Birlingham News online

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Editorial

What a weekend! Some weeks, nothing much seems to happen. On other occasions, it is hard to keep up with everything going on. This was one such weekend.

It started with the first change in government in 14 years and a Labour landslide in Parliament. Whether you are happy about the new administration or not, we can at least hope for some stability over the next five years.

Then came England's nail-biting win over Switzerland in the Quarter Finals of Euro 2024 on Saturday: a Swiss goal 15 minutes from the end, an England equaliser five minutes later, half an hour of frantic, goal-less extra time and finally – the most cruel way for any team to leave the competition – a 5-3 win for England on penalties.

Lastly, to round off the weekend, a record-breaking ninth win for British driver, Lewis Hamilton in the F1 Grand Prix at Silverstone after a close finish.

It may have been quiet in Birlingham but in the world outside there was plenty going on. Even if you are not normally a fan of either politics or sport, there must have been something there to catch your interest!

Flower & Produce Show

Saturday 7th September

Details of the Flower & Produce Show are shown on the next page.

The full schedule will be included in the next edition of Birlingham News but in the meantime you can view it at:

https://online.fliphtml5.com/xcxcl/djoe/

St James' Church



Churchwarden: Adrianne Woodward
(Tel. 01386 750936)

All are welcome to attend the Hymns and Pimms service on Sunday 14th July at 3.00pm to commemorate St James' Day.

Hymns have been chosen by various village organisations and the bells will be rung prior to the service. Pimms, and other soft drinks, will be served along with nibbles. Glasses will be replenished both during and after the service.

Canon Claire is leading the service and it is to be hoped that as many of you that can will come to support her and St James . . . in spite of the tennis finals!

Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 17th July

The next meeting of Birlingham Parish Council takes place on Wednesday 17th July 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.

The agenda for the meeting will be available shortly at:
http://www.birlingham.org/pc_info/pc_agenda_2024-07-17.pdf

and the draft minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 21st May can be viewed at:
http://www.birlingham.org/pc_info/pc_minutes_2024-05-21.pdf

Birlingham IW

July and August meetings *by Caryl Mills*



The July meeting is a members-only trip. There is no meeting in August.

We will be back in the Village Hall at 7.30pm on 19th September. Enjoy the summer.



Father and recent newborns enjoy twilight in Birlingham
(Photo:Chris Hermon)


Birlingham
Flower and Produce Show 2024
SEPT 7TH | FROM 2:00PM
BIRLINGHAM CRICKET CLUB
WR10 3AD

General Election

Thursday 4th July

The results of the election for the West Worcestershire MP are shown below, along with statistics for the changes in share of the vote and turnout.

All information courtesy of BBC News

West Worcestershire results

✓ Counting complete

Conservative **Harriett Baldwin**	Votes	19,783
	Share	36.2%
	Share change	-24.5
Liberal Democrat **Dan Boatright-Greene**	Votes	13,236
	Share	24.2%
	Share change	+6.1
Labour **Kash Haroon**	Votes	8,335
	Share	15.2%
	Share change	-1.3
Reform UK **Christopher Edmondson**	Votes	7,902
	Share	14.4%
	Share change	+14.4
Green **Natalie McVey**	Votes	5,068
	Share	9.3%
	Share change	+4.6
Party of Women **Seonaid Barber**	Votes	363
	Share	0.7%
	Share change	+0.7

Change compared with 2019

Vote share and change

Party	Vote share	Change since 2019
Conservative	36.2%	-24.5%
Liberal Democrat	24.2%	+6.1%
Labour	15.2%	-1.3%
Reform UK	14.4%	+14.4%
Green	9.3%	+4.6%
Party of Women	0.7%	+0.7%
Others	0.0%	

West Worcestershire turnout

Registered voters:	79,242
West Worcestershire turnout:	69%
Change since 2019:	-6.10%

Annual Parish Meeting

The Birlingham Annual Parish Meeting took place on Tuesday 21st May. The Chairman's report and a summary of other reports were included in a previous edition of *Birlingham News* at www.birlingham.org/village/bn/bn331.pdf.

The Annual Parish Meeting received annual reports from the following:

- The Lengthsman
- The Footpath Warden
- County Councillor Adrian Hardman
- The Jubilee Committee
- District Councillor Paul Middleborough

All these reports are reproduced below.

Lengthsman Report 2023 - 2024

Manor House

The running water has reduced recently probably due the drier weather pointing to a groundwater issue.

The pipework leading to this section starts in a field behind Farm Cottages in what was originally ponds but which are now dry. The route continues via a dry ditch entering a culvert in a field adjacent to Whitehall Lane. From Whitehall House it goes down under the footpath continuing across several fields making its way to the pond in The Moors.

From there it crosses the Manor paddock and under the road and into the open drain on the Manor field before finally entering the river. It seems likely that this section of pipework is blocked somewhere and the pond overflow is taking all the water and now exiting in the Manor paddock. Severn Trent investigations have failed to locate any blockage.

Shorthill/The Avenue

There is a blockage in the pipework from the road gully which runs down the field. Records show that the pipework has been traced and jetted for several yards and then is lost. It is picked up again slightly further down the field where the records show it makes its way along the footpath between Holly House and Leyfield.

It is understood that there was a pond here historically but it was filled in many years ago. At some time the pipework has been replaced with a mixture of VC and PE but of a reduced diameter.

The farm have investigated several times but I am unaware of any conclusion.

Maryworth Barn

gully and pipework restricted. In heavy rain carriageway becomes flooded.

Eckington Road

Footway still badly overgrown

Carl Brassington

Birlingham Footpath Warden's Annual Report

Birlingham has two 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' (e.g. gates, stiles etc.) that needs to be replaced; they also provide an annual strimming service for certain paths which are difficult to maintain.

The main work in the past year for the volunteers has been the controlling/ clearing of undergrowth.

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

County Councillor Adrian Hardman's Annual Report

In view of tonight's meeting being the annual meeting and last month's Panorama programme, which focused on Councils going bust; my brief report focuses rather a lot on the money.

Worcestershire County Council continues to navigate a challenging financial landscape into the financial year 2024/25. Despite sustained efforts to manage costs, we face significant demand and cost pressures in key service areas: Children's Social Care Placements, Home-to-School Transport, and Adult Social Care. These pressures are compounded by the council's fixed cash budget and limited income generation capabilities due to national restrictions on council tax, business rates, and trading income.

In the Current Financial Year (2023/24): The council anticipates a significant overspend, around some £20M; albeit mitigated by additional business rates income, further adult social care grants, and the one-off use of reserves.

The Budget for 2024/25: Despite an increase in public health-related grants and business rates pool funding (rising by £27.9 million), we are not keeping pace with the escalating demand pressures. The budget proposals aim to address these ongoing financial strains, projecting into the 2024/25 fiscal year to manage the structural deficit effectively.

In February 2024, the government acknowledged WCC's financial position, awarding an additional £5 million in grants for social care. Additionally, a 2.99% increase in council tax, coupled with a 2% uplift in the adult social care levy, has been approved through Full Council. These measures, alongside targeted investments in children's and adult social care, enable the council to uphold its capital commitments across critical areas such as the economy, environment, highways, and education.

The council undertook extensive consultations on its draft budget, engaging with a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including scrutiny panels, the school's forum, trade unions, business representatives, parish and town councils, and staff. This collaborative approach ensures that our financial strategies align with the broader community needs and expectations.

Our Corporate Plan underscores our dedication to championing business, supporting children and families, protecting the environment, and promoting health and well-being. Despite the financial challenges, we remain committed to these pillars, ensuring that Worcestershire County continues to thrive.

Worcestershire County Council is at a challenging point, facing significant financial pressures yet bolstered by strategic planning and external support. As we move into 2024/25 financial year, our focus will remain on delivering essential services, managing resources effectively, and advocating for additional government funding to mitigate these pressures further.

The promotion of Health and Wellbeing remains a key priority of Worcestershire County Council. When I was in the cabinet; with the role as the member with overall responsibility for Adult Social Care, and I sat on the Health and Wellbeing Board. Your health and well-being are of paramount importance. Worcestershire County Council are working closely with healthcare providers and community organisations to ensure access to healthcare services and promote healthy lifestyles for all our residents with Prevention being at the heart of all we do.

What a year is has been for flooding and with 10 named storms over the winter this led to considerable disruption with the closure of Eckington bridge on numerous occasions when we had to rebuild the parapets on both sides without the issue of flooding rearing its head. We anticipate one more Rd closure for a day, on the B Rd. I was pleased that we were able to do the resurfacing work in the village and I know that this did not exactly run to plan but from what I can see it is an improvement, but we still have some drainage work to finish off. I'm afraid that we have still to resolve the flooding issue in lower end and I will try to get some movement on this issue but if I could point out to the council where we had a house being constantly flooded from the highways in Bricklehampton because of the backlog this took me 12 months to get resolved and the owner is still unhappy! Just a final point on the Pershore reorganisation of education, I understand that this probably will be delayed by at least a year due to funding issues.

In closing, I would just like to leave you with this one key statistic: 72 1/2% of the budget at Worcestershire County Council is currently spent on 2 1/2% of the population and these are the most vulnerable in society. It is important that we continue to protect this cohort of our population. These are the most vulnerable, and the County Council are committed to ensuring these members of our community are supported and protected.

Thank you for your time and support while I was ill .

Adrian Hardman

Jubilee Committee

The Jubilee Committee has had another busy year, starting with the Coronation celebrations last May.

Birlingham News is delivered to around 95% of households, as well as many former residents. Over the last year we have replaced the original email format with the new online edition. We deliver two issues per month on the second and fourth Wednesdays. Our subscribers are still alerted by an email when the online edition is ready to download. Thank you to the many people who now contribute on a regular basis and particularly Ian Yates for his extensive Parish Council reports.

In the last twelve months we have produced a further two issues of the **Birlingham Bystander**, with the Spring edition about to be delivered.

The **village website** continues to receive many visitors but more volunteers are still needed to take on specific groups of web pages.

(***continues***)

The surviving trees in **Jubilee Wood** are now showing good growth. Last May a group of volunteers tidied round the trees. Thanks to Tree Warden, Rupert Day, for his continuing advice on the upkeep of the wood.

The **Memories Group**, now renamed the History Group, is up and running again under the leadership of Julia Luff.

Our **equipment** has been borrowed for a number of events in the village.

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

Report of Wychavon District Councillor Paul Middlebrough

I am delighted to give you a written report of the main events of Wychavon Council over the past twelve months.

Democratic

At the District Council elections in May 2023 the conservative group remained the largest.

Conservatives	29
Greens	6
Labour	1
Liberal Democrats	7

The leader of the Council Chris Day is the councillor for Ombersley.

Financial

Wychavon remains in a sound financial position and has not been faced with reductions in services. The budget for 2024/25 was agreed at £12,852,000 which results in a Band D council tax increase of £5 resulting in Band D council tax being £125.08.

This is the first rise in Wychavon's council tax for 6 years and reflects the challenges of increases costs and demands for services. That being said Wychavon's District charge is the third lowest in England.

Planning

The Revision of the South Worcestershire Development Plan continues to run mightily slowly as the inspectors ask for more up to date information. It is now expected it will be approved early next year.

This is very serious for some areas because Wychavon does not have a five-year land supply and so applications for medium to larger sized developments have been hard to resist. On a brighter not the Planning Inspectorate seems to be more positive in giving more weight to Neighbourhood Plans.

Green developments

Evesham and Pershore leisure centre dare having £400,000 invested in decarbonisation projects.

The parks contractor has started using Hydrogenated vegetable oil (HVO) in their vans and ride-on mowers to reduce carbon emissions. They are also using Aspen Alkylate petrol which produces approximately 1% of the polluting emissions of regular petrol in the smaller equipment such as strimmer's and blowers. At the same time, they started a 12-month trial of using no herbicides or pesticides in the parks.

Abbey Park, Pershore water play is complete. We now need the weather to improve so we can open it!

(***continues***)

Health

A major investment in Droitwich has been announced to upgrade the leisure facilities at the leisure centre, the Lido and athletics track to make active healthy recreation more accessible.

Key Investments

The Riverside Centre in Evesham is a hindrance to the vitality of the town with empty retail unit and an unattractive visage. Working with the owners, and potential developers the council is developing plans to demolish the centre, bring new housing and retail together with opening up the views to Abbey Park and the river.

Police

Anti-social behaviour, inconsiderate and aggressive driving area constant worry together with IT fraud and domestic abuse.

I would encourage household joining the West Mercia Neighbourhood Matters web site. It provides information and contact details for the local safer neighbourhood teams.

West Mercia Police really would like to hear from you so why not ask your family, friends and colleagues to register too? Talk to the police if you have concerns through Neighbourhood matters.

Wychavon Rural Fund

Capital grants of between £2,500 and £25,000 are available to both private, public or voluntary sector organisations.

£25,000 has been awarded to Avon Navigation Trust's £38,000 project to construct a new, fixed bridge near Strensham Lock to improve the footpath network. This is part of a larger project that will improve the portage paths in the area and bring additional biodiversity to the site.

Community Legacy Grants

Just over £4million in Community Legacy Grants have been awarded. Our investment has enabled communities to build brand new village halls, make major improvements to existing community buildings, create new green spaces and play areas, start a community minibus service and even build a new burial ground and open-air theatre. The scheme is now coming to an end.

Planning Applications

During the year the following new planning applications have been submitted for the parish.

Submitted	Approved	Refused	Being Processed
8	6	1	1

Personal reflection

Coming back on to Wychavon Council after a four-year break has been a pleasure. I have enjoyed meeting, helping and sometimes disagreeing with residents in the ward, but you a friendly group of people. I look forward to continuing to meet and hear from you in the coming year.

Paul Middleborough

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

Road Closure

Wednesday 17th – Friday 19th July

The Avenue from the end of Church Street to just above Church Lane will be closed from Wednesday 17th to Friday 19th July for drainage works by the County Council.

Church Street can be accessed either via Upper End and Shorthill or via Eckington Road and New Barn Lane.

The notice of closure and the official diversion map were included in the last edition of Birlingham News at:

www.birlingham.org/village/bn/bn332.pdf

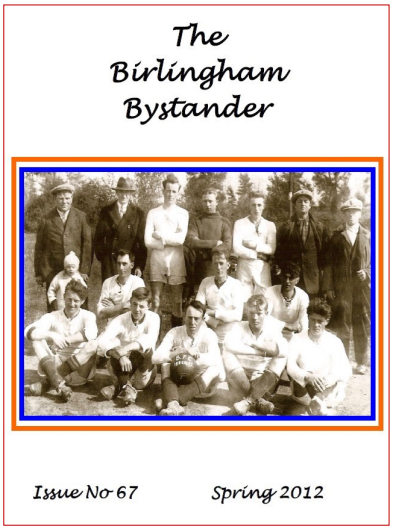
Personal Ads

Babysitting. If anyone requires any babysitting within the village please contact me. Details below.

Georgina Cook (age 17)
Telephone 01386 751421

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.

Bystander Archives



The Spring 2012 edition of the *Birlingham Bystander* begins with an article about the Indigo Kings, Carl Brassington's jazzy blues group.

There are items about Bulb Sunday and the Bulb Teas, the bellringers, the poppy appeal, the forthcoming Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, and the launch of the village website and *Birlingham News*. There are memories and photographs of bygone days, and reports of Christmas activities and the Village Hall.

The wedding is reported of James and Ella Revill. There are obituaries for Irene James, Rosemary Revill and David Cole. Alan and Linda Bradley are welcomed, and there are goodbyes to Monica Wild, and Gerard and Sandi Gasparro.

The front cover features the 1926 Birlingham Football Team.

Issue 67 of the *Bystander* can be viewed at:
www.birlingham.org/village/bystander/issues/bystander067.pdf



Birlingham Village Fete, 22nd June *(Photo: Peter Luff)*

Dates for your diary

July

Sat 13	Birlingham CC 1st XI vs Burghill, Tillington & Weobley CC 2nd XI, 12.30pm
Sun 14	'Hymns and Pimms' service for St James, 3.00pm, St James' Church
Wed 17	Birlingham Parish Council, 7.00pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Thu 18	Birlingham IW (members-only trip)
Sat 27	Birlingham CC 1st XI vs Barnards Green CC 3rd XI, 12.30pm

August

Wed 7	Cuppa & Chat, 3.00–4.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Thu 15	Birlingham IW – no meeting
Sat 17	Birlingham CC 1st XI vs Canon Frome CC 1st XI, 12.30pm
Sat 31	Birlingham CC 1st XI vs Pershore CC 3rd XI, 12.30pm

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 22nd July (for publication on Wednesday 24th July). We regret that we cannot guarantee to include any items submitted after that date.

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