

Birlingham Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 21 May 2014

at Birlingham Village Hall

Councillors:

Councillor Morris
Councillor Comins
Councillor New

Other Representatives:

County Councillor Hardman
Tree Warden Stuart Crowther
PACT Chris Reynard

Present:

Steven Conder
Ian Yates
Karl Grimston

Apologies for absence:

District Councillor Davis
Councillor Aston
Councillor Hill
Footpath Warden

Welcome

1. Election of Chairman and signing of Declaration of Office

Councillor Morris would stand again. He signed the Declaration of Office.

2. New members - Signing of Office

Steve Conder and Ian Yates signed the Declaration of Office for standing as Councillors. They have completed their Register of Interest applications to be returned to Wychavon District Council.

(Declaration of Acceptance of Office must be signed by new members before or at the first meeting of the council after their co-option)

3. Declarations of Interest

- a) Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
- b) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
- c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.

(Note: Councillors who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or Other Disclosable Interest which falls within the terms of paragraph 12(4) of the code of conduct, must leave the room for the relevant items)

4. Election of Vice-chairman

It was hoped that Councillor Hill could be persuaded to stand as Vice-chairman. Councillor Morris to advise.

5. Appointment of Financial Support Officer

Councillor Hill had said he would be pleased to be the Financial Support Officer. Councillor Hill was elected.

6. Appointment of Footpath Warden

Bruce Hayward had stated he was happy to continue and was appointed as Footpath Warden.

May 2014

7. Appointment of Lengthsman

Carl Brassington was happy to continue with his duty and was appointed as Lengthsman under the scheme run by Worcestershire County Council.

8. Appointment of Tree Warden

Karl Grimston has put his name forward and was willing to accept the appointment of Tree Warden. Karl was appointed and members hoped that he would enjoy acting as Warden.

9. Planning Group – consideration of delegated members

The delegation of the Planning Group was agreed. Councillor Comins was happy to steer the Group with Councillor Aston as before and Councillor Conder would complete the team. Councillor Yates will make up the team if there is a shortfall or declaration of interest as three members are needed for the Group.

10. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held 19 March 2014, a copy of which had been circulated to all Councillors, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

11. Democratic Opening

There were no comments.

12. Progress Reports

a) Footpaths

- i) Attended Footpath Warden session at Countyside Centre in Worcester.
- ii) Footpath 506 (near church) strimmed.
- iii) Footpath 520 (other side of Nafford Lock) strimmed.

b) District Councillor – absent.

c) County Councillor

- i) Congratulated Councillor Morris on his appointment as Chairman.
- ii) Annual report published
- iii) There has been no progress on the flooding at Upper End and it's difficult to find a solution. As there is no flooding to properties it remains a category 3. There is a 'scheme' existing and a meeting is planned in six weeks. Councillor Hardman will update at the next meeting.
- iv) There has been a failure to deliver the directional traffic sign. It is on the 'list' but the list is long. Councillor Hardman said his solution would be to pay for it out of the member's budget or have to stay on the list for some considerable time. He will budget the sign.
- v) Is there a programme for repairs to Church Street?

Councillor Hardman was thanked for his attendance.

d) Clerk- see Appendix ¹

13. Planning

a) Current applications pending - none

b) Applications granted / refused

- i) W/14/00448/PP Cherry Trees, Eckington Road, Birlingham
Extension and modernisation of existing house to provide efficient internal space and upgrade sustainability of building
Approved 30 April
- ii) W/14/00590/PP and W/14/00603/LB The Manor House, Lower End, Birlingham
Reconstruct boundary wall and repair section using existing reclaimed bricks as needed
Approved 2 May

- iii) W/14//000524/CU Land rear of Attwood Cottage
Change of use of field from agricultural use to domestic use
Approved 7 May

- c) SWDP - see Appendix 2

Note: Councillor Comins would like to attend the meeting being held by Badsey and Aldington Parish Council on 6 June. Badsey and Aldington Parish Council has the support of in excess of 25 parish council's which represent 50,000 residents. Sir Peter Luff MP will be attending. Questions and points will be raised asking why no major development applications have been refused and why there has been a 25% increase in housing in Badsey in 3 years with the potential of more which is indicative of other parishes in Worcestershire.

14. Financial Matters

- a) Bank Balance: £5,157.73 as at 30 April 2014.

- b) The Accounts for 2013/2014 – as per the audit financial year end were agreed.

The chairman read out the Financial Support Officer's comments: from the accounts we finished the year very much in line with budget and our resources amounted to £2,983.00. It is our policy to grow reserves so they eventually equal the sum of the Litter Pick bursary £1,500.00 plus one years fixed costs. Given that next year's precept allows again for a surplus we should reach our target by March 2015 unless there are some unscheduled costs.

- c) The Accounts for 2014/2015 including the budget figure. Acceptance of the accounting receipts and payments so far. Acceptance that the budget figures have been increased again by 5%. Acceptance of the "budgets" for litter pick, Lengthsman and trees including the plane tree. There was discussion on whether the increase should be 3.5% or 5%. The plane tree budget had previously been agreed at £500.00

- d) Receipts –

- £170.00 – Worcestershire County Council – Lengthsman November & January
- £100.00 – Worcestershire County Council – Lengthsman February
- £2,501.00 – Wychavon District Council (Precept £2,411.00 and Grant £90.00)

Payments –

- £35.98 - Website domain renewal 23/1/13- 23/1/14 cheque number 298
- £482.95 - Clerks pay (January, February, March) cheque number 299
- £25.00 - Clerk's expenses (January, February, March) cheque number 300
- £120.80 PAYE HM Revenues & Customs (January, February, March) cheque 301
- £170.00 – Lengthsman (Nov – Jan) cheque number 302

- e) Future payments

- £100.00 – Lengthsman (Feb)
- £500.00 - Village Hall contribution
- Gift for Tree Warden
- £243.80 – Zurich insurance June 2014 – May 2015
- £151.54 – CALC service charge and affiliation fee
- £40.00 – Lengthsman (March/April)
- £25.00 – Clerks training
- Internal auditor

- f) Internal Audit - completed on 6 May and for public inspection on 16 May.

For resolution:

The internal auditor has asked that the minutes be corrected for January 2014 Financial matters Item 8 (page 278)

80pence - £120 should read £120.80 and **95pence** - £482 should read £482.95.

The fee for the internal audit was resolved at £50.00. Mrs Baker is a qualified accountant.
Audit - Grant Thornton
Notice of public rights – the date for the external audit has been received and the public notice has been placed on the noticeboard which is six weeks before the date of the external audit (the latest date for the council to approve the accounts for the previous year is 30 June)

15. Neighbourhood Plans

Discussion on a neighbourhood plan for the parish. Councillors Morris, Hill and Comins were willing to help on what would be a 3-4 year process. There are guidelines on the Wychavon website.

It was agreed to take letters around to see what interest there was. In future could invite Wychavon District Council to attend a meeting.

Need to decide whether to proceed with the plan.

16. Jubilee Wood

A report from the Jubilee Committee:

A permanent Jubilee Committee was formed earlier this year and the committee has taken responsibility for the future maintenance of the trees that were planted in November 2012 as part of the Jubilee celebrations. The committee will also fund any future costs relating to the maintenance of the wood and will keep the Parish Council updated on progress.

The current plan is to form a working group to monitor the wood and make decisions on future maintenance. This group will comprise members of the Jubilee Committee plus other interested parties, such as the landowner and the Parish Council's Tree Warden.

Although a large number of trees died during the unexpected heat wave early last year, a survey of the trees earlier this week found that 237 trees are growing well. (420 were planted originally.) There are also a number of self-seeded trees in the gaps, mainly oak and hawthorn.

Given that the trees would have had to be thinned out eventually, only a limited amount of re-planting will be necessary and this is planned for the autumn. It is hoped that the trees can be obtained from the Woodland Trust, who provided the original trees, and that a suitable replacement can be found for the Jubilee Oak, which did not survive.

The grass around the trees is not thought to be a problem now that the trees are established but Stuart Crowther has recommended that an area of grass be cleared around any new plantings. David Kew has offered to help with the clearing of the two large patches of brambles along one side of the planted area and this should be done in the next few weeks.

There has been some new damage by deer to the older trees but this does not appear to be a major problem.

The next stage is to produce a detailed plan of the area, showing locations and types of trees. A decision can then be made about how many trees will need to be replaced.

Wychavon District Council do not feel that the wood is sufficiently established at this stage for them to protect it with a Tree Preservation Order but we should be able to pursue this idea in the future when the trees have made more growth.

At some point a plaque will be placed at the entrance to the site. The name of the wood is still the subject of debate but no final decision on this need be taken until the plaque is installed.

Birlingham Jubilee Committee 18 May 2014

17. Councillors' reports and items for next agenda

Karl Grimston would talk to David Kew regarding oaks for the Jubilee Wood. Is there any possibility of one from the Queen's estate?

Councillors Comins and Conder gave apologies as they would not be able to attend the next meeting as they were on holiday.

18. Closure with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.48pm.

The next Parish Council meeting is on Wednesday 16 July at 7.45pm.

Signed: **Councillor Steve Morris, Chairman**

Date:

Appendix 1: Clerks Report

News e-mail

Birlingham News 46 - 26 March

It was a busy week last week, with a lengthy Parish Council meeting on Wednesday and the parish meeting to discuss the improved facilities at St James's Church on Saturday.

In this issue:

1. Mothering Sunday Service, 30th March
2. Parish Council Meeting
3. New Parish Councillors
4. Village Tree Warden
5. Birlingham Website Group
6. Jubilee Committee
7. Meeting to Discuss Improved Facilities at St James's Church
8. Village Twitter and Facebook
9. Planning Applications

2. Parish Council Meeting A number of important decisions were made at the last meeting of Birlingham Parish Council on 19th March. In addition to the items mentioned separately below, the following issues were discussed:

- Concern was expressed to our District Councillor, Ron Davis, that individual planning applications are no longer decided by the full Planning Committee but are now determined by planning officers, even if there are strong objections.
- There were also concerns about the District Council's decision to stop sending out paper copies of planning applications, as this makes it more difficult for the Parish Council to consider applications. Both these concerns were taken on board by Councillor Davis.
- A letter is to be sent out explaining the proposals for a Birlingham Neighbourhood Plan and a meeting will be set up with an officer from Wychavon if there is sufficient interest.
- Concerns over proposals to form a Defford Parachute Club proved to be unfounded.
- A meeting is to be set up between the Parish Council and representatives of Woodfield Farm to discuss the damage caused to parish trees by hedge-trimmers.

The next meeting of the Parish Council is the Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday 21st May at 7.00pm.

3. New Parish Councillors Two new parish councillors were co-opted at the meeting on 19th March to fill the casual vacancies. They are Steven Conder from Partridge Cottage, Lower End and Ian Yates from Lower Farm, Defford Road. They will take their places on the council at the May meeting.

There will be elections for the whole council in May 2015.

4. Village Tree Warden The village's Tree Warden, Stuart Crowther, will be stepping down at the May meeting of the Parish Council. His position is to be taken on by Karl Grimston.

Stuart has worked hard as warden for the last 14 years, planting about 40 trees around the village.

5. Birlingham Website Group The Parish Council has decided that from 1st April the village website will be run by an independent Website Group. This group will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the website and for its finances. Any surplus made from advertising will be donated to village organisations via the Jubilee Committee.

The Birlingham Website Group will also be wholly responsible for the village emails. These changes will not have any immediate effect from a practical point of view but it is hoped that in the future more people will become involved in the running of the website.

6. Jubilee Committee Following consultation with all those involved in the Jubilee in 2012, a permanent Jubilee Committee has been formed, with the following aims:

- To provide the basis of an organisation for future village-wide events (for example, royal occasions).
- To organise events that will raise funds for a number of village organisations.
- To manage the Jubilee Account and to distribute surplus funds in a way that will benefit the whole village.
- To provide funds for the future maintenance of the Jubilee Wood, to monitor its progress and to take whatever action is necessary to ensure its survival.

Full details of the Jubilee Committee will be available on the website shortly.

[Birlingham News 47 - 8 April](#)

This issue should include something for everyone, whether it's trying out aloe vera, tidying up the village, finding out about changes at the Church, planting seeds, taking part in competitive games or upgrading your broadband.

In this issue:

1. Aloe Vera Introduction, 8th April
2. Nafford and Swan's Neck Litter Picks, 12th & 14th April
3. St James's Church AGM
4. Flower & Produce Show Seed Exchange
5. Wychavon Parish Games
6. Superfast Broadband

2. Nafford and Swan's Neck Litter Picks, 12th & 14th April

Following the successful litter pick around the main part of the village a couple of weeks ago, the Parish Council are now organising two more brief litter picks at Nafford and Swan's Neck. Both of these attractive areas of our village have suffered from rubbish being left by the recent floods and would benefit from being tidied up. The litter picks will take place on the following days:

- Nafford, Saturday 12th April at 2.00pm
- Swan's Neck, Monday 14th April at 2.00pm

If you can spare an hour to help on either of these occasions, please contact John Hill for Nafford or Steve Morris for Swan's Neck.

5. Wychavon Parish Games

Birlingham has again been invited to take part in this year's Parish Games. This is a series of fifteen events, which are competed for by residents of the various parishes within Wychavon. Events are: Angling, Bell Boating, Bowls, Crib, Cross County, Ladies' and Men's Darts, Dominoes, Men's Five-a-side, Petanque, Pool, Ladies' Rounders, Skittles and Junior and Senior Table Tennis. Teams don't have to enter every event, as last year's result sheet shows.

More information is available at www.birlingham.org/docs/pg_2014_letter.pdf and the results of last year's games (which were won by Eckington) can be viewed at www.birlingham.org/docs/pg_2013_results.pdf.

If you would like to help organise an entry for Birlingham (and give Eckington a run for their money this year), or take part in any of these events, please let us know at news@birlingham.org.

6. Superfast Broadband

High-speed fibre broadband is due to be switched on in a number of communities, including Eckington, between October and December this year. Whether or not this will include faster broadband for Birlingham is unclear at the moment.

More information on superfast broadband is available at : www.birlingham.org/docs/broadband_2014.pdf.

[Birlingham News 48 - 19 April](#)

A Happy Easter to you all.

In this issue:

1. Easter Sunday Service, 20th April
2. Great British Asparagus Run, 23rd April
3. Felling of Cedar Tree, 24th April
4. Fiftieth Anniversary Quarter Peal, 25th April
5. Swan Beer Festival, 16th-18th May
6. Litter Picks

6. Litter Picks

Thank you to all those who took part in the Litter Picks at Nafford on 12th April and Swan's Neck on 14th April. At each location a large mound of rubbish was collected, most of which had been left behind by the recent floods.

[Birlingham News 48 update - 22 April](#)

Felling of Cedar Tree, 24th April – Postponed

The crane that was to have been used to lower the cedar tree has broken down. As a result, the cedar tree will not now be felled until May.

In the meantime, requests for firewood can still be made to John Comins, Churchyard Secretary. Poppies will be planted around the war memorial tomorrow (Wednesday) and there will be a short ceremony; sunflower seeds will be planted in the churchyard on Sunday. Please come along and support both events.

[Birlingham News 49 - 29 April](#)

In this issue:

1. Poppy Planting at War Memorial, 30th April
2. Family Service, 4th May
3. Fiftieth Anniversary Quarter Peal

1. Poppy Planting at War Memorial, 30th April

As part of the commemoration of the start of the First World War, and in accordance with the wishes of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, poppy seeds will be planted around the war memorial at 11.00am this Wednesday, 30th April.

Rev. Burn is coming to say a prayer and everybody is welcome to come along.

[Birlingham News 50 - 15 May](#)

Birlingham is entering the Wychavon Parish Games and it's the Swan Beer Festival this weekend. Full details below.

In this issue:

1. Swan Beer Festival, 16th-18th May
2. Annual Parish Meeting, 21st May
3. European Elections, 22nd May
4. Poppy Planting
5. Wychavon Parish Games
6. Planning Applications

2. Annual Parish Meeting, 21st May

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Wednesday 21st May in Birlingham Village Hall at 7.00pm. This meeting will be followed by the regular bi-monthly Parish Council meeting at 7.30pm. The Parish Council is your link to the District and County Councils and is there to protect the interests of the village. So do come along and have your say on village matters.

The Agendas for the meetings are available at www.birlingham.org/pc_info/pc_agenda_2014-05-21A.pdf and www.birlingham.org/pc_info/pc_agenda_2014-05-21B.pdf. The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting on 15th May 2013 is at www.birlingham.org/pc_info/pc_annual_2013-05-15.pdf and the minutes of the last Parish Council meeting on 19th March is at www.birlingham.org/pc_info/pc_minutes_2014-03-19.pdf.

3. European Elections, 22nd May

The European Elections take place on Thursday 22nd May, at which seven MEPs will be elected for the West Midlands region. Voting is by party list; your vote will be for a party, rather than an individual, and the number of seats given to each party will be proportional to the number of votes they receive. At this election, you can choose between the following parties:

An Independence From Europe
British National Party
Conservative
English Democrats
Green Party
The Harmony Party
Labour Party
Liberal Democrats
NO2EU
UKIP
We Demand A Referendum Now

More information about the election is available at www.birmingham.gov.uk/euroelections2014. Lists of candidates and more news on the election can be found at www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-27127314.]

4. Poppy Planting

The planting of poppy seeds around the war memorial, as part of the commemoration of the start of the First World War a hundred years ago, proved to be a popular event. Around 25 people attended and photographs are now on the village website at www.birlingham.org/village/gallery/gallery_pp_14.htm.

5. Wychavon Parish Games

Denise McGowan has volunteered to co-ordinate Birlingham's entry in the Wychavon Parish Games this year.

Possible events include Angling, Bell Boating, Bowls, Crib, Cross County, Ladies' and Men's Darts, Dominoes, Men's Five-a-side, Petanque, Pool, Ladies' Rounders, Skittles and Junior and Senior Table Tennis. The organisers are really pleased to see Birlingham back in the games and information on when the events take place will be available soon.

If you would like to join one of the teams, or organise a specific team, please contact Denise.

6. Planning Applications

The following planning applications have been determined by Wychavon District Council:

- **Cherry Trees**, Eckington Road: Extension and modernisation of existing house to provide efficient internal space and upgrade sustainability of building (Case No. 14/00448). **Approved**. Full details and conditions can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website at www.e-wychavon.org.uk/pl/pl.exe?cs=14/00448.
- **Aitwood Cottage**, Lower End: Change of use of field from agricultural use to domestic use (Case No. 14/00524). **Approved**. Full details and conditions can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website at www.e-wychavon.org.uk/pl/pl.exe?cs=14/00524.
- **The Manor House**, Lower End: Reconstruct boundary wall and repair section using reclaimed bricks as needed (Case No. 14/00590; Listed Building Consent application Case No. 14/00603). **Approved**. Full details and conditions can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website at www.e-wychavon.org.uk/pl/pl.exe?cs=14/00590 and www.e-wychavon.org.uk/pl/pl.exe?cs=14/00603.

Trees and hedges

From: Clive Porter
To: Clerk
Sent: 18 March 2014

Michael being overwhelmed with work at present, he has told me about the tree concerns and asked me to respond.

May 2014

If trees have got damaged due to hedge cutting operations, we do apologise. I well know from experience how frustrating this can be.

I am sure, the council will appreciate what a slow expensive and difficult task hedge-cutting is, in fact, again from experience, can be a nightmare of obstacle avoidance. Deliberately, not all hedges are cut every year, but most of the roadside ones have to be, for road safety reasons. If hedges were not trimmed, the result would be either untidy overgrowth needing eventual drastic action or the hedge simply disappears.

I do not know if the PC is aware of the conservation work we have done in the past 45 years in Birlingham. Most simply take it for granted. This has prompted me to do a quick appraisal. I have always been "conservation conscious" and a "tree fanatic" in particular. I reckon we have established (not merely planted) about 290 trees in Birlingham, just along the roadsides. This is not counting: any in Lower End or Broadway Road along to Sheerpool Lane. Nor the hundreds established around the fields. Nor those at Bakers Hill Farm. Nor the many in Defford Parish.

We do not normally plant trees in or near hedgerows. Instead, especially since the demise of the Elms, we have pioneered the habit of carefully selecting existing trees, mainly Oak, Ash and Field Maple, clearly marking and preserving them by hand trimming around them and regular pruning. (more trouble for the hedge trimmer!) It is amazing how these have grown and without all this, the landscape would by now be completely different. We only encourage native tree species.

All this, with many other unnoticed measures, has partly been responsible for the Farming and Wildlife Awards, the LEAF status, for being able to sign up to various environmental schemes and to help satisfy our customers who want responsible farming.

If a Council representative would like to meet to discuss any issues, we are available.

Yours sincerely, Clive Porter (partner G.W.Revill)

Councillor comments: I am pleased they are so conscious of the need to plant trees and to look after them, which makes it more annoying that they are cut down, after all we only have the roadside to plant them in.

To: Clive Porter From: Clerk Sent: 3 April

Thank you for taking the trouble to respond to the Parish Council and further to Michael's email. Your reply was written into the 'clerks report' and will be attached to the minutes of the Council in March. Here is the extract from the discussion at the meeting:

1. Trees / Hedges / Jubilee Wood

There was no excuse for the substantial damage caused to the 8 year old chestnut. There should be some compensation. Could we ask Porters/Revills for their advice on protection? What about wooden barriers? How do we work together? Every year there is damage to trees.

The Clerk suggested that questions be forwarded from members and Porters/Revills could be asked to comment. They were willing to have a meeting with a Councillor/Clerk to discuss any issues and this would take things forward.

The members and tree warden noted the apology and hoped that a meeting would be helpful.

So perhaps a meeting could be arranged at a time convenient to yourself (and Michael) with the Chairman, Steve Morris and myself.

Electronic Payments – PAYE

The latest CALC ISSUE 10 21st March 24 has the following:-

Paying PAYE Contributions to Revenue and Customs
May 2014

Following the briefing note last week from NALC about using electronic payment methods to pay over tax and NI to HMRC, one or two clerks have let me know that they have recently received paying in books and envelopes from HMRC to allow them to continue to send cheques. I have also had the following helpful note from the Yorkshire Local Councils Association, which I think suggests that the confusion is country wide.

Ways to pay PAYE/NICs: HMRC expectations

YLCA has become aware of an issue surrounding the method of payment of PAYE and National Insurance contributions to HMRC. Some councils have been instructed that they must pay electronically; some have been informed that the letter sent out by HMRC which tells them of this was sent by mistake and some have received the usual paying in book with no instructions to pay electronically. Mixed messages certainly seem to be coming out of HMRC, depending which office and officer a council liaises with.

HMRC themselves say that there is no obligation to pay electronically unless there are 250+ employers, but obviously it is easier for HMRC if all employers pay by electronic means and thus they are trying to encourage people. If you go to the page below you can see exactly what HMRC means by electronic payments.

It remains possible to use the paying in book and cheque method by post but as you will see from the website extract below (*italics*), HMRC is strongly recommending that employers use an electronic payment method.

HMRC's view is that, irrespective of the inconvenience, anyone (including the parish sector) can take a signed cheque or letter of instruction to their bank in order to have the bank make an electronic CHAPS or BACS payment on their behalf. (Be aware that this may trigger a bank charge). Please remember that if the council does resolve to make payments in this way it needs to have regard for the establishment of proper practices via its financial regulations.

The information below is lifted from the HMRC website at:
<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/payerti/paying/deadline.htm#1>

HMRC strongly recommends that you use an electronic payment method.

Paying electronically is fast, secure and convenient provided you use an accurate reference number - and it's mandatory for employers with 250 or more employees.

It's your responsibility to make sure payments are made on time, whichever payment method you use. You may be charged interest and a penalty if your payment isn't received by the deadline.

HMRC counts all of the payment methods listed below as electronic:

- . Direct Debit
- . Online debit or credit card using BillPay
- . Bacs Direct Credit
- . Faster Payments by online or telephone banking
- . CHAPS
- . GBS Transfer
- . Bank Giro
- . payment at the Post Office

You can find out more about these and other payment methods by reading the guide 'How to pay PAYE/Class 1 National Insurance/CIS'.

[Notification to WDC of co-option](#)

Democratic Services and Kim Paul informed of 2 new members through co-option.

[Thank you's to candidates standing for co-option](#)

Emails were sent to the two candidates who were unsuccessful in the co-option of new Parish Council members. Several other residents had shown an interest should there not be enough candidates putting their names forward.

May 2014

2014 Wychavon Parish Games

From: Susan Collins
To: Clerk
Sent: 22 March

I attach a letter inviting Birlingham to take part in the 2014 Wychavon Parish Games. Birlingham always used to take part in the Games, although they have not done so recently. We would really like to see Birlingham back in the Games, and would ask that your Parish Council consider this seriously at your next Meeting You do not have to enter all the events, as you can see from the attached results sheet.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Information put on the noticeboard and circulated on birlingham news

Wychavon District Council – The role of the Planning Compliance Officer

Email received – 18 March with following letter attached:

Our Ref: COMP/EG

Compliance with Planning Conditions

I would like to introduce myself as Planning Compliance Officer with the Planning Enforcement team at Wychavon District Council. This new role is a positive step in seeking to address conditions imposed on planning permissions before developers commence work and before complaints are received that they have not adhered to those conditions. It is often the case that non-compliance with conditions can result in a great deal of nuisance and disruption being caused to the local residents. It is expected that my new role will help to prevent this from being the case in the future, whilst the rest of the Enforcement Team will continue to deal with all other complaints received.

To begin with, I will focus on the larger schemes – namely housing developments over 10 houses, commercial developments over 1,000 square metres or 0.5 hectares in area, or where it includes significant works to listed buildings, sites with trees protected by tree preservation orders, or where there has been a history of non-compliance.

You will appreciate that when planning permission is granted there are usually some conditions that will need discharging, including the pre-commencement conditions. It is necessary that applicants/agents have written confirmation from us of the discharge of these conditions prior to work starting on site.

Soon after a planning approval notice has been sent to the applicant/agent I forward them a letter introducing myself, reminding them of the importance of discharging their planning conditions and request details of a start date. It would be helpful if we could work together in sharing information we know about proposed start dates of developments in your parish so that I can communicate with developers as early as I possibly can. I will copy your parish into any communication I send/receive regarding start dates and discharge of conditions that I hear about.

If you have any information or enquiries regarding the above information my contact details including days of work are at the bottom of this letter. Please feel free to get in touch with me with any enquiries you may have regarding the above. In the event I am not available then please contact Graeme Duerden, Development Control Manager (Enforcement), 01386 565293, or planning.enforcement@wychavon.gov.uk.

Elaine Godwin, Planning Compliance Officer

May 2014

[New councillors](#)

Names and addresses of new councillors sent to Democratic Services and Member Services.

[Reminder to bookings secretary at BVH](#)

May meetings starts at 7pm rather than 7.45pm

[Signage to prevent heavy vehicles entering lower end](#)

[Clerk to Adrian Hardman](#) 28 March

The request for a directional vehicle sign to be erected by the war memorial in Birlingham has been going on now for some considerable time. We need to stop lorries coming off the Eckington Road (New Barn Lane) and instead enter the village from the Defford Road by the plant nursery.

There have been more recent articulated lorries attempting to drive in the lower end of the village and this has caused damage to the highway and the verges.

The Parish Council have asked that there be an update particularly as you mentioned that the sign was looking positive last time you attended a meeting.

We have the Annual meeting in May and it would be good to get this on and off the agenda.

Thank you for your assistance.

[Lengthsman](#)

Contract returned. Carl Brassington asked if he can continue as Lengthsman.

WCC say "Thank you for another successful year. Despite tight financial constraints, we have been able to maintain funding at the same level as the previous year, as such your budget to cover the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 will be £1,780.15.

[CALC training](#)

Clerk attended the 15 May (The 3 M's) session

[Jubilee Wood TPO](#)

Chased Tree Officer for an update (over a year)

[Response from Sally Griffiths](#) 31March

I'm so sorry I haven't followed this one up in such a long time!

I've been out to take another look at how the new planting is doing. Unfortunately it's looking in a very sorry state and I think that it is possible that as much as 50% of the planting may have died, although it is not yet possible to be certain. I don't think that it's just the weather that killed off many of the whips but also the competition from grass and weeds - unless this is addressed many of the replacements may be lost again.

There is also a lot of what looks like rabbit or deer damage on many of the larger trees which needs to be prevented before it does long term damage.

Due to the present condition of the wood I am no longer entirely convinced that a TPO is appropriate - I think we would be criticised for using the TPO process to protect something which at present has limited amenity value. A further concern is that due to the level of failures the trees will be very widely spaced making it difficult to describe as woodland.

May 2014

I think I will have to postpone serving a TPO until firstly we see how many losses there are and how many replacements there will be. Sorry this is so negative - not really what you wanted to hear I'm sure! I share the parish council's wish to see a woodland preserved in this location in the long term but in considering a TPO I have to assess the present contribution that the trees make to the amenity of the area.

Regards Sally

Sally Griffiths BA(Hons) Dip LA MLI

Tree and Landscape Officer

[Reply from Clerk](#) 10 May

Apologies that I haven't acknowledged your response.

I have passed your comments on to the Parish Council members and it will be an item for discussion later this month.

It is sad but I would have to personally agree that a TPO would have to be postponed at this time. If 50% of the saplings survive that will be a bonus because during the 6+ weeks of scorching sunshine last year and without water I envisaged nearly all the trees dying.

I will get members to discuss the replacement whips / grass and weeds / damage to larger trees.

I don't believe you are being negative as you say you "wish to see a woodland preserved in this location in the long term".

I'll let you know any outcomes from the Parish Council and Jubilee Committee members as and when.

Thank you for taking the time to re-visit the site and giving your views.

[Forwarded to all Councillors:](#)

[Clerk](#) Just a reminder about an agenda item. The Parish Council requested the TPO and initiated the formation of the Jubilee Wood. The Jubilee Committee was agreed at the March 14 meeting; as below:

1. Jubilee Committee

The decision to form a permanent Jubilee Committee.

The people who were involved in the Jubilee events last year have unanimously agreed with the formation of a permanent Jubilee Committee. The Committee comprises Steve Morris (Chairman), John Hill (Treasurer), June Hiden (Secretary), Cathy Brunet, David Kew, Chris Herman and Maxine Cook, who were the main organisers of last year's events. Additional members will be co-opted on a temporary or permanent basis, as and when necessary. Current signatories to the Birlingham Jubilee account are John Hill, June Hiden and Maxine Cook.

The aims of the Jubilee Committee are:

1. To provide funds for the future maintenance of the Jubilee Wood, to monitor its progress and to take whatever action is necessary to ensure its survival. It would take responsibility for the Wood.
2. To provide funds (as loans) to invest in future events that will benefit the whole village.
3. To be involved in the organisation of village-wide events, as appropriate.

With respect to the Wood, the Jubilee Committee will take responsibility for making an agreement with the landowner, for securing a tree preservation order (TPO), for placing a plaque and for the future maintenance and funding of the Wood.

The Jubilee Committee will continue to report on its activities to the Parish Council and it is to be hoped that the Parish Council will continue to show a keen interest in both the Committee and the Jubilee Wood. The Jubilee Committee's activities and use of funds will also be reported on the Birlingham website.

It was agreed by all members.

May 2014

So between Parish Council members and Jubilee members some future decisions on maintenance / requirements etc need to be made. I don't believe anything has been done to the 'wood' since it was planted.

Chairman's response: The trees that have survived are growing well. However, I would like to do a full survey and I think that probably requires two people I'm not convinced the grass is a problem, especially as they are well established now, but I have asked Stuart for his opinion. However, there are a couple of patches of brambles that need to be cleared.

A couple of the larger trees have fresh deer damage but again I'm not sure there's much we can do. They will survive the occasional bit of damage; it's only if the bark is stripped all the way round there will be a problem. Looking at the older trees you can see that it's happened before but it's obviously not a regular breakfast stop for the deer.

It would be nice to replace the Jubilee Oak with a genuine specimen. I'll get on to Dave Kew, with his connections to the Woodland Trust.

I know we haven't really done anything to the wood since it was planted but hopefully if all goes well there really shouldn't be much to be done.

SWDP

Subject – SWDP Inspector's Further Interim Conclusions

Dear Parish Council Clerk

Following the recent Stage 1 Phase 2 SWDP hearing sessions (held on 13 and 14 March) the Inspector has now published his Further Interim Conclusions. These were placed on the SWDP Examination webpage http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page_id=5393 at 8.30 this morning. For your ease of reference I have attached the cover letter, his Further Interim Conclusions and the agreed south Worcestershire Councils' Press Release.

Should you have any queries in respect of this email or its attachments could you please contact your Planning Policy/LDF Manager:

- Malvern Hills District Council – Elizabeth Murphy elizabeth.murphy@malvern hills.gov.uk 01684 862371
- Worcester City Council – Ann Cooper ann.cooper@worcester.gov.uk 01905 721178
- Wychavon District Council – Fred Davies fred.davies@wychavon.gov.uk 01386 565367

With kind regards, **Paul Bayliss, SWDP Project Manager**

For immediate release: 3 April 2014

Inspector recommends 28,370 homes for south Worcestershire

The Inspector who is carrying out an Examination of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) has recommended that 28,370 homes need to be built in the area by 2030.

However, he has also said that nearly 5,000 of those homes have in fact already been built – because the Plan covers the period since 2006.

The Inspector's recommended figure is higher than the 23,200 in the Plan that was submitted to the Government last year and a slight increase on the 27,300 proposed by the three partner councils in January this year. However, it is considerably fewer than the 36,000 some developers called for during public hearings in October and March.

It is also 2,200 fewer than would have been required under the old West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, which the coalition Government abolished shortly after coming to power in 2010.

Councillor Judy Pearce, who chairs the South Worcestershire Joint Advisory Panel that leads work on the SWDP, said:

May 2014

"We know many people will be unhappy at the level of housing the Inspector has proposed, but the only way we can secure a locally-controlled future for south Worcestershire is to ensure that the Plan gets to the stage where it can be adopted as quickly as possible.

"Once adopted, the SWDP will give the three councils control over where new homes and businesses are built. Without it, we face a future where developers can try to build almost anywhere and our powers to resist their applications would be very limited."

The Inspector, Roger Clews, took into account the requirements of the new National Planning Policy Framework and the recently released National Planning Practice Guidelines in reaching his conclusions, which have today been published at www.swdevelopmentplan.org.

Each of the three councils preparing the Plan - Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council – will be asked in the summer to formally accept the Inspector's recommendation.

In preparation for that, work has begun to identify potential sites where the additional homes could be built and to assess other implications of the Inspector's recommendation.

The councils have already told the Inspector that they will continue to follow the strategy of the SWDP, which is to concentrate development in and around existing communities, rather than create new towns and villages as they prepare their response to his recommendation.

A substantial database of sites already exists from earlier work on the Plan, and more have been proposed by local people, organisations and developers in a recent formal call for sites.

Those sites will all be assessed for a range of factors, including access to infrastructure, transport links and whether they are prone to flooding.

A preferred list of sites will then go to the three councils at their summer meetings. A six-week consultation will then be launched to give the public the chance to have their say on the new proposals. The consultation will be concluded by the end of September.

After that, the Inspector is expected to hold a second stage of his Examination, to consider the proposed new sites and a variety of other vital aspects of the Plan. These are expected to include policies on affordable housing, transport, flood management and design.

It is expected that the SWDP will be adopted by the three councils in 2015.

The SWDP will guide south Worcestershire's economic and housing growth over the next 16 years and, when adopted by the three councils, will form the basis for planning decisions across South Worcestershire.

The Plan formally covers the period between 2006 and 2030. That means 4,909 homes that were built between 2006 and 2012 count as part of the 28,370. A further 3,785 new homes that were already being built or had been given planning permission by 2012 also count towards that total.

- ENDS -

Notes to Editors

The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) will provide a long-term vision up to 2030 for south Worcestershire, with the emphasis on boosting the local economy and delivering sustainable housing development.

It is based on extensive evidence and consultations, and has been jointly prepared by the three partner councils – Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon.

The SWDP includes proposed policies for dealing with four broad areas:

- creating jobs and economic prosperity

May 2014

- meeting housing needs
- transportation
- the environment.

Details of the proposals are available at www.swdevelopmentplan.org.

The proposals build on the work done between 2007 and 2010 on the South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy. The three councils decided to take a different approach when the coalition Government announced changes to the planning system.

Further Information

- South Worcestershire Development Plan website
www.swdevelopmentplan.org

- Malvern Hills District Council
Jeanette Covington: 01684 862158 / jeanette.covington@malvern hills.gov.uk
www.malvern hills.gov.uk

- Worcester City Council
Rob Byrne - 01905 722 409 / rob.byrne@worcester.gov.uk
www.worcester.gov.uk

- Wychavon District Council
Emma Wild – 01386 565102 / emma.wild@wychavon.gov.uk www.wychavon.gov.uk

Litter pick – Nafford

On Saturday 12 April a litter pick took place around Nafford. Thanks go to:-

Tara Kirkham-Evans accompanied by Alex and Olivia, John and Daphne Hill and John Komor.

The rubbish was removed from site by Steve Diston.

Litter pick – Swans Neck

On Monday 14 April

Thank you to Steve Morris, Steve Conder, Mark Adams and June Hiden

Poppies at war memorial

Councillor to members:

As part of the commemoration of the First World War, the PCC have been asked by the Archbishop of Canterbury to plant some poppies and they would like to do this around the war memorial.

This seems like a good idea although it may cause problems with mowing the grass. Any thoughts?

They want to plant on 30th April so we need to make a quick decision.

Response: The main concerns were where to plant them because of mowing

Communicate – April

[Wychavon copy from Councillor Davis](#)

Latest edition of Communicate, the news bulletin for and from Wychavon's Strategic Partnership and the LSPs sent by email.

May 2014

Licensing Act 2003 - Review of Statement of Licensing Policy

Email attachment of a letter from Worcestershire Regulatory Services regarding a consultation on Wychavon's Statement of Licensing Policy.

Please note that the closing date for comments to WRS is Friday 11 July 2014.

Kind regards, Mel Harris, Senior Member Support Officer

New Homes Bonus Protocol 2014 – 2016

Copied to all Councillors

Dear Clerk

I'm emailing to let you know that we have now published our new New Homes Bonus (NHB) Protocol on our website [here](#). Please bring it to the attention of your councillors.

The protocol explains how the bonus is calculated and its relationship to the planning system. It confirms our approach of continuing to allocate up to 40% of NHB to areas that have experienced housing growth. It explains the sliding scale for allocations of over £50,000 in years four and five. It also contains the new rules we've introduced for years four and five allocations. These are shown in teal coloured text on pages 8 to 10.

Please note that we now require **all** parish and town councils to consult the community about how NHB allocations for their areas should be spent and to provide evidence that they have done so. If you're not sure how to go about this, please get in touch and we can share how other parishes have done this.

I will soon be contacting any parish councils who have had a NHB allocation for more than two years and that haven't already spent some of it or have let us know they are developing plans for spending it, to find out what your intentions are.

Finally, please do use our new web facility to check NHB allocations and available funds for your parish or town throughout the year.

Kind regards, Tracy Perkins, Partnership Support Officer

CALC membership

Circulated to all Councillors

Notifying of what the Association can do; training opportunities and networking events and access to advice.

Notice of review of polling districts & polling places

Circulated to all Councillors

Invites any interested parties to make comments on any changes they wish to be considered.

VH Committee Minutes

Unconfirmed Minutes of the VH Committee Meeting held on 27th March 2014 received on 7 May from Secretary. Circulated to all Councillors.

May 2014

Land Drainage Act – maintenance of watercourse

Letter received from Wychavon District Council that action is served on Worcestershire Nature Conservation Trust at Smite to clear a watercourse at the east of Eckington Road

World War One Centenary – grant fund

Circulated to all Councillors

Ron Davis on behalf of Community Development WDC – circulated to all Councillors

£5000 available for voluntary and charitable groups

Who can apply? - To apply for a Wychavon Community Grant, follow these steps:

1. Choose your project. It can be a one off scheme with a distinct start and finish, or an ongoing project throughout the four years.
2. Fill in the forms. Application forms are available now.
3. Gather supporting information: It is important that the following things are included in your application:

- Evidence of local support and how it meets community needs.
- Bank account details and most recent account.
- A copy of the organisation's rules and regulations and/ or constitution.
- Copies of estimates and budget relating to project.

4. Submit your application: Make sure that the application is filled out fully and correctly and all of the supporting evidence is enclosed.

2014 marks the start of the WW1 Centenary. Wychavon District Council has a total of £5000 to award to organisations such as schools, Parish Councils and community groups. We are looking for projects that mark the centenary through community participation. There is a maximum of £250 per project and will be awarded to projects that contribute to and involve the local community in some form e.g. entertainment, education etc. It is an open application process with no closing date. When it is gone, its gone so do not delay in applying.

Projects could include:

- A drama performance
- An exhibition commemorating soldiers from the village or town
- Poetry class
- A workshop
- Remembrance events

Whatever your project is...the most important things are:

- It commemorates WW1
- It meets local needs and benefits local residents
- It has community support
- It is well planned and involves as many local people as possible

Contact Tracy Grubb T: 01386 565168

E: tracy.grubb@wychavon.gov.uk

Community Development, Wychavon District Council,

[Landowner statements](#) [CALC 15 information](#)

Landowner Statements – a New Threat to Village Greens

The Open Spaces Society writes:

May 2014

Town and village greens are land where local people have enjoyed informal recreation, for at least 20 years, without challenge or permission. Once the land has been registered, by the county or unitary authority (the registration authority) as a green it is protected from development.

Now landowners can submit to the registration authority a statement and map which challenge people's informal use of land and thereby threaten the public's ability to register the land as a town or village green. Once a statement has been deposited and notices posted on the land, local people have only one year in which to submit an application to register the land as a green based on 20 years' use for informal recreation.

The Open Spaces Society, the leading organisation concerned with the protection of green spaces, has asked all registration authorities to tell it of any such statements. However, it would be valuable if all local councils were to do this too. There is no guarantee that a notice will remain on the land for long, so the only way you can be sure of knowing about the threat to your local green space is by getting the council to inform you.

We recommend that you contact your county or unitary council's commons registration department and ask to be notified of any landowner statements made under section 15A of the Commons Act 2006. (These may be combined with landowner declarations relating to public rights of way, under section 31(6) of the Highways Act 1980.)

Once you know of a landowner statement, you can check the land to see whether it is eligible to register as a green. The Open Spaces Society's book *Getting Greens Registered* helps with this. If it is eligible as a green, local people have one year in which to gather evidence of use and submit an application. If it is not eligible you might wish to consider alternative ways of protecting the land, such as designation as Local Green Space.

Details are on the Open Spaces Society's website <http://www.oss.org.uk/what-we-do/village-greens/new-threat-to-village-greens-landowner-statements/>. You can contact the society for further information and help, although the society will ask you to join if you are not already a member.

Open Spaces Society,
25a Bell Street,
Henley-on-Thames RG9 2BA
01491 573535, hq@oss.org.uk, www.oss.org.uk

Parish matters May 2014

Hardcopy available from Clerk. [Circulated to all councillors.](#)

Western Power Distribution – Parish council pack; helping people to cope during power cuts

Containing: analogue telephone, torch with batteries, powerbank, rechargeable radio, foil blanket, reusable hand warmer, information booklet

BVH – accounts and chairman's report

Received from Kelvin and circulated to all councillors

Appendix 2: SWDP

Please ask for: Adrian Becker
Direct Dial: 01905 722545
Email: adrian.becker@worcester.gov.uk

Date: 18th March 2014

Dear Sir/Madam

South Worcestershire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment:

May 2014

2014 Call for sites and broad locations for housing

What are we doing?

The South Worcestershire Councils (SWCs) comprising Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council) are carrying out a 2014 'call for sites' for housing. This invitation is a consequence of the ongoing examination of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), to assist progress in moving towards Stage 2 Hearings, and address a probable uplift in housing requirement. The SWCs will use this information to update the South Worcestershire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)ⁱ, which identifies a pool of potential housing sites. The work is in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) March 2012). It also enables the SWC to take account of the new National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) published by DCLG on 6 March 2014 which advocates updating as good practice.

We are therefore inviting town and parish councils, neighbourhood forums, agents, developers, landowners, businesses, relevant local interest groups and others to tell us of any sites, land or buildings across south Worcestershire that could have the potential for housing.

How do you put forward a site?

We would like your assistance in identifying potential sites using the enclosed proforma. Copies are also on the SWDP website (www.swdevelopmentplan.org) and can be photocopied. Please send a completed proforma together with a site plan for each site, identifying the site at a scale of no less than 1:2500, to:

SHLAA 2014, South Worcestershire Development Plan, Orchard House, Farrier Street, Worcester, WR1 3BB

The proformas and maps must be received by the SWC by 17:00 on Wednesday 2nd April 2014. Information received after that time will not be included in this SHLAA update, but will be retained by the SWCs for future SHLAA production.

The timescale for the receipt of information on sites for housing development is necessarily short. This is due to the need to update the SHLAA evidence, and accelerate work to progress the SWDP. This will then allow us to proceed to the Stage 2 Hearings based on the broad approach discussed with the SWDP Inspector at the reconvened Stage 1 Hearings last Friday.

Lengthy and detailed supporting statements are not required. Supporting information should be limited to that requested on the proforma and the guidance notes, and using the proforma enables speedy and efficient data processing.

What sites should be included?

Please note that we are looking only for updated or new sites that have not been previously submitted. Unless you wish to make any changes to previously submitted sites (for example site area, land ownership, new access), or wish to withdraw any site(s) from further consideration, there is no need to re-submit any sites that you have already put forward through the following means:

- any sites you previously submitted to the earlier SHLAA work, or where you have written to ask for a site to be considered through the SHLAA process; or
- sites already included in the SWDP Proposed Submission Document (Jan 2013)

- through formal representations on the SWDP Proposed Submission Document (Jan. 2013) and ‘omission sites’; or
 - sites which have the benefit of planning permission or are subject to current planning applications.
- Should you have any queries about providing information please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate planning officer below:

Malvern Hills District Council: Angela Newey/Rosie Murray (01684 862373)

Worcester City Council: Adrian Becker: (01905 722545)

Wychavon District Council: Jessica Woolley: (01386 565430)

What this call for sites is not

This is a request by the SWC for technical evidence submitted on a ‘without prejudice’ basis. Putting forward a site for assessment does not mean it will necessarily be put forward by the SWCs for inclusion. This call for sites is not a consultation on the South Worcestershire Development Plan and it is not the appropriate opportunity to comment on the SWDP, and any such comments received will not be considered at this stage or forwarded to the Inspector. Please DO NOT send information to the SWDP Examination Inspector or the Programme Officer. There will be ample opportunity at a later date to comment on any new sites proposed or omitted.

Where is the Examination of the SWDP up to?

The SWDP Inspector is currently considering new evidence on the objective assessment of housing need following his reconvened Hearing Sessions on 13 and 14 March 2014. Further ‘Interim Conclusions’ on the overall housing requirement are expected shortly. These will inform the scale of uplift in the number of new homes required across South Worcestershire for the period 2006 to 2030.

What will happen next?

Once we have received the Further Interim Conclusions, the South Worcestershire Councils will:

- (a) consider the conclusions, and subject to those conclusions then
- (b) publish a timetable for the next steps; and
- (c) decide whether additional site allocations for housing will be needed and if so how many.

Whilst the objective assessment of housing need may indicate a need for more new homes, NPPG makes clear that the SHLAA is an important evidence source to inform plan making but does not, in itself, determine whether a site should be allocated for development. This is because not all sites considered in the assessment will be suitable for development or necessary to meet the requirement. The ‘timetable for the next steps’ is therefore expected to include a Council decision-making stage and subsequent public consultation before progressing to the next stage of the Examination hearings.

Please note that the nominated officer for co-ordinating this call for sites is Adrian Becker. His contact details are at the top of this letter.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Bayliss
SWDP Project Manager

May 2014