

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2005

Issue No.4



www.barntgreen.org.uk

If a copy in larger print or in Braille is required, please contact the Clerk

Vacancy for Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

A vacancy has arisen for the post of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to the Council and the Council is in the process of recruiting a new Clerk.

If you are interested in the post, an application pack can be obtained from the Clerk, and applications should be returned by 4th February 2005.

The post will be challenging and interesting with opportunities to develop the role and contribute to community life.

Chairman's Introduction

It is an appropriate time to look forward and plan. This year residents will have the opportunity to shape the community and determine how it will develop over the next ten years. If you do not, others will and the result will affect us all. The Parish Plan will be drawn up in the next few months. It will be the blue print of what and how the community sees itself in the future and will be used to form an action plan to cover a ten year period. It will enable the Parish Council to budget, and it will be a benchmark against which performance can be measured.

How do you wish to see the village develop over the next ten years? Do you want the commercial services to expand? Do you envisage the centre developing into a mini town centre? Do you think this is desirable or inevitable? Do you want it to stay as it is? Do you want more shops? If so what types? Or fewer shops?

All these questions need to be answered by you. If you do not let us know what your visions are, others will and you may not like what happens. Before it is too late - please let us know. Or, why not volunteer to join the Parish Plan Steering Committee – if you are interested please contact the Council.

As part of information gathering, a questionnaire will be delivered to every household, please take time to complete it.

At the Annual Parish Meeting on the 4th May 2005, we hope to minimise the formal meeting and to give you a further opportunity to contribute to the Parish Plan. We want to encourage everyone to attend this 'Village Evening' so please make a note in your diary; we will try to make it an enjoyable event.

Wheelie Bins

The remainder of the village will shortly be using wheelie bins. If you have any problems with the new system please contact 01527 881633. It has been suggested that a byelaw be created to prevent wheelie bins being kept at the front of houses. We looked into the legal aspects and it seems doubtful this can be done. However, we will keep it under review.

Pedestrian Safety Measures, Hewell Rd

The Highways Partnership Unit (HPU) has now received correspondence from some frontagers on Hewell Road as a result of the bollard notice that was issued last year and, with its Legal Department, will check the responses to see if these properties have the right to access their property from the road. Their engineers will then work up an appropriate design.

Millennium Arch

It was very sad to see that in December the arch at the entrance to the park on Hewell Road was hit by a vehicle, damaging the pillars beyond repair. In the interests of safety they were dismantled straight away and quotes are now being obtained to rebuild it. It is hoped that the cost of this can be recovered from the driver. If you have any information which would help us identify the driver please contact us.

Land at the BT Telephone Exchange

An application for permission to build 24 flats on this land was submitted to the District Council on behalf of BT some time ago. It is understood that this application will be dealt with fairly soon, and that there are developers interested in the site and surrounding areas. The Parish Council is keen to secure extra parking for the village as part of any development in this part of the village and will do its best to ensure this is part of any scheme.

Crossing Point on Bittell Road

The Parish Council and residents have on many occasions asked if it would be possible to install a pedestrian crossing on Bittell Road, near the Baptist Church. The police have recently contacted us to say that they would support this measure and we are meeting with them to try to find a way of funding it, which is always the problem.

Website

The website is to be upgraded. Any ideas would be appreciated.

Barnt Green Festival

The Parish Council is hoping to stage a Festival on 25th June this year – watch out for details! If you have any ideas, please contact Betty Lucas on 445 1370.

Parking on Hewell Road

The Police have joined with the Parish Council in lobbying the District Council to consider decriminalising parking. This means that enforcement of waiting restrictions on roads can be done by District Council wardens rather than the police and has two benefits; first, it frees up the police for more serious matters and secondly, it means that any revenue could be used to fund the scheme. The Parish Council could then supplement the hours of enforcement along the lines of our original plan, supported by residents, to part-fund a traffic warden. Several neighbouring district councils have decriminalised parking with great success, but unfortunately Bromsgrove District Council has decided not to take a proactive approach but instead to wait and see.

The police have been a little more active recently in enforcing the waiting restrictions, but regrettably they report that the majority of offenders are people working in the village and residents. **Please** respect the safety of pedestrians on the pavements and the rights of others to use the parking facilities. If you work in the village, the Victoria Inn and Barnt Green Social Club have kindly offered their car parks to shoppers and staff, so please use these rather than those designated for shoppers.

Carol Service

The Carol Service around the Christmas Tree was well attended and a very enjoyable start to the festive season. Thank you to all who took part and to Meadow Farm who allowed us to use their premises for the refreshments. Thanks also to Mr Temple for the loan of the photo on the front cover. Any there any volunteers, residents or traders, to do mulled wine this year?

Park, Hewell Road

RoSPA strongly recommends that so the beech hedge in the centre of the park has been cut back and stock fencing installed. Whilst it is a bit unsightly at the moment, we are confident that in a year or two it the stock fencing will no longer be visible.

Car Parking at the Station

The cost of parking at the station car park will increase from £1 to £2 per day with effect from 1st April 2005. However, the Parish Council is negotiating with the District Council to see if there is any way of lessening the impact this will have on the village. We will keep you informed of any developments.

Rendering Plant, Hopwood

You will all have read in the local press an action group called HARM (Hopwood Against Rendering Movement) has been set up in Hopwood to fight a proposed rendering plant for animal carcasses. The output from this 25 metre factory chimney and two processors, one working continuously and one working in batches, has a total capacity to render more than 100,000kg of animal offal each day. If it is not correctly controlled HARM has real concerns that the effect on the immediate area might be devastating, creating health and environmental pollution. HARM is so concerned about this they have employed the services of a solicitor to help them properly oppose the planning application in order to ensure the go-ahead to this rendering plant is not given. If you would like to contribute to the fight please contact H.A.R.M, Mrs Gail Simpson, 84, Waterside Orchard, Hopwood, Birmingham B48 7AE.

What Do You Think About...?

During the past few months some suggestions have been received from residents, and your views on these would be most welcome.

1. "In order to really improve safety for children in the village, it is suggested that:
 - parking is prevented on both sides of the road for a considerable distance either side of the school;
 - a limit is put on how long parents can spend chatting to other parents whilst their respective cars remain parked outside the school - thereby limiting the opportunity for other parents to park";
2. "The Parish Council should buy the fields around the Barnt Green Inn and maintain them for the local community";
3. "The Parish Council should provide road and pavement sweeping services, funded by the precept";
4. "Residents should be banned from keeping their wheelie bins at the front of their properties"

Please either contact one of the Parish Councillors or the Clerk with you thoughts or leave a comment via the website. Let us know what you think!

Making your mind up

Advice from Worcestershire County Council Trading Standards Office

Changing our mind and returning something we have bought, simply because we no longer like it or it doesn't fit, has become second nature. But the tide is turning; well-known high street stores are bucking the trend in an attempt to control the situation and are beginning to rigidly stick to their rights within the law.

So what is the law? If a product or service is of unsatisfactory quality, unsafe, not fit for the purpose for which it was intended, or misdescribed you can reject it by returning it to the retailer. This protection is covered by The Sale of Goods Act 1979 (as amended).

What if I want to return goods that I don't like or don't fit? If the goods don't fall under the points above then you have to abide by the shops returns policy. This is usually detailed on the back of your receipt or alternatively at the checkout.

Returns information may also be accompanied by the words 'Your Statutory Rights are not Affected' - this emphasises that the protection under The Sale of Goods Act still applies. What is important to remember is that shop policies are not all the same.

What if I buy things remotely e.g. via the internet or mail order? This is distance selling and you are entitled to a seven working days 'cooling off period'. The seller must be informed of the cancellation within this time frame in writing - telephone will not do. The exception to this is when you invite the seller into your home by way of an appointment. This is not deemed to be distance selling and therefore the standard Sale of Goods Act rules apply.

For more information visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/tradingstandards or call 01905 765373

How to Contact the Parish Council

If you would like to contact the Parish Council about anything at all, please either contact one of your Parish Councillors or the Parish Clerk. Your Parish Councillors are:

Elaine Buckett (Chairman)	0121 445 1254	chair@barntgreen.org.uk
Judith Jagger (Vice-Chairman)	0121 445 2437	
Peter Cliff	0121 445 6383	
Tom Gray	0121 445 4424	
Betty Lucas	0121 445 1370	
Sheila Parker		
Susan Whitehand	0121 445 3530	
Parish Clerk: Deborah Warren	0121 445 5433	clerk@barntgreen.org.uk

Parish Council Meetings

These are usually held on the last Monday in each month at the Parish Centre on Sandhills Road at 7.00pm. You are welcome to attend and observe, and an opportunity is given at each meeting for members of the public to speak. Details are on the website, and notices are regularly displayed on the notice board with the dates of the next meeting.

Useful Telephone Numbers:

District Councillors:

Mrs Ann Doyle 0121 445 4184

Brian Fuller 0121 445 4950

anne@doyle5341.fsnet.co.uk

County Councillor:

Brian Taylor 0121 445 1350

Anti-Social Behaviour Officer: 01527 881423

Police: 08457 444888

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at the Parish Centre on Wednesday 4th May 2005 at 7.00pm. Please come along!