Birlingham News online

Published on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month

No. 368 Wednesday 10th December 2025

Editorial

A few months ago we asked you to fill in a short survey about *Birlingham News*. The response was excellent.

Like everyone else, members of the team have busy lives, so it has taken us a while to work through the replies. However, we are pleased to say that this edition contains the full survey results.

Thank you for your patience!

Musicians Needed!

Saturday 17th January

by Charlotte Baskerville

Are you a first-class flautist, superb singer or even a mind-blowing mandolin player?

We are looking for musicians to play at an event on the evening of Saturday 17th January at St. James' Church. Birlingham has a huge amount of talent and it would be lovely to include performances showcasing a range of ages, instruments and genres. Join us for an evening of music making!

Please get in touch with Charlotte Baskerville via email if you are interested in taking part:

charlotte@baskerville.in

St James' Church



Churchwarden: Adrianne Woodward (Tel. 01386 750936)

Christmas Church News

St James' will be holding its annual Carols and Christingles Service, led by Peter Stansbie, on **Sunday 21st December at 6.00pm**. The service is suitable for 'young and old' and will have contributions from villagers of all ages. After the service a variety of seasonal refreshments will be served in the Village Hall.

Also, you will be welcome to attend **Christmas Day Holy Communion in St James' at 10.30am**, led by Revd Jayne Parker. There will be sherry and mince pies served after the service.



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Parish Council Report

by Ian Yates

Birlingham Parish Council held its meeting at 7.00pm on Wednesday 19th November in the Village Hall. A summary of agenda items follows:

- **Addressing concerns over speeding, residential disruption and pedestrian safety**

  Work continues to address resident concerns.

  Further work has been undertaken to identify hauliers who are ignoring Red Star's transport policy by entering the village before 6.00am (in summer) and 7.00am (in winter). The farm is happy to receive any evidence. Photographic records of early morning lorry movements for August, September, October and part November were presented to Red Star at a meeting on 7th November. This showed that a significant percentage of lorries were ignoring the policy with some even entering before 5.00am. The haulier responsible was identified and Red Star has agreed to contact them to try and improve the situation.

- **Community Initiatives**

  Village groups have been sent a questionnaire to help the parish council understand priorities that might be promoted, supported and subsidised. A number of ideas and suggestions have been received including a sign outside the Village Hall, a contribution towards new central heating for the Village Hall, new village marquee, planters at the entrance to the village and restoration of the traditional signpost on the main road at Upper End. More details will be summarised by Councillor David Glover in a *Birlingham News* article.

- **Wychavon District Council Report – Paul Middlebrough**

  Local Government Reorganisation

  The Council's proposal for a new unitary local government structure in Worcestershire supports the case for a North and South Worcestershire (two unitary councils) model.

  "Working with Malvern Hills and Worcester City to shape a thriving Worcestershire, North and South, where every community flourishes and public satisfaction drives everything we do. Through bold local leadership and the power of devolution, we will unlock opportunity, remove barriers and deliver services that truly reflect the needs of our people and places.

  By creating two dynamic councils rooted in local identity, we will build vibrant, sustainable communities where residents and partners can grow, connect and succeed. This is our commitment: a local and responsive Worcestershire, driven by what works best for each unique area."

  While a single unitary council offers greater savings, the North & South model provides a viable approach focused on local delivery and outcomes. In reshaping services and supporting proactive transformation, residents and customers will see more robust and efficient councils in the future.

  The two-unitary-councils option protects our residents from a vicious harmonisation of council tax to bring it up to the levels in Redditch.

  The proposal covers community engagement/empowerment and details the potential for parish and town councils to have a key role as representatives on any neighbourhood area committees for local decision making and working alongside integrated neighbourhood teams.

  The council will vote on supporting this approach on 19th November and submit it to Government by 28th November.

  It is the government who have imposed the unitary solution, and they will decide on the next steps in March of next year.

- **Lengthsman retirement and vacancy**

  Carl Brassington, our long standing lengthsman, has decided to retire at the end of December. He has served the village well for many years and the Parish Council would like to thank him for all his hard work. I'm sure we would all like to join in wishing him a happy retirement. The Parish Clerk, June Hiden, has taken the action to find someone who can take over the role.

- **Parish Council vacancy**

  A reminder that there is a vacancy on the Parish Council. If you are interested in joining, please contact the parish clerk at birlingham_clerk@yahoo.co.uk.

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



Jayne Brassington

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Christmas Bin Collections

Dates for bin collections in Birlingham over the Christmas period are as follows:

- **Black bins**: Saturday 20th December (replacing Monday 22nd December) plus up to two extra black refuse sacks placed next to the bin

  Tuesday 6th January (replacing Monday 5th January) – plus up to two extra black refuse sacks placed next to the bin

- **Green bins**: Tuesday 30th December (replacing Monday 29th December) plus any number of clear recycling sacks placed next to the bin

- **Brown bins**: Tuesday 30th December (replacing Monday 29th December)

Clear recycling sacks will be available from Pershore Civic Centre but any clear sacks can be used.

Make sure that your bins are out by 7.00am as collections may be earlier than usual.

Wychavon District Council's guide to what can and cannot go in your green recycling bin over Christmas is shown below.

The Wychavon website is still showing 2024 Christmas information but their full list of Christmas collection dates (shown on the next page) can be found at:

https://www.wychavon.gov.uk/component/fileman/?view=file&routed=1&itemless=1&name=CS%20-%20Christmas%20Collection%20Dates%20flyer%202025.pdf&folder=Documents/Waste/2025&container=fileman-files

More information on Wychavon waste and recycling in general is available at:

https://www.wychavon.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/christmas-waste-and-recycling

Your naughty and nice Christmas recycling guide

by Wychavon District Council

Here is the Wychavon District Council guide to help you get your recycling right and cut your waste this Christmas.

The Nice List

These go in your green bin/clear sack or can be taken to a Household Recycling Centre where indicated.

Wrapping paper – if it is not glittery or metallic/plastic lined. Scrunch your wrapping paper into a ball and if it holds its shape it can be recycled

Cardboard packaging – please flatten before putting in your green bin/clear sack.

Glass bottles – all colours can go in your green bin. If on a sack collection, please take to a Household Recycling Centre or one of our bring banks.

Crackers – if the wrapper can be scrunched and holds its shape then it can be recycled along with the cardboard tube, paper joke, paper hat and the snapper. Any plastic prize inside needs to go in your black bin/sack.

Plastic bottles – all colours except black can go in your green bin/clear sack. Leave lids on.

Advent calendars – the outer cardboard and plastic inner can go in your green bin/clear sack if it is free from foil or chocolate and is not made of black plastic.

Plastic tubs - pots or trays, such as those used for nibbles or dips (as long as not black plastic), can go in your green bin/ clear sack.

Metal drinks cans - these go in your green bin/clear sack.

Tin foil – if clean and free from food this can be recycled at a Household Recycling Centre. Please do not put in your green bin/clear sack.

Cardboard takeaway boxes – if not too greasy and free from food these can go in your green bin/clear sack

Plastic or metal sweet/biscuit tins – these go in your green bin/clear sack.

Christmas cards – these go in your green bin/clear sack or save them to reuse as tags next year.

The Naughty List

These items go in your black bin/sack.

Tinsel and other non-paper-based decorations.

Black plastic – of any kind.

Polystyrene – like the kind used in packaging.

Paper napkins and plates.

Metallic or plastic-backed wrapping paper (do the scrunch test to check).

Glitter-covered products and bows or ribbons (unless you can save them to use next year).

Santa's Helpers

Additional ways to reduce and reuse.

Christmas trees – real ones can be taken to Household Recycling Centres.

Food waste – portion plan and use up leftovers. Visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com for tips.

Clothing – if good quality donate them to a charity shop or put them out for collection with your black bin/sack in a plastic bag and we will take them to be reused or recycled.

Unwanted toys/gifts – donate them to a charity shop.

Batteries – take them to any supermarket or retailer that sells batteries and use their battery recycling point. You can also put them in a plastic bag and leave them on top of your **black bin** for recycling.

Usual collection day	Festive collection day
Monday 22 December	Saturday 20 December
Tuesday 23 December	Monday 22 December
Wednesday 24 December	Tuesday 23 December
Thursday 25 December	Wednesday 24 December
Friday 26 December	Monday 29 December
Monday 29 December	Tuesday 30 December
Tuesday 30 December	Wednesday 31 December
Wednesday 31 December	Friday 2 January
Thursday 1 January	Saturday 3 January
Friday 2 January	Monday 5 January
Monday 5 January	Tuesday 6 January
Tuesday 6 January	Wednesday 7 January
Wednesday 7 January	Thursday 8 January
Thursday 8 January	Friday 9 January
Friday 9 January	Saturday 10 January

Collections as normal from **Monday 12 January 2026**

Extra waste and recycling

From **Saturday 20 December 2025 to Monday 12 January 2026 only**, you can put out up to two extra sacks of general waste next to your black bin. Extra recycling can be put out next to your green bin in clear sacks. You can get these from libraries in Broadway, Droitwich Spa, Evesham and from the Civic Centre in Pershore.

Please make sure bins are out by 7am as collection times may be different to normal.

Garden waste customers:

If you have a real Christmas tree, you can put it in your garden waste bin. You can also cut it into manageable sections, no more than 4 ft in height, and leave it beside your garden waste bin.

If you are not one of our garden waste customers, then you can sign up for £54 a year at **www.wychavon.gov.uk/waste**



Download your collection calendar for 2026 at **www.wychavon.gov.uk/calendar**

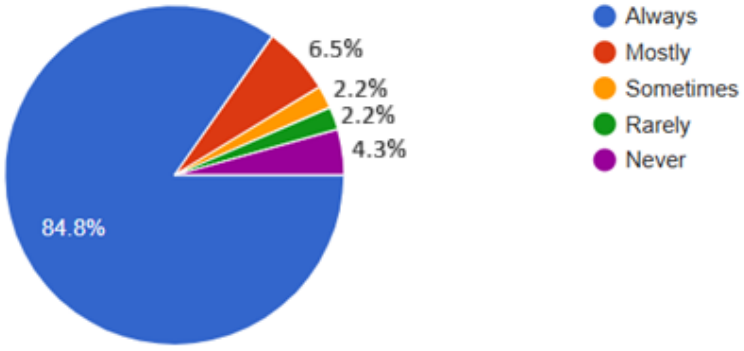
Birlingham News Survey Results

Earlier this year, we are asked you to complete a short online survey to let us know your views on *Birlingham News* and asked you to let us know if there were any changes you would like to see. The *Birlingham News* team has been very busy over the summer but we are now able to publish the results.

Thank you to all those who took the time to complete the survey. The full results for each of the six questions are given below.

Our analysis of the results and our responses to the main comments are given below.

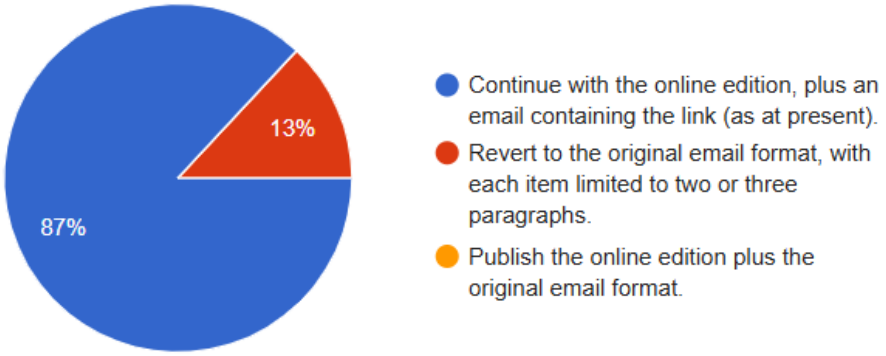
1. How often do you read the original email edition of *Birlingham News*?



We are pleased, but perhaps not surprised, that 91% of the people who responded to this survey always or mostly read *Birlingham News*.

How those who never read *Birlingham News* stumbled across the survey is more of a mystery!

2. How would you like to see *Birlingham News* published in the future?



It is encouraging that the vast majority (87%) are happy with the current format.

Unfortunately, it is not feasible to produce a text version as well as the online edition but we would welcome suggestions from those who preferred the old email format as to how we can make *Birlingham News* more accessible for them.

3. Would you be willing to help with the preparation of Birlingham News in any way? If so, please give your contact details

Thank you to those who already contribute to *Birlingham News* or have offered to help (including a reader in France!)

4. Are there any changes you would like to see to *Birlingham News* or do you have other comments?

* *Must be a considerable amount of work preparing the online edition when the message is the same? Personally I would prefer simpler emails*

  The majority of readers seem to prefer the current online format but we would welcome ideas for how we can provide the essential information in a more accessible format.

* *I think it's good as it stands. Unfortunately the email always arrives in my bin, so sometimes I miss reading it.*

  Make sure news@birlingham.org is included in your Safe Senders list!

* *The frequency could be reduced to, say, monthly and any urgent news disseminated in occasional emails.*

  We would prefer to keep to twice-monthly editions as some news would be very out-of-date by the time of publication and some notices of events would have to be given a long time in advance.

We have attempted to answer each of the points submitted but if you disagree with our conclusions please let us know at news@birlingham.org.

(Comments *continued*)

* *I very rarely read the editorial – I don't see the point of it, the village isn't big enough for anything of substance to happen once a fortnight to justify an interesting editorial.*

  The editorial provides the opportunity either to summarise what is in Birlingham News or to muse on a topic that is not strictly 'news'. You can always skip over it. We welcome guest editorials from our readers.

* *I find it slightly awkward having both The Bystander and the BN. Do you put results of social events in the BN, or wait for the magazine, which makes the news very out of date when it eventually is printed? I think there might be room for amalgamating the two, and having a more newsy and up to date BN.*

  These publications serve different purposes. The *Bystander* provides a historical record or the major events in the village while Birlingham News is intended to give a snapshot or what is happening now. Sometimes there is a slight overlap (for instance, when thanks are given in BN after an event, along with a photo or two, while the main report is held for the *Bystander*) but generally they are distinct.

* *More historical information regarding the village, photos etc.*
* *Compile a listed collection of old photographs with (brief) details that can be accessed by readers.*

  This is really the job of the *Bystander* or the website. If you would like to help build up historical information on the website we would love to hear from you.

* *Less complaining about things!*

  We weren't aware that there were lots of complaints but we are always happy to receive letters from residents!

Finally, a small selection of the compliments:

* *We think what you produce is great, we just need to get into the habit of reading it more often. Thank you for the time the team takes to produce it because we are very aware that these things don't just happen.*
* *I think the newsletter hits the mark perfectly, it is informative and a lovely way to keep up with all the village news.*
* *I think the format and frequency are about right and I think it's a fabulous service which needs to be preserved.*
* *I enjoy the publication – especially news and finding out what is happening in Birlingham even though we have moved from the Village. It enables us to return for particular events.*

Thank you to all those who submitted supportive remarks like these. We will continue to publish *Birlingham News* as it is at present but we are always interested to hear suggestions for improvement.

5. How do you access *Birlingham News*?



Since our last survey three years ago, there has been a significant move away from computer/laptop access to mobile phones..

We are not surprised that those who receive a regular paper copy of the email have not been able to access this survey.

6. Please select your postcode.

Postcodes	Area	% responses by area
WR10 3AA	Upper End	13%
WR10 3AB	Village Centre	24%
WR10 3AQ	Church Street	11%
WR10 3AD-3AG	Lower End	20%
WR10 3BX, 3BZ, 3DA, 3DB, 3DJ	Defford Road, Eckington Road, Nafford	13%
OTHER	Out of village	17%

Birlingham News is currently distributed to over 95% of households and roughly a third of those responded. There was a good spread of responses from around the village and it was particularly encouraging to hear from so many people no longer living in Birlingham.

Thank you very much to everyone who took the trouble to complete our survey.

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: Discharge of conditions 4 (Bat mitigation strategy) and 5 (External lighting) of planning application W/25/02657/HP (Case No. W/25/02072/CCO). **Approved**. Full details can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website at:

https://plan.wychavon.gov.uk/Planning/Display/W/25/02072/CCO



Defibrillator Code

The code to unlock the defibrillator at the front of the Village Hall is:

C1234

Personal Ads

Personal adverts should consist of a maximum of 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 Winter 2020 edition of the *Birlingham Bystander* contains an article about the installation of bird boxes in the churchyard and reflections on Armistice Day, one of several occasions curtailed by the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.

There is a copy of a letter from the new headmistress of Birlingham Village School in 1946, information on the SmartWater initiative, advice on planting wildflowers and a recipe for plum and port mousse.

The first appearance of 'Hairy Spotter' is followed by Adrianne Woodward's description of a year in the life of a churchwarden and a report of the cricket season. The building of the new outdoor shelter at the Swan Inn is described and there is a report of the latest changes at the Village Hall.

There are welcomes for Terry and Martin Cox, Pierre and Denise Nayna, and the Garle family. The death of Dr Steven McVittie is recorded.

Issue 84 of the *Bystander* can be viewed at:

www.birlingham.org/village/bystander/issues/bystander084.pdf

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Dates for your diary

December

Sun 21	Carols and Christingles, 6.00pm, St James' Church
Thu 25	Christmas Day Holy Communion, 10.30am, St James' Church

January

Wed 7	Swan Inn reopens
Wed 7	Cuppa & Chat, 3.00–4.30pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Sat 17	Evening Musical Concert, St James' Church – details to follow
Wed 21	Birlingham Parish Council, 7.00pm, Birlingham Village Hall
Thu 22	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 22nd December (for publication on Wednesday 24th December). We regret that we cannot guarantee to include any items submitted after that date.

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