Birlingham Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 18 January 2023

In Birlingham Village Hall

Councillors:

Councillors Aston, Byrne, Griffin, Luff, Porter and Yates.

In attendance:

County Councillor Adrian Hardman, District Councillor Ron Davies and Clerk, June Hiden.

Welcome – The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were tendered by Councillor Cook who was delayed at work. Apologies given 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.

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.

Councillors Aston and Byrne declared an interest in their planning applications.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2022, 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 was nothing to report.

4. Progress Reports

a) Footpath Warden:

i. Footpath 501 (above Hills Cottage) – missing finger post. Due to health and safety procedures, I am no longer able to replace finger posts by the side of the road. I raised the issue of the missing post some time ago but will re-raise it.

The Clerk has raised the issue of the need for the gap in the hedge at the entrance to the footpath to be cut back.

b) Tree Warden: an advert for a Warden had been published in the Birlingham News and the Parish Council would like to hear from anyone interested in volunteering their help.

c) Lengthsman – see ***Appendix 1***

Question was asked about the flooding near the Manor Paddock. Councillor Byrne said that STW had been out and the issue was above the paddock boundary.

d) District Councillor:

i. A happy and healthy New Year.
ii. The budgets are currently being set.
iii. A conditional offer has been made to appoint Gayle Wootton as Head of Planning.
iv. The Elections are due in May. Councillor Davies will not be standing and at this time no District candidate is known.

e) County Councillor:

i. Councillor Hardman's update states that his portfolio is in social care. He has been concerned about the Acute Hospital and visited recently. There were 42 patients waiting in the corridor and 33 ambulances waiting outside. Patients are bed blocking as they are not able to return home. There are failures in the plan for demography.

ii. The consultation has been launched for the budget at 4.94%. The current overspending is £13milliion. This should lower with the Government directing more money. There is an online Zoom meeting available for parish councils on 30 January 2022.

iii. The kerbing in Whitehall Lane is being actioned as a preventative measure for flooding to driveways.

v. The 2 tier changes in education in Pershore will go ahead. Defford school will extend with budget allocated. The Councillor was in favour of the changes.

The Chairman asked about the rondels in Upper End. Councillor Hardman agreed that when the weather improves all four sets of 30mph roundels will be repainted, as they have been damaged by flooding and road repairs. This was estimated at £1,000 but the works would go ahead.

The Vice chairwoman suggested that the road near Hills Cottage was sinking again. Clerk to contact Worcestershire County Council Project Engineer and copy in Councillor Hardman on action.

Councillors asked about the road sweeper as it had not been seen. It was confirmed that the village should be visited twice a year.

The Chairman thanked County Councillor Hardman for his attendance and for his assistance.

f) Clerk - See ***Appendix 2***

5. Planning

a) Planning applications pending: -

i. W/2202657/HP - Hills Cottage, Upper End WR10 3AA

First floor extension over existing carport. The enclosure of carport bay at ground floor level to create entrance hall and construction of zinc standing seam roof to link house to carport. Addition of PV solar panels.

Applicant - Mr Nicholas Aston

Parish Council comments:

"The majority of the parish council do not support the planning application as it has been submitted. The reasons for this decision are as follows:

The mass and the height of the proposed additional building, and in particular the height of the ridge line, detracts in a material way from the central part of the house that was so beautifully restored, with great care and attention. We feel it would diminish and detrimentally dominate the character of the listed building. The proposed addition mass and additional height is overlooked by the adjoining neighbours.

The proposed new ridge line over the garage is also nearly as high as the central part of the house/cottage. We feel it changes in a detrimental way the balance and the aesthetics of the listed building.

The front elevational treatment is a little brutalist compared to the sensitive way the central element of the cottage has been sympathetically restored.

The proposal conflicts with the Adopted Village Design Statement with regard to the proposed alternation of the shape and nature of the property and associated garage block.

However, as an observation only, the Parish Council would be minded to support an application with:

A lower height ridge line, with a less imposing mass, and use of materials in keeping with the main central part of the cottage. The filling in and use of part of the ground floor area in the garage to be used for domestic use. The use of the first-floor area over the existing garage as a domestic use, but with the existing ridge line height of the existing garage being adopted as the maximum height. The use of solar panels on the rear of the properties roofing (so that it cannot be seen from the road or the immediately adjoining property)."

ii. W/22/02656/LB (Associated Ref: W/22/02657/HP) – Hills Cottage

First Floor extension over existing carport. The enclosure of carport bay at ground floor level to create entrance hall and construction of zinc standing seam roof to link house to carport. Addition PV solar panels

As with the Planning application the Parish Council comments are the same.

iii. W/22/02342/LB (Associated Ref: W/22/02341/HP) - The Manor House, WR10 3AD

Construction of a single storey orangery infill extension

Applicant - Mr Steven Byrne

W/22/02341/HP - Associated Ref: W/22/02342/LB

Construction of a single storey orangery infill extension

The Parish Council comments:

"The Parish Council has no objection in principle to this application. However, in Birlingham's Village Design Statement which was adopted as a Local Information Source by Wychavon Council's Executive Board in February 2018, it is stated under Guidelines for Development that 'Alterations to existing buildings should respect the original design or improve its contribution to the character of the parish'. We therefore understand that the planning officer will wish to consider the impact of the

proposed orangery on the wider appearance of the listed 18th century property with later 19th and 21st century extensions."

iv. W/22/01882/FUL - Lower End Farm, Berwick Lane WR10 3AD

Demolition of garage (with planning approval) and construction of replacement visitor accommodation as alternative.

Applicant – Mr and Mrs Keys

Parish Council comments:

"*The Parish Council view is that they have a responsibility to support local enterprises which often need to diversify to continue to be viable, subject to there being no or acceptable levels of impact to local amenity and environment. We see that the proposal and its stated use for visitors for the training facility would aid this enterprise considerably. So, the Parish council do not object to the proposal, provided the appointed planning office attaches appropriate conditions to the consent.*

The Parish Council would like the planning officer to consider imposing a condition that the development approved shall only be used as ancillary to the dwellinghouse known as Lower End Farm. (Possibly with the reason to define the permission in the interests of the amenities of the locality in accordance with policy SWDP21 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan, or indeed our policy reference)

Alternatively, as the existing predominant use appears to be that of a farm/landscaping, impose an agricultural tie on the proposed development."

b) Applications granted: - none

c) Enforcement: - none

6. Financial Matters

a) The Accounts for 2022/2023

i) Bank balances - current is £10,717.58 as at 28 December 2022 and Business saving balance is £8,294.88 as at 9 December 2022.

ii) Receipts

i. £165.00 – Worcestershire County Council

iii) Payments agreed: –

i. £2,515.00 – Telephone kiosk balance outstanding (664)
(deposit paid £1,185) includes additional charge /caveat for back fixing £150
Councillor Hardman's funding of £1775 received.
Funding from Jubilee Committee and Bystander £250 notified as transferred
(British Bits trading as Spar Logistics quotation March 2022 £3,550
paid £1,185 cheque 651 April 2022 deposit and £2,515 September 2022 balance cheque 664)

ii. £105.00 – Lengthsman September 2022 (675)
iii. £165.00 – Lengthsman October 2022 (676)
iv. £20.00 - Birlingham Village Hall – November 2022 (677)
v. £55.00 – Royal British Legion 2 poppy wreaths (678)

vi. £625.00 – payment for contractor for phone box base prior to re-siting - GSI Construction (680)
vii. £620.00 – Clerks pay – October, November, December (681)
viii. £104.28 – Clerks expenses – October, November, December (683)
ix. £155.00 – Clerks PAYE – October, November, December (685)

Birlingham Village Hall – January 2023 was not booked by Clerk and therefore without heating was not charged.

Payment pending to Rupert Keys for gravel around the bench – previously discussed as necessary groundworks estimated at £60.00. Awaiting invoice (including VAT) on completion of work.

b) Future payments for consideration

i. £135.00 – Lengthsman November 2022
ii. £120.00 – Lengthsman December 2022

c) Budget requirement application has been completed as £6,625.00 precept including grant of £179.00 (due by 27 January 2023). Calculations received from WDC.
All Councillors in final agreement.

As a consequence in the reduction in amounts planned for 'projects' the Parish Council were able to reduce the 2023/2024 precept from £7235 (in 2022/23) to £6625 (in 2023/24), a saving of £610. This reduces the amount payable for a Band D property from £41.47 to £38.66.

The Lengthsman is increasing his hourly rate to £15.00. The Lengthsman scheme is allocated by Worcestershire County Council. This will have a slight impact on the amount of work the Lengthsman budgets for on parish highways.

The Financial Support Office and Clerk have summarised the Projects and Reserves and Councillors informed.

Clerk is reluctant to start internet banking.

d) Insurance – Clerk has chased the Insurance Broker again regarding the asset cover and third-party public liability.

7. Millennium Bench

Councillor Cook had informed the members that she had chased the carpenter and he was waiting for the weather to improve for the installation of the bench. The base for the bench has been constructed around the time capsule on the village green and Rupert Keys was again thanked for his assistance with this.

8. Full Fibre Broadband (Fibre to the Premise – FTTP)

The Chairman gave an update from Airband, who have advised that the start date for installation of the fibre infrastructure in Birlingham has been delayed until July 2023. It is estimated to be a four-month build. Although disappointing, the revised schedule still means that Birlingham will get full fibre years ahead of an installation under the government's general roll-out. This should mean that by the end of the year residents will then benefit by having their choice between a full fibre service from Airband or remaining with their current 'fibre to the cabinet' provider.

9. Telephone Kiosk

Councillor Cook has chased the company, British Bits, who have renovated the kiosk asking for a delivery date. The new concrete base for the telephone box was constructed on 5 December 2022, opposite the Village Hall. This work, which was carried out by a local builder, was delayed due to the very cold weather, which would have prevented the concrete from setting. British Bits have a contractor who needs to confirm a date for the return and installation of the restored box.

10. Litter Bins

Three new litter bins were installed on 30 November 2022 located around the village at the end of Church Street with the junction of Shorthill, Grange Lane next to the post box and Broadway Road at the top of Sherpool Lane. It is hoped that these will help alleviate the problem of dog mess, poo bags being left on the side of roads and footpaths while also encouraging people not to drop general litter in the village. The bins will be regularly emptied by Wychavon contractors. An email has been circulated to all Councillors with a copy of the costs and emptying agreement.

All Councillors in agreement for the Clerk to return the signed contract.

11. Newcomers Meetings

There are sixteen new households that have moved into the village over the last two years. This is an unusually high number. Some have already become integrated into village life while, for others, COVID lockdowns have made it difficult. The Parish Council has decided to invite these new arrivals to an informal drinks party in March as a way of welcoming them to the village. Councillor Luff had circulated a draft invitation and would deliver by hand. All Councillors agreed to go ahead.

12. Elections of Parish and District

Elections are due to take place on Thursday 4 May 2023. Any further information will be circulated by the Clerk.

13. Roads and Flooding

- Berwick Lane – this continues to be an issue. Clerk to chase an update.
- Broadway Road – outside The Old Laundry. This is a STW issue which is being investigated and actioned.
- Manor Paddock – STW have visited the paddock to investigate.
- Whitehall Lane – the kerbing in the lane has commenced. The initial drainage issue was outside The Russells and County Councillor Hardman was involved in supporting the owners with any potential works to alleviate flooding to their property.

14. Plane Tree

The Clerk had been given several recommendations on tree surgeons and those that had worked in the village in conservation areas. The clerk was waiting responses from tree surgeons on any advice regarding the plane tree, following concerns from villagers on brash falling on the village green. The tree has a preservation order on it. Clerk to chase companies. Clerk will also speak with the insurance broker regarding public liability.

The Jubilee Wood – it was also noted that a large amount of timber had been put in the wood by a contractor.

15. Councillors' reports and items for next agenda

- Bell ringers – a question was asked regarding the ringing and practicing of the bells on Wednesday evenings at the same time as a Parish Council meeting. The Clerk informed that historically the Parish Council have asked the belling ringing group that on those meeting evenings, particularly in the summer when windows were open, that the ringing did not take place due to the noise.

- Court Barn – a resident had asked for advice and information regarding the speeding in Upper End and the HGV movements. Councillor Aston had given details of the Twenty is Plenty group and the previous police advice given to the Parish Council. Resident and Parish Council to monitor.

16. Closure and date of next ordinary meeting

With nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.25pm and the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 15 March 2023 at 7.00pm.

The meeting will be held in Birlingham Village Hall. Clerk to book hall.

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

Date: ……..……..……..……

Appendix 1 – Lengthsman's Report

UPPER END

DRAINAGE - Highways

Reference #8417 (25 November 2022) - gullies full again at the field entrance Upper End

Gully 1 - 4-digit tracker pin is 0087.
Gully 2 - 4-digit tracker pin is 4322.

All reports are prioritised based upon the information provided. We will investigate all reported issues within 28 working days.

18 January – update

Thank you for your report regarding the flooding issue at UPPER END that you reported on 25 November 2022. We have visited the site with a jetter and have identified a problem which is causing some flooding to the area. We have raised a works order for the necessary repair, which will be placed on a list, prioritised against other work and actioned accordingly.

FLY TIPPING – Wychavon District Council

A4104 - 22 December – tipping on A4104 in the ditch by the pull in opposite Lower Farm
CEPO Forms WDC: Fly tipping report, reference: ZTG-9225974

Reply from Community and Environmental Protection Team: An officer will respond to your report within 2 working days.

Church Street

Reference #10945 - 3 January 2023 – repeater sign knocked over.



LOWER END

Broadway Road
DRAINAGE - STW
Reference number 2005891243 - 19 December 2022
Water the leak outside The Old Laundry

POTHOLES
Meadow Lane
3 January 2023 - Reference #10943) to Worcestershire County Council 4-digit tracker pin is 1789.





Appendix 2 – Clerk's Report

Notification of external auditor appointment for the 2022-23 financial year for the 5-year period until 2026-27

1 December 2022, quote:

Dear Clerk/RFO/Chairman, Birlingham Parish Council,

Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments (SAAA) is the independent, sector led organisation responsible for the appointment and contract management of external auditors to smaller authorities since the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 established new arrangements for the accountability and audit of local public bodies in England. Smaller authorities are those whose gross annual income or expenditure is **less than £6.5 million**.

Under the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, SAAA is responsible for appointing external auditors to all opted-in smaller authorities, for setting the terms of appointment for limited assurance reviews and for managing the contracts with the appointed audit firms.

This communication is to notify you that SAAA has appointed an external auditor to the authority for the 5-year appointing period from 2022-23 until 2026-2, following a procurement exercise to appoint auditors to each contract area from 1 April 2022.

Your current appointed auditor will conclude any outstanding work on the 2021-22 Annual Governance and Accountability Returns and the new appointed auditor (if changed) will be responsible for the arrangements in respect of the 2022-23 AGAR process onwards.

The contact details of your appointed external auditor and fee scales are shown in the appendix to this letter and can also be found on the SAAA website: www.saaa.co.uk.

The audit firms all have previous experience of conducting limited assurance reviews for smaller authorities and have dedicated support personnel. SAAA will monitor the performance of the appointed firms in providing the audit services in terms of quality and compliance with their statutory terms of appointment.

If your authority has any potential conflict of interest relating to the auditor appointment, for instance if a Councillor or close relation is employed by the appointed auditor, you should advise SAAA immediately.

Exempt authorities

Since 2017-18, authorities where the higher of income or expenditure for the financial year was £25,000 or less and who meet all the qualifying criteria have been able to declare themselves as 'exempt' from a limited assurance review by an external auditor. However, all authorities, even if they declare themselves 'exempt', still need to fully complete, agree and publish an annual return (AGAR).

All authorities require an external auditor appointment even if the authority meets the criteria to qualify for exemption, as a Certificate of Exemption is required to be submitted to the external auditor and a named auditor must be in place to deal with questions or objections from local electors about the accounts.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) needs to be completed in accordance with "proper practices" as set out in '*Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England, a Practitioners' Guide*', and then be published in accordance with any applicable Transparency Code.

Annual Governance and Accountability Return forms will be sent out by your appointed auditor electronically at the end of the financial year. It is assumed that your authority is willing and able to accept documents electronically by e-mail; whilst an authority may request paper copies this may incur an administration charge.

Advice and assistance are available from the various sector membership organisations:

National Association of Local Councils and County Associations - *www.nalc.gov.uk*

Society of Local Council Clerks - *www.slcc.co.uk*

Association of Drainage Authorities - *www.ada.org.uk*

Yours faithfully,

Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd

Appendix

Auditor appointments for smaller authorities for the five financial years from 2022-23 to 2026-27

SAAA announced the conclusion of its procurement process and the award of limited assurance review contracts for five years to the successful external audit firms on 30 November 2021.

Responsibilities under the new contracts will relate to accounts for the financial year beginning on **1 April 2022**. The details of your specific appointment by contract (County) area are listed below.

Your Authority's Audit Appointment for 2022-23 to 2026-2027

Your appointed auditor will be **PKF Littlejohn LLP**.

Their contact details are:

PKF Littlejohn LLP, SBA Team, 15 Westferry Circus, Canary Wharf, London E14 4HD

All auditor appointments are listed by contract (County) area and all the Auditor contact details are listed on our website on the Audit Appointments page.

Scales of Fees 2022-23 to 2026-27

The following fees have been determined by SAAA following consultation for the Audit Years 2022-23 to 2026-27.

Scales of audit fees

Scales of fees for smaller authorities, are based on bands of annual income or expenditure, whichever is the higher. This means that the fees are broadly proportionate to the public funds involved and the ability of each authority to pay.

Table 1 sets out the scales of audit fees for smaller authorities that complete their AGAR fully and accurately within the required timescales and provide the necessary supporting information and any explanations sought.

Authorities with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £200,000 will be subject to basic limited assurance audit review. Authorities with either income or expenditure exceeding £200,000 will be subject to intermediate limited assurance audit review.

Table1 - Scale of fees for bodies subject to limited assurance review

INCOME/EXPENDITURE BAND (£)	FEE FOR LIMITED ASSURANCE REVIEW (£)	
0 - 25,000	0	(**if** a Certificate of Exemption is submitted)
0 - 25,000	210	(**if** a LAR review is required)
25,001 - 50,000	210	
50,001 - 100,000	315	
100,001 - 200,000	420	
200,001 - 300,000	630	
300,001 - 400,000	840	
400,001 - 500,000	1,050	
500,001 - 750,000	1,365	
750,001 - 1,000,000	1,680	
1,000,001 - 2,000,000	2,100	
2,000,001 - 3,000,000	2,520	
3,000,001 - 4,000,000	2,940	
4,000,001 - 5,000,000	3,360	
5,000,001 - 6,500,000	3,780	

Note: An authority with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000 that is **not** able to certify that it is an exempt authority as it does not meet the qualifying criteria, or if the authority wishes to have a limited assurance review by the external auditor, then the fee payable is £210.

Reminder letters

Where the auditor is required to send a reminder to any authority that has failed to submit either an AGAR or Certificate of Exemption to the external auditor by the statutory submission deadline will be charged £40 + VAT for each reminder.

Additional work and variations to the scale fees

If an active authority fails either to submit its Annual Return to the supplier for review by 30 September or (if it is an exempt authority) to provide a certificate of exemption, the supplier will consider issuing a

public interest report, the cost of which will be payable by the authority pertaining to the fee income band of that authority as in Table 1 (above).

Extra fees may also be charged in other circumstances, for example where auditors are required to:

· consider objections to the accounts from local electors, from the point at which the auditor accepts the objection as valid;

· exercise special powers in relation to the review, such as issuing a report in the public interest; or

· undertake any special investigations, such as those arising from disclosures under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Extra fees will be calculated and charged according to the work required, subject to the maximum hourly rates set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2 - Maximum hourly rates for additional work at smaller authorities

STAFF GRADE	MAXIMUM £ PER HOUR
Engagement lead	355
Senior manager/manager	215
Senior auditor	140
Other staff	105

Value Added Tax

The fee scales exclude Value Added Tax, which will be charged at the prevailing rate on all work undertaken.

SAAA – Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Limited

77 Mansell Street, London E1 8AN www.saaa.co.uk

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Accident on Eckington Road, outside Dairy Cottage

December 2022 - Clerk contacted by resident - debris and fallen trees following a road traffic accident.

Reference #10680 - Overgrown/Fallen Tree or Shrubbery Report to Worcestershire County Council

Whitehall Lane

Kerbing works due 17/18 January in Whitehall Lane as proposed by Worcestershire County Council – 10m kerbing starting outside Box Farm.

RSN Rural Funding Digest – January 2023 edition

Circulated to all Councillors. Monthly bulletin featuring RSN Rural Funding Digest & Government Consultations. The Government Consultation section may include a draft response to relevant rural consultations and highlights other consultations relevant to rural areas which you may be interested in responding to.

Worcestershire County Council Budget 2023/2024

Circulated to all Councillors. From Legal and Governance

> *"As part of Worcestershire County Council's engagement on the budget for 2023/24, Michael Hudson, Chief Financial Officer has produced a budget briefing as a video, which can be found using this link – https://youtu.be/ZfsHF20FIdo*
>
> *Should you have any questions from the video that you would like answered please email these into Democratic Services using this email DemocraticServices@worcestershire.gov.uk where you will receive a response. "*

Break-in at Cricket Club

Clerk contacted by Pershore Rural North and South
"Received a third-party report regarding a break in at the cricket club and wanted contact details so we can carry out a visit and confirm what has happened as we do not seem to have received a report yet.

Safer Neighbourhood Team

Relevant parties informed and then report put into Birlingham News.

Extracts of interest

Birlingham **News 291 – 23 November**

Here is your first comprehensive look at Christmas events in Birlingham.

The online edition of this email is available at www.birlingham.org/village/bno.

In this issue:

1. St James' Church Services – December
2. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 7th December
3. Christmas Meet and Greet, Saturday 17th December
4. Carol and Christingle Service, Sunday 18th December
5. Christmas at the Swan
6. Parish Council Report
7. Planning Applications

2. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 7th December

Sue Hermon writes:
Cuppa & Chat will be held on Wednesday 7th December from 3.00pm to 4.30pm in Birlingham Village Hall. Everyone is most welcome to come along for a festive get-together to get us into the Christmas spirit! The cost is £2.50 per head.

Tea, coffee, mince pies and more plus a glass of mulled wine or two will be available.

There will be a raffle of prizes provided by Cuppa & Chat, with proceeds going to the Midlands Air Ambulance. Hope to see you there.

For more information, or to request transport, please contact me on 01386 750096 or email sue.hermon@me.com.

6. Parish Council Report

Birlingham Parish Council held its meeting at 7.00pm on Wednesday 16th November in the Village Hall.

A report of this meeting will appear in the next edition of Birlingham News.

7. Planning Applications

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

The Manor House, Lower End: Construction of a single storey orangery infill extension (Planning Application Case No. W/22/02341/HP; Listed Building Consent Case No. W/22/02342/LB). Awaiting decision by Wychavon District Council. (Consultation period ends on 22nd December.) Full details can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website.

Birlingham **News 292 – 15 December**

Here is the final roundup of Christmas events in Birlingham.

The online edition of this email is available at www.birlingham.org/village/bno, which also includes the bin collection calendar for next year, a useful guide to what can and cannot go in your green recycling bin over Christmas and more detail on the Trees Call to Action Project.

In this issue:

1. Christmas Meet and Greet, Saturday 17th December
2. Carol and Christingle Service, Sunday 18th December
3. Christmas at the Swan
4. Christmas Bin Collections
5. Trees Call to Action Project (TCAP)
6. Parish Council Report
7. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

5. Trees Call to Action Project (TCAP)

Ian Yates writes:

The Trees Call to Action Project (TCAP) is an exciting new project that will enable communities and landowners to learn how to care for trees or to access funds for tree and hedgerow planting. The fund was developed by Defra in partnership with the Forestry Commission and is being delivered by the Heritage Fund.

The Heart of England Forest, Stratford District Council, Warwick District Council and Wychavon District Council are working in partnership to support tree planting across our local landscape and community spaces. Working together with TCAP staff, communities and landowners will be creating new green spaces to benefit the environment and reconnect people with nature for physical and mental wellbeing for generations to come.

To find out more about how you can benefit from the project we're inviting you to get in touch. Planting does not have to be on a large scale; it could be an orchard, hedgerow or simply planted for aesthetics.

If you would like more information, you can either contact your local TCAP Officer, Craig Wood at craig.wood@heartofenglandforest.org, phone 07843 813941 or contact the Parish Council Clerk, June Hiden, at birlingham_clerk@yahoo.co.uk.

More details about the project, its benefits, the team and the monthly newsletter are included in the online edition of Birlingham News at www.birlingham.org/village/bno.

6. Parish Council Report

Ian Yates writes:

Birlingham Parish Council held its meeting at 7.00pm on Wednesday 16th November in the Village Hall. Several topics were discussed and more details on some of them are summarised below:

- **Full Fibre Broadband (Fibre to the Premise – FTTP)** As previously reported, the Parish Council has been working with Airband to bring Full Fibre Broadband to Birlingham much earlier than the government's general rollout, which continues to be pushed back according to recent media reports. Airband has already completed many successful Full Fibre projects in Worcestershire and is planning to install Full Fibre in Birlingham (and Defford/Besford) provided there is sufficient interest from residents. With more than 70 Birlingham residents having already registered their interest in being connected via Airband's website, we believe there is sufficient to ensure the project goes ahead. However, if you have not yet registered, we would encourage you to do so at www.airband.co.uk. Airband is paying for the installation so there is no cost to residents. Registration does not commit you to use their service. However, should you decide to sign up for Full Fibre once the service is available, the monthly cost will be similar to or possibly less than the cost you are currently paying for slower and less reliable broadband. The latest update is that Airband will start to install the Full Fibre infrastructure in January or February.

- **Telephone Kiosk** The telephone box has now been fully restored by a specialist company and will be returned to its original position opposite the Village Hall. A new concrete base will be constructed and the box returned and installed before Christmas.

- **Millennium Bench** The base for the bench has now been constructed around the time capsule on the village green. Our thanks to Rupert Keys for volunteering his time and effort to do this. The bench itself will be installed w/c 5th December by the carpenter who has been restoring it.

- **Tree Warden** Our current tree warden is unable to continue due to work commitments. The Parish Council would like to hear from anyone who would be willing to volunteer for this role, which is not onerous. If you are interested, please contact our clerk, June Hiden, at birlingham_clerk@yahoo.co.uk and she can provide more information.

Birlingham **News 293 – 29 December**

We hope you all had a very merry Christmas and we wish you a happy New Year!

The online edition of this email is available at www.birlingham.org/village/bno. The online edition contains a handy recycling guide, information on the Jubilee Wood and dates for your diary for the next six weeks.

In this issue:

1. Christmas Bin Collection, Monday 2nd January
2. St James' Church Services – January
3. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 4th January
4. Swan Inn Re-opening, Wednesday 11th January
5. Snowdrop Teas 2023
6. Missing Kitten

7. Planning Applications

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

Hills Cottage, Upper End: First floor extension over existing carport. The enclosure of carport bay at ground floor level to create entrance hall and construction of zinc standing seam roof to link house to carport. Addition of PV solar panels (Planning Application Case No. W/22/02657/HP; Listed Building Consent Case No. W/22/02656/LB). Awaiting decision by Wychavon District Council. (Consultation period ends on 20th January (Application); 2nd February (Listed Building Consent).)

Birlingham **News 294 – 11 January**

The coming week is a busy one, with Sunday Holy Communion, the Parish Council meeting, Birlingham IW and the Burns Night Supper filling most of the days.

A complete list of events for the next six weeks is included in the online edition of this email at www.birlingham.org/village/bno.pdf, which also contains full details of the Burns Night Supper.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham Parish Council, Wednesday 18th January
2. Birlingham IW, Thursday 19th January
3. Burns Night Supper, Saturday 21st January
4. Church News

5. Cricket Club Break-in
6. Parish Tree Warden
7. Lost and Found
8. Missing Kitten Found
9. Jubilee Mugs
10. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

1. Birlingham Parish Council, Wednesday 18th January

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

6. Parish Tree Warden

Due to other commitments the Parish Tree Warden is stepping down. The Parish Council is looking for someone enthusiastic about the trees in the village to take up the mantle.

The primary objective of the Tree Warden is to gather information about the local trees, get involved in local tree matters and encourage local practical projects related to the trees and woods. To fulfil this objective the Parish Tree Warden will:

- Attend the local Tree Warden Training Sessions.

- Look for opportunities to involve the community in taking an interest in, planting and caring for hedgerows and trees.

- Keep watch on important trees in the parish and report back to Parish Council, in order to:
    - Provide early warning of threats, disease, decay, or vandalism.
    - Comment on planning applications that will adversely affect the trees.
    - Report any unauthorised work on trees, in particular in the Conservation Area.

The role is by no means time-consuming and only requires very few hours per month to fulfil.

If you are interested in becoming the new warden to report to the Parish Council, please contact June Hiden by email at birlingham_clerk@yahoo.co.uk.