



# BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2006



Issue No.11

[www.barntgreen.org.uk](http://www.barntgreen.org.uk)

#### Chairman's Introduction

Welcome to David Gilburn and Rick Main who have joined the Parish Council. Both are hard working, community minded, busy people and they will bring new vigour to the council. An introduction to them both is included in this issue of the newsletter. All parish councillors will face a general election in May 2007 - now is the time for **you** to consider offering yourself to serve the community for a four year period. The Parish Council adopted the Parish Plan at its July meeting; the Plan has now been submitted to both the District and County Councils and the Police. It is intended to serve as an information source for them and provide a clear indication of what the majority of the residents and users of the village are concerned with and what actions they would like to see from service providers. It is the intention of the Parish Council to robustly address the 31 recommendations of the Plan. A full compliment of councillors and support from co-opted residents is essential-please join us.

Elaine Buckett, chairman Barnt Green Parish Council

#### New Councillors



A warm welcome to David Gilburn (pictured left) and Rick Main who have joined the Parish Council. David and Rick live in Barnt Green and both served on the Parish Plan Steering Committee. They are fully committed to seeing the implementation of the Parish Plan, for which David acted as editor.

David is married to Anne, and has a son and daughter. They have lived in Barnt Green for over 16 years, having previously lived in the Netherlands for a similar period. David is a chartered accountant, having spent most of his career working as a tax advisor, although is now semi-retired. Spends part of his spare time looking after the garden. Likes food, wine and travel. Rick has lived in Sandhills Road since 1987. He worked for MG Rover until its demise and has since set up his own consultancy offering business improvement services to smaller companies. He took on the job of Parish Council archivist earlier this year and is always on the look out for historical information about the village. Rick is a member of Barnt Green Sports Club and is a keen tennis player.

#### **Budget 2007-2008**

The Parish Council is in the process of building its budget for 2007-08. The draft

budget will be presented to the council for discussion at its November meeting, and the final budget will be signed off in January.

You are most welcome to attend any Parish Council meetings; if you particularly wish to hear about the council's spending plans for the coming year, or have any input to make, then please come along to the council meeting on Monday November 27<sup>th</sup> at 7.00pm at the Parish Centre. (See page 5)

**CALLING ALL READERS!**  
**Come and explore your local LIBRARY**  
**at COFTON HACKETT**  
**Situated on the left hand side of Barnt**  
**Green Rd. just before the Rose**  
**Hill/Groveley Lane roundabout.**

NOW WITH EXTENDED OPENING HOURS – see below.

Your local library is now open until 8.00pm on Friday evenings, and on Saturday afternoons. This gives extra opportunities for family visits.

The library ran a number of events during the year including a summer reading challenge; a Bookstart Bookcrawl; the Queen's Birthday celebration, which all libraries took part in on Saturday June 24<sup>th</sup>. when youngsters enjoyed birthday cake, and 'Hunt the Crown Jewels' in the library, as well as decorating cards fit for a Queen! Cofton Hackett Brownies also provided a very colourful and imaginative spring display. All those who took part in the Decorate an Easter Egg competition were awarded a prize, as the standard was so high.

Cofton Hackett welcomed a new assistant Mrs June Palmer in April, and she will be pleased to help you on Saturday afternoons.

Children needing Homework Help can access a computer reserved especially for them, on Friday evenings from 5.30pm – 8.00pm.

At all other times our two public computers can be booked in advance by phone, using your borrower card. Anyone with the internet at home can also book via the website – [www.worcestershire.gov.uk](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk) - Here there is also the facility to renew books, and also reserve titles at a cost of 40p. This charge is 50p for books requested in the library.

For information, and computer booking, ring Mrs Di Morgan Community Library Co-Ordinator – 0121 453 5693

#### **OPENING HOURS**

TUES. & WED. – 2.30 - 5.30

FRI - 2:30 – 5:00 and 5.30 – 8.00

SAT - 9.30 – 1.00 and 2:00 – 5:30

#### **The Parish Plan**

The Parish Plan was adopted by the Parish Council at its meeting on July 24<sup>th</sup> and the council is in the process of revising its methods of operation to ensure the successful implementation of the Plan.

This will place a considerable workload on all councillors and the council will be looking for enthusiastic volunteers to help see the plan through to fruition. If you are interested in offering your services, please contact the executive officer.

#### **Parking**

Parking continues to be a thorny issue in the village and was highlighted as a major concern in the Parish Plan. We have had many complaints of cars being parked in disabled bays without displaying the blue badge. All complaints and registration numbers are passed to the police. Also all registration numbers of cars parked in restricted waiting zones, to the detriment of the traders caused by the reduction in spaces for shoppers, are reported to the police. There are several cars that are often parked for long periods in the village – again their index numbers are noted and passed to the police for them to take some action.

Parking in a disabled bay without displaying the blue Badge is illegal, it is antisocial, and it shows complete indifference to others.

The parish council does as much as it can but it is up to the police and to you-please report all such incidences to PC Jayne Willetts at Rubery Police Station. You can ask to remain anonymous if you feel vulnerable. Perhaps together we will get some action.

The council also receives complaints from time to time about deliveries in the village, and lorries - particularly skip lorries -

causing noise. It would be most helpful if residents could note the company, vehicle registration, date and time of the problems so that we can work with the traders and others to try and resolve any problems

### **Keep Barnt Green Tidy**

Now is a good time to trim your hedges. If your garden abuts the pavement, please cut your hedge back hard to prevent encroachment onto the footway. We receive many complaints about the hedges and in winter they can be very dangerous - either directly or indirectly - by forcing people onto the road. Blackspots are Fiery Hill Road and Hewell Road.

We hope residents have noticed the improvements to the area around the railway bridge at the junction of Hewell Road and Hewell Lane. This has given a much neater appearance to an area that was previously overgrown and used for flytipping.

### **Footpaths**

The Parish Council has now received funding from Worcestershire County Council to begin work on the upgrading of stiles on the parish footpaths. This will usually take the form of a replacement pedestrian gate which will make the paths more accessible for disabled walkers, and will be more "dog friendly".

The first footpath to be upgraded is the one that starts at the bottom of the Bittell Road playing field. This should overcome the problem of sheep finding their way onto the playing field and has the full support of the local farmer.

Simon Richards, our footpaths officer, is planning walks for both the autumn and spring. Watch the noticeboard and website for more details.

### **Bittell Road Playing Field**

As users of the playing field will be aware, we have had some problems with the installation of the sockets for the new goalposts. We are in discussion with the suppliers and hope to have the situation resolved shortly.

Many thanks to the owner of the land on which the tree with the overhanging branch was causing concern. The owner quickly

responded to the appeal in our summer newsletter and arranged for the offending branch to be removed.

The Parish Council is looking to form an ad hoc group to look after the trees at the lower end of the field. This is a lovely wooded area, but needs attention from time to time to keep the trees and undergrowth under control. We are talking to Worcestershire County Council's countryside officer about the possibility of having some "work days" under his supervision. If you are interested in joining such a group, please contact the executive officer.

### **Chairman's e-mailbox**

Apologies to any residents who have experienced problems sending e-mails to the Parish Council chairman at the [chair@barntgreen.org.uk](mailto:chair@barntgreen.org.uk) address. We have now cleared out the mailbox and access should be much easier. We are currently working on a re-design of the council website which should ensure that such problems do not occur in the future.

### **Wanted – a Super Sleuth**

The Parish Council is looking for a talented individual to help it uncover funding sources for various projects in the community. The council has had some success in securing grants for projects such as the Parish Plan and the new playground equipment, but there are a lot more untapped funding sources out there.

Qualities: essential - tenacity and time; desirable-a hard head for when it hits brick walls. Help can be given from experienced fund seekers.

If you are interested or have any experience of securing funding, please contact the executive officer.

### **County Comput@bus**

Worcestershire County Council operates a purpose built, fully equipped mobile computer classroom which offers free introductory computer classes to anyone over 19 years of age. Courses cover basic internet and e-mail and last for 2 hours per week for a six week period. The

Comput@bus can accommodate a maximum of eight students and can be located in any public area. Anyone interested in pursuing this opportunity, please contact the executive officer. If we get enough support, we can arrange for classes to be held in Barnt Green in the new year.

#### **Verges on Bittell Road**

A meeting to discuss the state of the grass verges on Bittell Road has been arranged for Tuesday October 31<sup>st</sup> at the home of Parish Council vice-chairman Judith Jagger. All Bittell Road residents from the affected areas have been invited.

#### **Shoplifting**

There have been several incidences of shoplifting over the summer period, and with Christmas approaching this could happen again. If you see anything suspicious in the village, please contact one of the local traders. There is a "ShopWatch" scheme in operation in Barnt Green and traders have instant access to the CCTV camera control room. Alternatively, ring the police at Rubery Police station.

#### **Village Clean-up**

Many thanks to The Victoria inn and to Meadow Farm butchers for their help and support for the village clean-up day held on October 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Parish Council Budget for 2007-2008**

The Parish Council is funded through the local tax system. Each year the Parish Council tells the District Council how much it needs for the following year to run its services, and that amount is added to the Council tax bill for each household in the parish and is known as the precept. For this current year, the estimated revenue expenditure was approximately £44,000; a grant of £4600 was received from the District Council to defray "concurrent functions" and the remaining £6000 of the grant towards new playground equipment was also received. After making allowances for the estimated costs of acquiring and running a Parish Office and setting aside an amount of reserves to cover unexpected costs, the precept was set at £56,000.

This year a draft budget has been prepared and will be finalised at the Parish Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2006. The whole of the draft budget will be displayed on the website, and hard copies can be requested from the Executive Officer. The Parish Council welcomes your comments on the budget and parishioners are entitled to attend the council meeting on November 27<sup>th</sup> to express their views. Also a "Drop-in surgery" has been organised for Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> November from 09.30 – 11.30 at the front of the Happy Valley Chinese takeaway in Hewell Road, at which residents are welcome to call in and discuss the budget with councillors.

The draft budget includes the cost of more or less everything the Parish Council would like to do next year, at a revenue cost of approximately £46,500. At this stage it looks unlikely that any concurrent functions grant to offset this (paid by the District Council) will be forthcoming. The draft budget includes the following items of expenditure:

- Continuing the programme of replacing the concrete street lighting columns
- Replacing the tarmac path and re-landscaping the Park on the Sandhills Road side
- Installing planters on the pavement in front of the Tesco block of shops
- Replacing two benches
- Covering the cost of Parish Council elections in May 2007

It does not include the cost of implementing some of the recommendations from the Parish Plan, in particular the cost of funding a traffic warden and of installing an adventure playground in the Bittell Road playing field. It is hoped that some of these costs could be met from a further "106 monies" grant from the District Council. In addition the Council continues to look for premises in the village which would serve as an office for the executive officer and as a community centre with IT facilities. This would be funded through a loan and we have added a further £15855 to the total revenue expenditure to cover the costs of acquiring and running such a facility which would be of enormous benefit to the community and the council.

These amendments mean that the predicted total required by precept for 2007-2008 is around £60,000, an increase of between 6 and 8 per cent on the current year's figure.

**Dates for your diary....**

Monday October 30 <sup>th</sup>	Parish Council Meeting (Note 7.30 start time for this month)
Saturday November 18 <sup>th</sup>	Drop-In Surgery on council precept. 09.30-11.30am, Happy Valley.
Monday November 27 <sup>th</sup>	Parish Council Meeting
Friday December 8 <sup>th</sup>	Carol Service – 3.45pm at the Millennium Arch

The latest information on village activities can be found on the Parish website. If you have any activities that you would like to bring to the attention of local residents, please contact the executive officer.