

October and November 2025



BIRDINGBURY NEWS NO 130



Lighting up Autumn

Birdingbury Parish Council Report

The Parish Council meeting took place on Monday 15 September and we were very pleased to be joined by our Borough and County Councillor, Dale Keeling. Dale updated us on three matters:

Devolution and possible merger of Councils: where we are to expect some kind of communication from Rugby Borough Council: watch this space!

The possibility that RBC may no longer have a five-year supply of land for housing following the changes in the way land is calculated from the Government: this changes the rules around what development is allowed in villages like ours and so is another area where we need to watch the situation closely. Apparently, the Government's changes are affecting a large number of local councils.

Lias Line between Oxford Road and Birdingbury Road: Dale has emailed his support to WCC transport planning department, which wishes to allocate funds from the Active Travel Fund to enable further progress to be made on this, which we all know as 'the railway line'. This is about its further opening up and development of the pathway. A report will be presented to Cabinet later in the year seeking approval to enter into a sub-grant agreement with Sustrans, the developer, so that WCC can forward grant funding to them to progress this work.

We also took advantage of Dale being there to talk to him about two other issues:

Recreation Ground funding: sadly, I received almost no response to my request in the last Birdsong for support to look at how we might raise funding to restore and replace the equipment we have, which is in increasingly poor condition and, in some cases, does not meet modern safety standards. This is likely to mean we have less and less useable equipment for our younger residents over time, unless action is taken. Given this, we asked Dale whether there might be any grants available (and thank you to the resident who suggested we might want to apply to some local employers in the area). Dale said that RBC had previously had funding available for play equipment and that he would look into this possibility for us. The Parish Council also agreed to consider whether we needed to look at increasing the precept to build up some more reserves to pay for items like this. That discussion will take place in November/January meeting.

War memorial: Dale believed there might be funds available to help with the cleaning/restoration of this and is looking into it for us.

Also on the recreation ground, we have now received the funding I mentioned last time, and so we are going to go ahead and purchase new goal posts for the recreation ground. These will be in place as soon as we are able to mobilise forces to do so.

On our perennial topic of village connectivity, things do seem to be moving. The City-Fibre infrastructure is now available, and orders can be placed with broadband providers if you want fibre to the premises and if it is available at your address (I am aware that it has not covered all of Birdingbury, due to the specific lots that were granted to CityFibre). This is subject to your own contractual position with your existing provider and, of course, personal choice in wanting to go ahead. A request has been made of City Fibre to see if they are willing to come to the village to answer any questions villagers may have.

Thank you to all who completed the Atlas Towers survey in relation to a potential 5G mast. It received a total of 76 responses, with a clear demonstration of poor mobile coverage based on those responses. One outlier reported excellent coverage, but 58% reported poor and 28% no coverage. In terms of support for a new mast, 83% were supportive, 9% not supportive, and 8% unsure. In relation to the free text responses, there were several very positive comments and a small number of very negative comments, mainly based around potential health risks (we also received representations on this at our meeting). Many raised the importance of the mast being sympathetically situated so that it was not an eyesore in a small rural village. We understand that Atlas Towers, having surveyed various sites, will be contacting the landowners of their preferred situations.

Thank you to Simon Kent, who went to the Community Café last week and answered a number of questions in relation to both fibre and mobile developments.

Apologies for the length of this update: hopefully it does demonstrate some progress in a number of long-running and important matters! Our next meeting is 17 November 2025, at 19:30 in the Birbury.

Sara Kendell, Chair, Birdingbury Parish Council

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Addendum to History Walk

Plaque to Mrs Pollock

The bus shelter was originally a summer house in Birdingbury Hall garden, not Master's Barn. A pathetic cut and paste error on the part of the Editor. Idiot!

Steve Edgar

Sorry folks

Idiot Editor

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Avoiding Slips, Trips and Broken Hips this Winter

Jill's Top Five Tips for Avoiding a Fall

Winter is one of my favourite seasons: frosty mornings, cosy evenings, and maybe even a sprinkle of snow. But let's be honest: it also brings icy pavements, slippery steps, and darker evenings that can make getting around a little trickier. Falls are one of the most common reasons people end up in hospital over winter, but the good news is there's lots you can do to protect yourself.

Here are my top five tips to help you stay steady on your feet this winter.

1. Keep Those Muscles Strong

Think of your legs as your built-in shock absorbers. The stronger they are, the better they'll support you if you slip. Simple exercises at home can make a big difference:

- **Sit-to-Stand**: Sit in a sturdy chair and try standing up without using your hands. Then sit back down slowly. Do this 10–15 times
- **Heel Raises**: Hold onto the kitchen worksurface, rise up onto your tiptoes, then lower back down. Aim for 10–15 repetitions whilst waiting for the kettle to boil.

Research shows that even a few weeks of strengthening exercises can lower your risk of falling so it's never too late to start!

2. Practice Your Balance

Balance is like any other skill: the more you practice, the better you get. And the better your balance, the more confident you'll feel when walking on icy ground.

Try these daily:

- Single-Leg Stand: Hold onto a counter, lift one foot slightly off the floor, and balance for 10–20 seconds
- Tandem Walk: Walk in a straight line as if you're on a tightrope, placing one
 foot directly in front of the other. You can hold onto a wall if you find this
 tricky to start with.

Programmes like the *Otago Exercise Programme* (which has been shown to cut falls by around a third!) use these exact kinds of moves.

3. Choose the Right Shoes

Shoes can be your best friend or your worst enemy in winter. A good pair should have:

• Non-slip rubber soles

- Low, wide heels
- Decent ankle support

Indoors, ditch the floppy slippers. A pair of snug, supportive shoes or trainers will keep you steady and safe.

4. Light Up Your Path

It gets dark so early in winter, and that makes it much harder to spot icy patches or uneven paths. Good lighting really does prevent falls.

Pop some motion-sensor lights near your front door or garden path, and keep a torch, or just your phone's flashlight, handy if you're out after dark. Little changes like this make a big difference.

5. Plan Ahead Before You Step Outside

Finally, a bit of planning goes a long way. Before you head out:

- Check the weather forecast: if it's icy, ask yourself if the trip can wait
- Spread salt or grit on your steps and pathways
- Take it slow, with smaller steps.

If you use a walking stick, you can even get an 'ice tip' attachment for extra grip. Research shows that these simple environmental tweaks, like salting a path, can cut falls outdoors by nearly half.

Final Thought

Falling isn't just part of getting older. With a few simple habits, you can stay steady, safe, and confident all winter long. Think of it as giving yourself a little extra peace of mind—so you can enjoy the frosty mornings and festive evenings without worry.

If you would like a copy of 'A Guide to Staying Steady' I can send it to you by email or I also have some hard copies. Get in touch at jill@jilldrewphysio.com

Jil Drew

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Birdingbury knows

The tune of the world plays out

We cannot trump it

Thin Jethro Laskey



Open for Business

After a well-earned break over the summer, the Community Café opened its doors again on Tuesday 9 September.

It was brilliant to have so many people pop in - a lot of regular faces and some new ones too. A really big welcome to Joy, and to Pam and Derry who had the chance to meet new neighbours, and to enjoy a warm drink with some delicious homemade cake.

If you're new to the village, or haven't yet had the chance to join us, we get together in the Club each Tuesday morning between 10.30am and 12 noon. We suggest a minimum donation of £2.50 for a tea/coffee/latte/hot chocolate and a piece of cake, sausage roll or cheese scone. Where else can you get such good value and enjoy such great, friendly company? Proceeds, as many of you know, go to a range of good causes – from global charities such as UNICEF and Red Cross, to charities much closer to home. So far this year, we've raised over £2,000.



If you'd like to find out more about the café or if you'd like to join our bakers' or helpers' rotas, please contact either Karen on 07919 594559 or Jean on 07826 539775.

Hope to see you at the café soon!

Jean Foroughi and Karen Armbrister

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Workshop Wonders Await

Jettison that FOMO! No need to miss out on inspirational art, craft, history or stress relief courses. Just take a look the workshops The Percival Guildhouse is offering on Saturdays in October and November.

On October 11 there is a stress-busting workshop, two different art workshops (making air dry clay ornaments and photography), and a fascinating illustrated journey through the world's great mountain ranges: 'Friends in High Places'.

If November 8 is more convenient, then workshops await on reflexology, weight management, art (floral painting in acrylics and life drawing), needlefelting for crafters and, for history lovers, 'Chatsworth and the Cavendish Family' and the 'Hidden World of Canal Heritage'.



Full details of all workshops can be found at www.percival-guildhouse.co.uk or phone 01788 542467 Monday to Friday.

Clare Turnbull

The Wonderful World of QR codes

We see them all over the place and we may have used them during lockdown. There are warnings about parking scams in Leamington concerning them that the police have shared with us, but what are QR codes and why are those strange square things important?

A QR code or Quick Response code was originally developed in Japan for use in identifying automobile parts. It is fast to read, and it can contain a lot more data than the barcode we see on things like food and cosmetics. QR codes can include information like a website link, so they are increasingly used to access services. Whilst originally reading a QR code required a phone with a QR reader app installed, many phones will now automatically read it via the camera. With the increase in postage costs and in anticipation of the use of less paper, QR codes will increasingly become the way to communicate information to groups of people. Also, sadly and inevitably, they will increasingly be used by scammers.



Warwick County Council had informed me as a member of the Parish Council that QR codes will become the standard way that road closures and other events will become notified to the public, rather than letters. We asked for letters to be sent to affected houses when the roads were recently closed due to the path reconstructions, but that won't always be the case in future. The NHS is also beginning to adopt QR codes to communicate information to patients.

So we need to be sure that a device in our household is capable of reading QR codes and connecting to the Internet. Can you?

Carmel de Nahlik

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At Home in the Birbury

Come and meet or make friends in the Birbury on the second and fourth Wednesday afternoons each month from 2pm to 3.30pm, in time to be home before dark.

Refreshments will be provided and, if you wish to, bring your handicrafts or board games,

A donation to cover costs would be appreciated.

If you need transport call me on 07759 808656.

Valerie Smith



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St Leonard's Church Update

I've been asked by a number of people if we might post church service information in these pages. Since we've had no one to edit a church section, I've been really grateful to Lesley for agreeing to include church information in the main magazine pages. I'll include services which are taking place at St Leonard's, but for wider Benefice information, please do check out our website www.draycoteandleamvalleybenefice.com or our various Social Media pages.

For any newcomers, we are part of an eight church rural benefice, under the leadership of Rev Phil Price. We have an Associate Minister, Rev Barbara Clutton, and a Licensed Lay Reader, Karen Hatch. They, and I, usually lead services at St Leonard's. We have two Sunday services a month and a weekly service on Wednesdays:

1 st Sunday of each month	11.00am	Allsorts service In the church	An informal gathering; we use the TV screen and recorded music, led by laity.
3 rd Sunday of each month	11.00am	Holy Communion In the church	A traditional eucharistic service with organ hymns led by clergy.
Wednesdays each week	9.30am	Morning Prayer 1 st Wednesday of each month in the Birbury Other Wednesdays	A short 35 minute service

We are a small, friendly, committed group. We serve coffee from 10.30am on Sundays before services start and there will always be someone to welcome and talk to you (unless you don't want that!). Other activities are detailed here in Birdsong, or on our WhatsApp group or occasionally on the village chat.

Forthcoming dates for diaries:

Sunday 5 October Harvest Activities

Harvest Service in Church at 11.00am with collection for Rugby Foodbank. Donations may be left in church before the service, or in the front porch at Davenport Cottage, Back Lane. Our donations will be delivered to the Foodbank on Monday 6 October.

Harvest Lunch The service will be followed by a lunch in and around Birding-bury Club from 12.15pm: roast pork batches or vegetarian quiche, with salads and fruit crumbles with custard. Donations are for church funds, there's no need to book. Suggested donations for lunch are £7 for two courses. Please bring cash as we do not have a card machine. Thank you.

Just come along to either event or both

Sunday 9 November Remembrance Sunday

Our annual Service of Remembrance will commence in Church at 10.15am. The short service will be followed by a procession to the village war memorial for the silence at 11.00am. Coffee will kindly be served afterwards at the Club

Sunday 7 December Carols, sherry and mince pies!

Come and join us in church from 10.30am for coffee, sherry and mince pies as we start the season with some uplifting carols and Christmas songs. The tree will be up and we will look forward to welcoming you.

Saturday 20 December Community Carols 6pm (tbc)

Annual carols and readings outside the Club at 6pm, followed by mulled wine and festive snacks.

Karen Armbrister, Acting Church Warden (cwbirdingbury@gmail.com)

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Twitterings

Welcome, Stanley and Laszlo, to the Birdingbury pack.

Congratulations to Jelena on her 18th birthday.

Belated hello to baby Georgie who joined Mum Annie, Dad James and big sister Millie five months ago (sorry for the delay).

Get well soon to Jackie, after her recent operation, and to Jenny.

And a speedy return to full Powers!



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Mobile Library

17 October 2025

14 November 2025

13.40 to 14.00

Outside the Club

12 December 2025

Cancer Research Fundraiser at Marton

It was a lovely sunny day for the Marton Fundraiser on Saturday 6 September. Everyone had fun playing rounders and pétanque with the usual amount of energy focused on winning by means fair or foul.

Fundraising activities included a tombola and raffle with stalls including locally made jams and pickles. A 'Guess the Name of my Teddy 'competition was organised by a local nine year old. To her relief, the winner received a box of chocolates and Teddy went back home safely.

The sizzling barbecue and cocktail bar, with wine beer and shots, plus tea and cake ensured no one went home hungry or sober.

As a result of everyone' generosity, the event generated around £2,600 to be shared between Breast Cancer and Prostate Cancer research.

Thanks to all who came along, organised activities, donated prizes and helped to make this another fantastic event.



Mary Harrison

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Roll Up For Bowling



This year Leamington Hastings Bowls Club celebrated its 40th anniversary and on Sunday 14 September a gathering of members past and present, with the toast, of course, being 'absent friends', enjoyed an informal roll up and a lovely afternoon tea. Photographs and trophies were on display, triggering shared memories, laughter and lots of chatting.

Our outdoor season has come to an end and we begin playing indoor short mat bowls. We play every Wednesday at 2pm until 4pm in the Leamington Hastings Parish Hall. Everyone is welcome to come and join us. You don't need special equipment, just wear loose clothing and flat shoes. Bowling is a great way to enjoy some exercise, improve coordination, increase muscle strength and meet new people.



Finally, we would like to acknowledge the years of work that John Goode gave during his time as President and Treasurer of LHBC. John passed away in July and our thoughts and best wishes go to Doris, Betty and all family members.

Sue Turner

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Hi everyone!

Get ready to have a fang-tastic time at Birdingbury's



Date: Friday the 31 October

Time: Trick-or-Treating starts at 6 pm

Location: We'll begin our spooky adventure at the Club before floating around the village in groups. We'll also have the Club full of Halloween games afterwards!

Dress up in your spookiest, silliest, or most phantomtacular costume and prepare for a night of monster fun and surprises!

Calling All Villagers: If you're happy to be-witching hosts, please leave a pumpkin or Halloween decor out to let us know your house is full of treats! We are so thankful to everyone who gets involved! 🌤 😊

Don't be a scaredy-cat - see you there!



Chloe, Olly & Isaac

Village Events

See the centre sections for information about what's on. Details can change at short notice. Check out Village Chat WhatsApp group and Birdingbury Club Facebook page.

When to eat	What to eat
Friday 3 October from 5.30pm	Tapas Zampa Authentic Spanish Tapas made to order
Sunday 5 August from 12.00pm	St Leonard's Harvest Festival Lunch Batches, quiches, salads, crumble and custard
Saturday 11 October from 5.30pm	Pizza Van Woodfired pizza made to order
Friday 17 October from 5.30pm	Cajun Kitchen Cajun & Creole comfort food, plus a smile
Saturday 18 October from 5.30pm	Bad Boy Burgers Mouth-watering burgers & fries
Thursday 23 October from 4.30pm	Chippy Van Club open from 4.30pm
Friday 24 October from 5.30pm	Village Kitchen Curry Freshly made in our Birdingbury kitchen
Friday 31 October from 5.30pm	That's Nugs Chicken nuggets street food style
Friday 7 November from 5.30pm	Bad Boy Burgers Mouth-watering burgers & fries
Friday 14 November from 5.30pm	Fireawaygrill Delicious grilled shawarma wraps & kebabs.
Saturday 15 November from 5.30pm	Pizza Van Woodfired pizza made to order
Thursday 20 November from 4.30pm	Chippy Van Club open from 4.30pm
Friday 21 November from 5.30pm	Tapas Zampa Authentic Spanish Tapas made to order
Friday 28 November from 5.30pm	Village Kitchen Curry Freshly made in our Birdingbury kitchen



Birdsong Editor: Lesley Fleming

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