

Dear Resident

I could draw a number of different conclusions about why the number of people who attended this year's Annual Parish Meeting in April dropped by over 90% from the previous year. I was disappointed because it was the opportunity for residents to express their views and concerns on local issues to their parish councillors. Without this, it is often difficult to gauge whether the decisions and initiatives of the parish council accord with the views of residents. I also think this meeting is an important part of our democracy.

Similarly, there are positions for 8 parish councillors in Barnt Green, yet only 6 of them are filled. The role of a parish councillor is not one of alignment to a political party but of deciding how to further improvements in the local community. The parish council does not work in isolation and engages with and supports the activities of local organisations in Barnt Green. It's been said before, but if anyone would like to become involved, please contact one of the parish councillors or the executive officer, the details for whom are given below. We are more than happy to explain what's involved.

The parish council is supporting the open gardens weekend on Saturday 2 July and Sunday 3 July. Posters and banners will be on display in the village. I'm sure it will be a success. The proceeds will be going to local charities. Let's hope for good weather.

Robert Cholmondeley, Chair, Barnt Green Parish Council

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, Edwin Gumbley, Charles Hotham, Jenny Jellie, Susan Whitehand, (2 vacancies)
Chairman:	Robert Cholmondeley <a href="mailto:robert.cholmondeley@btinternet.com">robert.cholmondeley@btinternet.com</a>
Executive Officer:	Gill Lungley <a href="mailto:exec@barntgreen.org.uk">exec@barntgreen.org.uk</a> tel: 0121 447 9893
Parish councillors' contact details can be obtained via <a href="http://www.barntgreen.org.uk">www.barntgreen.org.uk</a> or from the Parish Council office at 80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green, B45 8NF	
Office opening hours are: Mon to Weds 10am – 1pm and Thurs 10am – 4pm	
A calendar of meeting dates is on the notice board and website; all parish council meetings start at 7pm and are open to the public to attend.	

## Parish Council blog

Matters arising from recent meetings:

Our County Councillor Peter McDonald attended the parish council meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016, when he spoke about the economy drive at County Hall that will see cuts of between £25m and £30m over the next year. The aim is to be self-reliant by 2018 by which time at least 60% of services will have been lost and 95% of those remaining being commissioned to external providers.

Also at this meeting members voted to support the installation of a footbridge to replace the now-closed foot-crossing over the railway line which was closed by Network Rail on safety grounds.

The Council was pleased to welcome three members of the public to the meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> April to talk on a diverse range of issues that related to the Open Gardens Event on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> July, whether the Parker's Piece playing field could be used as the home ground for under-12's league football and the state of Barnt Green railway station.

The parish council is happy to support the Open Gardens event and agreed a nominal grant; will support in principle the use of Parker's Piece for organised sport although conditions of hire and impact to neighbours must be considered before going ahead; and has asked to meet with representatives of London Midland to discuss how the station can be improved.

The Annual Parish Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> April, mentioned by the Chairman on page 1 and which is hosted by the parish council to provide the annual opportunity for residents to discuss parish affairs, as required by the Local Government Act 1972, was held at the Friends' Meeting House in Sandhills Road. Presentations were given by Rachel Banner on the Open Gardens event, Richard Dugdale on Network Rail's electrification work to Bromsgrove and Cllr Edwin Gumbley on the proposal to become a SmartWater Village (more on page 4).

Issues raised from the floor related to an observation about the proposals for moving the Bittell Road pavement under the railway bridge from one side to the other in that it would increase the number of road crossings undertaken by pedestrians; and a comment relating to the council's annual accounts.

The Annual Council Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May saw the re-election of Cllr Robert Cholmondeley to the chair and an agreement to establish a separate planning committee which will provide comment to the Local Planning Authority on all planning applications in the parish.

During this meeting we heard that Severn Trent Water has offered to pay for the reinstatement of the three bollards that went missing from outside Oulsnam's in December last year, thanks to an article in The Village magazine.

Draft minutes of Parish Council Meetings are published on the council's website – [www.barntgreen.org.uk](http://www.barntgreen.org.uk) click on the 'parish council' tab and then click the words 'agenda and minutes' half-way down the page

## Two New Councillors Wanted!

**Are you** interested in the community, keen to represent the people who live and work in Barnt Green and have time to attend at least one evening meeting each month?

There are two vacant seats on the parish council that need to be filled by individuals who, like us, want to help improve the environment, ensure value for money on the precept and support the parish council's delivery of services.

We are responsible for some street lighting, the playing field off Bittell Road, Millennium Park in the village centre, village enhancement schemes including hanging baskets for the shops and the planters along Hewell Road, preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan and community-building.

We are the most basic tier of local government with a budget of £62,000 for this year. Details and an application form are available on the parish council website or direct from the office.

On Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March, St Andrew's School's Eco Team "Cleaned for the Queen" by spending the afternoon in the village with litter pickers and bin bags. They were very proud to take part in the national campaign, cleaning up the country in preparation for the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations this summer.

## Clean for the Queen

## Business Waste Collection

The Parish Council office has been reminded that if you run a business you must have a commercial waste contract in place. This is as required under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which provides the legal duty to safely contain and dispose of your waste even if you run your business from your home.

This year's opportunity to interrogate the parish council on its financial dealings will take place during usual office hours between 3<sup>rd</sup> June and 14<sup>th</sup> July. If you would like to view the books, vouchers, receipts, minutes, accounting records etc please contact the Executive Officer to make an appointment. More information stating your rights to inspection and about the audit process is published on our website and on the parish council's notice boards.

## Annual Audit ££

## A SmartWater Village



Seeing the wood for the trees is a vital part of any decision making process. The Parish Council is actively considering whether to provide free of charge a SmartWater kit to each house in the Parish which would then allow us to be known as a 'SmartWater Village'.

SmartWater is an international crime fighting and crime prevention company with an established track record for detecting and deterring criminal activity. They have created a clear liquid/gel, supplied in an easy-to-use phial with each solution containing a unique invisible marker that is recorded on a database at the company head office in Telford. After being painted on to a domestic valuable it dries and only becomes visible under ultraviolet light. Road signage and homes having small stickers to indicate its use will act as a deterrent to any prospective burglar as any goods stolen and recovered would be traceable back to the owner.

In principle it is a positive idea, working on the premise of "low hanging fruit", any thief seeing SmartWater signs would move on to easier pickings elsewhere, however, there are a number of important questions for us as a Parish Council when one looks at the detail.

Just two are: (1) a number of homes are already participating in the scheme and (2) others have spent their own money on state of the art domestic anti-burglary systems. To help your Parish Council see the "wood from the trees" I would welcome any resident contacting me - [edwingumbley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:edwingumbley@hotmail.co.uk), tel: 445 1416 or 07552 119227 with their opinion on the above be it positive or negative.

## Traffic Speeds

Please don't forget, if you would like to display a '30' roundel sticker on your wheelie bin then call in to the office or send an email request to the Executive Officer to drop some in to you, we still have a few left. We think they are an effective reminder to drivers of the prevailing speed limit on at least one day each week.

Good news! Worcestershire County Council is considering a reduction in the speed limit along Barnt Green Road / Kendal End Road from 40mph to 30mph. A copy of the notice of intent is in the parish council office and on the notice board. Please make any objections and representations in writing by 22<sup>nd</sup> June to the Head of Legal & Democratic Services at County Hall, Worcester WR5 2NP.

A number of other speed limits in the wider Barnt Green area are also being reviewed and consolidated at the same time.

### Dates for your diary ...

...**Barnt Green Open Gardens** weekend **2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> July 2016, 2 – 5pm**. There will be a choice of village-centre gardens to visit, a flower festival in St Andrews Church, an art exhibition in the Friends Meeting House, a duck hunt, plus teas, jams and plants for sale. The village will be celebrating the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup>!

...**St Andrews Church** hosts the following summer concerts:

**Barnt Green Choral Society:** Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June, 7.30pm – details 445 2344

**Asklepios Orchestra:** Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June, 7.30pm – details 01527 872598

**Sinfonia of Birmingham:** Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July, 7.30pm – details 0121 447 7671

- **Stravinsky** - Pulcinella Suite
- **Weber** – Bassoon Concerto with soloist Rebecca Eldridge
- **Prokofiev** – Classical Symphony
- **Beethoven** – Symphony no. 8

...**Zumba Gold:** dance routines designed for beginners and older adults using modified movements, Wednesdays @ 1.30pm Barnt Green Scout & Guide Hall



## CONTACT THE ELDERLY

### NATIONAL CHARITY INVITES OVER 75s IN BARNT GREEN TO JOIN THEM FOR A CUPPA, CAKE AND GOOD COMPANY

Contact the Elderly, a leading national charity dedicated to tackling loneliness and isolation among older people, is inviting local residents in Barnt Green to join its monthly tea parties and enjoy a few hours of tea, chat and good company. A new group in Barnt Green has space for a number of new guests to join and the charity is keen to raise awareness of these openings among the local community.

Contact the Elderly, with the support of thousands of volunteers all across the UK, organises monthly tea parties for small groups of older people, aged 75 and above, who live alone and would like some company on a Sunday afternoon. Each guest is collected from their home by a volunteer driver and taken to a volunteer host's home, where they meet with a small group for tea, chat and friendship. The group is welcomed by a different host each month, but the drivers remain the same which means that over the months and years, acquaintances turn into friends and loneliness is replaced by companionship.

Contact the Elderly's Birmingham Development Officer, Pamela Walker, said: "The monthly events make a real difference to the lives of those in the group and we would encourage anyone interested in coming along, or those who know of people to whom it might appeal, to get in touch."

**Barnt Green residents, aged 75 and above, who live alone without the support of family and friends, and are interested in joining the Redditch**  
Contact the Elderly group can contact Gill Talbot on 07539 276054 or email [pamela.walker@contact-the-elderly.org.uk](mailto:pamela.walker@contact-the-elderly.org.uk)

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY ST ANDREW'S FIRST SCHOOL!

Not just any birthday, but a very special one as St Andrew's First School, Barnt Green is 90 years old this year and will therefore be celebrating this milestone along with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The school is the only Church of England school founded in 1926 and was built just 16 years after St Andrews church was built in Sandhills Road.

During 2016 the school has both educational and fun celebrations lined up such as dressing up 1920's style in red, white and blue for a street party of cakes in the playground, a 1920's lunch, bunting-making, Charleston dancing and a crown making competition with each class researching a different aspect of the 1920's.



### National Plant Monitoring Scheme

**This partnership** scheme, backed by the government, aims to collect data to provide an

annual indication of changes in plant abundance and diversity. Thanks to volunteers there is good understanding of changes in the populations of birds, butterflies and bats. Plants are the foundations of ecosystems but currently there is no good measure of changes in plant populations. Hence this call for volunteers to visit a convenient 1km square divided into 5 plots and record plant 'indicator species' in each plot.

The plots will be surveyed twice a year. The kilometre squares to monitor have been identified by stratified random sampling. The plants have been chosen as indicators of the health of individual habitats. There are 3 levels for volunteers to take part in depending on confidence and knowledge, and support will be provided both through training, web and telephone.

Over 1,100 volunteers were recruited last year; anyone interested in nature who can identify plants, or is keen to learn, can take part. You do not have to be an experienced botanist.

For more information visit: [www.npms.org.uk](http://www.npms.org.uk)

## PARKER'S PIECE



Closer to home the parish council looks after the recreation ground behind the Baptist Church off Bittell Road, known as Parker's Piece (so-named after the first Chairman of the parish council, Sheila Parker). We recently installed a footway to help navigate the field when it's muddy and to encourage exercise in the great outdoors. It is intended to be extended in the future to eventually encircle the field.

We are always open to any suggestions for other improvements to the ground.

## POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

The recent election for West Mercia's Crime and Police Commissioner saw John Campion elected into office to replace Bill Longmore. Of the 13,110 valid ballot papers submitted to the count for the Bromsgrove district, 4,800 favoured John Campion as their first choice.

In the first of his weekly newsletters (available from the Commissioner's website at <http://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk>) John Campion writes of his intention to improve the help provided to victims and includes, as his key priorities, his aims to:

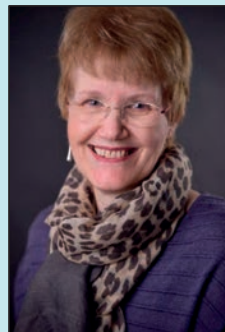
- Reform West Mercia to deliver a more effective police service that represents better value for taxpayer's money.
- Ensure a more secure West Mercia so that priority crime areas get the attention, resources and expertise they need.
- Reassure West Mercia, ensuring residents feel safe by tackling speeding in villages, anti-social behaviour, shoplifting and burglaries.

To assist him, John is in the process of recruiting a deputy PCC and four new Commissioner's Ambassadors; details are on his website.

### Introducing the parish council's newest recruit.

Jenny Jellie was co-opted to the parish council in September last year and writes: A day in the life of (actually just a few hours each month)...

You may be aware that we have vacancies for 2 Parish Councillors in Barnt Green. The current councillors have been asking local people who may be interested in joining without much success unfortunately. There appears to be the misconception that it's a very time consuming position with the general response that "we don't have time". I have been a councillor for almost a year now and still work full time. There are additional working parties that meet as required for various themes such as the environment, planning applications and the neighbourhood plan.



It really isn't onerous to give your time and views about what concerns or pleases you in Barnt Green and the local surrounding areas. If you are interested in being involved then please do what I did and get in touch with the parish council office, you will be warmly welcomed.

## VOLUNTEERS' WEEK

**1<sup>st</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2016**

Worcestershire County Council has arranged a Celebrating Volunteering Event for 9<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at The Hive, Worcester. There is to be an Information Market Place which starts at 5pm and the event commences 5.30pm - 7.00pm

Barnt Green Parish Council office is sited at 80 Hewell Road, B45 8NF  
Tel: 0121 447 9893 / email: [exec@barntgreen.org.uk](mailto:exec@barntgreen.org.uk)

The Parish Council has received the following from Barnt Green Pharmacy and is happy to print it in full:

### **SAVE YOUR LOCAL PHARMACY!**

Pharmacies in the area are urging people to join their fight against NHS cuts which could have life threatening consequences.

Around a quarter of the 11,600 pharmacies in England are under threat as a result of Government plans to cut NHS funding by £170 million. Petitions have been launched to oppose the cuts.

Community Pharmacies are valued by the public with 1.6 million visits every day. They are the fabric of society and are easily accessible for face to face healthcare advice and public health services where no appointment is necessary. As well as dispensing medicines they help patients stay well and out of Doctors Surgeries and A & E departments. They provide Medicine Use Reviews which help patients understand their medicines better and take them correctly for maximum benefit and fewer adverse effects. They dispense medication into compliance aids for patients who would otherwise get confused or forget to take their medicines at the right time.

They also offer a free delivery service to patients' homes. Some of these patients are housebound and lonely and are often as pleased to see a delivery driver for some company as they are their medicines.

If the proposed Government blanket cuts do go ahead, up to 3000 pharmacies could be forced to close or have reduced resources. This would have unpredictable consequences that can only be detrimental to patient care. It would be exceedingly difficult to maintain current excellent patient safety standards. Service levels to the public will inevitably fall and this would lead to increased pressure on GPs, A & E and Social Services.

Barnt Green Pharmacy has been family-owned for over ten years. Manager, Mohammed Arif has added 500 plus signatures to a petition against the cuts. He says "Where would our patients go? It won't be convenient for our older patients to go elsewhere. We would urge the Government that all pharmacies in the region are inundated and are all needed."

He urged our local MP Sajid Javid to visit the local pharmacies to see the work they do and the roles they fulfil.

We can't underestimate how important it is that all our patients get involved and are aware of these dangerous plans. We would like to generate discussions in parliament as it is the best way to get these proposals dropped. We would urge all patients to sign the online petition or sign the NPA paper petition in Pharmacies which would send a strong message to the Government. <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/116943>

We would also recommend you to write a letter to our local MP Sajid Javid describing the concerns regarding Pharmacy closures.

We are thankful for your support and look forward to allow Pharmacies in England to provide patients the best possible care.