

June and July 2025



BIRDINGBURY NEWS NO 128



Full Steam Ahead for Summer

Tractor Run Fun

Birdingbury Parish Council Report

At the Parish Council meeting on Monday 19 May, it was all change. Having reluctantly said goodbye to Guy as our Chair at the previous meeting, we formally noted our thanks for his sterling contribution and great service over a number of years. I have taken over as the new Chair and Simon Kent is Vice-Chair. That means I now get to write this first page report in Birdsong, definitely a career high-spot! We were also delighted to welcome Darren Young as a new Councillor, as he was coopted onto the Council. Darren will also be our PC liaison member with the Club.

A few things to update on. We have been approached by Warwickshire County Council which has been working with a company in relation to various locations within the county where they believe mobile coverage could be improved. Given that Birdingbury certainly falls within that category, we have agreed to engage with them, on an exploratory basis, to see what they are proposing. No further details are available at this stage but we will keep you posted. For the avoidance of doubt, this is separate from both the fibre roll-out that we have recently seen in the village and the previous proposal for a mast on the corner as you come into the village from Marton.

Work is continuing in relation to a number of other matters that have previously been raised here.

We have received a quote for the cleaning and general refurbishment of the War Memorial. It is several thousand pounds so we are seeking other quotes for comparison – but it may be that, if we want to proceed to keep this precious and important village landmark in good condition, we will have to look both at whether grants are available and/or whether we are prepared, as a village, to raise the necessary funds.

We are also continuing to receive quotes for replacement equipment for the recreation field – again, this is going to be quite a costly piece of work so we will be looking out for any available grants.

Finally, we are still awaiting confirmation of when work will be done on the culvert at the Leamington Hastings/Stockton Road junction. We will let you have an update once we receive a date.

Sara Kendell, Chair, Birdingbury Parish Council

Annual Village Meeting

Every Parish is required to hold a village or parish meeting in the spring to ensure that there is a public forum for residents to share their views. Our Annual Village Meeting was held on 29 April in the Birbury.

We use it as an opportunity for the various village organisations to give an update on their activities and to look a little into the future. There were about 20 people present and we heard from the Parish Council, PCC, the Club, the Birbury Management Committee, Birdsong, Community Café and Swap Shop.

The minutes from the meeting are on the noticeboard behind the bus shelter and have been circulated via the village WhatsApp group, but here are my takeaways:

- It has been a relatively uncontentious year for the Parish Council with few big planning applications, but plenty going on recreation field improvements, refurbished phonebox and War Memorial, superfast broadband infrastructure in place, to name a few key items.
- The Club has made great strides in the last year to address its financial situation
 and to engage the village even more. The volunteer model has been a great
 success, but also has its limits. Tony and the Committee welcome anyone
 getting in touch who has a skill or some time to spare, from bar work to bookkeeping, to serving on the Committee.
- St Leonard's PCC has also had a busy year managing the fallen wall and having
 repairs done to the coping stones on the roof. Beyond the fabric though, the true
 strength of the church is in its community its PCC volunteers, its priest and its
 congregation. As with the Club, there is a need for new people to get involved in
 any way that they can, to keep the church moving forward as it serves the
 community.
- Swap Shop and Community Café have become fixtures in the weekly diary for many who spend the week in the village, especially older residents. Community Café is in its third year and Swap Shop has been going for about 15 years. In recent months, we have seen neighbours who have had falls, operations or illnesses being missed at these events, and then welcomed back as they use the event as a reason to 'get back out there'. Long may that continue, but like everything else, this depends on people giving their time to make it happen.

So, I think my reflection on the meeting was that I had described it badly ... it's not when we hear from 'village organisations', it is when we hear from the <u>people</u> who make a village into a community. These are the people who make the village so much more than a collection of houses. And each of these village groups is looking for people to get involved ... what will the community be like if no-one answers that call?

Birdingbury Tractor and Classics Road Run 2025



The sun shone and once again as Main Street was full of tractors and classic vehicles for our annual road run on 3 May. The Tractor Run was conceived in 2018 as a tribute to the Birdingbury Show, which had been held for the last time in 2017 following the passing of Bob Munro, the main mover, sometime earlier.

Apart from during the Covid years, the Tractor Run has become an annual event. Of course these events don't just happen: a lot of planning and hard work goes into what is a very long day.

I don't intend to name individuals but thanks must go to all the organisers, buyers of provisions, the breakfast team, the BBQ team, The Nelson Club at Stockton for hosting the pit stop, Amie Boyd for her wonderful afternoon entertainment (particularly the WW2 favourites for VE Day the following Thursday), the Club crew for keeping up with everything and clearing up afterwards, and Dr Busker and the Rough Diamonds for the evening entertainment.

Special thanks for their generous donations must also go to:

- Copperfield Windows
- JM Firewood
- Birdingbury Club
- Priory Tool Hire (Clews)



and the following local businesses for donating raffle prizes:

- The Lost Farm Grandborough
- Joseph Morris Butchers
- Southam Agricultural
- Mike Harris Reclamation, Grandborough.
- Fosse Way Garage, Stretton on Fosse
- Woodbine Stables, Grandborough
- Napton Stores



- Napton Buffalo
- Napton Cidery
- The Friendly Inn, Frankton
- Crossroads Garage, Princethorpe
- Long Itch Diner
- The Two Boats, Long Itchington
- The Shoulder of Mutton, Grandborough
- The Green Man, Dunchurch.

However, the biggest thanks must go to all the entrants for the Run, and to the village and wider community for all their support.



We are donating £650 each to our two charities: SANDS and RABI, so once again, thank you.

Steve Edgar



Club Update

It's that time again: the Club's Annual General Meeting will be held on **Monday 30 June at 7.30pm** in **The Birbury**.

As usual, we'll be looking back over the past year, the current committee will officially stand down, and a new one will be formed.

In true AGM tradition, the need for new committee members is usually the point where people suddenly find the Birbury carpet *very* interesting. But this year, we really do need some new faces to step forward as I'll be stepping down as Chair (as promised at last year's AGM), and John and Jenny Barr will be handing over the financial reins too.

If you think the Club is something worth keeping alive then please do consider getting involved. If you have any experience with finances, then all the better, but anyone willing to help is welcome. You can speak to me, Jenny Barr, Bec Holmes, Rich Cutts, or Rob Walker before the meeting if you're interested, or just want a chat about it.



Also, if you've got any points you'd like raised at the AGM, please do **let us know in advance**. A few curveballs came out of nowhere last year, and while we love surprises, we'd rather be a bit more prepared this time around!

A Final Word from the Chair

Alex and I moved to the village back in 2005, and I vividly remember pulling up on Main Street while house hunting, spotting the (then fairly grotty) working men's club and thinking, 'What on earth is that doing here?'

If I had known then that I would spend nearly two decades helping run it, I would probably have thought better of buying the house and run off back to the estate agents!

It's been quite a journey (and it's definitely had its moments!) but if someone had told me back then that it would not just be a bar, but also become, in every sense, **the village club** - hosting church fetes, wine tastings, open mic nights, quizzes, food nights, a day-time café, working hand in glove with the Birbury, and even lifting the village's spirits during a national pandemic - I'm not sure I would have believed them.

While these events, and getting things back onto a stable financial footing have been wonderful, when it comes down to it, the things that matter most are the community related ones. Someone said to me recently that they used to dread coming in to renew their membership each year because it felt so unwelcoming - and now they're in most weeks, eating, chatting with friends and neighbours, and absolutely loving it.

That, to me, is what the Club is all about: a welcoming, lively space at the heart of our community. It has only become that through the sheer hard work of some very dedicated people that I have had the good fortune to work alongside during my time on the committee and, as Chair, and I'd like to extend my sincere thanks to them all.

Of course, there is still much to be done, and so I would like to take this opportunity to wish the new committee every success. I am confident they will build on all that has been achieved so far, and lead the Club on into an even brighter future.

Tony Flint, President, Birdingbury Club

BIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Club Opening Hours

Monday – Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	6pm – 9pm
Friday	5pm - 11pm
Saturday	2pm-11pm
Sunday	12noon -7 pm

BIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Cheese and Wine Update

We wanted to let you all know that we raised £300.79 from the Cheese and Wine night on 8 March, which has been added to club refurbishment funds.

This was split almost evenly between a small surplus from the event, my buying back some left over bottles and Tony Inskip (Dave Hawkes' guest) who bought two bottles of wine, and added a donation.

Thank you to everyone for came along and contributed to a great evening and a worthy fundraising effort for the Club.

John and Jenny Barr



Baby Steps



Over the Easter holidays, I fulfilled a dream to walk the whole of the Cotswold Way from Chipping Campden to Bath in ten days, a distance of 102 miles. I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to those lovely villagers who sponsored me and helped to raise over £700 for a wonderful charity called Baby Lifeline, who provide emergency packs for midwives to use when someone is giving birth in a setting away from hospital, for example, in war zones.

I love walking and always feel there is so much to explore here in the UK, right under our noses! Indeed the Cotswold Way is so close to home, it

was a good choice for me to walk solo. In case of injury I knew my husband, Niyi, was a short drive away and would be able to come to the rescue.

The weather during April was dry, sunny and warm most days, so there was very little mud and the carpets of bluebells, cowslips and wild garlic were incredible. There are also some impressive ancient trees in the wooded areas, and the views from some of the peaks are dreamily beautiful, especially Coaley Peak, Crickley Hill and Cleeve Hill. It was so refreshing to





be away from the tyranny of endless emails and meetings for these few precious days.

The path avoids towns but passes through some very pretty locations, including Painswick, Broadway, Winchcombe and Stanton, with laburnum blooms dripping from honey coloured stone buildings. The

sound of the Easter bells ringing out from Winchcombe church as I climbed

the first section of the path towards Belas Knap on a beautifully breezy sunny Easter Sunday was an emotional high point.

My favourite place was Wotton-under-Edge, which has a thriving and friendly high street and a bakery selling the most delicious lardy cake and Cornish pasties. Short detours allowed me to admire the peacocks at Sudeley Castle, the Painswick Rococo gardens and the stunning tulips at Dyrham Park (and of course, enjoy a National Trust scone or two!).



Another memorable spot is 'Cooper's Hill' where the annual cheese rolling race takes place. It is incredibly steep – almost a cliff face!

The path is impressively well maintained and signposted, and other walkers were in evidence, which added to my sense of safety as a solo walker. One section had a well signposted diversion because of anti-social behaviour but, despite this, it was very easy to find my way following the acorn logo, and my navigation app which rather helpfully told me how many more hills I had to climb that day!

I regretted my decision to manage without walking poles which would have helped me clamber up 'Dead Man's



Incline' on Leckhampton Hill. I was, however, very grateful to have chosen walking boots a size up from my normal shoe size, and to the podiatrist in Southam who made up a special 'foot first aid kit' for me. I used a sherpa service to move my suitcase from one hotel to the next along the route, which worked extremely well.



Towards the end of the trip, and after 8 or 9 days of walking, I started to run out of steam, and was almost too tired to eat or get ready for bed each night. At last I reached the edge of Bath, with only three miles to go on my final day.

The first glimpse of the Royal Crescent in the distance was so uplifting – the end was in sight! After arriving at the finishing point at Bath Abbey the tiredness really hit me. It was a shock to be surrounded by people and cars once more, my feet were very painful and it was a huge effort to hobble to the car with Niyi!

Once back at home, I immediately found myself researching the other national trails – it was such an amazing experience and I am eternally grateful to the Cotswold Way wardens who do such a great job maintaining this treasure of a trail!

Ruth Adewale



BIRDSONGBIRDSONG

What Three Words?



Have you ever been asked for your what3words location? You are likely to be by delivery services and the emergency services, so it is important to know the reference for your house and how to find a 'what3words' address. It is highly useful if you looking for somewhere when you are out and about, and could be essential if you need someone to find you!

What3words is a global mapping proprietary scheme where every single three meter square in the world has a description based on three words in English. This massive project has all sorts of invaluable benefits, and the London-based entity that executed the project has raised funding to allow its development. It is completely free for users.

Some local examples are the village Club: 'goodness.error.jubilant' for close to the front entrance; The Birbury front entrance is 'composts.mixing.packing'; and the Lychgate entrance to St Leonard's Church is 'vintages.soon.lunch'.

Words are chosen so the grouping for adjacent locations are not linked and thus unlikely to cause confusion. However, the three words do need to follow the specific order for your address.

There are free apps for Apple and Android users, and you can find your own what3word location using the website: https://what3words.com

Do you know yours yet?

Carmel de Nahlik

BIRDSONGBIRDSONG

The Mystery.....

Birdingbury knew

He caught the 3.42

Vanished without trace.

Thin Jethro Laskey



BIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Birdingbury Cancer Research Fundraising Day Saturday 12 July

Following the success of the Tractor Run in early May, this fundraising day in support of a very worthwhile charity should be another great event for the village .

We are pleased to confirm further details as we now have a better idea of what we are doing!

VILLAGE HISTORY WALK

This will be a short walk of about 3/4 mile, taking in many interesting aspects of our village such as the Club, the old pound, Nelson's sidings, Davenport Farm, the Church, the Railway Station, the prisoner of war camp, and Birdingbury Hall. We won't be walking to all these places but it will be worth mentioning them. Meet at the Club at 10.30am.



FOOTBALL AT THE PARK

This will be organised by Birdingbury's famous footballing families: the Kerrys and the Cutts. Teams will be organised to reflect the entrants, depending on age etc., and play will start around 2pm at the recreation field.



BARBEQUE

Come along for delicious burgers and sausages, grilled like only the Birdingbury BBQ'ers can. This will be starting around 3 to 4 pm, £2.00 per roll to cover costs.



OPEN MIC

This will run throughout the evening, featuring local talent and invited guests. Let me know (07964 870069) if you'd like to take to the stage so we can set up the running order.





Steve Edgar

We will be collecting cash in approved buckets on the day and a direct link to Cancer Research will be available for those wishing to donate electronically.

Thanks in anticipation for your support!

Karen Dives In

As many of you know, I completed a tandem skydive on Saturday 22 March.

If you've seen the video, you will have heard my instructor say that I had my eyes closed when we exited the plane. Well, at 14,000 feet and 130-150 mph, I'd challenge anyone to not close their eyes! Yet I know that I did open my eyes, as I could see the photographer underneath us.



I'm not an adrenaline iunkie: I did this in memory of my Mum, Christine Wells, who died on 10 November last year. She would have



been 81 years old on the day I jumped.

In the last 8 weeks of her life, she was cared for by the lovely ladies from Myton Hospice at Home. I wanted to give something back, hence completing the skydive. I have now raised over £1,600 for Myton in her memory.

Far be it for me to quash the aspirations of anyone wanting to do a skydive in the future, but I wouldn't do it again. I do, however, feel proud of myself for having done it. The rush of cold on leaving the plane was literally breath taking. The experience was exhilarating and left me feeling that it I could do that, then I can do anything! Most importantly, I did it for my Mum and I must say a huge thank you to all of you who supported me in raising money for Myton.

Sponsorships can be viewed on the Just Giving page - https://www.justgiving.com/page/ karen-thomas-1731955375558

Thank you again so very much for your support.

Karen Thomas



The Withingtons at Marton Glebe Farm

We have lived in 5 houses in Birdingbury. Marton Glebe Farm was house number 3.

The house, and Old Marton Glebe Farm, in the valley below, are both in Birdingbury Parish. Why then the references to Marton? Maybe they were once on glebe land owned by Marton Church and as such the annual rent formed part of the stipend of the vicar. Can anyone shed any light on this mystery?

In completing our move to MGF we discovered that Severn Trent had considered the valley below Stockton Road as a possible site for a reservoir. The plan was to construct a retaining bank between Birdingbury and Marton. Long Itchington Lane would have disappeared. However the capacity was too small and the site at Draycote Water was deemed much more suitable.

Whilst we were at MGF, various routes were being considered for HS2. An alternative, local section of the route would have come across Stockton Road and through the middle of our house before heading off towards Itchington Lane. Fortunately, from a village point of view, this plan was dropped when the final route was agreed.

We have many happy memories of our 10 years at MGF. Over the seasons, the changing views from the back of the house were spectacular. Aileen allowed me to indulge in my retirement dream of having land. We planted trees at the bottom of the field, where we also tried and failed to form a decent sized pond. I planted an orchard, developed a road-side veg plot and once a year, over six years, planted a different type of oak tree along the field boundary between us and the field that Rob Walker grazed sheep on.

Dick Withington

BIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Summertime Swap Shop

Summertime is when Swap Shop as we know it was started.

A group of villagers decided to gather together in the Birbury to exchange surplus fruit and vegetables, and relax with a cuppa and some cake. We still exchange various items ranging from furniture to food. You don't have to bring anything with you to join us and new faces are always welcome.

We meet every Saturday from 10.30am to 12.00noon in the Birbury, unless there is a village event on.

All welcome, just come along and meet us!

Di Turner and Jenny Hawes

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF BIRDINGBURY GROOM.

BOOKED TO RUGBY: LAST SEEN ON VILLAGE PLATFORM.

Mystery surrounds the disappearance of William Smith, an eighteen-years-old groom employed at Birdingbury Hall, who left Birdingbury Station with a ticket for Rugby on Saturday afternoon, and has not been heard of since.

Smith informed his fellow-servants that he intended to visit his father, who is a patient at the Rugby Infirmary, and would return in the evening. His departure by the 3.42 train was noted, as he was the only passenger to leave the village station, but he did not reach the Infirmary, and has not returned to the Hall.

POLICE INFORMED.

At the time he disappeared he was wearing a lightcoloured suit and trilby hat. He is a strong, healthy young man of average height and fair complexion. He appeared to be quite satisfied with his job, which he had held for over two years, and when last he saw his father he mentioned how well he was getting on.

Mr. Ernest Smith, the father, who formerly lived in Caldecott Street, Rugby, was employed at the Lodge Pluz Factory, as was his younger son, Mr. Reginald Smith.

The matter has been reported to the Police, but so far their inquiries have been fruitless.

MAY HAVE JOINED THE ARMY.

There are no indications that Smith has come to any harm, and a theory is that he may have enlisted, though it is usual for the Army authorities to notify a recruit's relatives and friends.

He had little money in his possession, and all his personal effects remain at Birdingbury Hall, where he has been employed by Colonel Norton since he left the Murray School, Rugby.

Village Transport Options

Aside from personal cars, taxis, ubers and buses, less mobile residents might like to be aware of two other services that can offer lifts to things like hospital appointments, supermarkets and other social events.

I saw VASA in action at Stratford Hospital when Chris had recent surgery there. A VASA driver had dropped someone off and was waiting to drive them back home. VASA (Stratford based) uses volunteer drivers who use their own cars and are DBS checked. Journeys are charged at a £3.00 admin fee plus 45p per mile. This service is for South Warwickshire and Rugby Borough. Call them on 01789 262889, email on transport@vasa.org.uk, or look on their website: www.vasa.org.uk



IndieGo can be seen at Sainsburys in Leamington on Thursday mornings and I talked to the drivers who highlighted their website: https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/public-transport/indiego/2

IndieGo is run by Warwickshire County Council and offers a Rugby service based on Dial-a-ride. This service supports wheelchair users. You would need to register first. T his can be done alongside a booking on 01926 742000 between 0900 and 1500. Same day bookings are based on availability. Prices are: adult single £4; adult return £7; young person single (5 to 18) £3; young person return (5 to 18) £5. Children under 4 are free. Concessionary passes are said to be valid on this scheme. We are in Zone 3. The website gives basic information so a phone call is likely to be more helpful.

Both services encouraged me to get the word out to more people!

Carmel de Nahlik

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Mobile Library

27 June 2025

25 July 2025

13.40 to 14.00

Outside the Club

Seems We Will Never Know....

MISSING BIRDINGBURY GROOM FOUND.

A COMMUNICATION FROM BIRMINGHAM

A postcard bearing an address in Birmingham was received on Saturday, by his father at the Rugby Infirmary, from William Smith, the groom at Birdingbury Hall, who, as previously reported in the Advertiser, had been missing from his employment since September 5th, when he left Birdingbury, presumably to come to Rugby. In it he states that he will shortly visit his father, and then explains why he left so mysteriously.

This and the article on the preceding page are from The Advertiser: 11 and 25 September 1925—thanks to Thin Jethro for explaining his haiku!

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Twitterings

Big congratulations to Sophia and Dimitri Pantazievits on their recent marriage: have a great party!

Big congratulations to Karen and Andrew Armbrister on their silver wedding anniversary!

Big congratulations to Ian and Lynne Tipton on their golden wedding anniversary!

Sad farewells to Sue Middleton of Learnington Hastings, who many will remember with fondness.

Welcome Mabel!



MARTON



ALL THE FLOWERS, OF ALL THE TOMORROWS, ARE IN THE SEEDS OF TODAY,

F THE PETALS OF THE RED PIMPERNEL ARE STILL CLOSED IN THE MORNING. RAIN IS ON ITS WAY.

THE STRONGEST MAN IN THE WORLD CANNOT LIFT A HEAVY HEART.

Louisa Ward Close, CV23 9SA

OPEN!

Every Sunday 2.00pm - 4.00pm May 25th to September 28th

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2025 13th & 14th September 10.30am to 4.30pm

Discover and be amazed at our eclectic mix of rural and domestic artifacts

Group visits welcome





Contact df@davidfry.net 01926632936

Leamington Hastings Bowls Club

The outdoor bowls season is well under way!



If you would like to join us on Wednesdays at 6pm, you will be made very welcome. We bowl on the green next to the Leamington Hastings Parish Hall.

3 We have bowls you can borrow. You just need to wear loose clothing and flat shoes.

We are a friendly, non-league club open to everyone: returning players or beginners, young and not so young! You can play for free three times before you decide to join us. Enjoy gentle exercise, fresh air, and good company.

We look forward to seeing you. Find us on Facebook.

Sue Turner

BIRDSONGBIRDSONG

Late Summer Workshops

In a break with tradition, Rugby's Percival Guildhouse is offering some late summer workshops in August, outside normal term times. Day-long sessions focusing on Stress Busting Techniques and Weight Management Made Simple will take place between 18 August and 4 September.

Also on offer are two morning sessions on Get Stuck Into Art for those who love art but would welcome a bit of expert direction, and four Summer Writing Oasis sessions for those who want to explore creative writing, be it fiction, poetry or memoir.

For more information, visit: www.percival-guildhouse.co.uk or call 01788 542467 between 9am-3.30pm weekdays.

Keep learning!

Clare Turnbull



Birdingbury Village

Fete

Sunday 6 July 2-4pm Club Forecourt

Proceeds to St Leonard's Church

Raffle with FAB prizes
Roast Pork Batches
Home Baked Goodies

Tombola Fun for all ages!

Village Events

See the centre pull-out sections for details of what's on. There's always lots more happening and details can change at short notice.

Keep your eye on Village Chat WhatsApp group and Birdingbury Club Facebook page.

When to eat	What to eat
Thursday 5 June from 4.30pm	Chippy Van
	Club open from 4.30pm
Saturday 14 June from 5.30pm	Pizza Van
	Woodfired pizza made to order
Sunday 22 June: lunchtime sitting(s) tbc	Mosby Meadows Sunday Lunch
	Served to your table at the Club
Friday 27 June from 5.30pm	Village Kitchen Curry
	Freshly made in our Birdingbury kitchen
Thursday 3 July from 4.30pm	Chippy Van
	Club open from 4.30pm
Friday 4 July from 5.30pm	Bad Boys Burgers
	Mouthwatering burgers and fries
Friday 11 July from 5.30pm	That's Nugs
	Chicken nuggets street food style
Friday 18 July from 5.30pm	Tapas Zampa
	Authentic Spanish Tapas made to order
Saturday 19 July from 10.45am	Breakfast
	Rolls and a cuppa to start the day
Saturday 26 July from 4.30pm	Pizza Van
	Woodfired pizza made to order
Thursday 31 July from 4.30pm	Chippy Van
	Club open from 4.30pm



Birdsong Editor: Lesley Fleming

Moonrakers, Back Lane Tel 632508

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