

Dear Resident,

I am hugely disappointed that work has not yet started on the installation of lifts at the railway station and that a date has not been set by Network Rail. The project and its funding was agreed by the Department for Transport in June 2023. However, Network Rail attended the Parish Annual Meeting on Monday 22nd April and gave a presentation on the project. Design work is to be finalised in the coming months after which the contract for installation will go out to tender. It has not been possible to give an exact date yet when installation will commence.

It's pleasing to see that Charles Banner has, this month, been granted a life peerage. His official title is Baron Banner of Barnt Green in the County of Worcestershire. Lord Banner KC has been honoured for his work as a leading barrister on planning and environmental issues. He intends to use this expertise in the House of Lords. The local significance of his territorial designation is that he grew up in Barnt Green and his mother lives here as many of you may know. Congratulations.

Robert Cholmondeley, Chair, Barnt Green Parish Council

MP and Councillors' contacts:

MP	Sajid Javid - sajid.javid.mp@parliament.uk
County Councillor	Adrian Kriss - AKriss@worcestershire.gov.uk
District Councillor	Charles Hotham - c.hotham@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Parish Councillors	Robert Cholmondeley, Charles Hotham, Philip Perry, Olivia Pardo Roques, Susan Whitehand, Mark Roberts, James Baldwin and Lydia Williams. Councillor contact details available via: www.barntgreen.org.uk
Chairman	CLlr Robert Cholmondeley - robert.cholmondeley@barntgreen.org.uk
Executive Officer	Eleanor Choudry
Office Address	80 Hewell Road, B45 8NF
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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.

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Visible House Numbers

The Ambulance Service are urging people to make their house numbers visible so that they can find you when you need them most. Lives are at risk because vital minutes are lost when ambulance crews cannot see your house number or name. Ensure your house number is visible from the road in the dark.

Snowball App

Snowball is a free review platform to help people with a disability to access their local community but also things like, days out, holidays, pubs, restaurants, blue badge car parking bays, accessible toilets, etc. For more info visit

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/snowball-community/id1624679548>

Pollinator Site



The area at the end of Green Bank is a designated pollinator site. The Volunteer Group of local residents have been busy raking up the autumn debris. The parish council supplied a weed puller to help reduce the weeds and encourage wildflowers and other plants to grow. It will take a few years for the area to become fully established. The site is encouraging insects and wildlife to flourish and help biodiversity in Barnt Green.

Coffee & Chat Sessions



Come along to meet others in the local community, you are guaranteed a warm welcome, a hot drink and biscuit!

Barnt Green Baptist Church, Bittell Rd

Every Wednesday 10 am until 12 noon

NEW Under 5's Stay & Play starts
Thursday 11th April 9.30-11.30am

St Andrews Parish Centre, Sandhills Rd

Every Friday 10.30 am until 12 noon

Biodiversity in Barnt Green

Recently introduced legislation has meant that new duties have been placed on all Public Authorities in England to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of their policy or decision making. The overall intention is to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England and as such Parish Councils (including Barnt Green) must take biodiversity into account in their decision making. Biodiversity is defined as "the variety of all life on Earth: genes, species and ecosystems. It includes all species of animals and plants, and the natural systems that support them. Biodiversity matters because it supports the vital benefits humans get from the natural environment. It contributes to the economy, health and well-being, and it enriches our lives". The Parish Council now has a standing item on the agenda for all its meetings on the subject of Biodiversity and we are increasingly conscious of biodiversity issues in our decision making, such as when commenting on Planning Applications.

There are already a number of Biodiversity initiatives underway within the Parish. At the County Council level, Worcestershire has already identified in its Biodiversity Action Plan the existence of 17 habitats and 26 species which are of particular conservation priority. A number of these - Bats, Farmland Birds, Ponds and Lakes, Road Verges, Grassland, Ancient Veteran Trees, Woodland Habitat and Hedgerows are identified as particularly relevant to the Barnt Green Parish. Worcestershire County Council will also be consulting on a draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) in the Autumn and we have recently added areas of Parish Council owned sites to the Local Habitat Map which seeks to identify areas that *could* be used to support nature recovery initiatives in the future. The Parish Council (ably supported by some very willing local volunteer residents) also maintains the pollinator site in the village and has recently planted a number of new fruit trees both there and in the Bittel Road Playing Fields. There are a number of other public authorities who own and manage land within the Parish (e.g. Network Rail, Canal and River Trust, Barnt Green Waters) and we plan to develop relationships with each of them so we can coordinate and support future biodiversity activities.

There's undoubtedly even more we could be doing and we would welcome any suggestions from Residents and/or local land owners for any ideas for Biodiversity projects. We would love to hear from you and help conserve

The Local Government Boundary Commission England Recommendations for Worcestershire Electoral Boundaries

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament. Their main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England. They are conducting a review of Worcestershire County Council.

Some councillors currently represent many more or fewer electors than others. This is described as 'electoral inequality'. The aim is to create 'electoral equality', where the number of electors per councillor is as even as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

Redditch Borough Council and Worcester City Council are due to have revised ward boundaries implemented for their council elections in 2024. As these new wards will be implemented before the conclusion of the review of the County Council, they have based their coterminosity calculations on the new ward boundaries, rather than the existing boundaries.

Their proposed two-councillor division of Alvechurch & Wythall includes the parishes of Alvechurch, **Barnt Green**, Beoley and Wythall. This proposal differs from the Council's scheme which included more of Wythall village in its Wythall division, using the A435 as an identifiable boundary. This suggestion produces a 12% electoral variance for Wythall division. The Council acknowledged the high electoral variance but argued there was a strong community argument to move more of Wythall village into the division. This argument was also supported by submissions from a local resident and Councillor Kent who argued that the division boundary should reflect the Wythall parish boundary. They explored amending the division boundary to reflect the parish boundary on the basis of the community evidence received. However, this produced a 14% forecast electoral variance.

They have therefore decided to take a different approach which will ensure an effective balance of the statutory criteria. They propose a two-councillor Alvechurch & Wythall division which unites Wythall parish in one division, improves coterminosity and results in a forecast electoral variance of 6%.

The final recommendations of the consultation will be published on the 2nd July 2024. Barnt Green Parish Council responded to the consultation to say that Cllrs did not favour the 2 councillor concept which will increase administration, is potentially confusing for the electorate and will probably diminish the influence of the parish council.

Bittell Road Playing Field

Following the drainage works a further survey of the ground is to take place before the children's play equipment is refurbished. The basketball hoop has been repaired.

New Village Entrance Gates

Following a serious accident on Blackwell Road, Worcestershire County Council provided funding for village entrance gates. It is hoped they will highlight the 30 mph speed limit and have an impact on traffic speed.

Community Speed Watch Volunteer Group

Community Speed Watch is a community driven road safety initiative, coordinated by West Mercia Police but managed and run by volunteers in the community. It involves trained volunteers from the community monitoring the speeds of vehicles with approved, hand-held speed measurement devices. Where vehicle speeds are found to be inappropriate, a letter is sent to the registered keeper by the police with the aim of encouraging them to reduce their speed when driving in the future. There must be at least 6 volunteers in the scheme and any 3 volunteers must be present at any one time. Please email the EO if you would like to volunteer at exec@barntgreen.org.uk.

Vehicle Speed Activated Sign

The PC has applied for funding for a new vehicle activated sign on Fiery Hill Road following 4 accidents in 4 weeks. If successful, it is hoped that this will help to reduce the speed of traffic.

Barnt Green Parish Council has office space that is available to hire on an adhoc/regular basis for £5 per hour (minimum £15).

We are situated at 80 Hewell Road at the rear office. There is access for all users and a dedicated meeting space seating up to 15 people. Please contact the EO for terms of hire and a booking form.

Email exec@barntgreen.org.uk or call 0121 447 9893. Facilities include: set meeting style table layout for 8 people, toilet facilities, kitchen available upon request, internet etc.

Chuggers & Chaingang

Chuggers & Chaingang, is the local run and ride Club based at Barnt Green Sports Club. Weekly Chugger sessions are Monday at 7pm with additional sessions on Wednesday evenings. Chaingang rides are on Wednesday evening also at 7pm with additional sessions on Saturday mornings. Please contact Membership Secretary Kate Gallimore for more information.

kategallimore@googlemail.com or visit www.barntgreenchuggers.co.uk.



Dog Walkers

There are many beautiful walks in and around Barnt Green and many dog walkers visit the area. Unfortunately some residents, who do not own dogs, are finding dog waste bags in their wheelie bins. Please take your dog waste bags home or dispose of them in a public bin.

Difibrillator

A replacement defibrillator has been installed beside the Post Office on Hewell Road. The PC received 50% grant funding to replace the faulty defibrillator. Defibrillators will only deliver a shock if they detect an abnormal heart rhythm. Please follow the link below to watch a professionally recorded full demonstration training session of how to use the defibrillator in an emergency including FAQ's
<https://vimeo.com/557677120/e7524918c5>

Christmas in Barnt Green



The Christmas lights switch on seems a long time ago! The event was held in Millennium Park with the wonderful Arrow Valley Brass Band. Drinks were served by local retailer, Village Vineyards. The event was a success despite the freezing weather but the mist added a Christmas atmosphere and Father Christmas made an appearance. The event will be held in Millennium Park next year. Congratulations to Barnt Green Antiques for winning the Best Dressed Christmas Window competition.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

SATURDAY 7TH

SEPTEMBER 2024

Social Eats

STREET FOOD & MUSIC FESTIVAL

Bittell Road Playing Fields

Further details will be available on Barnt Green Parish Council website and Facebook page.

Need help with the NHS App?



Contact the NHS App support team using the QR code below or by visiting: digital.nhs.uk/nhsapphelp



The team will be able to help you with all technical queries.

It's normal to experience some technical difficulties with the NHS App if your GP surgery is changing clinical systems or merging with another practice.

If you encounter any technical issues after these changes are complete, please contact the NHS App Team.

You can also find more help and information, here: www.nhs.uk/nhs-app



Use the NHS App for quick and secure access which allows patients to book appointments and order repeat prescriptions without the need to be held in a queue by busy practice telephone lines.