# Birlingham News online

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## Editorial

Don't panic! You haven't slept through the spring, summer and autumn and woken up in the middle of next winter, regardless of what it says on the front of the current *Birlingham Bystander*.

The *Bystander* was completed before Christmas but could not be printed until January. Therefore the intention was for the cover to specify 'Winter 2023/24'. Unfortunately this revision was lost in translation, somewhere in the publication process, and the latest edition is marked 'Winter 2024' (technically correct but potentially confusing).

Meanwhile, the next issue of the *Bystander* is well under way and the Editorial Team will be pleased to receive photographs, articles and other content to be included when it is published in April/ May. The copy date for the next edition is 7th March.

Rest assured, Spring *will* follow Winter!

## Cuppa & Chat



**Wednesday**
**7th February**

*by Sue Hermon*

Our first Cuppa & Chat of 2024 will be held on Wednesday 7th February from 3.00pm to 4.30pm in Birlingham Village Hall.

The cost is £2.50 per person and everyone is most welcome to come along for tea or coffee plus a cake or two and a chance to win our free Mystery Entry Prize!

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

We are looking forward to seeing you all again.

## Village WhatsApp Group

*by Jessica Dormer*

The village WhatsApp group is up-and-running and has already proved useful in tracking down a lost dog lead; letting people know whether Eckington Bridge is open; sharing information about repairs to a burst water main; and saving my own bacon (or should that be turkey) when I discovered – on Christmas Day – that I didn't have any tin-foil!

If you are already a member you should be able to add other people to the group yourself.

Otherwise, if you would like to join, please either email me at:

jessica@thedormers.net

or send me a WhatsApp message on 07939 695113.

If anyone has asked to be added, but hasn't been, do let me know.

## St James' Church



*Churchwarden:*
*Adrianne Woodward*
*(Tel. 01386 750936)*

All are welcome to attend the annual Bulb Sunday Service in St James' on Sunday 4th February at 3.00pm.

The service will be led by Canon Claire Lording and will include items from the Upton Parish Choir, with soloist Jayne Swann, and their Director of Music, John Holloway, will be the organist. Also, there will be a variety of appropriate readings by villagers.

Teas can be bought after the service in the Village Hall. Proceeds will go to the Friends of St James' to help with the upkeep of the fabric of the church.

## Snowdrop Teas 2024

*by Caryl Mills*



Thank you to everyone who has signed up to help serve teas during February.

We need people to help on Saturday 17th February which may be a busy day as it is forecast the sun will be shining!

If you are able to help between 11.00am to 1.30pm or 1.30pm to 4.00pm please contact me on 07766 657666 or email caryl-mills@hotmail.co.uk



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## Airband Full Fibre Service

*by David Glover*

*David Glover is the first in the village to be connected to the new Airband Full Fibre service. This is his review of the service.*

I had a positive experience with my Airband installation. The technicians were helpful, and telephone support was excellent.

The network speed is impressive, with the option to take 100, 300, 600 or 900 Mbps, but it's worth noting that the router has only one Ethernet output port, which might be limiting if you want several hard-wired connections. However, there are easy solutions for this, like expanding through a separate switch etc., which I'd be pleased to discuss if it helps anyone.

If you're using WiFi only, then it's not an issue. The fibre cable comes into the property alongside the old BT connection. You do need power at the fibre entry point for the Airband 'network interface box'. An Ethernet cable is then run from this to their router, from which you get great WiFi speeds and the option to connect to a network switch via the single output port.

You can also take a VoIP phone (i.e. a phone that operates over the fibre connection rather than through the BT telephone line) and transfer your existing landline number to this. Alternatively, you can keep your BT landline until the copper cable infrastructure is removed.

Overall, I'm very satisfied with the service.


**Eckington Stores**

We have a range of locally produced products:

- Fladbury meat pies
- LDA fresh meat
- Drapers bread and cakes
- La Parisienne French style bread & cakes
- Pegoty Hedge ready meals
- Pegoty Hedge organic beef
- Bennetts ice cream
- DJ Perks fruit and vegetables
- Meat Company sausage and bacon
- Happy Chucks eggs

We open 7 days per week:

- 0600 to 1830 Monday to Friday
- 0600 to 1800 Saturday
- 0600 to 1300 Sunday

**John, Sue and Mark**
**Tel 01386 750266**




*Seven swans a-swimming: parents and five offspring on the River Avon near Woodfield Farm, 20th January*
*(Photo: Paul Burton)*

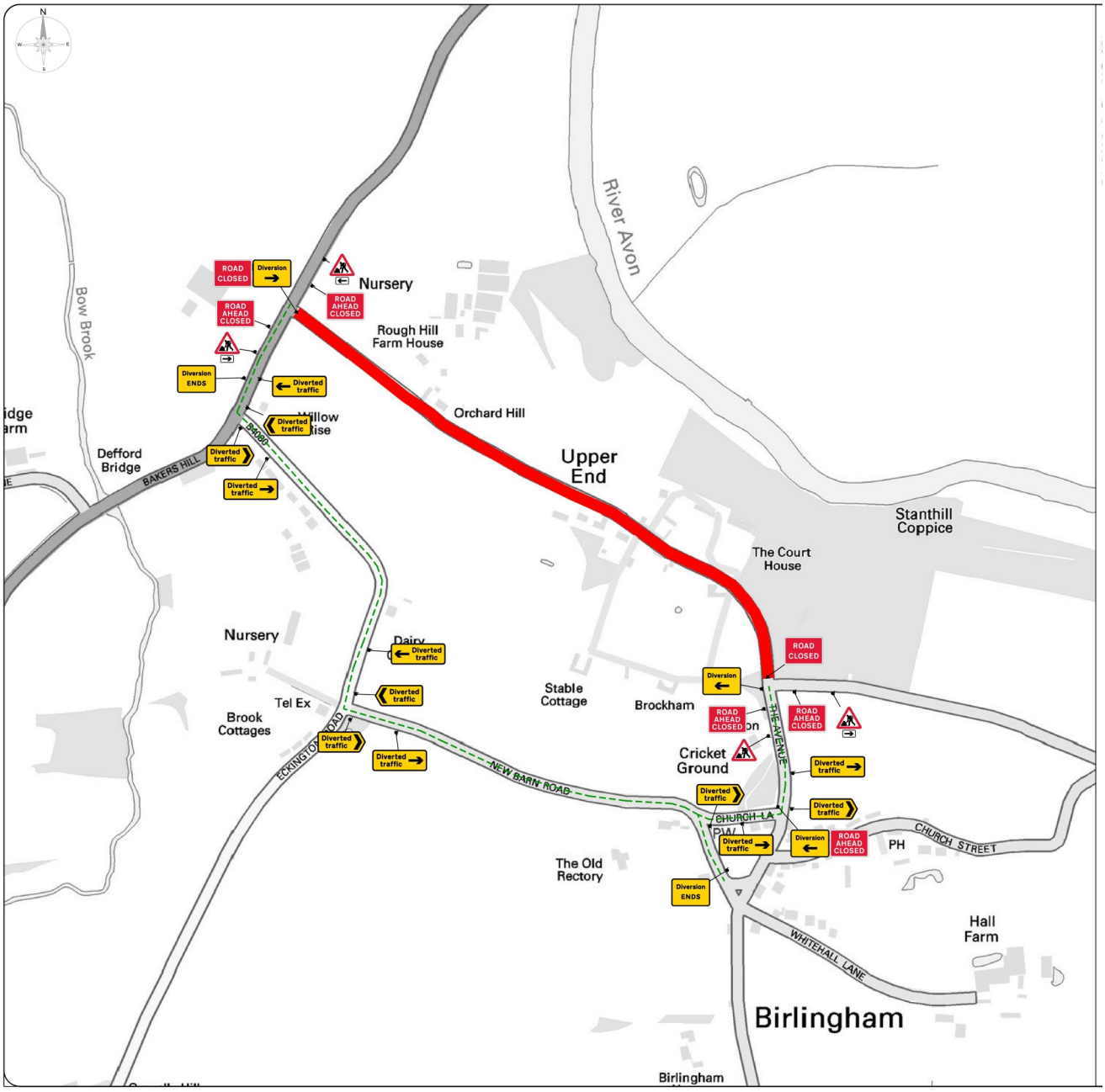
## Road Closure – Upper End

Upper End, from the junction with Defford Road to the junction at Shorthill, will be closed for five days from 12th February. This is to allow for utility works by Airband (the provision of fibre broadband to the village).

The notice of closure is given opposite and the diversion map is below.

**WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**
**PUBLIC NOTICE**
**Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984**
**(C2271 Upper End, Birlingham) (Temporary Closure) Order 2024**
**Proposed Order:** to close that part of C2271 Upper End from its junction with A4104 Defford Road to its junction with C2271 Broadway Road.
**Reason:** Utility works by Airband.
**Exemptions:** to permit access to any land or premises fronting the highway affected where there is no other form of access; and to allow the works to be undertaken.
**Alternative route:** A4104 Defford Road, B4080 Eckington Road, C2271 New Barn Lane, U46415 Church Lane, U46414 The Avenue and vice versa.
**Maximum duration:** 18 Months. Anticipated duration: **5 days** Commencing: **12 February 2024**
Thomas Pollock Head of Commercial Law (Legal & Governance) County Hall Spetchley Road Worcester
**18 January 2024**

1512376 -1-C2271 Upper End, Birlingham
Streetworks Admin WCPO00059177



# Parish Council Report

*by Ian Yates*

Birlingham Parish Council held its meeting at 7.00pm on Wednesday 17th January in the Village Hall. A summary of agenda items follows:

- **Airband - Full Fibre Broadband**

  Installation of the fibre infrastructure by Airband continues around the village and the first few properties have now been connected to their service (see a separate article from David Glover on his experience).

  However, fibre is not yet available in all parts of the village. As previously reported there have been some delays due to Airband having to apply for a road closure at Upper End to install 6 poles to bring the fibre into the village from the A4104 to near Hills Cottage.

  Unfortunately, the wayleave for the 6 poles was refused and so Councillor Porter met with Airband to discuss, as an alternative, that they bury the cable in ducting on land owned by him and his brother which is rented to the farm (GWR). This would be a much-preferred solution and without it full fibre would not be available to Upper End properties.

  The farm agreed to quote for digging the trench and installing the ducting with the cost being met partly by Airband, and the balance coming from the Parish Council and a grant from Worcester County Council. At the time of writing, this was under consideration by Airband but may result in a further delay.

- **District Councillor's Report – Paul Middlebrough**

  A full copy of his report will be included in the Minutes. However here is a short summary:

  - Council Tax Base. For 2024/25 officers are recommending a tax base increase of 0.91% on the 2023/24 position.
  - Corporation Meadow, Evesham. Approval has been given for an allocation of £40,000 against works required to a small woodland and fencing at Corporation Meadow, Evesham.
  - Pershore Station Footbridge. The Executive Board has approved up to £500,000 towards the development and installation of the footbridge at Pershore station.
  - Planning Matters. The draft Wychavon Design Code Supplementary Planning Documents are to go out for public consultation from 8 January 2024 to 5 February 2024. Details of issues relating to the Pershore Area can be found at:

    https://mgov.wychavon.gov.uk/modern.gov/documents/s63676/The%20Draft%20Wychavon%20Design%20Code%20SPD%20for%20the%20Pershore%20and%20Surrounding%20Region.pdf
  - A new head of planning has been appointed and will be taking up his position shortly.

- **County Councillor's Report – Adrian Hardman**
  - WCC have budgeted for a council tax increase of 4.94%
  - They are forecasting a £20M overspend and are expecting to make staff reductions as a result.
  - They have 1100 children in care at present and are having to meet additional costs of home/school and special needs transport.
  - With the ongoing installation of fibre throughout the county, Worcestershire will start removing the old copper telephone infrastructure from end of 2024.
  - Councillor Hardman has received a grant request from Birlingham IW and agreed a grant from the Divisional Fund to help meet the cost of fibre ducting in Upper End.

- **Water leak on the road by the Manor House Lower End**

  Councillors Byrne and Yates will meet with Liam Gormley, Enforcement Officer - Land Drainage, Wychavon District Council on Tuesday 23rd Jan to try and resolve the ongoing problem of water running across the road and creating a hazard when it freezes.

- **2024/25 Budget and Precept**

  The Parish Council discussed the budget for 2024/25 which sets the precept for the year. It took into account the additional cost of installing ducting for Airband's fibre connection in Upper End but was able to make savings elsewhere. So a small increase of £290 in the precept was agreed equivalent to approx. £1.94/property.

- **Planning**

  It was agreed that Councillor Parsons would take over the planning role on the Parish Council from Councillor Byrne. The PC thanked Councillor Byrne for all his help and advice on the many applications that the PC were required to comment on. Several planning applications and enforcement cases in Birlingham were discussed. Full details will be available in the minutes.

- **Defibrillator**

  The defibrillator pads must be replaced every two years. The Parish Council agreed to share the cost of replacement with the Village Hall committee.

- **Communities Together Event for Parish and Town Councils**

  Councillor Parsons attended this event. It provides the Wychavon Executive Board with advice on community support and funding requirements. Full details in the minutes.

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

## *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

## Planning Applications

**The following planning application has been determined by Wychavon District 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 (Listed Building Consent Case No. W/22/02656/LB). **Approved**. Full details and conditions can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website at:

https://plan.wychavon.gov.uk/Planning/Display/W/22/02656/LB

The Parish Council comments are available at:

http://www.birlingham.org/pc_info/pc_comments_22_02656.pdf

## *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.*

## Kyle Gordon confirmed as next Chief Constable for West Mercia Police

*from the office of John Campion, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia*

PCC John Campion's preferred candidate, Kyle Gordon, has been confirmed as the next Chief Constable of West Mercia Police at the Police and Crime Panel today [19th January].

Kyle was chosen by PCC John Campion as the preferred candidate as Chief Constable following a vigorous and open process in December 2023. As a current Commander for the Metropolitan Police Service, he brings a wealth of experience having held a range of roles including with the British Transport Police and Police Service for Northern Ireland.

PCC John Campion said: "I welcome Kyle's drive to build on the progress that has been made to deliver a police service communities can trust and be proud of. I am confident that he will support me in delivering my Safer West Mercia Plan, with a renewed focus on policing with the community."

Kyle Gordon said: "I am delighted to be confirmed as the next Chief Constable for West Mercia Police. I am passionate about delivering a community focused police service that is visible, accessible, responsive, and effective to build further on the trust and confidence we have amongst our communities.

"I am very much looking forward to taking up the role of leading the force and working with PCC John Campion and partners to deliver the Safer West Mercia Plan, whilst ensuring the communities of Herefordshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire and Telford & Wrekin are at the heart of policing."

## *Dates for your diary*

**February**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sat 3/Sun 4 | Snowdrop Teas |
| Sun 4 | Bulb Sunday Service, 3.00pm, St James' Church |
| Wed 7 | Cuppa & Chat, 3.00–4.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall |
| Sat 10/Sun 11 | Snowdrop Teas |
| Thu 15 | Birlingham IW, 7.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall |
| Sat 17/Sun 18 | Snowdrop Teas |
| Sat 24/Sun 25 | Snowdrop Teas |

**March**

| | |
|---|---|
| Wed 6 | Cuppa & Chat, 3.00–4.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall |
| Wed 20 | Birlingham Parish Council, 7.00pm, Birlingham Village Hall |
| Thu 21 | Birlingham IW, 7.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall |

*Birlingham News online* is available at www.birlingham.org. Details of future editions will be emailed to subscribers of *Birlingham News*. These emails are available to residents of Birlingham, their families and friends. If you know anyone who would like to receive these emails, or have any comments or items for inclusion in either the email or online edition of *Birlingham News*, or wish to be removed from the mailing list, please write to news@birlingham.org.

*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 Monday 12th February (for publication on Wednesday 14th February). We regret that we cannot guarantee to include any items submitted after that date.

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