Birlingham News online

Published on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month

No. 277 Wednesday 25th May 2022

Editorial

It is hard to believe that it was ten years ago that we were all rushing about preparing for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Now here we are again, getting ready for the Platinum Jubilee.

The difference today is that this Jubilee is the first of its kind. The previous record was held by Queen Victoria, who was on the throne for nearly 64 years. At the time of her 60-year Diamond Jubilee coins were embossed with the words 'The longest reign'. The coin makers of the day probably believed that this record would never be broken – and would no doubt be surprised to find that coins have now largely been replaced by plastic cards, which don't have the same commemorative appeal.

Therefore it is unlikely you will come across one of this year's Jubilee 50p pieces in your change – but you can own a rare Birlingham Platinum Jubilee mug!

Surely this really will be the longest reign? Certainly no one alive today will see another Platinum Jubilee, so let's make the most of next weekend.

Road Closures

Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th June

The following roads will be temporarily closed during the Platinum Jubilee celebrations:

- The roads from Church Street to Whitehall Lane (including the road in front of the church) will be closed on Saturday 4th June from 1.00pm until 6.00pm to allow for the Street Party. Access to Church Street and Whitehall Lane will not be affected.
- All roads around the church will be closed on Sunday 5th June between 11.30am and 1.00pm for the Pram Race. The closure will only take effect during the race itself.

Parking will be available on both these days at the cricket ground. It would be appreciated if people did not park on the roads around the church, on the pound opposite the Village Hall, or in front of the Village Hall and the School House on either of these days.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Programme

Friday 3rd – Sunday 5th June *by Steve Morris*

The final preparations are now being made for next week's celebrations of the Platinum Jubilee. More than 30 volunteers are involved in the various events (but, of course, we could always do with more!)

Programmes have been distributed to every home in the village and it would help with planning if you could complete the enclosed form, even if you are not able to join us at the celebrations. Forms can be returned to the church porch, by post or online.

The events begin with a Jubilee Quiz on Friday 3rd June in the village marquee, which will be erected in Whitehall Lane. The main event is the Street Party on the Saturday afternoon, which will take place from 3.00pm until 5.00pm between the Village Hall and the Church. During this event, the children's Pudding Fit for a Queen entries will be judged. There will also be a toast to the Queen and we will be taking a village photograph of everyone who is there.

On Sunday 5th, the Celebratory Church Service will be followed by the traditional Pram Race. The weekend is rounded off by a Treasure Hunt around the village.

Jubilee mugs are available, personalised for Birlingham: a permanent reminder of this extraordinary occasion.

During the weekend there will be a Jubilee raffle, with some amazing prizes donated by Birlingham Nurseries, Eckington Stores and Revills Farm Shop.

We hope that many of you will decorate your houses and brighten up the village for the weekend. Ideas for colouring in your own posters and bunting can be found at the website linked to below.

Thank you to all those who have worked so hard making the preparations. The weather forecast is currently looking good, so we hope this will be a memorable and fun weekend.

The Jubilee programme and details of the Jubilee mugs are reprinted on the next page. See page 31 for the current weather forecast!

Jubilee Bunting

Colour in your own bunting! Ideas for posters and bunting can be found at:

https://www.colouringheroes.com/jubilee

https://www.colouringheroes.com/flag-bunting?fbclid=IwAR0SRIc6-5akgOJvjdEsAjE-



Cuppa & Chat – Fully Booked

Wednesday 1st June *by Sue Hermon*



A special Jubilee Cuppa & Chat is being held on Wednesday 1st June. This event is already fully booked by our lovely regulars, who have received written confirmation of their reserved place. If you are unable to attend I ask that you let me know.

If anyone would like to be added to the cancellation list, please contact me on 01386 750096 or email sue.hermon@me.com.

The next Cuppa & Chat after this will be on Wednesday 6th July and we look forward to seeing you.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

Programme

Friday 3rd June

- **Jubilee Quiz**
  7.30pm, Village Marquee, Whitehall Lane

  Teams of 3–5, seven rounds of ten Royal questions, prize for winning team. Please bring nibbles, drinks and glasses if you would like to.
  Entry fee £3 per person.

Saturday 4th June

- **Street Party**
  3.00pm–5.00pm, between Church Street and Whitehall Lane

  Trestle tables on the roads between the Church and the Village Hall. Bring your own picnic and a chair! Includes toast to the Queen (provided) and village photograph. Optional dress code: red, white and blue.

- **A Pudding Fit for a Queen**
  Entries by 3.00pm, Birlingham Village Hall

  Children's competition. Bake a cake or cook a pudding fit for the Queen! Any type of cake or cold pudding to feed a minimum of 6 people. Age ranges:10 and under; or 11–16.
  All children are welcome to enter, whether they live in the village or are visiting for the Street Party.

Full details of all the Jubilee events can be found on the village website at http://www.birlingham.org/village/events/jubilee2022

Sunday 5th June

- **Celebratory Church Service**
  10.30am, St James' Church. Led by Peter Stansbie.

  A celebration of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee with contributions in word and song by villagers of all ages. The congregation will be invited to join in with the singing of a variety of patriotic songs and hymns. Complimentary Union flags and refreshments provided.

- **Pram Race**
  12.00pm (after Church Service), around the church

  Any wheeled, non-motorised vehicle is acceptable! The pram must contain one passenger and the route is twice around the church, with a shorter children's race. Dress for the occasion!

- **Treasure Hunt**
  Start 2.00–3.00pm at the Village Hall

  Appealing to all ages and disabled-friendly, the Treasure Hunt takes in much of the village and the 70 clues (including picture clues) can be solved without leaving public areas. It is expected that the hunt will be done on foot. Prize for the winning family, group or individual. Free entry. Bring a pen and something to rest your answer sheet on!

To help our planning for these events, please complete and return the enclosed form as soon as possible.
Alternatively, complete the online form at:
www.birlingham.org/village/events/jubilee2022

Birlingham Platinum Jubilee Mugs





Bone china mugs featuring the official Platinum Jubilee design
£10 each – please order your mugs on the attached form

All village children aged 16 and under will receive a free mug

Thank you to our sponsors for their generous support of the Birlingham Platinum Jubilee Celebrations



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Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Council Meeting

by Paula Aston

The Birlingham Annual Parish Meeting took place last Wednesday, 18th May, and was followed by the normal Parish Council meeting. In the absence of the chairperson the meeting was chaired by Paula Aston.

The Annual Parish Meeting included the following:

- The Chairman's annual report
- Annual reports from County Councillor Adrian Hardman and District Councillor Ron Davis
- Annual reports from the Footpath Warden and Lengthsman
- Annual report from the Jubilee Committee

All these reports are reproduced below.

A report of the Parish Council meeting appears on page 32.

Chairman's Report – Parish Meeting, May 2022

This report is a summary of the many activities that have taken place over the last 12 months. It has been another restricted year due to Covid which has curtailed some of the usual activities and forced meetings to be held virtually. Never-the-less an extensive list of projects were dealt with and real progress was made on a number of issues important to residents.

As always, I would like to begin by thanking everyone who have given their time for the benefit of the parish; all the members of the Parish Council; Vice Chair Paula Aston, Maxine Cook, Julia Luff, Steven Byrne, Terry Griffin and Michael Porter. They have all been involved in the many different projects undertaken by the Parish Council over the last 12 months as detailed later in this report. A special thank you also to June Hiden for the long hours she puts in as Clerk. Her knowledge and experience is invaluable.

Our thanks also go to those involved in the Parish Council's scheme of delegation; Carl Brassington the village Lengthsman, who has worked hard to keep our gullies, drains and verges clear, significantly reducing the impact of flooding; Rupert Keys Tree Warden who has monitored and maintained the village trees; Bruce Hayward Footpath Warden ably assisted by Mark Smith who have spent many hours maintaining the parish footpaths.

I would also like to thank the following; County Councillor Adrian Hardman, for his help with organising the work on the resurfacing of the village roads and for arranging funding for 'Cuppa and Chat', speed roundels and telephone box restoration. District Councillor Ron Davis, who despite ill health has continued to keep us informed on Wychavon matters. It is much appreciated that they find time to attend our meetings whenever possible. Thanks also to Steve Morris who continues to develop and maintain the village website, including a page for the Parish Council and amongst his many activities heading up the Jubilee Committee and Birlingham News.

<u>Annual Parish Meeting</u>

This meeting must be held between March and the end of May. In May 2020, due to Covid restrictions, the meeting was held via video conference. It was hoped that in 2021 the meeting would be held in person but that was not to be the case and once again due to restrictions it was held by Zoom.

<u>Covid Volunteers</u>

The pandemic had dominated Parish Council activities during 2020 and the Parish Council put out a call for volunteers that would be prepared to help vulnerable residents. Some 20 villagers came forward for which we were very grateful. With the vaccine rollout in 2021 and the easing of restrictions there was less demand on the volunteers but they remained available to assist wherever necessary particularly in the first part of the year.

(*Continues on next page*)

County Councillor Adrian Hardman

It gives me great pleasure to be back with you again after the election in May 2021, but not in person tonight, because it is the annual meeting at Wychavon tonight.

I'm very sad to say that I seem to be talking about the same topics as I talked about this time last year before the election. COVID-19 is still very much with us, and as I write this we have 93 people from across the county in our two acute hospitals which is just over 3 wards of very ill people but the better news is that currently in the past seven days we had just under 60 people per 100,000 with the virus in the two district wards to the north of Bredon hill and this puts us at the middle of the league table, and the good news is that we only have two people with COVID-19 who are in the intensive care unit.

Throughout the pandemic this year the County Council has been able to continue to deliver its services either online or in a slightly different way and while we have not made as much progress in some areas as I would have wished; it is reassuring that we head into the end of the financial year very slightly overspent in our living disability's budget but generally there will be a minor call on reserves this year. In this year's budget but we had a 3% rise in the adult social care levy and a .9% rise in council tax making 3.9% for 2022 / 23. This budget means that we are fully funding all our adult social care and children's care pressures and currently have no waiting lists for social care. But there is little doubt that the government social care reforms will put considerable pressure on the County Council to administer them and I just hope that we are able to fully fund them all and don't end up in the position that Scottish councils find themselves in.

The situation in Ukraine continues to worry the County Council deeply and we are in the process of welcoming the Ukrainian guests that are undoubtedly going to end up in the county. This will be by working in partnership with our District Council colleagues and re purposing our "here to help scheme"

(*Continues on next page*)

(Chairman's Report continued)

Roads and flooding

The Parish Council dealt with a large number of road and flooding issues in the village.

- Resurfacing work at Lower End. Patching and resurfacing work on Broadway Road at Lower End around to Church Street was completed.
- Water Leak in Berwick Lane. There has been a persistent water leak at the top of Berwick Lane near Lower End Farm. This has caused some flooding and is a problem in winter when it freezes. Despite drains being jetted several times it did not fix the problem. In August a new drain was installed by the Highways Project Team. Unfortunately the work did not fix the leak! It was thought that the leak was coming from Severn Trent pipework but it has now been established that the problem is being caused by the old pipework not being correctly sealed off. This is on-going.
- Grange Road. Road collapse outside Avonside Cottage was fixed and road re-surfaced.
- Flooding near the Manor House. Work was carried out to address the problem of water running across the road near the Manor House. However water is starting to run again and Severn Trent Water have been called out as a result to inspect it further. This is ongoing.

The Parish Council thanked Worcestershire County Councillor Adrian Hardman, Councillor Julia Luff and Clerk June Hiden for their assistance in getting this work done.

Millennium Bench.

Having removed the bench from around the plane tree on the village green to prevent damage Councillor Maxine Cook identified a carpenter to restore it. Work was delayed by the lockdown and also the extent of the restoration which was much larger than initially thought. The carpenter kindly agreed to carry out the additional work in his own time and at his own cost. Rupert Keys kindly volunteered to do the ground work so that the bench could be re-sited around the time capsule and the installation is now almost complete.

Parish Council Financials

In November a budget meeting was held to discuss setting the parish precept for 22/23 based on government guidelines. It was agreed to submit an average annual increase equivalent to £3.02 per property.

Each year the parish council makes provisions from their budget to cover possible future costs in three areas. These are:

- For the plane tree on the village green which due to its size may require surgery at some point in the future.
- To cover costs that the parish council are charged to run an election.
- To build a community fund to support village projects.

Provisions for the plane tree are now considered sufficient for likely surgery costs so provisions that would have been allocated to the plane tree will now go to the Community Fund so providing additional money for village projects. My thanks to Councillor Terry Griffin and Clerk June Hiden for their management of the parish finances.

Jubilee Wood tree planting

The Parish Council were made aware of the Queen's Green Canopy scheme which is a tree planting initiative to mark The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022. The Woodland Trust made tree saplings available free of charge and it seemed a great opportunity to try and improve the Jubilee Wood which has suffered with a number of dead trees. Steve Morris from the Jubilee Committee ordered 210 saplings and in snowy conditions in November they were planted by some 15 volunteers. The Parish Council thanked Rupert Keys for managing the planting, the volunteers for braving the cold conditions and Steve Morris for coordinating the project. (*Continues*)

(County Councillor continued)

so that if you take a Ukrainian guest into the home do you have a degree of support if it is with translation services or indeed just providing schooling. At the moment we find it very hard to gauge the amount of support or indeed the numbers of guests that will be arriving in our county.

I am aware that we still have some work to do in the area but generally I feel that the roads are in a satisfactory state. I hope the renewed roundels are having some effect on speeding traffic. The Eckington Bridge will be closed for a week at the start of the school holidays.

The middle school and the first school remain in good heart, and I would point out to the parish that we are amid having a review of the Pershore pyramid which could well result in it going two tiers.

Adrian Hardman

District Councillor Ron Davis

Due to my illness last October l had been given Doctors orders to reduce my community activities and regain my strength. So my attendance at meetings has been somewhat reduced.

I have, however, been contactable by email or telephone and maintained contact with the Parish clerks to my 4 Parish Councils.

Regretfully, l was forced to stand down from my position on the Executive Board after 7 years and had to handover my portfolio of Resources and Investments a position l thoroughly enjoyed. l was pleased, however, that my recommendation to freeze for the 5th year the Wychavon element of this year's council tax.

It has been my privilege to serve the Eckington Ward for another year and l trust l can continue for the next 12 months- health permitting.

We have a difficult year ahead which will require patience a clear and positive strategy Wychavon have the Resources and very sound investments to get through including good management and good Governance.

As l have stated in previous reports- Covid is still out there so take good care of yourselves.

Ron Davis, Eckington Ward

(Chairman's Report continued)

War Memorial – Frederick Quarrell

You may recall that during some research into the First World War it was discovered that Frederick Quarrell, a villager who died during the war, did not have his name included on the Birlingham war memorial. The Parish Council therefore decided to apply for funding to pay for his name to be added. This work was somewhat delayed due to Covid and the need to get planning permission as the war memorial is a listed monument. However the Parish Clerk June Hiden has identified a stone mason who will now add the inscription.

Full Fibre Broadband (Fibre to the Premise – FTTP)

Councillor Ian Yates received an email from a resident enquiring about the Government's Gigabit Voucher Scheme that can be used to fund the provision of Full Fibre Broadband to homes as part of a community project. Full Fibre Broadband (also known as FTTP) replaces the copper telephone cable that runs between the telephone cabinet and house with a fibre optic cable. The benefit is higher speeds (up to 1Gb/s) and a more reliable service. An explanatory leaflet was circulated by the Parish Council with the Bystander to all properties and the response was very encouraging with more than a third of the village interested. A quotation was received from OpenReach but subsequently they were unable to commit to the project before the Worcestershire County Council deadline. An alternative provider called Airband was proposed as they were already installing full fibre to local villages. Thanks to the efforts of Councillors Steven Byrne and Michael Porter this proposal was accepted minutes before the deadline and full details will be made available to residents starting in May.

Dog/litter Bins

The Parish Council has included funding for three additional bins in its 2022/23 precept. Wychavon District Council, who empty the bins, have approved the proposed locations which are the junction of Broadway with Grange Road, top of Sherpool Lane (junction of Broadway with Shorthill) and junction of Shorthill with Church Street as these are areas popular with dog walkers.

Telephone Kiosk - restoration

The telephone box has been in a sad state for some time. It is no longer owned by BT and was adopted by the Parish Council a few years back and there have been discussions about its restoration. Councillor Maxine Cook found a company that specialises in this work. Councillor Adrian Hardman kindly agreed to fund 50% of the cost with the balance coming from Parish Council's project fund and the Jubilee Committee. The box will be removed from site for approximately 10 weeks while it is fully restored.

Speed advisories

The Parish Council discussed with Worcestershire County Council the installation of speed advisory roundels. The existing 30/40mph roundels located near the entrance to Birlingham Nurseries were completely worn away and needed remarking. Due to the ongoing traffic problems and speeding in the narrow section of Upper End near Court Barns, consideration was also given to the installation of 30mph repeater roundels at each end of the narrow section. This work was carried out earlier this year with thanks to Adrian Hardman who agreed to fund the installation.

Planning

The Parish Council commented on several planning applications during the year. This is to provide Wychavon District Council who are responsible for planning decisions with a local perspective based on the residents' feedback in the Village Survey and Village Design Statement. My thanks to Councillor Steven Byrne who as Planning Group coordinator was responsible for collecting comments and summarising them for WDC.

Defibrillator pad and battery replacement

The Birlingham defibrillator, mounted on the side of the village hall, first became operational in 2018. The defibrillator's pads have a shelf life of 2 years and the battery 4 years. Both pads and battery were replaced following the defibrillator's use in 2019. As a result the pads needed replacing again and the Parish Council agreed to contribute 50% of the cost from its Community Fund.

(*Continues*)

Birlingham Footpath Warden's Annual Report

Birlingham has 2 volunteers who, together with local landowners and others, look after the Parish footpaths on behalf of the County Council. The County Council meet any small expenses incurred, and will often supply 'furniture' (eg. gates, stiles etc.) that needs to be replaced.

The main work in the past year for the volunteers has, as usual, been the controlling/clearing of undergrowth and repairs to stiles and finger-posts.

At each Parish Council meeting a report is made of work undertaken during the previous two months.

All the footpaths in Worcestershire are shown on the Public Rights of Way web map which is maintained by the County Council Countryside Service; visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/countryside and click on Public Rights of Way and then Interactive Map. (There is a link from the village website).

If anyone has any concerns or suggestions regarding the footpaths in the Parish, please contact me at Tadpole Cottage on 751382 or via the Parish clerk.

Bruce Hayward

Lengthsman's Report

Apart from the very strong winds this winter it has been mostly uneventful in the village. The winds brought down several trees and branches but all were quickly cleared with help from the farm and Michael Porter.

The flooding issues did not prove as bad this year so perhaps it was a fairly dry winter. There are the ongoing outstanding items which are monitored by June but no major new issues to report.

The rut across the road in Upper End has been filled half way across the road for some reason leaving half still rutted. The soil wash-ff from the fields is still an issue as is large vehicle traffic squashing the verges into the gully grids and filling them.

(*Continues*)

(Chairman's Report continued)

Ukraine

Councillor Julia Luff led discussions on ways in which the Parish Council could support refugees and families from the war in Ukraine and in particular any that become resident in Birlingham. There are a number of initiatives being considered by village organisations and it was agreed that any support offered should be coordinated. A letter of support was sent to RedStar who normally employ a large number of workers from Ukraine.

Permissive Footpaths

The Parish Council received a number of comments from residents regarding new Permissive Footpath and No Public Access signs that went up around the village just before Christmas. The Parish Council contacted landowners and as a result the new restrictions on Sherpool Lane to the John Bennett memorial pond and on Ash Plantation to the wetlands hide were removed. My thanks to Councillor Julia Luff for her efforts in drawing up maps to clarify access.

Remembrance Day

The Parish Council provided wreaths for both the Eckington and Birlingham remembrance services which was again restricted by Covid. However Councillor Terry Griffin laid the wreath in Birlingham and Chris Reynard in Eckington.

In conclusion, although 2021 was still restricted by Covid the Parish Council was able to carry on with a large program of activities on behalf of villagers and the community.

Ian Yates
Chairman, Birlingham Parish Council

Jubilee Committee

The Jubilee Committee has continued to be involved in a range of activities.

The current emphasis is on the Platinum Jubilee in June. We have organised four meetings and now have nearly 40 volunteers to help with three days of events, including a team of 15 who are leading the events and activities. The events will include a Quiz Night, Street Party (with village photograph), Pudding Fit for a Queen children's competition, Celebratory Church Service (organised by churchwarden Adrianne Woodward on behalf of the PCC), Pram Race and Treasure Hunt.

Birlingham News is delivered to over 90% of households, as well as many former residents. We deliver two issues per month on the second and fourth Wednesdays. Thank you to the many people who now contribute on a regular basis and particularly Ian Yates for his extensive Parish Council reports.

We are trialling an online PDF edition of Birlingham News, which allows us to include photographs, items that would not normally make it into the email and detailed reports.

In the last twelve months we have produced a further two issues of the Birlingham Bystander and our eleventh edition (Issue 87) is about to be delivered.

The village website continues to receive many visitors but more volunteers are needed to take on specific groups of web pages. The Village Forum is no longer being used.

Another 210 trees were planted in the Jubilee Wood by 15 volunteers. These are now all showing new growth. A number of people have volunteered to help with future maintenance. Huge thanks to Rupert Keys for co-ordinating the planting effort, providing the equipment and generally advising on the upkeep of the wood.

Our stock of equipment includes a water boiler (currently on loan to the church), 25 trestle tables, bunting, 30 camping chairs, 26 plastic chairs, heaters, glasses, music stands and road signs and , all of which are available for village residents and organisations to borrow for private or public functions. (*Continues*)

(Lengthsman's Report continued)

The road surface in the lane between Grange Road and Broadway Road is in poor condition and is the only one not to have been recently re-surfaced.

The footway in Eckington Road is badly encroached by the vegetation but this is not unusual for a rural route.

There have been a couple of small fly tipping issues which have been cleared but the pull-in off the A4104 still attracts lots of rubbish.

Carl Brassington



(Jubilee Comittee continued)

Work on *Birlingham in the Second World War* and the Birlingham Memories Project was interrupted by the pandemic but we hope to get going on these again soon.

We are hoping to recruit new members of the Jubilee Committee over the next few months, to help spread the workload and bring in fresh ideas.

Thank you to the many dozens of people who have been involved in all these various activities over the past 12 months.

Steve Morris
Chairman, Jubilee Committee

Parish Council Report

by Paula Aston

As the Parish Council meeting was following the Annual Parish Meeting, elections needed to take place.

Ian Yates was duly elected as the chairperson for 2022/23 and Paula Aston was elected as Vice Chair for the same time period.

- **Millennium Bench**: Councillor Cook advised that work on the bench is nearing completion and the base for the bench will be installed hopefully over the next few weeks and then the bench can be brought back to the village and placed on the village green.
- **Full fibre broadband**: Councillor Byrne advised that the closing date for applications for fibre broadband via Air Band to the village has passed and the required interest reached at the 11th hour so we will now await further information on how we move forward and an installation date.
- **Telephone kiosk**: Councillor Cook advised that noticeably the telephone box had been removed from the village and taken to be restored to its former glory. It will be returned to the village over the next couple of months and will look as new. Suggestions on how the telephone kiosk can be used moving forward would be welcomed by the Parish Council.
- **Queens Platinum Jubilee events**: Update was given by Councillor Cook and the Jubilee Committee. There are several events happening over the bank holiday weekend in the village and leaflets and invitations have gone out to households to inform everybody of these.

Minutes of the meeting will be produced and issued in due course.

The next meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled for Wednesday 20th July at 7.00pm.

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Deadline extended for £500 apprentice payment

The deadline for new apprentices to apply for a £500 incentive payment has been extended until the end of September.

As part of the Wychavon and Malvern Hills Upskilling Project, both councils are offering the incentive to promote apprenticeships and trainee programmes, which help many people to take their first steps in the world of work or embark on new careers.

So far, 26 apprentices have benefited from the £500 incentive payment, and many are encouraging others to apply.

Zander Marshall from Ombersley was just 16, and had recently left school, when he joined Amada as an apprentice in mechanical and electronic engineering.

"An apprenticeship mixes work and training so it meant that I could get a head start in my career while also gaining a qualification. I have definitely learnt a lot so far, both about engineering and the world of work," says Zander.

"The incentive payment was a big help when it came to buying my car, which has made travelling to and from work much easier."

After being made redundant, Carly Wardle, a 21-year-old from Evesham, started an apprenticeship in business administration with Certified Quality Systems.

"I'm gaining a lot of hands-on experience of working in a professional environment and developing new skills. I'm enjoying my role and I've become much more confident in it," says Carly.

"The incentive payment has really helped in the current situation, especially with the petrol price increases."

New apprentices or trainees of any age are eligible to receive the £500 payment if they meet the criteria.

To qualify, they must live or work in the Wychavon or Malvern Hills District areas, earn less than £15,000 a year, have completed at least the first month of their course, and claim the payment themselves.

This incentive forms part of a range of activities designed to boost skills, help businesses grow and support people into work, using more than £283,000 from the UK Community Renewal Fund.

There is also a separate support payment of £1,000 available for new apprentices and trainees, which can help them to cover the cost of travel, equipment, clothing and other associated expenses.

Cllr Richard Morris, Executive Board Member for Economic Growth and Tourism on Wychavon District Council, said: "We understand the financial pressures that apprentices and trainees face, so we are pleased to be able to provide them with this support. We would encourage everyone who can to apply as soon as possible."

More details about the support available, including full terms and conditions, and how to apply, can be found online: www.wychavon.gov.uk/business.

St James' Church



Churchwarden: Adrianne Woodward (Tel. 01386 750936)

Services at St James' Church during June will be held at the following times:

* **Sunday 5th**: Celebratory Service, 10.30am (led by Peter Stansbie)

  A celebration of Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee with contributions in word and song by villagers of all ages. The congregation will be invited to join in with the singing of a variety of patriotic songs and hymns. Complimentary Union flags and refreshments provided.

* **Sunday 19th**: Holy Communion, 10.30am (led by Revd Canon Claire Lording)

A welcome awaits at both of the services.

Letters to the Editors

We welcome brief letters to the Editors on any subject relating to Birlingham. The Editors reserve the right to shorten letters and we cannot guarantee that all letters will be printed.

Please send letters to:
news@birlingham.org

Roadside Verge Maintenance

by the Parish Clerk

The following advice on roadside verge maintenance has been received from Worcestershire County Council:

- Verges will be cut where necessary for safety reasons (e.g. splays at road junctions).
- However, for environmental reasons, where there are no safety issues, WCC will either leave the verges uncut or only cut 1m back from the carriageway edge.
- Similarly residents, for environmental reasons, are encouraged not to cut the verges by their house unless it is absolutely necessary for safety.

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Personal Ads

Personal adverts should consist of one paragraph of text, maximum 100 words, and will be included in a single issue of Birlingham News.

Please note that advertisement text will be published exactly as received.

Personal ads should be sent to news@birlingham.org no later than the Monday before publication.

Birlingham News is published on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.

Dates for your diary

June

Wed 1	Cuppa & Chat, 3.00–4.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Fri 3	Platinum Jubilee – Quiz Night, 7.30pm, Village Marquee, Whitehall Lane
Sat 4	Platinum Jubilee – Street Party, 3.00–5.00pm
	Platinum Jubilee – Children's Pudding Fit for a Queen competition
Sun 5	Platinum Jubilee Celebratory Service, 10.30am, St James' Church
	Platinum Jubilee – Pram Race, 12.00pm, St James' Church
	Platinum Jubilee – Treasure Hunt 2.00–3.00pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Sun 19	Holy Communion, 10.30am, St James' Church

July

Sun 3	Morning Praise, 10.30am, St James' Church

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Birlingham News online is open to any organisation or business within the parish to promote events. Inclusion of an event does not imply that Birlingham Jubilee Committee supports either the event or the views of the organisation promoting it.

The copy date for the next edition is Sunday 5th June (for publication on Wednesday 8th June). We regret that we cannot guarantee to include any items submitted after that date.

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