

Dear Resident

Looking back over the last few months, the Parish Council has been involved in a number of community events. It supported the Fun Run held on Sunday 7 May. It organised the Motor Festival on Sunday 2 July. Most recently, it facilitated the Busking Festival on Saturday 12 August. I thank those of you who have supported these events and made them successful.

Looking forward, the annual Community Walk is scheduled for the afternoon of Saturday 23 September. The routes of the walks are different this year and I hope that you will be able to come along.

The car park on the Cala Homes Foxhills site has opened. It is intended that this will be used by rail travellers to ease some of the parking on the public highway, specifically on the Fiery Hill Road side of the railway station.

The likelihood of new housing in and around Barnt Green remains. The planning process is looking ahead over the next 15 years, but we are all aware that there is a national housing shortage now. The next step remains a review of the Green Belt to be undertaken by Bromsgrove District Council. This will set much of the framework for the Parish Council to draft a Neighbourhood Plan for the future of Barnt Green.

There is currently a vacancy for a Parish Councillor. If you would like to become involved in shaping your community by becoming a Parish Councillor, please contact us.

Robert Cholmondeley, Chair, Barnt Green Parish Council

Inside The Bulletin:
Page 2: Round up in brief
Page 3: Council award
Page 4: Neighbourhood Plan
Page 5: New car park
Page 5: Speed – help wanted!
Page 6: Information for carers
Page 7: Join us on 23 <sup>rd</sup> Sept
Page 8: Annual Parish Meeting

**MP and Councillors' contacts:**

MP	Sajid Javid – <a href="mailto:sajid.javid.mp@parliament.uk">sajid.javid.mp@parliament.uk</a>
County Councillor	Peter McDonald – <a href="mailto:pmcdonald2@worcestershire.gov.uk">pmcdonald2@worcestershire.gov.uk</a>
District Councillor	Charles Hotham – <a href="mailto:c.hotham@bromsgrove.gov.uk">c.hotham@bromsgrove.gov.uk</a>
Parish Councillors:	Rosemary Briggs, Robert Cholmondeley, Charles Hotham, Judith Jagger, Jenny Jellie, Philip Perry, Susan Whitehand Councillor contact details via <a href="http://www.barntgreen.org.uk">www.barntgreen.org.uk</a>
Chairman:	Robert Cholmondeley <a href="mailto:robert.cholmondeley@btinternet.com">robert.cholmondeley@btinternet.com</a>
Executive Officer:	Gill Lungley, MILCM <a href="mailto:exec@barntgreen.org.uk">exec@barntgreen.org.uk</a> tel: 0121 447 9893 / 07410 906282

**Parish Council blog: since February...**

At the council's meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March, council members decided to reduce the number of these Bulletins issued each year by half to just two in March and August, and instead to send news every six months to The Village magazine, where we shall be featured in the May and November editions. This is so that we can get our news to residents from the area of Barnt Green that lies beyond the parish boundary and which is not on the delivery route.

In April, a parish resident took the opportunity to speak to the council meeting to register his concerns about the state of the roads in the area, particularly the new road surface on Fiery Hill Road. These comments were transmitted to the county council's Highways department who agreed with the concerns, leading to the re-closure of Fiery Hill Road junction with Kendal End Road in early August to allow for remedial actions.

Also in April, we agreed to register support of the Charter for Trees, Woods and People. Led by the Woodland Trust, the Charter will be launched on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2017, and is available online via [treecharter.uk](http://treecharter.uk)

May is the month of the Annual Parish Council Meeting when the council appoints its Chairman for the year and decides what committees and working parties it will operate until the next annual meeting. There were no major changes this year, but we were sorry to receive the resignation of Edwin Gumbley who had been a parish councillor since election in 2011.

In June, we heard from Jane Taylor from Worcestershire Association of Carers who talked about her role in this supportive organisation; more on page 6.

We also heard from the Network Rail Sponsor, confirming their commitment to install lifts at the railway station by December. Additionally, installation of the new footbridge to replace the foot-crossing on the currently closed footpath between Barnt Green and Cofton is expected by October.

At the meeting in July, we were dismayed to hear about the damage to the play equipment on the playing field. Vandals had battered the climbing wall, rendering it dangerous and so we removed two of the panels which will be replaced in due course. Members voted against the proposal to install CCTV.

Due to high-jinks behaviour at the Millennium Park play area, councillors agreed to apply anti-climb paint to the fence between the park and the Friends Meeting House.

From January 2018, all parish council meetings will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month usually at 80 Hewell Road

Meetings start at 7pm and are open to the public to attend, with an opportunity to speak during the 'Open Forum' section.

All agendas are published at least 3 clear days before the meeting and can be found on the notice board next to the bus shelter, and on our website.



## Parish Council Award

In qualifying for this award Barnt Green Parish Council has proved it meets all the Foundation requirements expected of a local council. This new initiative replaces the Quality Scheme, for which Barnt Green qualified in 2004.

### Award Presentation

The Foundation Award certificate was presented to the council's Chairman, Cllr Robert Cholmondeley, by the scheme's Worcestershire county panel Chairman John Duddington, at the parish council meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> July.

On presenting the certificate, John declared the award 'recognises the value of the parish council's work'.

Barnt Green Parish Council is one of only five across Worcestershire that has achieved this award.



### Website Re-vamp

The Parish Council's website has been revamped to reflect the requirements of the Local Council Award Scheme and the ongoing changes expected of local government, especially relating to financial matters.

We would like to know what you think of it: [www.barntgreen.org.uk](http://www.barntgreen.org.uk)

If you have any news items to be included at any time, or are involved in a local group or organisation that could be added to the 'Community' section, please get in touch.



Mill Shrub, July 2017

Parish Council contact details:

Office at 80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green, B45 8NF

Open: Mon – Thurs 10am – 1pm & Thurs 2pm – 4pm

Land: 0121 447 9893 / Mob: 07410 906282 / email: [exec@barntgreen.org.uk](mailto:exec@barntgreen.org.uk)

## Planning Applications

As a local council, we are notified of all planning applications that relate to our area of responsibility, and invited to comment on them. As these consultations require a response within 21 days, and as the council generally meets monthly, we have set up a Planning Committee to deal with notifications that arrive outside the usual meeting sequence.

Notice of meetings of the Planning Committee will be publicly displayed on the notice board next to the Hewell Road bus shelter and posted to the website. All parish council meetings are open to the public and include an opportunity during proceedings for public comment. So if you are bothered about an application for development near you, do call in to voice any concerns and hear what the parish council has to say!

The minutes of all parish council meetings, including committee meetings, are available on the website.

## Barnt Green Neighbourhood Plan

The website 'mycommunity.org.uk' defines a neighbourhood plan as:

- "A document that sets out planning policies for the neighbourhood area – planning policies are used to decide whether to approve planning applications
- Written by the local community, the people who know and love the area, rather than the Local Planning Authority
- A powerful tool to ensure the community gets the right types of development, in the right place.

Local people can create a plan that allows them to develop planning policies that reflect the priorities of their area and have real legal weight. The whole community then decides at a referendum vote whether the local authority should bring the plan into force."

Whilst there has been little news about this over the last year or so, the parish council continues its commitment to producing a Neighbourhood Plan. We are taking this initiative because the District Council's Local Plan clearly indicates that the six larger parishes in the district, of which Barnt Green is one, will see further house building. Additionally, due to the planners' emphasis on sustainability such as access to good transport links, we are particularly vulnerable with our railway station and central location.

We believe the people of Barnt Green should be consulted about the siting of any future development and what it should look like. However, our problem here, in confirmed Green Belt, is that we must wait for the District Council to start the long-anticipated Green Belt review before we can put forward any suggestions! At the moment all we know is that the review is imminent.

In the meantime, the parish council will track developments and give updates in the Bulletin and on the website.

**If you have any community news to share, please let us know.**

**This newsletter is issued each year in February and August and a feature page is included in The Village magazine in May and November.**

## NEW CAR PARK

One of the ongoing gripes about living in Barnt Green is the lack of viable parking spaces, not just for residents and their families, but also for the daily visitors who drive in to the village to either do some shopping or catch the train.



One way in which the Parish Council has addressed this issue has been to follow up on the District Plan's statement from 2004, to 'support schemes which lead to an improvement in car parking provision, meeting the needs of both the railway station and shopping area'. We now have a commuters' car park, with capacity for up to 28 cars that is free to use. CALA will be responsible for managing the car park for the first twelve months, after which the Parish Council will take it over.

## VILLAGE PARKING



Continuing with the theme of car parking, the Parish Council has been asked to find a solution that will allow everyone driving into the village centre to park exactly where they want to. We share our frustrations with you at the sometimes thoughtless and inconsiderate way in which other people park their cars and the proliferation of delivery lorries that always seem to be in the way. But, short of knocking down a couple of buildings and replacing with a multi-storey car park, we don't currently have any answers.

We all seem to be in such a hurry that it seems only logical to park as close to our destination as possible. We therefore ask everyone reading this who drives into the village and needs to park, to please park with consideration for everyone.

## COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH

Can you spare some time to volunteer on the Community Speed Watch scheme?

Barnt Green has been given the opportunity to create a local Community Speed Watch team. For those who are concerned about the speed of traffic along our local roads, this is a hands-on approach to tackling the problem.

Bittell Road has been assessed by Adnan Ali of Worcestershire's Safer Roads Partnership who has given us the green light to go ahead. We are now seeking volunteers to run it.



More information is available online via West Mercia Police website and [www.communityspeedwatch.co.uk](http://www.communityspeedwatch.co.uk) If you would like to help reduce the speeds of traffic within the community, please contact the parish council office for more details and a recruitment form.

It is known that there are numerous unpaid carers not known to the authorities for whom assistance is available through the Worcestershire Association of Carers (WAC). This is a countywide organisation that was established 20 years ago to offer an independent source of information, advice and guidance for the estimated 63,000 unpaid adult carers in the county.



WAC provides representation for carers at a local and national level and supports carers to have a voice in decisions that affect them.

Currently, WAC provides services to nearly 11,000 carers in the county and is in search for the remaining 52,000 carers. In order to find these hidden carers, WAC hosts a various amount of fundraising opportunities and events, such as hosting Carers Breakfasts, holds regular engagement drop ins and works closely with partners such as other charities, housing trusts, hospices and acute and community hospitals.

In addition to hosting events for carers, WAC also offers a wide range of services. They include: Carers Helpline (0300 012 4272), webchat, carer groups, e-learning, end of life support, carer talktime and their caring with confidence programme. The Caring with Confidence Programme runs highly interactive sessions that tackle all challenges carers face, such as emotional ups and downs, daily practical matters, better communication, and legal and financial issues.

More than 3 in 5 people within the UK will become an unpaid carer for a family member or a friend who needs help due to illness, age, disability or additional needs. As the number of carers continues to increase in Worcestershire, it is important to WAC to have the ability and funds to support and find these carers.

If you would like more information, please visit: [www.carerworcs.org.uk](http://www.carerworcs.org.uk) or email [mail@carersworcs.org.uk](mailto:mail@carersworcs.org.uk)

### **Worcestershire Parent and Carers' Community**

Set up in 2006 by a small group of parents and carers this charity supports children with disabilities and their families. All its members share the common aim of providing the opportunities for all their children to reach their full potential and make all of their lives better.

The charity organises fun-packed days out for all the family and ensures that family fun is at the heart of their activities. They will also play a key part in the decision making process when services are being planned, developed and reviewed. Membership is open to those who live or work in Worcestershire and have a child with a disability of additional needs.

Contact tel: 07955 688031 or 07955 760488  
[wpccaud@gmail.com](mailto:wpccaud@gmail.com) [www.parentcarers.org.uk](http://www.parentcarers.org.uk)



Join us again for a 5<sup>th</sup> year as we set off to walk across our local countryside en masse on the afternoon of Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

As usual all walks will start and end at Millennium Park, B45 8NW and there will be the option of three different distance walks to choose from:

- 8½ miles towards Tardebigge visiting Shortwood Tunnel on the Worcester canal. Meet at 1pm for 1.30pm start
- 5 miles to Apes Dale and back via Linthurst and Blackwell. Meet at 2pm for a 2.30pm start
- 3 miles by way of the Old Orchard and Pinfield Woods. Meet at 3pm for a 3.30pm start.

All walks should be back at Millennium Park by 5.30pm in time for some hot food provided by Warwick and his Pig Roast team and a drink from the Village Vineyards stall. There will also be some musical accompaniment.

Children and dogs on leads are welcome. There is no charge to join in any of the walks, but you will need to pay for the food and drink available.

We look forward to seeing you then; in the meantime, if you have any questions please ask at the parish council office.

### HIMALAYAN BALSAM



It's pretty and it's pink, but don't be fooled by its outer appearance. This is an invasive weed which grows in dense stands that suppress the growth of native grasses and other flora. After flowering, the ripe seed pods can shoot their seeds up to 7m away.

We are trying to control the growth near the stream at Barnt Green playing field by pulling up the weeds before they go to seed, then leaving to rot on site to prevent further spread. This process is known as 'Balsam Bashing'; the stems are hollow and the roots are shallow so it's easy to pull the plant out of the ground. Feel free to have a go if you see any growing where it shouldn't, but don't take it home.

**Community news can be posted to various notice boards in the village. There are boards at Barnt Green playing field (off Bittell Road), corner of Station Approach and inside Hewell Road bus shelter.**

## ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

We don't know what those three words mean to you, but what we do know is that perhaps they are off-putting. At this year's Annual Parish Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> April, the evening was shared with just twelve attendees. Out of an electorate of 1,478 in the Barnt Green parish area, that is less than 1% turnout.

The parish council is legally obliged to hold an Annual Parish Meeting for the specific purpose of discussing 'parish affairs'. The 'parish' in this case being all that area contained within the boundary covered by Barnt Green Parish Council and not to be confused with the 'parish' that relates to the church.

Such is the nature of these annual meetings that not even parish councillors have to attend! However, we have to continue to host the meetings and so we are taking the opportunity now to ask you, the electorate, what you would like to see and hear at them in the future.

This year's talk by Steve Hinton, Senior Ranger for Lickey Hills Country Park about the disease that is affecting the native woodland was followed by free-ranging discussion on matters such as Network Rail's plans for our local station, care for our highways planters, pavement repairs and dogs on leads.

Perhaps it's all just too mundane. So, over to you: we would love to hear ideas from you on how to liven things up a bit to encourage greater participation. Nothing too racy or costly, other than that all sensible ideas are considered. This is after all, your meeting.

Who knows, come next April those three words may take on a more positive meaning and we might have an Annual Parish Meeting to be proud of!



## CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

In a change to the usual timetable, this year's Christmas Lights switch-on will be on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

Cheryl Welsh, the Centres Manager from Bromsgrove District Council, will be helping us with plans to make this a special occasion. More news will be released when the details have been agreed with all those taking part.

## TESCO EXPRESS

Tesco Express on Hewell Road is to undergo refurbishment at some time in the next few months, requiring total closure of the store for 2 weeks. The work was meant to start in August, but has been delayed. Notices to shoppers will be displayed in store nearer the date.

If this is likely to cause real hardship to anyone please let us know.

## Barnt Green Parish Council

80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green B45 8NF | tel: 0121 447 9893 / 07410 906282  
Email: [exec@barntgreen.org.uk](mailto:exec@barntgreen.org.uk) | Website: [www.barntgreen.org.uk](http://www.barntgreen.org.uk)

All information is correct at the time of printing. Views expressed in the newsletter are those of the contributors and may not be those of the Parish Council.

For copyright information, please contact Barnt Green Parish Council.