remainder will have a copy put through their letterboxes.

12. Closure and date of next ordinary meeting - with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.10pm and the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

The Village Hall is closed after this meeting until 1 June 2020.

The next Parish Council Meeting is on Wednesday 20 May 2020 at 7.00pm which is proposed to be held by video conferencing as no public facility is available. The idea of having virtual meetings in the future will be discussed further.

Signed: ..... Councillor Ian Yates, Chairman

Date: ……..……..……..……

Appendix 1 – Clerk's Report

Lengthsman

Reporting:

Lower End
6/2 - Reference Number 835113 - pothole outside The Row

Broadway Road
6/2 - Reference Number 835114 – pothole near Woodfield

The Avenue

Resident report:

> *"I thought it wise to mention that it appears that the drain near Field Cottage is probably blocked. Water accumulated over the road and drain lifted. This is off the scale for irrelevance when compared to the horrendous grief suffered by so many. I just felt it best to log it."*

Lengthsman has looked at the drain. He has reported it.
18/2 – Reference 844090

Short Hill

19 January

Lengthsman to Clerk

> *"I spoke to someone from Revill's farm yesterday and he said that the gully is not connected to the highways drainage as it was installed by Gordon Phelps for the farm (probably when they filled in the pond).*
>
> *It runs a short distance into the field where it goes into a soakaway which must be full at the moment.*
>
> *I had no idea about this and do not know whether any of the other adjacent gullies are in the highway system or this soakaway."*

2 March

Flood water has gone. 'Revills' appear to have actioned their land drainage blockage.

4 March

Revills thanked for their action.

Broadway Road/Woodfield Farm

26 February

Confirmation of your report - reference: bls-7732440 - fly-tipping road plane-ings on the bend between October House and the farm

Upper End 808900 3 blocked gullies Rectory Lane 808901and Broadway Road 820955

Update from Highways
17 March 2020.

> *"Thank you for your enquiry. As you can imagine we have received a huge number of drainage enquiries since last October following the many flooding incidents in Worcestershire. In addition to our usual routine cyclic maintenance programme, we have additional gully emptiers out and about across the County. We are looking at all reports raised by the public, prioritising these were appropriate. Properties affected by flooding and flooding on major roads will continue to be treated as a priority. I hope you will have already seen some of our County Council vehicles in your area, and are reassured that we are doing everything possible to resolve problems in local areas and keep the public highway safe for all users."*

Carl summary for meeting

To summarise the outstanding issues that I am aware of:

Defford Road A4104

There is a ditch on the village side of the road which takes run-off from the adjacent fields land drains.
This ditch appears to be drained via a culvert which crosses the road to the ditch on the opposite verge. This culvert appears to be blocked and the water overflows on to the carriageway. The eye drains on the verge are also blocked meaning the water pools on the surface.

Upper End

Most of the road gullies are full, from the junction with the A4104 down to the Shorthill junction. These need to be emptied and the pipes inspected to see how far these blockages go.

The farm have cleared out the gully at the top of Shorthill which seems to have cleared the flooding.

Potholes and Gullies

I have received responses to all my recent reports indicating that the Council are prioritising issues due the recent flooding. It is unclear whether these reports will actually be actioned, or we need to report again.

The standard of repair work being carried out is appalling. The potholes in Broadway road between October house and the farm have been 'filled' but the whole surface is breaking up and they will soon return. There is a massive pothole just along from where the repairs were carried out which is one of the issues that I have reported.

Culverts

Church Street by Hall Farm Barns entrance appears to be at least partially blocked causing some flooding to the carriageway.

Broadway Road by entrance gate that leads to Sherpool also appears to be partially blocked and the inspection cover has been dislodged.

As these go under the carriageway, they are Highways responsibility so I will report these issues again.

Communication from residents – flooding and ditches

Lower End
February – a letter of acknowledgement and advice has been sent to a resident further to their concerns of local flooding and regarding flooding and dredging of watercourses generally.

Upper End
The run-off at Upper End has been reported again to Worcestershire County Council. Reference 856338.

16 March response from County Engineer in connection to Upper End and Defford Road.

"Hi June

I will pass this on to Ringway and ask them to attend gullys and system as whole in the Birlingham area. Can you confirm whereabouts the culvert is under the A4104? Other than the one at Defford Bridge which I've no doubt will still be under water."

18 March – meeting at location in Upper End

Additional gullies to be actioned.
Need to talk to landowner for potential bunding

Defford Road inspection also carried out by Engineer on route (as below to Barry Barnes)

Flooding on A4104 – near Tiddlesley Wood

9 February

Clerk to Barry Barnes, County Highways Liaison Officer, Worcestershire County Council

The A4104 at the top of Tiddlesley Wood (WR10 3BX) is still flooding across the highway mainly because the ditches on the southern side are not coping. How is this being addressed / progressed?

10 February

"I'll inspect myself soon and either deal with myself or pass to Wychavon District."

4 March

Asking for an update (copied in Community and Response)

Communication

4 February from Councillor Aston

"We have water draining from the highway onto the woodland at Hills Cottage. The builder has spoken to Carl and this apparently is due to blocked drains in the highway further up Upper End.

Can we ask highways to jet them to unblock and see if it makes a difference?"

REPLY - Clerk is actioning

Budget Briefing

Invitation from Worcestershire County Council (Member Engagement Officer, Legal & Governance) to attend the County Council budget briefing (each year the Council holds a series of meetings with representatives from the community to discuss its proposed budget plans and the possible impact this may have locally).

In attendance: Michael Hudson, Chief Financial Officer, along with Councillor Lucy Hodgson, Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities.

Councillor Griffin is attending.

Elected Member – Code of Conduct

9 February 2020

Confirmation sent to Wychavon District Council that Birlingham Parish Council have adopted the revised Code of Conduct as a whole at their January meeting following the contact as below:

20 December 2019

You will recall in 2012, pursuant to the Localism Act 2011 the previous standards regime was replaced by the requirement for all local authorities to have in place a code of conduct of their choosing which outlines the behaviour required of councillors. Wychavon worked closely with other Worcestershire districts and the county council to produce a Worcestershire wide code based on the governments model code.

This has worked well as it has meant less confusion among members of the public, and among councillors who represent more than one tier of local government.

In January 2019, the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) into Local Government Ethical Standards produced a report based on their review of standards in local government. The CSPL concluded that high standards of conduct in local government are needed to protect the integrity of decision-making, maintain public confidence, and safeguard local democracy. They made 26 recommendations for central government many of which will require changes to primary legislation and 15 best practice recommendations for local authorities to consider as a benchmark of good ethical practice.

The CSPL evidence supports the view that the vast majority of councillors maintain high standards of conduct. They did, however, find cases of bullying, harassment, disruptive behaviour and increased examples of how not to use social media.

In view of this report the Monitoring Officers from the Worcestershire district councils and the county council met to review the report and consider what changes/ updates were needed to our existing code to bring it in line with the best practice recommendations. A revised code was agreed by all and is now being adopted around the County.

It was considered by Wychavon's Member Conduct Committee and then adopted by Full Council on 11th December 2019.

Council also recommended that all Wychavon Parishes also adopted the amended version. Accordingly, please find attached the amended code of conduct for you to consider formally adopting at your next parish council meeting.

I would be grateful if you could contact my colleague, Julie Brain once your council has considered the revised code confirming the date of the meeting and whether the code was adopted as a whole, adopted with amendments (and if so what the amendments were) or not adopted.

In view of the fact that all Worcestershire districts have agreed the amended code and will be recommending it to their respective parishes I would be grateful if you could emphasis to your members that it is my recommendation, as monitoring officer, that the revised code be adopted in its entirety.

If your council decides not to adopt the revised version, please could you send us a copy of the current code which you expect your members to abide by, so we have this for our records when considering complaints.

If you have any queries, please contact me.

Meesha Patel, Monitoring Officer

Elected Member Code of Conduct – acknowledged by local authority

9 March - Email from Julie Brain to Clerk and copied in Monitoring Officer:-

"Dear June

Thank you for confirming.

Kind regards.

Julie"

Register of Interest Forms

22 January 2020 – contact from Wychavon District Council regarding an outstanding Register of Interest Form. There are no Forms outstanding and the local authority have been copied in on the query.

Save the Date – Worcestershire County Council Spring Parish Council 18 March 2020

21 January

Message from Deborah Dale, Member Engagement Office, Legal & Governance

"I am pleased to announce that the spring Parish Conference will be taking place on 18 March 2020.

*There will be the usual Information Market Place which will start at **5.30pm**, where you can meet with officers and partners to discuss various projects and initiatives across the Council. The conference itself will commence at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber.*

Details regarding the agenda will follow shortly."

Budget Requirement 20/21

30 January

The Budget requirement for 2020/2021 has been acknowledged by Senior Accountancy Assistant at Wychavon District Council.

"Thank you so much for returning the signed budget requirement 20/21 for Birlingham Parish Council"

South Worcestershire Development Plan Review – Briefing for Parish and Town Councils

27 January

Letter and invitation from Fred Davies, Planning Policy Manager (Malvern and Wychavon Councils) and Corin Beames, Acting Planning Policy Team Leader (Worcester City Council)

"Thank you to all of you who have provided responses to the consultation on the emerging South Worcestershire Development Plan before Christmas.

We would like to schedule a further briefing for you all to update you on progress with the Plan and a summary of the responses we received in respect of the last consultation stage. We encourage as many of you as possible to attend these briefings as it forms part of our work to keep you updated and provide an opportunity to understand how the emerging proposals may impact upon your town or village. We will also share our timetable so that you can plan for the next consultation!

South Worcestershire Development Plan Review - Briefing for Parish and Town Councils

Tuesday 31 March 2020, Guildhall, Worcester

A timetable for the review has been published as part of the Local Development Scheme for each authority and is available at https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page_id=8789.

We will be holding two briefing sessions for Parish and Town Councils and the programme will be as follows:

3.15pm - Arrival and registration - tea/coffee will be provided.
3.30pm - Presentation: An update on progress of the SWDP and a general Q&A
5:00pm - Close

6.15pm - Arrival and registration - tea/coffee will be provided.
6.30pm - Presentation: An update on progress of the SWDP and a general Q&A
8:00pm - Close

Towns and Parishes can attend either meeting, but in the first instance the event is open to one representative of each parish and town council. There may be space available for a second representative of your council to attend, if numbers permit. To secure your place, you need to supply the following information:

* *Name of first attendee and preferred session*

* *Name of any nominated second attendee and preferred session*

Please supply this information by 5pm on Friday 28 February 2020 to swdp@worcester.gov.uk<mailto:swdp@worcester.gov.uk

Councillor Byrne will attend the 6.15pm session

Wychavon Funding Workshop 4/2/20.

5 February

Report by Chairman

I attended the funding workshop at Wychavon DC last night. Two presentations:

· *Jem Teal, Community Development Manager presented the Community Legacy Grant which replaces the NHB. £3M over 3 years. First round is closed, second round is in process and the third round opens mid-2020. A good presentation. Jem is responsible for reviewing and approving funding applications. Understands his stuff having applied for grants in previous jobs. He stressed that Wychavon should not always be the first port of call as there are many other funding bodies and he suggested we use https://www.open4funding.info/ as a resource for finding the correct funding sources. He is even prepared to provide advice and guidance on non-Wychavon applications. I have followed up with him today on the cycle path to see if there is any way this could be funded.*

· *Tracy Grubb, Community Development Officer. She works for Jem and is the administrator for the Community Grant Scheme. Initially some confusion as we all thought she was talking about the details of how to apply for the Community Legacy Grant. However, the Community Grant Scheme is different but with a similar name. This is an annual rolling fund of c£50,000 and the scheme opens on 1st January and closes end March each year. So, the application process is just three months, probably because Wychavon have to see how much money is left in their budget ending April before setting the fund value. It means that in reality a project application needs to be developed before the scheme period opens. Otherwise there is insufficient time to complete the process. Typical awards are from £500-£8,000 but the average is £1-2,000 with match funding of at least 50% required from other sources. I asked if anyone had used the scheme for the balance of costs to make Smart Water free to households but apparently not.*

I am due to receive electronic copies of the slides and will forward these to you. My attendance at the workshop qualifies as a 'funding briefing' which is a pre-requisite before making any application.

Worcestershire CALC Wychavon Area Meeting

The agenda for the meeting on 4th March 2020 at the Civic Centre Pershore, together with the minutes of the previous meeting on 5th December 2019 had been received. Of note from the minutes:-

Parking Enforcement
Neither Christine Baxter (Parking Services Manager, WDC) nor Keiran Hemstock (Senior Traffic Management Engineer, WCC) could attend the meeting. They had sent written comments as follows:
Christine Baxter: Wychavon District Council investigates and enforces parking infringements that are reported to them that do not comply with County Council orders.
Keiran Hemstock: Any parking blocking footways, private driveways or preventing the passage of traffic along a road should be raised with the local police. Concerns relating to parking causing an ongoing safety issue (e.g. parking on junctions, visibility issues) should be referred to the County Council via the local County Councillor or WCC website at https:e-services.worcestershire.giv.uk/onlinereporting/FindLocation.aspx

Discussion took place about parking issues. It became clear that petty parking problems were now becoming big problems particularly in villages where parking is difficult at the best of times, e.g.: parking without lights at night; problems with fire engines unable to access roads due to parking, etc. The problem seemed to be exacerbated by the fact that Parish Councils did not have the power to issue parking tickets and there was no fear of being issued with a parking ticket.

Tree Maintenance:
Cllr Geoff Ransted mentioned that a tree surgeon was needed to do some work on a tree in his parish. Christopher said that it was very important to get your trees surveyed on a regular basis to avoid accidents i.e. trees falling on people in public spaces.

As the meeting concluded Margaret asked if people felt the open discussion was useful. The general opinion was positive and members felt it was useful finding out what goes on in other councils and exchanging ideas and solutions in an informal setting.

HGV's

9 February from resident

"Good morning June
Have just had a continental lorry in the village. Name on side - lasmaravillas. Reg no 1420 JLC.

We also had a lorry from AIM of Evesham approx. 2 weeks ago. It came in on New Barn. Driver explained he wanted Revills. When challenged he stated that AIM give no instructions to drivers re avoiding New Barn.
The only other occasional offender is Prima..... from Murcia".

Sent to James Revill

Then another lorry ……. Agetrans on the side

Message to James again.

> "Following my earlier email another 'complaint' has just been received. I have also had another telephone call from a resident in the church area complaining of the lorries".

Noted from 1 April 2019 extract from Revills

"As you are aware all our hauliers/suppliers have been informed of our normal trading times and this, together with the detailed information (which you have also seen), I believe has helped the overall situation to improve. Of course, a lot does depend on drivers following the instructions and there will always be an occasional time when instructions aren't followed".

13 February

Response from Revills

"Sorry for the issues with vehicle movements again, it possibly appears that over time perhaps some of the hauliers have changed personnel resulting in our instructions not being communicated correctly.

We will send a letter out again to hauliers, which you have seen before but slightly amended ensuring they are reminded of the access to Red Star."

Bench

8 February 2020, Councillor Cook wrote to all members:

"Alan has just finished removing the bench and the tree is free! One section is rotten and will need sorting. Alan knows someone who I can speak to and can help with that.

There are 4 stone feet that need to be dug out so I will get that sorted ASAP. Not sure where the others have gone...possibly sunk into the ground?

I'm sorry I couldn't get any if you to pop up and help 'place' the bench on the green as Alan just appeared this morning to do the work

Stile at Pigsty

5 February

Report from Footpath Warden to Chairman and Clerk:

"I have just spoken to Marion, and it seems she has, indeed, had the stile repaired.

I looked at it 3 weeks ago and sent photos to my contact at the County Council. She came out two weeks ago and checked the situation but has not made a decision about what is required. I have told her about the repair and await to hear from her. I will let you both know (and Marion) as soon as I hear anything."

New Homes Bonus - update

6 February - Wychavon chasing for an update.

9 February Clerk responds:

> *"The proposal for the bench is now commencing. The booklet is delayed and probably won't be started until early summer. The memorial is more complex as it is a listed monument and will have to go through the planning process. The volunteer project leader is abroad so I will contact him again when he returns.*
> *As we are starting the one project the £872 can now be transferred. I assume the other two projects are separate transfers as and when the proposals begin."*

£872 for the removal and relocation of existing Millennium Bench
£200 to produce a booklet to mark the 75th anniversary of WW2
£300 to add a villager's name who died in WW1 to the Birlingham War Memorial.

10 February

> *"Thanks for the update. All three projects will be paid separately once they are complete and you are ready to pay the bill. I will arrange for the £872 to be transferred to Birlingham PC's bank account."*

Worcestershire Pollinator Strategy consultation

11 February

From Laura Wood, Senior Ecologist, WCC

> *In 2016 Worcestershire County Council committed to being a 'pollinator friendly county'. This pledge is evident in many of our activities, including roadside verge maintenance, responses to planning consultations and the pollinator conferences held in 2016 and 2018. In line with other local authorities we have produced a pollinator strategy document for Worcestershire, bringing together the most pertinent objectives from the newly updated county Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) for species and habitats.*
>
> *The Worcestershire Pollinator Strategy is now out for consultation, please see it attached to this email – I am notifying you because you attended a Worcestershire pollinator conference in 2018 and asked to stay on our contact list, but apologies if you receive this email twice due to being more than one of our contact lists. If you wish to be removed from this list, please let us know.*
>
> *We intend for the county level strategy to be used by district, town and parish councils, community groups, planners and other stakeholders to support their work to promote pollinator friendly projects and development. The document gives a menu of actions required to safeguard and boost pollinator populations, which can be applied at a range of scales.*
>
> *In time, the strategy will be supported by a webpage including maps to help local groups select objectives most relevant to their location and site, and we hope to run workshops and provide templates to assist in production of more local pollinator strategies.*

Eckington Neighbourhood Plan Adopted – 19 February 2020

20 February

From Planning Policy, Wychavon District Council

At its Council meeting on 19 February 2020, Wychavon District Council 'made' (adopted) the Eckington Neighbourhood Plan; please find attached a copy of the Decision Document. The Eckington Neighbourhood Plan now forms part of the statutory development framework for Wychavon District and will be used alongside the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) in the determination of planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area.

The adopted Eckington Neighbourhood Plan can be viewed on the dedicated webpage using the following link - https://www.wychavon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/eckington-neighbourhood-plan. Alternatively, a hard copy can be viewed at the following locations:

* Wychavon District Council, Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, WR10 1PT (Monday-Friday 9am-5pm)

* Pershore Library, Church Street, Pershore, WR10 1DT (Monday and Wednesday-Friday 9am-5.30pm, Tuesday 9am-7pm and Saturday 9am-5pm)

Wychavon Parish Games Association

10 March
Letter received from the Secretary of Wychavon Parish Games Association (organiser of the Parish Games)

Clerk to Birlingham Parish Council

Dear Mrs Hiden

2020 Wychavon Parish Games

Believe it or not, this is the 42nd year of the Parish Games, and I am writing to you to invite residents of Birlingham Beckford to enter this year's Games. It would be really good to see Birlingham back in the Games, and we know your parishioners would enjoy their participation.

The Games are a series of fifteen events, which are competed for by residents of the various parishes within Wychavon. Events are: Angling; Bell Boating; Bowls; Crib; Cross Country; Ladies' Darts, Men's Darts; Dominoes; Men's Five-a-Side; Petanque; Pool; Ladies' Rounders; Skittles, Junior and Senior Table Tennis. As you can see, there is something for everyone, and participants enjoy visiting clubs, pubs and village halls in other parts of the District. Many Parishes start by entering just one event and then enter more in the following year. No Parish is too small to take part. The entry fee remains at £6.00 per event, with a maximum fee of £60.00 if you enter more than ten events. This is paid by the Parish Council. Many Parishes only enter one or two events.

One of our Committee members would be more than happy to come along to any Meeting in your Parish to tell you, your Councillors and the public more about the Games. However, in the meantime, I would ask you please to ensure that this letter is taken to your next Parish Council meeting.

Packs of rules and an entry form will be sent out to Parish organisers within the next few weeks. To save costs, these are only routinely sent out to those Parishes who took part last year. However, we would be more than happy to send one to your Parish if you wish – just let me know. We also have A4 posters publicising the Games, and we would be very happy to send you as many as you would like

Further information is available on the website, which is currently being updated. Alternatively, you can always contact me directly for further information.

PARISH GAMES 42nd YEAR

The Wychavon Parish Games started in 1978, and the aim of the Games remains the same today: To offer all residents of the Wychavon District the opportunity to participate in active sports and pub games. The competitive spirit is strongly combined with community spirit; be that through developing relationships within the teams created in a Parish or the local derby atmosphere between teams from

near or neighbouring Parishes. This is why there is a strict rule about participants having to reside within the Parish that they represent The Games combine a series of inter-Parish/Ward competitions where individual Parishes compete against one another to win individual events and to produce overall winners. The Games offer participants the opportunity to visit other Parishes, experience the hospitality and therein develop relationships and build and broaden communities. For example; the One Day Events are held within a variety of appropriate locations around the District with the Knockout Events being held on a Home and Away basis, predominantly in Pubs and Clubs, thus enabling a broad scope of venues to be enjoyed. There are two types of competition: One Day Events: Angling (19.09.20); Bell Boating (27.06.20); Bowls (13.09.20); Cross Country (13.07.20); Men's 5-a-Side Football (21.06.20); Petanque (19.07.20); Rounders(05.07.20); Junior and Senior Table Tennis (04.10.20).Knock-Out Events: Crib; Ladies' Darts; Men's Darts; Dominoes; Pool; Skittles. These start in August and continue through to their Finals which are held in the autumn. Engraved Trophies, many of which have been in existence since the start of the Games, are awarded to the Winners and Runners Up in each Event with the much-coveted Silver Salver being awarded to the overall Winning Parish. These Trophies, as well as a number of others, are given out at the annual Presentation Night hosted by the previous year's overall Winning Parish; this year, this will be held at Bengeworth Sports & Social Club, Evesham, in November. Entry fees are paid by the Parish Councils.

Communication

20 February email from Stanimira Stavreva-Colley saying she was thinking of moving to the area and when the next Parish meeting was.

23 February reply:

> The next Parish Council meeting is on Wednesday 18 March 2020 commencing at 7pm in the village hall.
>
> There is a Democratic Opening which allows for 'public question time' and gives you an opportunity to speak at the proceedings. Views and questions can be raised regarding issues on the agenda or you can raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Chairman. I understand that you may have already been in contact with the Chairman enquiring about a prospective property and a potential change of use. Members are not in a position to give their views on potential planning applications. This is for the District Council to consider when you submit a 'Pre-planning advice' application where the local authority will assess the merits of your proposal and determine the likelihood of its support.
>
> The Parish Council have statutory duties and a Code of Conduct that they are required to follow and anything from the meeting is recorded for the minutes. However, if you wish to have a conversation the members can listen and perhaps explain how they may make comments on a future formal submission.
>
> If you want to send any further information in preparation of the meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me.

After various email exchanges and explanations of the Parish Council duties a response came back following the local authority giving their formal view.

Email 10 March:

> *"Dear June,*
>
> *Thanks a lot for the email.*

I had a reply from the council and albeit that apparently, they really want a new dentist in the area, it seems like that they do not want such in the outskirts of Birlingham. Another village is their choice, but somehow not mine.

Anyway, thanks a lot for your prompt response and my search will need to continue."

Grant from County Councillor Hardman

Cuppa & Chat – Birlingham

7 March - Clerk contacted Councillor Hardman

"At the Parish Council meeting in January you mentioned the group, Cuppa & Chat which meets on the first Wednesday of each month. The volunteers run the group to enable residents to meet for an hour or so for company – "an opportunity to meet friends, catch up on local news and discuss the latest topical issues of the day".

Everyone is welcome, young and old. Cost is £2.50 per head to cover the overheads; for example the hire of the hall.

The head contact is Sue Hermon.

I bumped into Sue the other day and said I would contact you again for your support and suggestions in anything that assists the group and enables them to continue with their gatherings."

10 March - reply

"I would like to support them with a grant of £250, possibly for a Victory in Europe Cuppa and Chat, or a Christmas one."

12 March – Clerk

Thank you very much for your support. It is great that Sue and her team continue to meet every month voluntarily and give support and friendship to the parishioners. All part of not wanting social isolation. They even offer lifts to the events so no-one misses out.

I have asked Sue and the Cuppa & Chat team to let me know what they wish to do with your offer of the grant.

Reply

"In that case I will do the paperwork today, since we have to have it in by tomorrow due the year end. I just have £250 left over and this is a great idea, and it's down to them on what they do with it."

Small Business Support from Government in response to Covid 19

Sent from Ron Davies

March 2020

Small Business Support from Government

Last week's budget announced that any small business in receipt of Small Business Rate Relief (SBBR) would benefit from a £3,000 support grant from the government. This has now been increased to £10,000 (as announced by the Chancellor on 17 March). A further grant of up to £25,000 will be available for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses with a rateable value for business rates purposes of between £15,000 and £51,000.

It is expected that these grants will be paid to eligible businesses by district councils without the need to apply or make contact. The final details are being confirmed with government and payments will be made as soon as possible.

In addition to these grants the government has announced a coronavirus business interruption loan scheme. This will be launched next week and will be operated by the British Business Bank.

More information is available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses

Birlingham Village Hall

18 March

Message received from Chairman, Village Hall

> BVH CLOSURE VERY IMPORTANT: Coronavirus update.
>
> The BVH committee after much deliberation have come to the conclusion unanimously the BVH needs to close. The BVH will close at the end business on Wednesday 18th March 2020 and will not reopen until Wednesday 1st July 2020.
>
> A view on reopening the Village Hall will take place on Monday 1st of June, when Government guidelines will be followed so it may be necessary to remain closed for longer!
>
> The BVH committee apologise to all concerned for the inconvenience this may cause, but in the interest of public safety we believe this is right course of action to take at this difficult time.
>
> I most apologetic to you and the Parish Council members for the disruption this will cause regarding meetings that maybe planned, as the Hall will no longer be available for the Parish Council use should you decide to go ahead with planned meetings.
>
> Regrettably, there will be no exceptions to the reopening of the Hall until the next review date of Monday 1st of June.
>
> There was also a message from the Bookings Secretary regarding the Hall closure.

Great British Spring Clean - postponed

Join us for the Great British September Clean 11-27 September 2020

Everyone at Keep Britain Tidy has been absolutely blown away by your support for this year's Great British Spring Clean. Together – volunteers, local authorities, charities and businesses – have shown tremendous commitment to the campaign and to each and every one of you we would like to say a huge big thank you.

Our first priority has always been making sure everyone stays safe and so we have taken the decision to postpone this year's Great British Spring Clean until September.

Join us for the Great British September Clean, from 11-27 September, when we will be bringing communities back together to clean up our streets, parks and beaches.

If you had already planned to take part in the Great British Spring Clean you can reschedule your activity for the new campaign period, instead of cancelling it.

Cycle Track reporting

5 February

Chairman to Jem Teal Wychavon District Council

"I was the person who raised the question about cycle tracks last night.

The Parish Council has been looking into the provision of a pavement/cycle track along the side of the A4104 from the top of Tiddesley bank to Defford Road in Pershore – a distance of about 1 mile. We have discussed this with Ron Davis and he has encouraged us to explore costs and funding. There have been a number of Birlingham residents who have asked us if a safe way to walk or cycle into Pershore could be provided given that the village has no shop, a very limited bus service (which is likely to be lost all together) so travel by car is the only option. Birlingham also has a large group of agricultural workers based at Red Star which can regularly be seen walking down the narrow strip of grass along the A4104 to shop for food in Pershore. The A4104 is a very busy road with a national speed limit of 60mph, so walking inches from the traffic is not to be recommended. Birlingham's parish boundary crosses the A4104 at the top of Tiddesley bank – hence my question about joint funding proposals from more than one council. Given that there are already many people who walk in the other direction from Pershore along the A4104 to enter Tiddesley Wood and that the proposal to build 450 homes at Orchard Farm is in discussion it seems to make sense to explore this project further.

Anything you can send me to help us cost and fund such a project (which I can imagine will not be small) would be most appreciated.

Chairman's summary of further email exchange with Community Development Manager, copied to all Councillors:

6 February

Having exchanged several emails with Mr Teal over the last couple of days, here's a summary.

- An official cycle track has to be a minimum width of 3 meters. It is unlikely, even if the hedge was cut right back, that there is sufficient room on the verge from the top of Tiddesley Bank past Avonview Marina and Palace Moorings.
- A pavement has to be 1.5-2.0 meters. It is then up to the user to decide if they wish to cycle on it!
- It would be worth taking a tape measure and checking the available space.
- A footpath could either start at the top of Tiddesley Bank (where the existing footpath comes out) or at the turning into Upper End (which tends to be the route Red Star pickers use)
- A cycle path would have to start at the turning to Upper End as you can't cycle through the orchard above the river.
- The approximate cost of building a pavement/cycle path is £100/meter plus fees (traffic management, surveyors, etc.). So, based on a distance of approx. 1 mile from the start to the Defford Road turning opposite the cemetery, a ball park for budgeting purposes would be £160K for building and £40k fees = £200K

If we think this is still worth pursuing, we should bear in mind that if we applied for a grant with say Pershore Town Council such a grant would have to be match funded at some level – somewhat beyond our meagre finances! So perhaps the next step would be to talk with Worcester CC to see if the provision of a footpath could be linked to their scheme to build 450 houses at Orchard Farm.

Comments from Councillors:-

"*Wow well done Ian - it does sound confusing, why on earth didn't someone give the two grants more strikingly different names, it must cause endless misunderstanding. Glad you've attended so we can move forward with proposals for Birlingham.*"

"*I believe it is part of the course that grants, once you manage to find the appropriate one in the first place, are overly complex. Well done for getting us a step closer*."

"*Very useful and comprehensive. It is certainly worth a try talking to the county re trying to tie it into the Orchard farm development. They may well argue however that legally any payments of CIL or 106 Agreement generates from that scheme technically should be used to aid connectivity from that scheme to Pershore. But worth a try*."

"*Thanks for doing all of that - a very comprehensive analysis and I agree worth a try*."

"*Very comprehensive report. Thank you. May be worth a try. I fear that match funding could be a problem. No doubt the council will have already earmarked any s106 or other payments for other projects & may feel ours is a low priority*."

Birlingham News (extracts of relevance)

Birlingham **News 205 - 22 January**

Plans for the VE Day Commemorations on the weekend of 8th-10th May have now been started but volunteers are needed to help make the events a success – see below.

In this issue:

1. Bulb Teas
2. Clerk to the Trustees of the Almshouses
3. Parish Council Report
4. VE Day Commemorations
5. Mobile Phone Found

3. **Parish Council Report**

Ian Yates writes:

The Parish Council Meeting was held at 7.00pm on 15th January 2020.

- **SmartWater**. Councillor Paula Aston wrote an article in the Bystander before Christmas giving details on SmartWater and encouraging residents to contact her to express interest in joining the scheme. There has been very little response but if you still wish to contact Paula her email is paula_mann@hotmail.co.uk. The Parish Council has been discussing the provision of Smart Water for households in Birlingham to deter theft. SmartWater allows items to be invisibly marked with your details so that if stolen they can be traced. It has been shown that if sufficient households in an area sign up to SmartWater it acts as a major deterrent to thieves. If we can get 75% or even 85% of residents in Birlingham signed up to the scheme, then the cost is substantially reduced and with grants the provision of SmartWater may even become free of charge. The Parish Council is continuing to seek grants from WCC and the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- **VE Day Commemorations**. By the time you read this, a meeting will have been held in the Village Hall on 20th January to discuss the programme of events suggested by the government to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day on 8th May 2020. All village residents were invited to attend via Birlingham News. The objective of the meeting, which was led by Steve Morris of the Jubilee Committee, was to establish if there are sufficient residents willing to volunteer to run any of the proposed events. Councillor Julia Luff agreed to attend and co-ordinate with the Parish Council.
- **SWDP Review**. The proposal for 450 houses at Orchard Farm near Tiddesley Wood is still in consultation. This could take 14 months and no decision will be reached until 2021. There is considerable concern over a deficit in infrastructure provision with objections possible from Worcester Acute Hospital Trust, local schools etc.
- **Flooding**. The Parish Council raised concerns with Worcester County Councillor Adrian Hardman about recent flooding on the A4104 between the top of Tiddesley Bank and the turning to Birlingham village and also on Shorthill. This will be actioned.
- **Dog Fouling**. The village continues to suffer from dog fouling in which either the owner has not picked up or having picked it up has left the bag on the side of the road rather than taking it home or to a bin. The Parish Council had previously looked at the provision of additional dog bins but found the cost to be prohibitive due to the need to buy approved bins and pay for them to be regularly emptied. Councillor Steven Byrne will obtain two aluminium signs for review which remind dog walkers of their responsibilities. If considered suitable, a number of these signs will then be positioned around the village.
- **Millennium Bench**. Councillor Maxine Cook has identified a carpenter who will remove the bench from around the plane tree at end of February when hopefully the weather has improved. The bench will then be stored while a suitable alternative site on the village green is prepared for its restoration and reassembly.

Full minutes of the Parish Council meeting will be posted on the village website shortly.

4. **VE Day Commemorations**

Steve Morris writes:

There was an open meeting on Monday, hosted by the Jubilee Committee, to discuss the VE Day Commemorations in May. During that meeting the following programme of events was provisionally agreed:

- As there will be official events on Friday 8th May in Pershore and we don't want to clash with those, nothing is currently planned for Birlingham on that day.
- On Saturday 9th May there will be a street party from 3.00pm outside the Village Hall. Please bring your own picnic tea. It is hoped that a special cake will be baked for the occasion.
- This will be followed by a Service of Commemoration in the church at 5.00pm. The flower arrangers will be creating special window displays for the weekend.
- The bells will be rung to mark the occasion at some point in the evening.
- Starting at 6.00pm there will be a 40s-Themed Dance in the Village Hall. There will be music from the 1940s and you are encouraged to dress in the style of the times!
- The Birlingham Memories Group will be putting on an exhibition in the church throughout the weekend.

Birlingham **News 206 – 29 January**

It's snowdrop month, but we start with some sad news.

In this issue:

1. Norma Bennett
2. St James' Church Services – February
3. Snowdrop Teas
4. Birlingham Photography Club, Tuesday 4th February
5. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 5th February
6. Planning Applications

6. **Planning Applications**

The following planning application has/applications have been received by the Parish Council:

Hills Cottage, Upper End: Demolition of existing single storey rear extension. Partial demolition of single storey side extension and replacement. Internal modifications (Case No. 20/00145). Awaiting decision by Wychavon District Council.

The following planning application has been determined by Wychavon District Council:

The Old Laundry, Broadway Road: First floor front extension over existing footprint (Case No. 19/02661). **Approved**.

Birlingham **News 207 – 12 February**

The Snowdrop Teas will continue for another two weeks – a great opportunity to enjoy our lovely churchyard followed by tea in the Village Hall.

In this issue:

1. Bulb Sunday Service, 16th February

2. Snowdrop Teas
3. Funeral Service for Norma Bennett, Thursday 27th February
4. Village Litter Pick, Saturday 21st March
5. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

4. **Village Litter Pick, Saturday 21st March**

The Parish Clerk writes:
The Parish Council is organising the Annual Litter Pick on Saturday 21st March, meeting on the village green at 10.00am. Litter-picking equipment is provided. The litter pick coincides with the Great British Spring Clean.
Please save this date and join us if you can. We should be able to complete the litter pick in an hour if sufficient people turn up.

Birlingham **News 208 – 26 February**

This eclectic issue contains details of the Pet Service this Sunday, Wychavon's climate change survey and more.

In this issue:

1. St James' Church Services – March
2. Birlingham Photography Club, Tuesday 3rd March
3. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 4th March
4. Snowdrop Teas – Thanks
5. Wychavon Climate Change Plan and Survey
6. HMRC Scam
7. Planning Applications

5. **Wychavon Climate Change Plan and Survey**

How concerned are you about climate change? What would you be willing to change to help tackle it? What do you think Wychavon District Council should be doing?

Now is your chance to let them know. They are currently developing an ambitious carbon reduction plan, which they call Intelligently Green. This will set out their plan to cut emissions over the next ten years from their own operations and emissions created by businesses, residents and travel that they can directly influence.

The plan will be agreed in April, but you can read their proposals now. Before they agree the plan, they want your views. You can take their short survey and let them know what you think of the plan's targets and proposals and also your own views on climate change and what you are willing to do to tackle it.

7. **Planning Applications**

The following planning application has been received by the Parish Council:

October House, Broadway Road: Redevelopment of garage and sheds including removal of existing stables and garage extension (Case No. 20/00108). Awaiting decision by Wychavon District Council. (Consultation period ends on 5th Month.

Birlingham **News 209 – 11 March**

This issue contains details of a film night, the litter pick, new tai chi classes and help for bees but we start with some sad news.

In this issue:

1. Pat Barber
2. Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 18th March
3. Birlingham IW, Thursday 19th March
4. Village Litter Pick, Saturday 21st March
5. Tai Chi Classes
6. Worcestershire Pollinator Strategy
7. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

2. **Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 18th March**

The next meeting of Birlingham Parish Council takes place on Wednesday 18th March at 7.00pm in Birlingham Village Hall. During the meeting there is an opportunity to express your views on local issues, so please come along.

4. **Village Litter Pick, Saturday 21st March**

The Parish Clerk writes:

The Annual Litter Pick, organised by the Parish Council, takes place on Saturday 21st March, meeting on the village green at 10.00am. Litter-picking equipment is provided. The litter pick coincides with the Great British Spring Clean.

Please join us if you can. We should be able to complete the litter pick in an hour if sufficient people turn up.

6. **Worcestershire Pollinator Strategy**

Worcestershire County Council have begun a consultation on the Worcestershire Pollinator Strategy 2020-2025. This strategy aims to support the recovery of pollinator populations (bees and other insects) within Worcestershire and beyond.

One outcome of the strategy is that the mowing of road verges will be later in the spring than it was a few years ago. This will enhance road verge biodiversity and ensure that more wildflowers are available for longer for pollinators.

Birlingham **News 210 – 18 March**

This extra edition of Birlingham News contains details of changes to organisations, events and activities in Birlingham as a result of the announcements made on Monday relating to coronavirus and the need to stop all non-essential social contact.

Please note that we are looking at ways of allowing villagers to share information more quickly and we will give further details in an Update tomorrow (Thursday), along with information on the Parish Council's plans.

In this issue:

1. Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 18th March
2. Offers of Help for those Self Isolating
3. Birlingham Village Hall
4. Swan Inn
5. St James' Church
6. The Friends of St James' Church AGM
7. Cuppa & Chat
8. Other Activities in the Village Hall

1. **Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 18th March**

The Parish Council takes the government's guidance very seriously but has decided that it will go ahead with its meeting tonight (Wednesday 18th March) with the sole purpose of discussing the co-ordination of volunteers who have kindly offered to help vulnerable members of our community with shopping or prescriptions and who have to self-isolate. The meeting WILL BE HELD BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. Attendance will be restricted to just members of the Parish Council. It WILL NOT BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC in order to limit the possibility of infection.

2. **Offers of Help for those Self Isolating**

Birlingham News and the Parish Council are working together, having received offers of help from several people in the village. As stated above, the Parish Council will be discussing the co-ordination of volunteers at their meeting tonight (behind closed doors).

In the meantime, if anyone needs *urgent assistance*, we have had this very generous offer from Charlotte and Nick Baskerville:

If anyone in the village is isolating or is concerned about going out in the current climate, we are happy to help with shopping and/or collecting prescriptions if needed. Charlotte and Nick Baskerville (The Old Post Office)

3. **Birlingham Village Hall**

Alan Bradley (Birlingham Village Hall Chairman) writes:

The BVH Committee, after much deliberation, have come to the conclusion unanimously that the Village Hall needs to close. The Hall will close at the end of business today (Wednesday 18th March) and will not reopen until Wednesday 1st July 2020.

A view on reopening the Village Hall will take place on Monday 1st June, when Government guidelines will be followed, so it may be necessary to remain closed for longer.

The BVH Committee apologise to all concerned for the inconvenience this may cause, but in the interest of public safety we believe this is right course of action to take at this time.

4. **Swan Inn**

Zoe Haines writes:

The Swan Inn is open for business. We have purchased takeaway containers if anyone would like a meal delivered and left on the doorstep, with phone payments or cash left on the doorstep. You can ring through to place an order (01386 750485) and we shall deliver 12.30-1.30pm and 6.30-7.30pm.

We hope to do this for as long as we can stay open.

5. **St James' Church**

Adrianne Woodward writes:

Public worship at St James' Birlingham has been suspended until further notice, in accordance with avoiding non-essential contact, to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

However, the church will be open from 10.00am until 4.30pm for private individual worship. You are advised that as there are no handwashing facilities in the church it will be expedient to bring your own supply of hand gel when visiting.

7. **Cuppa & Chat**

Sue Hermon writes:

As the Village Hall is closing for the next few months, there will sadly be no Cuppa & Chat meetings whilst the coronavirus continues to pose a significant risk. As soon as the situation allows, we will restart our regular monthly get-togethers and look forward to welcoming everyone back.

8. **Other Activities in the Village Hall**

As the Village Hall is closed until the end of June, all meetings and activities that normally take place there have been cancelled, including:

- Birlingham IW is cancelled for the foreseeable future. This Thursday's film night will not now take place.
- Birlingham Photography Club will not be holding meetings for the foreseeable future.
- The tai chi classes advertised in last week's Birlingham News, due to have started on Tuesday 14th April, have been postponed.