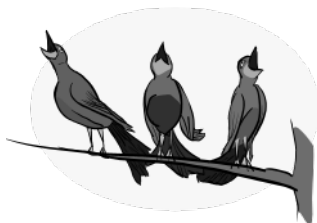


# **BIRDSONG**

**August and  
September 2025**



**BIRDINGBURY  
NEWS  
NO 129**



**Birdingbury in Bloom**

# Birdingbury Parish Council Report

July's Parish Council meeting was a very busy one, with many important items being discussed.

Subject to any reports we receive to the contrary, it appears that the 'culvert issue' at the corner of Stockton Road has now been resolved, even in the recent heavy rains we have had. However, we are keeping an eye on the drain at the bottom of Back Lane, which it appears may be struggling again. We are also looking into some man-made changes that appear to have been made to the river flow under the viaduct.

The issue of village connectivity continues to move forward on two fronts: the continuing installation of fibre and a new proposal for improved 5G mobile coverage. On the former, you will have seen some recent work being done by CityFibre and some is still continuing. They will then test it and it is expected to go live in autumn, after which we should all expect to receive some contact. In relation to 5G, you will see further information on pages 4 and 5 from Simon about an approach we have received from an organisation which wants to gauge our interest as a village in improving it. Please do try to complete it, as it is the best way to let your views be known and taken into account.

I talked last time about the recreation ground and the deteriorating state of the equipment. Here we are looking for some help from village residents, from those whose children want to make use of the play equipment and/or those who are "just" happy to get involved. We need volunteers to form part of a working group, to brainstorm what we would get most value out of, and how funds could be raised. The sums involved are very far beyond anything the Parish Council could fund so, whilst we can assist with where to apply, we are likely to need to provide some co-funding and so we need people who are willing to support with how we might seek to raise this. Please could anyone who is prepared to get involved either email me on [sara.kendell@birdingbury-pc.gov.uk](mailto:sara.kendell@birdingbury-pc.gov.uk) or contact me through the Village Chat WhatsApp group.

There have been a number of newcomers into the village since my last update – welcome to all those who have moved in – we all hope that you will find it a happy and supportive place to live! On which point, many thanks to all those of you who have given your time and effort to brightening up the village with planters and flowers. The war memorial looks beautiful, as does the front of the club. It is very much appreciated by the less green-fingered (or artistic) amongst us!

Finally, please note that a further closure of Main Street and part of Back Lane has been signalled to us for footway reconstruction and associated works from 18 – 26 August 2025. More information on page 20. Signs will also be put up nearer the time to warn us all, so please watch out for that.

*Sara Kendell, Chair, Birdingbury Parish Council*

# Birdingbury Village Club Update

As the newly elected President, I'm honoured to share my first update on the Club's progress. At our last AGM, we spoke of turning a corner—and I'm proud to say that 2024 proved just that.

Thanks to changes in how the Club is managed, we saw over a 20% increase in sales compared to 2023. Even more encouraging, we moved from a loss to a net profit, which has allowed us to rebuild our reserves and recover some of the funds lost in previous years.

## At the heart of our success



A key factor in this turnaround has been the staff and volunteer structure we've adopted. Despite rising supplier costs and increases in the minimum wage, this model has helped us stay resilient and efficient. A big thank you goes to everyone who has helped and contributed over the past year; your support has made a real difference. If you feel like you could offer support in any small way, please contact one of the committee and we will be happy to have a chat.

## Events and community spirit

2025 has started strongly. Our food nights and organised events continue to be a great success, providing vital income while also bringing the community together. The Club is thriving not just financially, but socially.

At the recent AGM, Tony Flint stepped down as President after many years of dedicated service. I would personally like to thank Tony for all his support over the years, and for helping shape the direction of the Club.

We also say farewell to Jenny Barr, who has stepped down from her role as Treasurer. Over the past few years, Jenny has played a vital role in helping us control costs and make sound financial decisions for our members.

On behalf of the committee, we thank them both deeply for their service and wish them all the very best for the future.

Finally, I'd like to extend a warm welcome to our new committee - Carol McCormack, Bec Holmes, John Starley and Rob Walker. I'm very much looking forward to working with you all in the year ahead.

I look forward to seeing you at the Club soon.

*Richard Cutts, President, Birdingbury Club*



## Better Broadband and Mobile for Birdingbury

Living in Birdingbury has many advantages, but internet connectivity is not one of them. Many of us suffer from poor quality internet and mobile connections which are becoming increasingly important in our connected world. There are two developments which have the potential to significantly improve our connectivity in rural Warwickshire.

Warwickshire County Council are part of the River Severn Partnership which has been quietly surveying Warwickshire's mobile coverage. Sensors installed on our bin lorries have been covertly surveying our mobile signal (you can see the results here: <https://app.streetwave.co/coverage-checker/river-severn-partnership/map>) which highlights the lack of quality coverage in our village. The Parish Council has been approached by Atlas Towers who are proposing to improve our mobile signal. They have used the data from the River Severn Partnership to identify villages with poor coverage and with a population that would make a new mobile mast viable. Such a mast would improve the mobile signal across the village for all mobile networks. At its meeting on 21st July, the Parish Council agreed to promote a survey created by Atlas Towers to understand the mood of the community better. No mast will be installed unless there is village support, a suitable agreement can be made to install a mast on private land, and full planning approval has been received. At present, no sites have been confirmed; potential landowners will only be contacted if there is broad support from the village to move ahead with this initiative.

The Parish Council encourages you to complete the survey so that we and Atlas Towers have a better understanding of the views of the village. Completion of the survey is for the collection of information only. There is no financial cost to individuals or the village. If a new tower were to be installed, anyone with a mobile would benefit from improved coverage across Birdingbury and over towards Leamington Hastings.

The survey can be accessed at <https://bit.ly/4kSmHmk> or use this QR code.



The second development is the work being undertaken by CityFibre. Following their successful bid to bring full-fibre broadband to Birdingbury and other Warwickshire villages, CityFibre are laying fibres in our roads, along existing ducts and up our telephone poles in preparation to be able to offer high speed internet services to those who want it.

They have provided the following information about the rollout

Faster and more reliable broadband is coming to Birdingbury through a brand-new full fibre network from CityFibre and Project Gigabit. Project Gigabit is the UK government's rollout of lightning-fast, reliable broadband across the UK. The programme targets homes and businesses that are not included in broadband

companies' own commercial plans, reaching parts of the country that would otherwise miss out.

Full fibre has only really started to be available at scale in recent years but there has been a lot of confusion around what it is and the benefits it brings.

For many years, internet service providers have advertised 'fibre' broadband services to customers but, in reality, these are only part-fibre. They use fast fibre optics to connect to the cabinets you can see on your street, but then use slow copper cables from the cabinet to connect to your home. The copper part of these traditional 'fibre' services makes broadband using this old technology slower and less reliable than a full fibre service. Full fibre broadband however uses fibre optic cables all the way into your home or business. It requires less power and is far faster and more reliable than copper or part-fibre technology.

This means you will be able to access broadband that is faster than the UK's average. Additionally, full fibre is more reliable than copper-based broadband. Switching to full fibre could save you money too. Full fibre packages over the new network are competitively priced when compared to part-fibre plans, and can be much cheaper depending on your service provider and package.

CityFibre build and operate the network which is used by service providers. Once the network in your street has been switched on, you can then use the postcode checker at [www.cityfibre.com](http://www.cityfibre.com) to browse available plans and choose the right service provider and package for you.

Once you've found your package, you can place your order and book your installation date. Installation appointments can typically be scheduled within one week of purchasing a broadband plan. They will take you through the installation process which typically takes between two to three hours to complete.

The latest project information, including an FAQ and a way to register for updates is available at [www.cityfibre.com/projectgigabit](http://www.cityfibre.com/projectgigabit)

We expect we will be able to start using these new fibre services from the autumn.

*Simon Kent*

...and here is my positive spin on the digging up of the roads in the village. I have found the contractors helpful, friendly and working to minimise disruption while trying to get their job done. No pain without gain, as they say.

I am told, but have not verified it with an estate agent, that priorities in the past for a house buying decision were location, followed by school quality. It appears that it is now location followed by broadband speed!

*Declan Hayden*



# All Grown Up!

Erin enjoyed celebrating her 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday in Birdingbury Club on 7 July – it was a wonderful night of karaoke, music, food and friendship.

We were delighted so many friends came from the village and from further afield – it was lovely to see you all. If you couldn't make it, you missed a corker of a speech from Erin – if you need any tips on public speaking, please get in touch!

The night was finished off with a reprise of the karaoke, which the visiting Welsh Male Voice Choir couldn't resist joining in with!

Erin's report for her birthday:

'First, I would like to thank to all the team for making this birthday magical, especially Jo and Darren for really stepping in and helping my Dad plan everything - it was really a night to remember, so thank you guys.

My favourite bit of the night was hanging out with all my friends and being with my family and eating pizza and cake - thanks to Jenny for making it. It was amazing, also you didn't have to do it and thank you to your husband and Esmee for making the banner - it was incredible.

And last thing, real thanks to the bar staff for serving us and thank you to Andy the pizza man.'

*Erin Flint and Alex Rigler*

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## Mobile Library

22 August 2025 19 September 2025 17 October 2025

13.40 to 14.00

Outside the Club

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## Goodbye, Birdingbury, and Thank You

The time has come after 30 years and two houses for us to say ‘Goodbye’ to Birdingbury.

In the Summer of 1994, Lisa was pregnant with Anna when I came home and declared that ‘we’re moving to Coventry!’ – you can imagine the reaction! We were looking for an old house in town, but after several weekends of little luck, we ended up on a rural drive to view a new house in a village. We were shown around by a bearded chap in sawdusty overalls who remembered us later as ‘the tired looking couple’. We bought No. 2 Old Rickyard from the Barneys and spent the next few months saying to people ‘no, Rickyard, not Brickyard!’.

We moved in that September and Anna was born in December, followed by Kate a year later and Henry in 1998. There was something in the village water around that time as there seemed to be lots of children of a similar age – Mortons, Coles, Owens, Mackies, Kerrys, Bradleys, Daveys, an Armbrister and a Craig-Smith – many of whom were at Leamington Hastings school together. These were halcyon days for kids before mobile phones and we seemed to either have no children in the house, or at least eight!

With three children and now a dog, Whiskey, we had outgrown No. 2. At the same time, Chris and Rhondda’s boys had both left home so they were thinking of down-sizing from Willowfield ... what could be simpler than a house-swap? So, during February half term in 2004, we moved the entire contents of No 2 onto the drive next door, so that the contents of Willowfield could be moved in to No 2. The Barneys lived there whilst they converted the Barn into their current house. The move went smoothly despite the solicitor’s not getting around to completing the sale until some days later! Chris and Rhondda sold No 2 to Liz, with Poppy, Tilly and Riba becoming a mix of fascination and fear for Whiskey, and then for Bennie.

No 2 and Willowfield obviously hold great memories for us, but the essence of village living has been in the connections with others from the community – chats on the drive with neighbours, meeting other dog owners ‘on the track’, Swap Shop, the Festival, Remembrance Sunday, Reading Group, Club food nights, our bar shifts, Community Café and Progressive Suppers. Too many friends made to mention here, but you know who you are!

We’ve now handed Willowfield over to Bali and Joy and their children, Mia, Caleb and Charis. We’re sure that you will make them welcome and that they’ll enjoy the house and village as much as we have.

We’re moving to Leamington, swapping village life for the convenience of a hundred coffee shops within 5 minutes walk! I am sure that we’ll be coming back to Birdingbury occasionally so this is probably ‘See You Later’ rather than ‘Goodbye’, but we wanted to say ‘Thank you’ for what Birdingbury has given to us and our family over the years.

See you around.

*Lisa and Guy French*

# Cancer Research UK Fundraising Day



On 12 July, I hosted a Cancer Research UK fundraising day around the village. This included a village history walk, football in the park, a barbecue, and an open mic in the evening. We collected donations in cash and many people, not just from the village, also donated via the charity's giving page.



I would like to thank all the villagers who were happy to discuss the histories of their properties, everyone who participated in the tour and the 5-a-side football, who bought a burger or sausage, or who played a few tunes in the evening. The sun shone, we had a great time, and we raised (including gift aid) a magnificent £1,438.75.



A summary of the village history walk follows.

*Steve Edgar*

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## Village History Walk

Here are some of the highlights of the village walk. There is information available about our village from many different sources but I have to acknowledge the work done by the Birdingbury local history group. I have also researched certain topics and referred back to those.

### The Village

Birdingbury goes back at least to the doomsday book (William the Conqueror's survey of England and parts of Wales, completed in 1086), where the village is recorded as 'Derbinggerie'. The village later appears as 'Birbury' on the Christopher Saxton map of 1637.

### The School, Club and Birbury

The school was possibly opened around 1870 as a 'board school' and is shown on the OS map for 1885. It was closed and turned into a workingmen's club in 1935. The Birbury was built in 1987 as a village meeting room by Bob Munro, the builder, with help from local craftsmen. It was financed by villagers and local organisations. The back wall has commemorative bricks with the names of some of the contributors. A photograph of most of the builders, with their names on the back, hangs on the wall.



## **Plaque to Mrs Pollock**

Mrs Alsager Pollock bought Birdingbury Hall in 1936 and lived there until 1962. Mrs Pollock, known as Freda, had inherited great wealth from her two husbands. She was to be found opening fetes, garden shows and numerous local events in the style of ‘the lady of the manor’. It was Freda who planted at least two trees by Master’s Barn to commemorate the coronation of Elizabeth II. The two trees were eventually replaced by the tree that we see today but the two stumps are still to be found in the grass. Her longest lasting gift to the village was the much loved bus shelter, which regrettably burnt down in 2012 but was later rebuilt. This was originally a summer house in the Hall garden.

## **Village Pound**

An animal pound is shown at the top of Main Street, behind where the war memorial is now, on the 1905 OS map displayed in the Club lounge. There is no trace of this today but a pound would be where stray animals would be held until the owner came to claim them for a fee, of course.

## **Windmill**

‘Windmills in Warwickshire’ (a Warwickshire Museum publication) shows that a post mill was situated by Mill House, Stockton Road. This, or its predecessor, was built in 1675 with open trestle and four common sails. It was taken down towards the end of the 19th century but the mound and pier bases remain.

## **The Boat Inn**

Although a couple of miles from the village this canal side pub on the Southam Road is actually just inside the Birdingbury parish boundary.

## **Nelson’s Sidings**

Nelson’s lime and cement works were located at Stockton alongside the Grand Union canal about half a mile from the Boat Inn. They were opened around the late 1850s with a canal arm into the works, which is still there, although the works closed in 1946. Sometime around 1877, Nelsons entered into an agreement with the London and North Western Railway to build a new siding and crane from the main line at Weedon military dock to transfer goods onto the railway from the canal. This was not very efficient as the trip to Weedon was 16 miles and 16 locks by canal, so the company looked for an alternative. The Rugby and Leamington railway had opened in 1851, and in 1881 they began negotiations to purchase land from Sir Theophilus Biddulph for a railway siding at Marton alongside the Birdingbury to Marton Road. The distance from Nelson’s works to Marton sidings was only three and a half miles but would have to go overland. This may have been by cart and horses or mules passing along the top end of Birdingbury. In 1895, a new railway branch between Marton junction and Weedon was opened passing right beside Nelson’s works thereby making Marton sidings redundant. After a working life of only 14 years, the sidings closed in 1895 and the rails were lifted. However, it is still known as Nelson’s Yard and the area is now a small industrial site.

## **Lime Industries**

Large deposits of limestone, laid down in shallow seas 200 million years ago, lay under the area between Rugby and Southam. Cement and limestone production has been a major industry for years and many works have been set up around Long Itchington and Stockton, with quarrying still continuing at Southam with the clay, known as Blue Lias, being transported to Rugby for cement manufacture. A lime kiln once existed opposite the entrance to Mill House, Stockton Road, as shown on the 1905 OS map.

## **Bob Munro and the Birdingbury Show**

The Birdingbury Festival and Country Show began in 1989, when Bob Munro and Glyn Hotchkiss came up with the idea while setting up toilets for the village fete. It grew bigger over time, with many different exhibits such as military vehicles, tractors, vintage transport, dog shows etc. In 2016, Bob Munro passed away and it was decided that 2017 was to be the last show. To give an idea of the size of the event, at the last show there were 124 tractors, 41 commercial vehicles, 28 military vehicles and 112 classic cars, plus of course many other attractions. Video of the show is available on YouTube.

## **Davenport Cottage**

Davenport Cottage as we see it today was originally part of a farm belonging to the Birdingbury Hall estate. The Birdingbury Hall estate consisted of 2180 acres covering 12 farms, woods, cottages and farmland. The whole of the estate was put up for sale on 15 June 1914, to be sold as one lot or, failing that, split into 48 lots. There were many more buildings on the farm and following the sale, most were knocked down and the bricks reused to build the farmhouse we see today at Davenport Farm along Long Itchington Lane. One claim to fame is that Christian Horner, formerly of the Red Bull Formula 1 racing team, was born at Davenport Cottage.

## **Birdingbury Camp**

Birdingbury camp was situated along the lane from Birdingbury to Frankton and was known as POW Camp 97. It was opened in 1943 with the first occupants being Italian prisoners of war who were housed in tents while huts were built. It then became a German working camp, although an Italian presence remained. Capable of holding 560 prisoners, it was closed in 1947 and most occupants were repatriated. Some prisoners, however, stayed in the UK and worked on local farms and other trades. The camp later became a hostel for displaced persons, mainly from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. From 1953, it was used as emergency council housing for a short while. The old entrance to the camp can still be identified and in springtime daffodils grow around where the huts would have been.

## **Railway Station**

The Rugby to Leamington railway opened in 1851, with Birdingbury station opening in 1853. Due to a slow decline in usage, caused partially by the development of motor transport, the line, along with Birdingbury station closed in 1959. This was not quite the

end though, as coal and cement trains continued between Rugby and Southam cement works for about another 20 years. The last train in 1985 was, ironically, a weedkilling train. Relics of the line can still be found, including Birdingbury station which still stands as a private house.

### **St. Leonard's Church**

There has been a church in Birdingbury for over a thousand years. The current building dates from about 1875 but prior to that there were two previous churches, the latest being a rebuild of church number two from 1777. Access to the church from the village was along the road to the Hall until 1929, when the Rectory was sold and the access closed. Church-goers then had to take the main road and walk down the steep hill to the front entrance. The church has two bells but they cannot be rung as the hanging is in a poor state. Mention must be made of Henry Homer, rector from 1755 to 1791. He and his wife had 17 children, which someone cynically suggested 'at least guaranteed him a congregation'.

### **Birdingbury Hall**

The idea to take a look at Birdingbury Hall had been in my head for some time so I was delighted that Sue and Bruce agreed to host our walking tour.

The manor of Birdingbury was held in ancient times by the priory of Coventry. After the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII between 1536 and 1541, it was acquired by the Throckmorton family, later associated with the gunpowder plot. Members of the family still live at Coughton Court in Warwickshire.

The Hall was built around 1630 and in 1687 it was bought by the Biddulph family, who played a large part in the history of Birdingbury and surrounding villages. The Biddulph family owned Birdingbury Hall from 1687 to 1914. During that time, two family members were rectors and were in post for 27 and 50 years respectively. The two houses just before the Hall entrance were built for the chauffer and butler to the Hall. The plaque on the wall reads 'in memory of Mary Biddulph died 1895, erected by her brother TCB 1899'.

The Hall suffered a devastating fire in 1859 when the north wing was completely destroyed and the house was extensively remodelled and rebuilt. The Biddulph's never returned to the Hall following the fire and there have since been a number of owners. The house is grade 2 listed.

### **Other items briefly mentioned on the tour included:**

The school field (donkey field), the village water pumps, Master's Barn, the shop/bakery and washroom on Main Street, the barracks (a nickname for some very basic small houses), the 'outside' off licence, and the post office.

*Steve Edgar*

## Community Café...

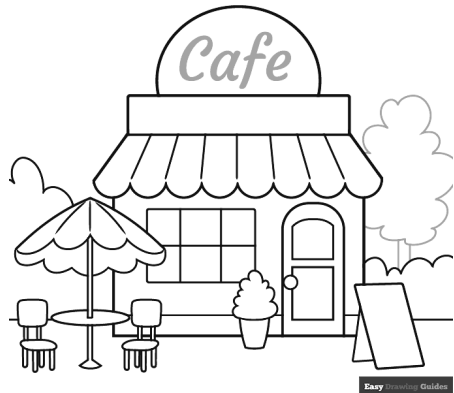
...has continued running weekly on Tuesday mornings and we've been delighted to welcome some new faces of all ages. We've had tiny babies to the most senior of the village: seeing them laughing and chatting together is very precious.

We are now on a break for the summer holidays and will resume on Tuesday 2 September at 10.30am. Big thanks to all our lovely supporters and the volunteer helpers and bakers.

As we mentioned previously, Jean and I are stepping down after 3 years, following the Christmas Café. We are delighted that some of the team are trying to work out how to keep things going, whilst sharing the responsibilities. Please speak up if you can give any time to help.

We have made many donations so far this year to varying charities and to Birdingbury Club's refurbishment fund. Here are the details for December 2024 and January to July 2025

- Crisis at Christmas £300
- Birdingbury Club £625
- NSPCC £200
- Rugby Foodbank £50
- UNICEF £250
- Save the Children £50
- DEC Sudan/ Myanmar £150
- UN Family Programme £151
- Menieres Society £25
- Sjogren's Foundation £25
- Action for Children £240



The grand total for the year to date is around £2000 – well done everyone!

***Karen Armbrister and Jean Foroughi***

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# St Leonard's: Your Church in Your Village

## Church Fete

A big thank you to everyone for their support for our recent Church Fete, which took place in the Club due to inclement weather. Generous donations resulted in a variety of tombola items, and a terrific display of wonderful village baking. The roast pork batches sold out, and the fabulous raffle prizes were all won by village friends. A good afternoon.

We were delighted to raise just over £1400: much needed funds for our small village church. Income is becoming extremely challenging, as fewer people are engaging.

We have an annual fund raising target of £2500, so the Fete is our main income generator, alongside our Christmas Fayre and other smaller activities. As you may be aware, we have lost our 'Holy Rolls' initiative due to the Council determining it a 'Food Business' (with which we vehemently disagreed!) and that has had an impact on our income. If you feel you could support our village church with any regular giving, do have a word with me. Thank you.



Lots of people worked hard to help the fete take place. We thank them and Birdingbury Club who always welcome and support us.

## Forward Planning

- Summer Programme – 2 services each Sunday 10am and 4pm – see the posters and our website for details ([www.draycoteandleamvalleybenefice.com](http://www.draycoteandleamvalleybenefice.com))
- Sunday 1 October at 11am: Celebrating God's Creation (donations for Rugby Foodbank)
- Sunday 9 November at 10.15am: Annual Service of Remembrance
- Saturday 20 December at 6pm: Community All-Age Carol Service in Church (tbc)

*Karen Armbrister, Acting Church Warden*

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# **Birdingbury Bread Charity – a Legacy of Giving**

Birdingbury has a long tradition of caring for its community through what became known as the ‘bread charities’. These initiatives in Birdingbury date back to the early 18th century, thanks to the generosity of two benefactors – William Smith of Kytes Hardwick and Thomas Bayes. Their contributions brought support to the most needy in Birdingbury for over 300 years.

## **The beginning**

On 23 April 1711, William Smith left four shillings per annum to be distributed as bread to the parish’s poor every Easter Sunday. This sum came from the interest earned on £80 Consolidated Stock (Consols). Later, these funds were managed centrally through the Charity Commission, with the annual payment credited to the Birdingbury Charities’ account in Rugby.

Similarly, Thomas Bayes established a separate charity in 1730, leaving an annual charge of one pound on property in Easenhall, Monks Kirby. After several arrears and intervention by the Charity Commission, this charge was eventually redeemed in 1915, and a further £40 was invested in Consols.

## **A tradition of bread and flour**

For many years, income from these funds was used to distribute bread or flour among the village’s needy. In 1916-1918, receipts from F. Wills (Birdingbury’s village shop) document the purchase of loaves for distribution. A note from 1917 lists 15 recipients of these gifts, and three of the surnames also appear on our War Memorial in the list of the Fallen – Wall, Parker and Harvey. Maybe the bread, for them, was also a symbol of the village’s gratitude for the families’ sacrifices.

By 1955, the distribution shifted from bread to flour, and by 1970, bags of coal replaced flour as the charity’s donations.

## **Modern management**

Changes in society, including the advent of the Welfare State in the 1940s and the Charities Act of 1960, brought increased oversight and new responsibilities for charity trustees. Birdingbury Charities continued to adapt, keeping records of transactions, including charting the evolution from handwritten bank books issued in 1918 by Northamptonshire Union Bank in Rugby, later to become National Westminster Bank. The final cheque in shillings was written in 1970 – 18s for 2 bags of coal.

Though distributions became less frequent after 1970, occasional gifts were still provided to village residents. In 2014, eleven people received £5 tokens. This was to be the final recorded distribution.

## Closing a chapter

With the charity being dormant in recent years, Jackie Westcott and Pauline Meade, the remaining trustees, decided that the funds could be better used elsewhere. They consulted the Charity Commission, which advised winding up the charity. The funds, including investments transferred to CCLA Ethical Investment Funds, were sold, and the accumulated amount of several hundred pounds will be donated to Hope4, a Rugby-based charity addressing homelessness and food poverty.

Hope4, which has recently been honoured with the King's Award for Voluntary Service, will continue the legacy of generosity started by Mr Smith and Mr Bayes over three centuries ago. Their kindness has left an enduring mark on Birdingbury, demonstrating how even small acts of benevolence can ripple through time.

## Looking ahead

As Birdingbury bids farewell to its bread charities, the village should be proud of this remarkable history. The funds will now serve a broader purpose, helping those in need through Hope4. It's a fitting end to a story of kindness that has spanned generations, reminding us all that the spirit of giving never truly fades.

*Guy French*

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## Rounders all Round!

Come along to the playing field at Marton on

**Saturday 6 September**

**Rounders and Barbecue**

**in aid of**

**Breast and Prostate Cancer Research**

**12 noon - 4pm**

**£5 per player - scratch teams**

**Food and refreshments - pay as you go**

**For more information contact**

**Mary Harrison 01926 632939**



## ACCIDENT ON THE RUGBY AND LEAMINGTON RAILWAY

A serious accident occurred on the Leamington and Rugby Branch of the London and North Western Railway on Tuesday last. The passenger train left Rugby for Leamington at 1.30 as usual and arrived in due course at Birdingbury station. It consisted of engine, tender, three first and two second class carriages; three carriage trucks and the guard's van. After setting down a passenger and some luggage at Birdingbury, the train started again on its journey: but, immediately on doing so, the driver observed a coal train following him on the same rails at a very rapid rate. This excited his alarm, and he immediately turned on his steam, in order to get out of the way as much as possible, and make the collision, which was inevitable, as light as could be. The guard of the passenger train jumped on to the line and escaped uninjured. The coal train then ran into the other with great force, breaking to pieces the guard's van, and more or less damaging the three trucks which all became detached from the other carriages. No doubt, their being in the way prevented the full force of the concussion reaching the passenger carriages, none of which were injured; and with the exception of a few bruises, none of their occupants were very much hurt. The collision threw the driver of the passenger train back upon his tender; and this circumstance, together with the fact of his having turned the steam to full pressure, and the force of the concussion, caused the train to run on more than a mile before he could stop it. The engine of the coal train turned over and fell down the embankment – the driver and stoker having jumped off; the former escaped without serious damage but the head of the latter was hurt: he is now, however, out of danger.

Messengers were sent to Rugby to stop any trains passing along the line; and the passenger train itself, after emptying at Marton, arrived at the Avenue station at 2.50. The station master immediately took an engine and assistants to the spot, and set them to clear the line, which was effected by the next morning, when the trains proceeded along it as usual, being taken in the meantime, via Coventry.

The danger signals were hoisted at Birdingbury station, which ought to have prevented the coal train coming into it: and, therefore, the whole blame of the transgression rests upon the driver who, not only disobeyed the signals, but was working the engine at an extraordinary and furious rate. We have no doubt that the Railway Company will take proper steps in respect of the matter.

*From The Royal Leamington Spa Courier and Warwickshire Standard of January 5, 1856*





# bostock sunflowers

*Pick your own sunflowers*

Sunflowers £1.50 per stem

Tractor and trailer rides £3.50 (under 3 Free)

3 acre Maize in the Maze with gnome treasure hunt £3

Hot food by Time For Tea

FREE ENTRY, NO BOOKING REQUIRED!



Birdingbury Fields Farm - CV23 8HL

Open 10.30am to 6pm from Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> July daily for 3 weeks!

Updates on our Facebook page @Bostocksunflowers / 01926 812319

## Exciting Autumn Ahead

Bookings open in mid-August for a wealth of new and tried-and-tested well-being and adult education courses at Rugby's Percival Guildhouse.



The independent centre is introducing several new day and full-term courses in the Autumn Term, covering crafts such as Crochet for Beginners, Textile Textures and Stitched Mixed Media, and Learn to Use Your Sewing Machine.

There are new courses on Character Concept Design for Games and Animation, one on Introduction to Animation, and Beginners' Photography. For lovers of history and literature, there are new courses on The Franco Years, from Carta to Charter, and Shakespeare's Women.

The full list of courses, which includes all traditional favourites, will be available online at [www.percival-guildhouse.co.uk](http://www.percival-guildhouse.co.uk) from 14 August. Printed brochures will also be available from Rugby Visitor Centre at the Art Gallery & Museum, and many other locations locally. Enquiries and bookings can also be made by phone after 14 August on 01788 542467.

*Clare Turnbull*

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

## As we saw earlier.....

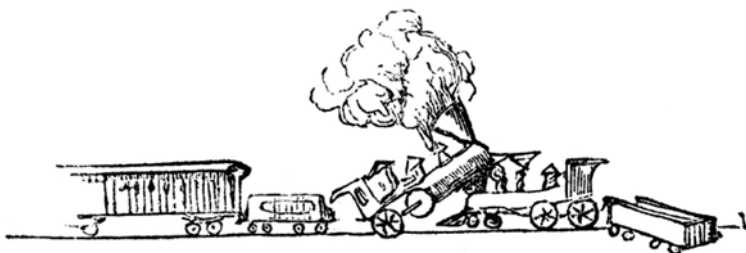
Birdingbury knows

Things come off the rails when you

Go too fast downhill

*Thin Jethro Laskey*

BIRDSONG-



BIRDSONGBIRDSONG

# Community Café 2026

The Community Café is such a great feature of our community. People of all ages get together and sample lots of delicious home-made delicacies!

As many of you know, after doing such a splendid job for three years, Karen and Jean are stepping back after Christmas but we are aiming to keep the Café running every other week from January 2026.

Can you help keep the Café going? There are a number of ways you can contribute, such as:

- Volunteering at the Café once a month (setting up, hosting, serving, clearing)
- Baking once every two months
- Assisting with the regular charity donations
- Managing the baking rota
- Publicity

If you are interested, please message either of us via the Village Chat WhatsApp group and we will send you the link to sign up, or pop into the café when it reopens and have a chat with us. We look forward to welcoming current and new team members for continued Café companionship next year!

*Sharon and Maggie*

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

## Club Opening Hours

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

See adjusted hours for Club events

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## Road Closures

As mentioned in the PC report, Main Street/Frankton Road (between Master's Yard and entrance to Old Court) and Back Lane (from Main Street to Old Rick Yard), will be closed from 18 to 26 August for the reconstruction of the footways and associated works. The roads will be closed on weekdays from 9am to 3pm.

The suggested diversions are:

- Main Street / Frankton Road Diversion: Marton Road, Birdingbury Road, A423, B4453 Rugby Road / Princethorpe Road, Main Street, Burton Lane, Birdingbury Lane, Frankton Lane and vice versa.
- Back Lane Access/egress via Leamington Hastings Road only.

To report any problems with these works or for further details of current & planned road-works visit WCC website [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/roadworksmap](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/roadworksmap) or call them on 01926 412515.

*Carmel de Nahlik*



## Twitterings



Congratulations to Morgan and Hailey whose wedding in Birdingbury on 8 July was followed by a honeymoon in Wales, with a further trip planned later this year.



Congratulations also to Gel and Andy whose wedding at Rugby Register Office on 24 May was followed by a reception in Arnold House, and a honeymoon in Mauritius.

There have been lots of new residents to welcome to the village:



Pam and Dekster at Masters Barn

David and Monty on Main Street

Alise, Ed and their two boys at Rowan House

Joy, Bali, Mia, Caleb, Charis plus Orla and Reggie at Willowfield.

And finally, a big hello to baby Kit, who joins mum Jess, dad Nik, and brother Joseph!



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## Also Perching in Birdingbury

Red Kites are now a familiar sight, soaring high in the sky around Birdingbury. This graceful bird of prey is unmistakable with its reddish-brown body, angled wings and deeply forked tail, in contrast to the more modest buzzard.

Red Kites were saved from national extinction by one of the world's longest-running protection programmes. In just a few decades, they've gone from being on the brink of extinction to around 6,000 pairs in the UK. However, despite their success, they are still victims of illegal persecution.

The diet of the Red Kite consists of mainly carrion and worms, but they are opportunistic feeders and will occasionally take small mammals. Their weight can range from 800-1,300g, with a magnificent wingspan of between 175-195cm.

When soaring above the fields, they constantly adjust the angle of their tail to steer, while barely moving their wings. Listen out for their characteristic whistling 'pee eeooo' call.

*Birder*

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

## Go Green

Would you like to come along and try outdoor lawn bowls? Learn a new skill, meet new people, enjoy some gentle exercise and fresh air? Why not join us at Leamington Hastings Bowls Club?

You can play three times before deciding to join this friendly, non-league club.

We have bowls you can borrow and some coaching if you would like it: you just need to turn up in loose clothing and flat shoes. You will be made very welcome.

We meet every Wednesday from 6pm at the bowls green next to the Leamington Hastings Parish Hall and tennis court. During the winter months we play indoor short mat bowls in the parish hall every Wednesday 2pm-4pm (with a cuppa and a biscuit or 2 at half time).

See our Facebook page for more information.

*Sue Turner*

BIRDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG



# MARTON



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

IF 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](mailto:df@davidfry.net) 01926632936

## 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
Friday 1 August from 5.30pm	Village Kitchen Mexican Freshly made in our Birdingbury kitchen
Friday 8 August from 5.30pm	That's Nugs Chicken nuggets street food style
Friday 15 August from 5.30pm	Cajun Kitchen Cajun & Creole comfort food, with a smile
Saturday 23 August from 5.30pm	Pizza Van Woodfired pizza made to order
Thursday 28 August 4.30pm	Chippy Van Club open from 4.30pm
Friday 29 August from 5.30pm	Tapas Zampa Authentic Spanish Tapas made to order
Friday 5 September from 5.30pm	Village Kitchen Curry Freshly made in our Birdingbury kitchen
Friday 12 September from 5.30pm	That's Nugs Chicken nuggets street food style
Saturday 20 September from 5.30pm	Pizza Van Woodfired pizza made to order
Thursday 25 September from 4.30pm	Chippy Van Club open from 4.30pm
Friday 26 September from 5.30pm	Bad Boy Burgers Mouth-watering burgers & fries



Birdsong Editor:

Lesley Fleming

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**Copy date for next issue – 18 SEPTEMBER 2025**