Birlingham Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 15 July 2020

By videoconferencing

Councillors:

Councillor Aston, Byrne, Cook, Griffiths, Luff, Porter and Yates.

Present:

County Councillor Hardman, District Councillor Davies and June Hiden (Clerk). No Public Attended.

Welcome – The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were tendered by the Footpath Warden, Bruce Hayward and Lengthsman, Carl Brassington.

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.

Interests were declared by Councillor Michael Porter regarding Item 5 and Councillor Maxine Cook for involvement in the volunteer mowing at Birlingham Village Hall.

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 21 May 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. There were no questions.

4. Progress Reports

a) Footpath Warden:

i. Footpath 511 (Withy Walk) – cleared by the landowner.
ii. Footpath 518 (Asham Lane) – grass cut. Councillor Yates was thanked for his assistance.
iii. Footpath 519 (by Almshouses) – finger post replaced.
iv. Footpath 520 (by Nafford House) – strimmed.

b) Tree Warden: No report. Clerk to contact the Warden for an update on his availability.

c) District Councillor:

i. The local authority Executive Board meet every Wednesday at 8.30am. The main topic to be discussed continues to be Covid-19. There were three patients in hospital: two at the Alexandra in Redditch and one at Worcestershire Royal part of the Acute Trust. The infection rate appears to be slowing down although aware of Mathon near Malvern with seasonal workers in lockdown. Malvern Hills District Council are dealing with this matter.
ii. Wychavon District Council has paid out all £1.4m (of the £1.5m) of the Discretionary Grant funding to help businesses not eligible to receive either the cash grant for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses or the small business grant to get through the crisis. Wychavon staff have been working 24/7 to achieve this in such a short timeframe.
iii. If any residents are still shielding and receive co-ordinated food deliveries this will stop on 1 August 2020.
iv. The Councillor has been sending a weekly update to the Chairman who in turn has been putting the information on the Forum.
v. Jack Hegarty, Managing Director of Wychavon District Council is retiring at the end of July. A new CEO has been appointed. There have been three external candidates for the position of Deputy CEO and hopefully the successful person will be in post by the end of the year.
vi. Councillor Davis has been contacted by a resident concerned about traffic on New Barn Road and at the back of the church by the entrance to the cricket pitch. The Parish Council was also contacted. Tree branches have been damaged by agricultural or high sided vehicles when passing other cars on the single-track road. This is a public highway and the tractors need access to the fields. The concern has been noted and the resident will monitor the situation.
vii. Councillor Davis confirmed that Birlingham Village Hall have received a grant of £10,000 from Wychavon District Council.

d) County Councillor: full report attached.

Questions raised with Councillor Adrian Hardman:

<u>Birlingham Roads and Highway issues</u>

· Broadway Road at Lower End is now in a poor state of repair with many potholes and areas that have broken down. This road needs resurfacing and probably replacement of both the top and underlying base completely in some locations.
· Multiple incidents of flooding on the A4104 at the top of Tiddesley Bank on the bend near Lower Farm caused significant disruption and danger to traffic during the winter and more recently.
· Potholes on New Barn Road that have previously been filled have opened up again as tarmac was not cut in and sealed properly.
· Water has started to run out of the bank again at the top of Berwick Lane. The drains were cleared last year and this stopped it for a while but it will become an issue again once temperatures fall.
. Why was Church Street being redressed?

It was agreed that Councillor Hardman would arrange a visit to Birlingham to organise an action plan.

<u>Gate across Berwick Lane</u>
Several residents contacted the Parish Council about a new gate that had been installed across Berwick Lane just south of Greenfields. The gate had been erected by Smith's Industries Fisherman to stop vehicular access to the carpark lower down the lane due to a number of incidents of antisocial behaviour and fly tipping. There has been damage to the hide, vandalism of gates, trespass on private land. It was thought that the public

highway ended at this new gate and it was privately owned after that point. The fishermen have spent time and money on repairs in the lane to allow access. However, it has been established that the public highway extends to the bridge at Berwick Brook (approximately 200m further) and therefore the gate will be relocated until discussions with Worcestershire County Council regarding powers available to limit antisocial behaviour are concluded. It was noted that the existing pedestrian and mobility users right of way to the footpath to Nafford Lock has not changed. The landowner may apply for a 'gating order'. The Parish Council sympathise with the owners concerns and trust that Worcestershire County Council departments action this sensibly.

Councillor Hardman agreed to give an update on the above issues.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Hardman for joining the meeting.

e) Clerk - See ***Appendix 1***
Information from the Lengthsman is included. It was noted that the Lengthsman has arranged to do an online course himself, after his training expired and he was unable to continue with his duties due to the risk assessment recently agreed and received at Worcestershire County Council. The Lengthsman Scheme Manager at the County Council has said that there are still no training courses available.

5. Planning

a) Planning applications pending:-

i. 20/00975/HP - Stable Cottage, Eckington Road, WR10 3DA

Internal modifications. Conversion and incorporation of attached barn as kitchen. Two storey rear extension

Mr and Mrs Porter

Parish Council comments: "*The parish council would support the application. We would however expect the appointed planning officer to ensure the materials and architectural detailing to be kept in line with the existing structure*."

ii. Telecommunications Pole at OS 9361 4256

Broadway Road: Installation of fixed-line broadband apparatus (Case No. 20/00970). Awaiting decision by Wychavon District Council.

iii. Telecommunications Pole at OS 9266 4336

Eckington Road: Installation of fixed line broadband electronic communications apparatus (Case No.20/00998).

b) Applications granted:-

i. 20/00505/FUL - Bakers Hill Farm, Defford Road, Pershore WR10 3BZ

Proposed extension to agricultural building

Mr R Revill

Approved – 27 May

c) Enforcement

The Swan has now submitted their retrospective planning application for the covered seating area in the garden. The Clerk has not yet received notification of the application from Wychavon but once the Parish Council are in receipt of the proposal there will be an opportunity to comment in the normal way. However, Will Haines has sent the Chairman the copy of the Design and Access Statement. There is a statement on Page 5 of the DAS which says, '*After consultation with the villagers and the Parish Council, it*

was decided that there was a need to build a covered external seating area…..'. This is factually incorrect. The Parish Council became aware of the construction when it was well advanced. The Chairman and Planning Co-ordinator had been invited to the site and the Councillors' objective was to understand what was being built and why no planning application had been received. The Parish Council need to be fair and balanced when 'building' is brought to their notice that may require planning permission. A comment will be sent to the authority once the application is available for consultation.

6. Financial Matters

a) The Accounts for 2020/2021

i. Bank balance (current) is £6,789.17 as at 1 July 2020. Business saving balance is £8,620.37 as at 30 June 2020.

ii. Receipts –

£60.00 – Worcestershire County Council (Lengthsman March)
£40.00 - Birlingham Village Hall – refund (invoice 2020021 is replaced by invoice 2020036 and refund issued for May and July 2020 meetings)

iii. Payments: –

i. £560.00 - Clerks pay – January, February, March (577)
ii. £140.00 - Clerks PAYE – January, February, March (573)
iii. £104.28 - Clerks expenses – January, February, March (579)
iv. £13.10 - Clerks specific expenses 2019/2020 (580)
v. £60.00 - Lengthsman March 2020 (581)
vi. £233.62 - CALC (service charge per elector 213.10 and Nalc affiliation fee £20.52) (576)
vii. £257.60 - Zurich Insurance 1/6/20 – 31/5/21 (582)
viii. £225.87 - Archer Safety Signs – aluminium advisory 'no fouling' (583)

b) Payments for consideration –

i. £55.00 - Internal audit
ii. £140.00 - PAYE (April, May, June)
iii. £580.00 - Clerks salary (April, May, June)
iv. £104.28 - Clerks standard expenses (April, May, June)
Clerks payments as agreed in the budget. Further clarification to be made after the meeting with the Councillors once the Clerk has left.
v. £90.00 - Lengthsman May

c) Correction of 2019/2020 accounts

£96.00 – payment due to Lengthsman for work carried out February 2019
(BACS receipt 16 April 2019)

The Accounts for 2019/2020 for resolution declares Birlingham Parish 'exempt from a limited assurance review'. The Clerk requested that the submission date be extended, and this was agreed by the external auditors as the 31 August 2020.

d) Internal Audit – is still to be completed (Annual Internal Audit Report – page 4 - 2019/20 of the Annual Return). Clerk has arranged to meet with the auditor week commencing 20 July 2020 due to availability and change in government restrictions on social distancing. Auditor's findings (if any) will be reported.

e) Notice of the Exercise of Public Rights – under the new regulations there is no requirement for the exercise of public rights. Smaller authorities are still required to set a period for this purpose, but the only requirement is that the 30-day period for the exercise of public rights should start on or before the first working day of September.
(amendment : Statutory Instruction 2020/404 removing Rights and extending the deadline from 30 September to 30 November 2020).

Copies of the Annual Return (plus variances greater than 15% this financial year and bank reconciliation) have been sent to all Councillors.

f) Approval of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Part 2:

Section 1: The Annual Governance Statement (page 5) 2019-2020

g) Section 2: The Accounting Statements (page 6)

All Councillors were in agreement with the Annual Return for the external auditor.

Clerk to return the agreed and completed 2019/20 Annual Return Certificate of Exemption Notice.

Clerk to display the completed Certificate of Exemption, Annual Return (pages 4, 5 and 6), variances, bank reconciliation, the Declaration and the Notice after this meeting, published on the village website.

7. Times and Venue for Meetings 2020 - review

It was agreed to continue the next meeting by videoconferencing and that future meetings would be reviewed one at a time closer to the date of the meeting. Councillors were asked if they would continue to commence the meeting at 7pm and this was agreed. Councillor Aston will send out an invitation for Zoom.

8. Lower End / Broadway Road – road surface

Several residents in Broadway Road have contacted the Clerk regarding the state of the highway. This has been discussed above. Clerk to follow up with County Councillor Hardman.

9. Councillors' reports and items for next agenda

Updates on SmartWater, Dog fouling and the Millennium Bench:-

SmartWater

Councillor Paula Aston has been working on the provision of Smart Water for households in Birlingham to deter theft. The scheme runs until March 2021. The Parish Council has decided to fund the provision of Smart Water so that it is free to all Birlingham residents. The Smart Water kits have now been secured and funding arranged. Residents will shortly receive a letter asking them to register to receive their kits and this information and reply slip will be delivered out with the Bystander to all properties.

Dog Fouling

The Parish Council agreed to fund the provision of aluminium signs which remind dog walkers of their responsibilities and these have now been positioned around the village and at Eckington Bridge. The situation will now be monitored.

Millennium Bench – New Homes Bonus. Removal and relocation on the village green

Councillor Maxine Cook has contacted a resident but they are no longer available to do the work. She has now obtained three quotes for the works required to level for a part of the village green and renovate and reinstall the bench. The Parish Council approved one of the quotes and the work will start shortly as soon as the New Homes Bonus funding that has already been approved is released. Some 'crown lift' trimming of the lowest branches of the plane tree may be required and approval will be sought from the authorities.

Worcestershire Community Foundation funding

Nothing further. The funding was provisional and there has been no feedback.

Outdoor gym

There was little interest from residents for the outdoor gym. The problem arising is that there is no public open space in the village. The cricket ground and the Jubilee Wood spaces are both private. Councillor Porter will approach the landowner of the Wood.

Other reports:-

Churchyard maintenance

At the Parish Council meeting in May the Clerk received a request for funding to pay for churchyard maintenance. As reported at the time it was agreed that funding would be sought from the Friends of St James as several members of the Parish Council also sit on the Friend's committee. This funding has now been agreed and the issue resolved.

Website Accessibility

The Parish Council and the Jubilee Committee would evaluate the software. The Parish Council are not responsible for the village website so may not have to do anything.

Covid-19

Survey - The Chairman has completed an online survey sent by Worcestershire County Council regarding the Parish and Covid. It had been difficult to complete as the Parish Council had acted independently with the volunteering 'system' set up in the village via the WhatsApp Group.

Redstar and Revills

After the outbreak of Covid 19 at Mathon and a resident concern the farm was contacted by the Clerk regarding their precautions in place for seasonal workers. The director at Woodfield farm had responded confirming that measures were in place on all the sites. There are signs at the entrances and to buildings so that staff are aware and have access to procedures. The farm continues to follow Government and PHE advice on protective clothing. Wherever possible, the workers live and work with the same group of people, so this reduces the contact with others on site. The farm takes the health and welfare of their staff seriously.

Church Lane

A resident had contacted the Chairman regarding traffic in Church Lane. The Parish Council feel it is difficult to prevent traffic on a public highway. There is an advisory sign for lorries at New Barn Road / Eckington Road and his was erected with the support from County Councillor Hardman. Councillor Porter would ask the landowner of the cricket ground if the trees in the lane could be trimmed back.

Vehicle on corner by The Manor House

Councillor Byrne would ask the owner if the car could be parked off the highway more.

10. **Closure and date of next ordinary meeting** - with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.00pm and the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next Parish Council Meeting is on Wednesday 16 September 2020 at 7.00pm which is proposed to be held by video conferencing.

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

Date: .....

County Councillor Hardman's report

- Pressure continues to ease on the Acute Trust with only 12 new Covid-19 cases identified over the last 7 days.
- Town centres continue to be busy as non-essential shops have begun to open. District Councils (working in partnership with the County Council) have measures in place to enable safe shopping accepting that people need to be responsible for their own actions
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services visited hospitality venues across the County at the weekend with only minor compliance issues recorded.
- The Worcestershire COVID-19 Outbreak Control Plan has been published: http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20769/coronavirus_covid-19
  And has gone into action a little sooner than we would have liked.
- The plan details local governance arrangements, including a Covid-19 Health Protection Board chaired by the Director of Public Health which will implement the Outbreak Control Plan. This board sits under the Health and Wellbeing Board. I also sit on the board.
- The methodology for reporting positive cases changed on 2 July 2020 to remove duplicates within and across pillars 1 and 2, to ensure that a person who tests positive is only counted once. Numbers of lab-confirmed positive cases throughout this website now include those identified by testing in all settings (pillars 1 and 2).
- Despite the relaxation on social distancing guidance in schools, the three-tier system (smaller schools/lower staff numbers) presents challenges for the wider re-opening of schools in the Autumn.
- Given the above we are working closely with schools to identify options to provide additional capacity in readiness for the Autumn Term. Many schools are looking to use container storage to free up space in classrooms.
- The level of infections in Care Homes in Worcestershire remains stable and in line with levels across the West Midlands. All staff and residents in Care Homes with positive cases of COVID-19 have been tested. We only have two homes with active cases at the moment.
- The Test and Trace service is live. A team of Environmental Health Officers and Public Health Practitioners will provide this locally in Worcestershire.

Key Service Areas

Adult Services

- Increasing concerns re the financial viability of Care Homes linked to a reduction in admissions.
- As with school capacity issues, adherence to social distancing guidance will impact on Day Care capacity provision.
- Recovery planning underway, especially in relation to day service provision for adults with learning disabilities.

Children's Services

- A total of 9 out of 10 schools in Worcestershire are now open daily to reception, year one, year six and year ten or twelve students, following the wider re-opening of schools throughout June. Attendance across the county's schools has risen to 17.7% of the total proportion of children in school, higher than the national average of 15.6%.
- Positive feedback received from parents, teachers and pupils regarding the experience within schools since the re-opening.

Community Services

- Registration Services have now cleared the backlog and several small weddings have taken place.
- The Here2Help Contact Centre has scaled its opening times to reflect the reduction in calls for assistance. Options around extending the service on a more permanent basis, working as a multi-agency partnership with the Health and Care Trust.
- Working together across District and County councils we continue to make contact with shielded individuals whilst the cohort is being advised about changes to advice and guidance.

Economy & Infrastructure

- Traffic volumes are estimated to be running at 82% of pre COVID 19 levels.
- Highways surface dressing and maintenance returning to "Business as Usual".

Workforce and Training

- The message continues to be that everybody who can work from home, should work from home. Access to offices should therefore continue to be for essential need only, defined as business critical and cannot be delivered through working from home with digital solutions.
- County Hall has now been certified as COVID Secure and site-specific protocols have been agreed, which includes that access by anyone to the building must be authorised in advance.

Finance

- Further announcements of financial support to Local Authorities are expected in the next couple of weeks, since we are still burning cash at a rate of about £25M over a year, in added costs.

COVID-19 STATISTICS

Official statistics and information are available on the link below:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-track-coronavirus-cases

The methodology for reporting positive cases changed on 2 July 2020 to remove duplicates within and across pillars 1 and 2, to ensure that a person who tests positive is only counted once. Numbers of lab-confirmed positive cases throughout this website now include those identified by testing in all settings (pillars 1 and 2).

Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 are different kinds of data taken from coronavirus testing. Swab tests for Covid-19 are carried out in hospitals and surgeries as well as in the community all the time.
Each pillar comes with specific coverage goals and a set purpose from one or several organisations:

- Pillar 1 data comes solely from the tests carried out in Public Health England (PHE) lab and NHS hospital settings.
- Pillar 2 tests come from out in the community, such as care homes.

The publication of pillar two data will show a marked increase in the number of our confirmed cases in Worcestershire. This data has been available to Public Health and the Director of Public Health for some time and has been closely monitored throughout. In Worcestershire, our figures remain stable and comparatively low for the Midlands. "

Some key statistics being:

Number Testing Positive in Worcestershire	**2355**
Number Testing Positive in UK	**287621**

UK	**9/7**
Number of Tests carried out on the day	245507
Daily Increase in Cases	642
Cumulative Deaths	**44602**

The government announced it was re-imposing lockdown measures in Leicester last week, after a jump in cases last week. New figures released on Thursday show Leicester still had the highest infection rate in England - with 125 cases per 100,000 people in the week to 5 July (down 16 on the previous week)

The local figures are highlighted below:

Local Authority	**5/07/2020**	**28/06/2020**	**21/06/2020**
Worcestershire	2.5	3.55	5.74
Gloucestershire	2.1	0.95	0.63
Warwickshire	4.0	5.6	10.33
Shropshire	6.6	7.18	13.74
Herefordshire	1.6	1.56	2.08

Appendix 1 – Clerk's Report

Lengthsman

Reporting:

Broadway Road

30 March 2020
Reference Number 831299
Update from Worcestershire County Council Highways
"*Thank you for your enquiry. Deficit has been done*"

1 May 2020
Reference 876332 - potholes by Woodfield Farmhouse

Update from Highways: 8 May 2020 - "*Thank you for your enquiry. Contractors have been notified*."

Rectory Lane

1 May 2020
Reference 876333 - blocked gully outside Church gate

1 May 2020
Reference 876330 - potholes outside Glebe House entrance
Update from Highways: 8 May 2020 – "*thank you for your enquiry contractors have been notified.*"

New Barn Road

1 May 2020
Reference 876328 - pothole outside Carron Lodge

Upper End

1 May 2020
Reference number 876334 - Hill's cottage again
Update from Highways: 8 May 2020 – "*thank you for your enquiry contractors have been notified*."

Lengthsman Scheme Birlingham

24 March – from County Highways Liaison Engineer, Parish Lengthsman Scheme Manager

> "*Dear Parish Clerk*
>
> *Following a review of UK Government advice on the Coronavirus (COVID 19) pandemic, Worcestershire County Council have decided that all works carried out under the Annual Agreement for the Undertaking Of Minor Highways Maintenance Works 2019/20 should be suspended until further notice.*
>
> *I understand that this decision may cause issues in your Parish, but as the Highway Authority we must consider the health, safety and wellbeing of those working on our highways.*"

31 March 2020 – Parish Lengthsman Scheme Manager

"Dear Parish or Town Council

Thank you for making this another successful year for Worcestershire's Lengthsman Scheme.

Despite increasing financial pressures, we are pleased to have been able to maintain funding at the same level as the previous year, as such your budget to cover the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 will be £1780.15

I have attached your new agreement for you to complete and return. Please find also attached blank templates for the Lengthsman invoice and worksheets. Please note that we will not be able to settle invoices until a signed agreement has been received.

Invoices and worksheets should be submitted on a monthly basis as stated within the agreement. This is to ensure that site checks can be practically completed for audit purposes."

29 April 2020 – Clerk to Parish Lengthsman Scheme Manager

"Thank you for your email with confirmation of the continuation of the Scheme and my apologies for not replying sooner.

I attach the completed agreement sheets.

The Lengthsman will not commence work in the village until the Risk Assessment has been completed." (as below)

22 April 2020 - Christopher at Worcscalc wrote:

"Parish Lengthsman Scheme

Following the email issued by the County Council here is some addition information and resources which should help which goes through what you need to do generally.

Regarding the current situation regarding Co-Vid 19 we have included the most obvious risks on our template document.

We look forward to receiving your completed Risk Assessments, please send them to christopher@worcscalc.org.uk

THE FUTURE AND RISK ASSESSMENT TRAINING

It appears that the County Council will require in future years risk assessments and method statements to be provided in regard to the Lengthsman scheme. As a result, we have already started looking for a training provider to provide a course on carrying out these tasks. As soon as we have one arranged, we will let you know and arrange for a session to be held".

3 April – Clerk sends a Risk Assessment to CALC

1 May – CALC reply "*Thank you. I can confirm that the Risk Assessment is ok and the Lengthsman can resume duties."*

Dog Fouling Advisory Signs

23 March

From Councillor Byrne copied to all Councillors

> *"Further to our last parish meeting, I have now priced up the most cost-effective way to secure the 14 dog fouling signs for the village.*
>
> *The cost from Archers signs for the 14 plates in Aluminium is £12.95 each (including metal straps). Then the timber for the stakes should be c £10. I am happy to then put them together to save cost."*

30 March

Further update from Councillor Byrne to all Councillors:

> "*Will await the consensus from the PC members of where they should go (specific locations please, and offers of whether the individual is happy to have it fixed to their fence post please)*
>
> *The signs need to be fixed to a fence post or such like (not telegraph pole, noted). The one outside my house in the ground has been pulled out several times (3) and thrown in the hedge***.**
>
> *13 signs obtained and members consensus on where they should be located. Suggestions are Whitehall Lane, Lower, general areas where dog walkers go*."

AGENDA item.

Financial Assistance for Volunteers

25 March

Communication from District Council Ron Davis asking if Volunteers required reimbursement e.g. printing, fuel but evidence was required for this.

It was suggested that a claim for 0.45p per mile (which should cover wear and tear) for this should be submitted to the Clerk with details of each claimant then this should suffice.

Response – volunteers declined the offer.

7 May

District Councillor message copied to all Councillors

> "Here is the latest on business front – so far we have paid out over 80% of funds received – still a few to go!! I still have my small fund to disperse otherwise it will be returned. There is £125.00 per parish!"

12 May - Chairman reiterates to Parish Councillors the volunteers' response

> "*The £125 he refers to is to cover volunteer expenses. However, none of the volunteers have wanted to make a claim*."

Village Forum

26 March 2020

Chairman to Steve Morris - *"Just to say well done for putting the village forum together. It seems to be quite a success given the number of people who have viewed it so far."*

20 April

Chairman asked Clerk for information on a question asked on the Forum about access to the Wetlands Hide. The questioner wants to know the code. The permissive track to it is narrow.

22 April reply from PCSO Pershore Rural North and South, Safer Neighbourhood Team

> *"No, the use of the hide would not be appropriate and the fact that there would not be 2 metres of room for social distancing means this is not appropriate."*

Wychavon Parish Games

21 March

Message from the Secretary of Wychavon Parish Games Association

> *"After considerable discussion, we have reluctantly decided that we need to cancel all the one-day events that were due to be held in June and July - Men's Five-a-Side; Bell Boating; Rounders; Cross Country and Petanque.*
>
> *I am really sorry about this, but we didn't feel we had any choice.*
>
> *Decisions about the later one-day events - Bowls, Angling and Table Tennis - and the knock-out events will be made in June/July, by which time hopefully the situation will be clearer."*

Public Right of Way - obstruction

Clerk informed enquirer/landowner of the property owner. Landowner will write to adjacent property owner.

2019-2020 AGAR Littlejohn instructions

24 March

Message from external auditors regarding delay pending clarity over coronavirus implications in light of the government's announcement on 23 March 2020 to introduce stringent lockdown measures in response to the coronavirus pandemic. To be advised.

24 April

2019/20 Limited assurance reporting season

The government recently issued the following changes in legislation in respect of authorities subject to the limited assurance regime:

Statutory Instrument 2020/392 allowing authorities (except parish meetings) to hold virtual meetings. Effective 4 April 2020.

Statutory Instrument 2020/404 removing the requirement for a common period for the exercise of public rights and extending the deadline by which the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) together with any certificate or opinion issued by the local auditor must be published from 30 September 2020 to 30 November 2020.

County Councillors Grant - £250

31 March

Message from Sue Hermon to Clerk

> *"On behalf of Cuppa & Chat, I just want to say how very grateful we are for this grant, though somewhat surprised at the timing! Cuppa and Chat do not have a bank account, so please would you hold the £250 on our behalf, against the day when we can resume activities. When that time comes, we will let you know how the group would like to use it.*
>
> *In the meantime, I will email Adrian Hardman to express our appreciation."*

7 May – Clerk to County Councillor

> *"The Parish Council are in receipt of a BACS payment for £500. Many thanks for your assistance."*

11 May - Chairman to County Councillor

> *"Many thanks for the Smart Water payment. It is much appreciated."*

Road Closure – Church Street

26 April - Notice of Order - Road Closure - Birlingham - Wychavon District - 813172

27 April – clarification requested by Clerk with reply from Compliance Officer, Worcestershire County Council, Directorate of Economy and Infrastructure

> *"I have been in contact with our maintenance team and I am of the understanding that this closure will still be taking place over one day within the given period."*

To date nothing has been actioned.

Financial Assistance for Village Halls

8 May 2020 message from District Councillor to Chairman regarding village halls

> *"As part of the financial assistance package it has now been decided to allocate £10k to Village Halls not owned by the Parish Council.*
> *I am sure this applies to all 4 Halls in the Eckington Ward. This should be processed in the usual way - direct to their Bank accounts. Please advise your Trustees accordingly, any problems please let me know.*
> *Enjoy your VE celebrations."*

11 May - Chairman contacted Alan Bradbury, Chairman of Birlingham Village Hall

11 May - Clarification from Ian Dipple, Marketing and Communications Manager, Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Councils

"Following some queries from members over the weekend we would just like to clarify the information contained in last week's update about payments to village halls.

These payments are not as a result of a new dedicated pot of funding but are part of the existing business grant support payments available to retail, hospitality and leisure businesses.

We have now ascertained that village halls are eligible to receive these payments as 'public halls' and we are now working through the list to process payments as quickly as possible.

If your village hall has not already registered, then we will be contacting them this week to ask them to do so.

We need their bank details and for them to confirm that the ratepayer is not the town or parish council as we cannot pay these grants to town or parish councils. Village halls can register using the link on our website.

Feel free to share this information with the relevant village hall organisation in your area and encourage them to register."

12 May message from BVH Chairman

"Thank you so very much for your time on the phone yesterday and your mail below, its always a pleasure to talk to you.

I have been in touch with Rob Davis and David, from Wychavon Council both of which have been extremely helpful,

Thank you so very much for Ron's contact details this was extremely kind of you. I will be making an application for a grant for the BVH in due course later today.

Thank you again your help is very much welcome and very much appreciated. Wishing you and yours a wonderful day and very good week ahead."

Wychavon Arts and Cultural Groups

11 May

Message from Caroline Tredwell, Arts Development Officer

"I am currently reviewing the information we have on arts and cultural groups within the district. We would like to hear from everyone so if you are aware of any groups within your parish please can you ask them to contact Caroline Tredwell caroline.tredwell@wychavon.gov.uk or 01386 565 396 or signpost me to their contact details directly. Thank you in advance."

Clerk has contacted Sadie Yeomans (Pershore Quilters), Angela Fitch (Camera Club), Fiona Abbott (Three Little Pigs) and Karen Crowther (Arts and Crafts). All have responded to WDC.

HGV's in the Village

Clerk contacted Revills regarding HGV's entering the village.

James Revill has replied:

"I did receive all previous emails regarding lorries, these have been passed over to our team here to deal with.

All Hauliers have been contacted (again), the majority are aware.

I believe the issue currently is more difficult as some of the transport companies have agency drivers due to the current situation as some of their regular drivers are not working.

If there are anymore, please let us know and we will make contact with the relevant haulier."

Cotswold Conservation Board aonb

15 April - Cotswolds AONB spring 2020 newsletter circulated to all Councillors.

VE Day

A question was asked of the Chairman about VE Day commemorations

"As the rules haven't yet been relaxed, I think it would be wrong for the PC to be seen to be encouraging a group gathering even though I'm sure everyone would keep their distance. Through the WhatsApp (Volunteers) group people have agreed to bring flowers from their garden to place at the war memorial as a tribute while they are out walking. Also, I believe Chris Woodward has been given permission to ring one church bell at 11:00."

1774 Inclosure Map

Enquiry

10 March 2020

"Dear Ms Hiden,

I am on the understanding from having been at the Worcestershire record office today that you have the original (or 1810 copy) of the 1774 Inclosure map for Birlingham. If so, would it be possible to have a photographic detail of Lower End please?

Oliver Bradbury"

4 April 2020

Reply (initially thought contact was spam as found in 'junk')

"Hello Oliver

I am not sure why the Record Office have advised you that the Parish Council hold a map. As Clerk I would not hold any original documents and any recent records (minutes) have been deposited at The Hive for safe keeping. Sorry if this isn't the answer you wanted."

Extracts of interest

Birlingham **News 211 – 20 March**

The Parish Council is putting in place a plan to help those are self-isolating. There is also a new forum on the website for exchanging information and messages.

In this issue:

1. Parish Council Help for those who are Self-Isolating
2. Birlingham Village Forum
3. Shoots at Birlingham Gun Club Cancelled
4. Village Litter Pick

1. Parish Council Help for those who are Self-Isolating

Ian Yates writes:

If you are having to self-isolate and need help, here's how to contact village volunteers

As reported in yesterday's Birlingham News, the Parish Council met last night with the sole purpose of discussing the co-ordination of volunteers who have kindly offered to help vulnerable members of our community that are having to self-isolate. Below is a description of what help can be provided and how the volunteer co-ordination process will work:

- The volunteer process is being set up to support anyone over the age of 70yrs who has reason to self-isolate or any family that is self-isolating because of the possibility of having been infected.
- Volunteers will do their best to help with essential food shopping and the collection of prescriptions. Payment for goods using cash or bank transfer (not cheques or credit cards) should simplify the process.
- Volunteers will use a WhatsApp group (Birlingham Volunteers) to co-ordinate their response to requests for help.
- To request help we ask you to call one of the following central contacts. These contacts may change over time as additional volunteers are added but we will keep you informed:
    - Paula Aston – 07932 637746
    - Nick Baskerville – 01386 751136
    - Marion New – 07867 796044
- If there is no answer, leave a message. Please be sure to clearly state your name, address and telephone number. The central contacts will then arrange via the WhatsApp group for an available volunteer to call you back and provide assistance.
- We ask that anyone requesting help follow all the guidelines to protect volunteers from infection. Shopping will be left on your doorstep and cash should be placed in an envelope. Remember to wash your hands.

- In addition to the above, there is a new on-line forum on the website, which will carry messages of relevance to villagers – full details below.

I'm sure that the above process will evolve over time and we will keep you informed of changes either through Birlingham News or through the on-line forum. We have not forgotten the small number of people who may not use the internet. Volunteers will post this information through their letter box.

Volunteers required

Several people have already offered their time to support the volunteer process above. However, as it is likely that the number of infections will increase and the restrictions will remain in place for several weeks, we need more volunteers to come forward. If you are able to help, please email your contact details to ian.yates@sipeda.com and I will add you to the list. Ideally you will have a mobile phone with an answering service and have access to WhatsApp on your phone. Please also tell me when you are typically available – morning, afternoon, evening, all day etc.

Many thanks and stay safe.

2. Birlingham Village Forum

The Jubilee Committee has added a new noticeboard-style forum to the village website. This forum (which replaces the existing online noticeboard) will be used for giving up-to-the-minute information to the community. Birlingham News will still continue to be used to send out regular round-ups of events in the village.

The forum may look a little scary at first but once you have tried it a couple of times you will find that it is quite easy to use. We will work on making it even simpler over the coming weeks.

Anyone can read messages on the forum. However, if you want to post messages or reply to other people's messages you will need to follow a simple registration process.

The forum can be accessed at http://www.birlingham.org/forum/phpBB3. (If you are typing the address in a web browser rather than clicking on the link make sure the BB3 at the end is in capitals.)

On the first screen, click on Birlingham Village Forum in the centre of the screen. The topics (messages) are listed. To read any of these, click on the blue subject title.

Detailed instructions on how to read messages, register, log in, add new messages or reply to messages are given in www.birlingham.org/docs/forum_basic.pdf.

If you have any difficulty accessing the forum, need help with using it or have any other queries, please email forum@birlingham.org.

4. Village Litter Pick

The Parish Clerk writes:

At its meeting on Wednesday night the Parish Council decided that the Village Litter Pick, due to have taken place on Saturday 21st March, should be cancelled.

Birlingham **News 212 – 25 March**

We need to know that everyone in the village is receiving this information – please click on the link in the first item to let us know.

During the current exceptional circumstances, we plan to send out a Birlingham News every Wednesday. More frequent updates can be found on the Birlingham Village Forum at http://www.birlingham.org/forum/phpBB3.

In this issue:

1. Please Confirm Your Email Address
2. Birlingham Volunteers Update
3. Birlingham Village Forum
4. Swan Inn
5. Wychavon District Council Update
6. VE Day Commemorations – Postponed
7. Planning Applications

1. Please Confirm Your Email Address

Birlingham News is now distributed to 90% of Birlingham properties. However, in these difficult times, it is essential that we know that the email addresses we have are still current. Therefore, please help us by confirming your address. Just click on this link, news@birlingham.org, type "Confirm" in the Subject line and send the email.

We will deliver a letter and copy of the Birlingham News to any houses that do not confirm their addresses, in case their email has changed recently. Thank you for helping us to keep this system running smoothly.

Those properties that already receive printed copies of Birlingham News will continue to receive their editions in this way. If you know of anyone (in Birlingham or outside) who would like to receive the email, in printed form if necessary, please let us know at news@birlingham.org.

2. Birlingham Volunteers Update

Ian Yates writes:

We have had a fantastic response to last week's article in Birlingham News with lots of people coming forward to help. There are now 17 volunteers in the Birlingham Volunteer's WhatsApp Group and there are another 8 in reserve for when additional help is required. I'm sure you would like to join me in thanking everyone who has so kindly volunteered. I know that they have been very busy collecting shopping and prescriptions for those residents who are now self-isolating. The additional restrictions announced by the government on Monday will make their activities even more important as we all try and limit the amount of time we spend outside our homes. Remember that the best way to request help from the volunteers is to call one of the central contacts:

- Paula Aston – 07932 637746
- Nick Baskerville – 01386 751136
- Marion New – 07867 796044

and they will co-ordinate activities with the other volunteers through the WhatsApp group.

The Jubilee Committee has now finished setting up the Birlingham Village Forum (on-line notice board) and it can be accessed at http://www.birlingham.org/forum/phpBB3/index.php where you will also find instructions for using the Forum if you wish to post any messages. Will and Zoe from the Swan have just published details on a delivery service from Pershore Produce and The Meat Company.

Residents who do not use the internet or have chosen not to receive Birlingham News have also had the information on Birlingham Volunteers posted through their letterbox by the Jubilee Committee.

3. Birlingham Village Forum

The Birlingham Village Forum is now up and running and beginning to be well used. The Parish Council will be posting up-to-the-minute updates on the volunteer scheme and the Swan Inn is providing regular updates on what they can do to help.

We would urge everyone to use the forum to keep in touch during the current situation and to register so that they can add messages and post replies.

The forum can be accessed at http://www.birlingham.org/forum/phpBB3. (If you are typing the address in a web browser rather than clicking on the link make sure the BB3 at the end is in capitals.)

On the first screen, click on 'Birlingham Village Forum' in the centre of the screen. The topics (messages) are listed. To read any of these, click on the blue subject title.

Detailed instructions on how to read messages, register, log in, add new messages or reply to messages are given in www.birlingham.org/docs/forum_basic.pdf.

If you have any difficulty accessing the forum, need help with using it or have any other queries, please email forum@birlingham.org.

5. Wychavon District Council Update

Wychavon District Council published the following information on COVID-19 in their Parish News on Tuesday 24th March:

- We had been anticipating and planning for the stringent measures that Government announced last night but we hadn't expected them to come in to force so soon. Nonetheless we are well placed to play our part in assisting the Government's response.
- Some of our services are now closed but we are currently maintaining our waste and recycling collections and will attempt to continue to do so for the duration of the outbreak.
- We have now had guidance overnight about the support for business. This has taken a while to prepare by government. Our teams will be working on this today as we need to apply back to government for the monies. We expect this to be distributed in early April.
- We are expecting guidance from the Government very soon about how we will deliver essential supplies to people at extreme risk from Coronavirus.
- Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) will oversee the distribution of medicines and basic food parcels to people who do not have help from friends, family or others.
- If you have anyone you are concerned about we would advise you to fill in the form on the County Council's Here 2 Help page, www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help.

The full text of this newsletter is on the Birlingham Village Forum at http://www.birlingham.org/forum/phpBB3/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=25. More information on all of the above is available at www.wychavon.gov.uk/coronavirus.

6. VE Day Commemorations – Postponed

Steve Morris writes:

It will come as no surprise, following the closure of the Village Hall and the current lockdown, that the VE Day Commemorations, including the Birlingham Memories Project exhibition in the church, have been postponed. The events will be rescheduled for later in the year when life has returned to normal.

The Memories Project will continue its research, albeit at a distance!

7. Planning Applications

The following planning applications have been determined by Wychavon District 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). **Approved**. Full details and conditions can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website.
- October House, Broadway Road: Redevelopment of garage and sheds including removal of existing stables and garage extension (Case No. 20/00108). **Approved**. Full details and conditions can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website

Birlingham **News 213 – 29 March**

Thank you all for your amazing response to our request to confirm your email addresses, which is helping us to ensure that everyone is kept up to date with the current situation. Only a handful are now outstanding and will need to be hand delivered.

In this issue:

1. Stay Home, Keep Safe
2. Prescriptions
3. Food Deliveries
4. Waste and Recycling Collections

1. Stay Home, Keep Safe

With the number of coronavirus infections still doubling every three or four days, it is more important than ever that we all follow the Government's regulations:

- Only go out for essential food shopping and keep your trips to the shop to a minimum, preferably just once a week.
- You can go out once a day on foot (or bike) for exercise but stay well clear of anyone you meet.
- Keep a distance of at least two metres from anyone with whom you have to have contact.

In short, stay home unless it is essential for you to go out. The more closely we follow the advice, the sooner things will return to normal.

Keep in contact with friends and relatives using WhatsApp, text messages, Facebook etc. – even perhaps using old-fashioned telephone calls!

All the latest information on the current crisis can be found on the Village Forum at http://www.birlingham.org/forum/phpBB3.

3. Food Deliveries

There are now a couple of schemes for food deliveries in the village. Main details are given below but full details (and updates to the scheme) can be found on the Forum at http://www.birlingham.org/forum/phpBB3.

The Swan Inn

The Swan Inn is offering to collect and deliver food from Pershore Produce, the Meat Company (Tony Hall) and Eckington Stores. Deliveries will be collected on Wednesday mornings and delivered to your doorstep, so orders must be made before Tuesday lunch time.

Phone any of these businesses (details below) and specify 'Will, The Swan Inn, Birlingham' as the reference, along with your name and address.

Pershore Produce (01386 552645)

Pershore Produce stock items such as Hovis Bread, fresh milk, 3kg bags of pasta, sugar, rice, eggs, tinned products, frozen and fresh fruit and vegetables.

Payment must be made directly over the phone.

The Meat Company (01386 750510 & 07711 279978)

Tony has frozen stock of rare breed meat, pork, beef and lamb. Payment method to be negotiated with Tony.

Eckington Stores (01386 750266)

Contact Eckington Stores if you want magazines, newspapers etc. (once a week). Payment must be made directly over the phone.

Veg Boxes from Revills

Nick and Charlotte Baskerville are taking orders for veg boxes from Revills Farm Shop. Orders must be received by Monday evenings for delivery to your house on Wednesdays. Boxes will be left on the doorstep. The offer is open to anyone in the village, not just those isolating.

A typical £20 box would include about 16 types of fruit and vegetable. The full list of items can be found on the Forum.

To make payment easier the Baskervilles have offered to be a central point of contact for orders. They can be contacted on 01386 751136 or by email on thebaskervilles@baskerville.in.

4. Waste and Recycling Collections

A message from Wychavon District Council:

Our waste and recycling collections continue to operate as normal thanks to the dedication of staff at FCC.

To support this, we have stopped taking bulky waste collections until further notice.

We are offering businesses the opportunity to suspend their commercial and recycling collections to support them.

We are asking people not to carry out house, garage or shed clearances unless they can store the waste for a period of time. The Household Recycling Centres are currently closed as it is classed as non-essential travel and we cannot accept side waste, as it would overwhelm our standard service.

The full list of affected services is available at www.wychavon.gov.uk/coronavirus.

Birlingham **News 214 – 1 April**

Here is our weekly round-up of information relating to the current lockdown.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham Volunteers
2. Prescriptions Update
3. Deliveries in Birlingham
4. St James' Church
5. Public Information
6. Spring Edition of the Bystander
7. Dog Fouling

1. Birlingham Volunteers

Ian Yates writes:

As mentioned in last week's Birlingham News, we have had a fantastic response to the request for volunteers to help vulnerable members of our village and those self-isolating during this difficult time. These volunteers are doing a great job under difficult circumstances, helping with a whole range of activities from collecting shopping, delivering prescriptions, cooking meals, arranging vegetable and meat deliveries, co-ordinating volunteering activities, publishing information and keeping residents informed. The process is still ramping up so not all volunteers are available or busy yet but as the peak of the virus approaches it is good to know that we have sufficient help. It's wonderful to see the community spirit in our village and their willingness to help should be applauded. Here is the list of those who have kindly agreed to volunteer (in alphabetical order):

Paula Aston, Marg Barke, Nick and Charlotte Baskerville, Steven and Linda Byrne, Sarah Brown, Steve and Fran Cant, Maxine Cook, Terry Griffin, Will and Zoe Haines, Bruce and Sue Hayward, Sue Hermon, June Hiden, Matt and Kat Jones, Rupert and Ruth Keys, Julia Luff, Caryl Mills, Steve Morris, Marion New, Michael and Lizzie Porter, Dave and Joy Salt, Dan and Kris Shelley, Richard and Philly White, Ian Yates

The best way to request help from the volunteers is to call one of the central contacts:

- Paula Aston – 07932 637746
- Nick Baskerville – 01386 751136
- Marion New – 07867 796044

They will co-ordinate activities with the other volunteers through a WhatsApp group.

5. Public Information

Information relating to coronavirus has been received from a number of organisations:

- **Wychavon District Council**: Waste and recycling collections continue as normal but they have stopped taking bulky waste collections and the Household Recycling Centres are closed.
- **Worcestershire County Council**: The Here2Help website provides a central location for those members of the community who are unable to seek help from family, friends and neighbours.
- **NHS**: NHS call for volunteer army.
- **Western Power Distribution**: WPD has suspended non-essential operations and will be carrying out only essential works, such as restoring power following a power cut.
- **West Mercia Police**: Beware fraud and scams during COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Wychavon DC Business Support**: Availability of grants and other support.

7. Dog Fouling

The Parish Clerk writes:

There is a continuing problem with dog mess in Birlingham, particularly outside certain properties. Not only does this create an unhealthy and unclean environment, it is also an offence and dog owners can be fined up to £1,000 if they do not clean up after their dogs.

We would like to keep our roads and public rights of way clean and pleasant to walk on, so if you see anyone's dog making a mess, please remind their owners to clean it up. There are waste bins in the village that can be used, and these are emptied regularly.

The Parish Council will shortly be erecting advisory signs in the village. Dog fouling is a problem, but sometimes changing the behaviour of just a few thoughtless dog owners can make a big difference. There is no such thing as the Dog Poo Fairy!

It is recommended by the RSPCA and the Dogs Trust that dogs are kept on leads. This is particularly important at the moment during the coronavirus pandemic.

Dog services (including the dog warden), pest control, pollution control, trading standards and other services in the county are operated by a single body, Worcestershire Regulatory Services. For more information, go to http://www.worcsregservices.gov.uk.

Birlingham **News 215 – 8 April**

Latest information on the coronavirus crisis can be found on the Village Forum at http://www.birlingham.org/forum/phpBB3.

In this issue:

1. Coronavirus Volunteers
2. Curlews on Asham Meadow
3. Dog Nuisance in Asham Meadow
4. Spring Edition of the Bystander
5. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

1. Coronavirus Volunteers

The volunteers organised by the Parish Council are busy helping with essential food shopping and the collection of prescriptions. If you need help in any way, please contact:

- Paula Aston – 07932 637746
- Nick Baskerville – 01386 751136
- Marion New – 07867 796044

These contacts will then arrange for an available volunteer to call you back and provide assistance.

3. Dog Nuisance in Asham Meadow

Rosemarie Baseley writes:

We have just read the latest Birlingham News letter and are pretty disgusted to note that despite many earlier appeals with regard to dog fouling the issue actually increases or rather deteriorates. This is in the village area we note.

However, we thought we would also draw to your attention that the problem is equally as bad where we live on the edge of the village by Asham Meadow. We have seen very many dog walkers on many occasions arrive, park their vehicles in the lay-by opposite and let their pets off the lead into this meadow, ignoring the distinctive sign regarding the fact that the site is of great importance to birds which nest on the ground, such as the curlew, for one. This bird, in particular, arrived there unusually early, many weeks ago as we could hear its distinctive call. The signs were still ignored.

In some cases, there are several dogs and we have also noticed that dog walking companies now arrive to use this area to let the dogs free to run and deposit their excrement wherever. We have also noticed many dog walkers actually picking up their pet's excrement and throwing it in the hedgerow instead of depositing it appropriately in either Eckington or Birlingham dog bins.

As ever, the problem is not the animal, but the thoughtless, inconsiderate owners who do not have to clear up dog excrement from their own gardens.

Birlingham **News 216 – 15 April**

Here is the latest round-up of the messages we have received – details of the Parish Council's coronavirus volunteers and other up-to-date information can be found on the Village Forum at http://www.birlingham.org/forum/phpBB3.

In this issue:

1. Easter Message from the Vicar
2. Covid-19 Emergency Fund for Local Sports Clubs
3. Fly Tipping
4. Birlingham News Team

2. Covid-19 Emergency Fund for Local Sports Clubs

The Parish Clerk writes:

Sport England is making up to £195 million of funding available to help the sport and physical activity sector through the ongoing coronavirus (Covid-19) crisis.

The package includes a £20 million Community Emergency Fund, which is now open for local sports clubs and voluntary/community sector organisations (that deliver or enable sport and/or physical activity) to bid into. Grants of between £300 and £10,000 are available.

The fund has been developed to help organisations meet their obligations, in particular fixed costs that are no longer supported with revenue as a result of coronavirus, such as rent, utility costs, insurance, core staff costs and facility or equipment hire.

To find out more go to https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds/community-emergency-fund.

3. Fly Tipping

Julie Pardoe, West Mercia Police writes:

Whilst on our patrols around our area we are becoming aware of a slight increase in fly tipping. This is a natural and sad consequence of the landfill sites being closed down.

Can we request that any fly tipping needs to be reported to Wychavon District Council via this link: https://www.wychavon.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/street-care-and-cleaning/fly-tipping.

If people witness fly tipping taking place and are able to get any photographic evidence or vehicle registrations this assists with a potential prosecution.

Birlingham **News 217 – 22 April**

We're into lambing season and there have been several reports of lost or attacked lambs. Please be on the lookout for any suspicious activity.

On a positive note, Birlingham Nurseries is now open.

In this issue:

1. Lambs Stolen
2. Public Footpaths Near to Farmland or By Farms
3. Birlingham Nurseries
4. Coronavirus Volunteers

2. Public Footpaths Near to Farmland or By Farms

A message from West Mercia Police:

There have been a number of lamb attacks over the last couple of weeks by dogs being off the lead. Please can you keep your dogs on the lead/under control, whilst walking through fields that have a public right of way and contain livestock.

4. Coronavirus Volunteers

A reminder that if you are self-isolating and need help with essential food shopping or the collection of prescriptions, you can contact the following volunteers (organised by the Parish Council):

- Paula Aston – 07932 637746
- Nick Baskerville – 01386 751136
- Marion New – 07867 796044

These contacts will then arrange for an available volunteer to call you back and provide assistance.

Birlingham **News 218 – 29 April**

Here is the latest round-up of local information. Now that things have become more settled, we are reverting to our usual routine of publishing Birlingham News on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month (and fifth Wednesdays when applicable).

In this issue:

1. Road Closure at Church Street, Tuesday 12th May
2. Garden Waste and Bonfires
3. Fly Tipping
4. Latest News from Wychavon District Council
5. Birlingham Village Forum

1. Road Closure at Church Street, Tuesday 12th May

Church Street will be closed for one day during the week from Tuesday 12th May to Tuesday 19th May. This is to allow for surface dressing. The notice of closure can be viewed at www.birlingham.org/docs/road_closure_2020.pdf.

2. Garden Waste and Bonfires

Information from Wychavon District Council:

Please do not use bonfires as a way of disposing of garden waste. Not only is it anti-social, as smoke could get into somebody's home, it could also cause breathing issues or prevent someone using their garden for exercise. You could also be committing an offence and bonfires can easily get out of hand, resulting in pressure on the fire service.

Please be considerate to your neighbours and consider alternative ways to dispose of your garden waste:

- Leave your grass cuttings on the lawn; they will help keep moisture in during warm weather.
- Compost your garden waste. You can buy a bin at www.getcomposting.com.
- Sign up for our paid-for garden waste service.
- Store your waste until the Household Recycling Centres are open again. HRCs have been closed to help limit the spread of the coronavirus as it is non-essential travel.

Do not use bonfires to dispose of non-garden waste (furniture, general household rubbish etc.)

3. Fly Tipping

Fly tipping of waste is a growing problem. Fly tipping is defined as the 'illegal deposit of any waste onto land that does not have a licence to accept it'. Various types of waste are fly tipped, including general household waste, white goods (fridges, freezers and washing machines), construction rubbish (demolition and home improvement rubbish) and garden waste.

Instances of fly tipping of garden waste are on the increase, with more reports being received both on highway verges and on private land. We need to make you aware that although garden waste is biodegradable, it is still classed as waste, and it is still an offence to illegally deposit it under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 Section 33. Please dispose of garden waste in one of the ways suggested in the previous article.

4. Latest News from Wychavon District Council

Please be considerate of your neighbours at this time when more people than usual are at home. For example, try to keep noise that may upset your neighbours, such as barking dogs, to reasonable levels.

As well as the messages on bonfires, garden waste and other issues above, the latest news from Wychavon District Council contains information on support for victims of domestic abuse, seeking help if you are in medical need, recycling, financial support and much more.

5. Birlingham Village Forum

The Village Forum contains the latest news on the coronavirus volunteers and much more. Latest posts include such diverse topics as details of help for businesses, access to the wetlands bird hide and offers of free dried yeast for home baking and assorted balls of wool.

Birlingham **News 219 – 13 May**

While still staying at home (and alert), you have several opportunities to be involved in village life, whether it is contributing to the Bystander, joining the Village Hall mowing rota or helping the Trustees of the Almshouses.

In this issue:

1. June Butler
2. Road Closure at Church Street
3. Parish Council Meeting, Thursday 21st May
4. Spring Edition of the Bystander
5. Village Hall Mowing Rota
6. Bell Ringing at St James' Church
7. Birlingham Cricket Club
8. Clerk to the Trustees of the Almshouses
9. Applications Invited for an Independent Lay Member of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel
10. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

2. Road Closure at Church Street

Church Street will be closed for one day during the next seven days. This is to allow for surface dressing.

The notice of closure can be viewed at www.birlingham.org/docs/road_closure_2020.pdf.

3. Parish Council Meeting, Thursday 21st May

The next meeting of Birlingham Parish Council takes place on Thursday 21st May at 7.00pm, not Wednesday 20th as previously scheduled. Due to the current restrictions, this will be a virtual meeting, held using videoconferencing. Parishioners are invited to attend (but should contact the Clerk at birlingham_clerk@yahoo.co.uk in advance for an invitation).

Items for discussion during the Democratic Opening should be submitted to the Clerk in advance of the meeting. Note that any member of the public can ask for an issue to be debated, even if they are unable to attend the videoconference.

6. Bell Ringing at St James' Church

The Church authorities have given permission for a single bell to be rung at churches for special occasions.

Therefore, during the coming weeks, a bell will be rung at St James' Church at 8.00pm on Thursday evenings as part of the weekly Clap for Carers. Don't panic – it's not the signal for an invasion!

Hopefully it won't be too long before normal ringing can be resumed.

9. Applications Invited for an Independent Lay Member of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel

Applications for an Independent Lay Member of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel are invited from members of the public. Closing date: 5.00pm on Monday 18th May.

The Panel covers the geographical areas of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, and Worcestershire with support for the Panel provided by Worcestershire County Council.

The Panel is part of the governance arrangements for policing in the West Mercia area and its role is to maintain a regular check and balance on the performance of the directly-elected West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner.

Information on Police and Crime Commissioners can be found at http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20078/community_safety/861/police_and_crime_commissioners along with additional information on the recruitment process and an information pack.

Should you wish to apply, please download and complete the application form at http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/12481/independent_lay_co-opted_member_-_application_form and return to Sheena Jones, Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager by 5.00pm on Monday 18th May either by email, sjones19@worcestershire.gov.uk or by post to Sheena Jones, Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager, Legal and Governance, Worcestershire County Council County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, WR5 2NP.

In addition to the Worcestershire County Council website, details of this position can also be found on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter.