

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH OF BARFORD
HELD AT THE MEMORIAL HALL ON MONDAY 2 APRIL 2012 AT 7.30 PM**

Present: J V Murphy (Chairman)
Fifteen other electors
In attendance: Cllr L Caborn (WCC)
Cllr Mrs C Sawdon (WDC)

1 **Minutes of the annual meeting held on 4 Apr 11.** The minutes were approved as a true record. There were no matters arising.

2 **Annual Report by Cllr J V Murphy, Chairman of the Joint Parish Council.**

2011-2012 has again been a busy year – 9 routine JPC meetings, numerous Planning meetings, numerous Working Party or subcommittee meetings and the three Annual Parish Meetings. But no Special Meetings this year!

2011 was election year for local parish councils. Only Wasperton managed to fill all its places straight away. Barford promptly found three co-opted members and Sherbourne soon followed with its third councillor. Whilst this is unusual for us it is not unusual nationally and it does seem to be getting harder to persuade people to commit to local government service despite the fact that our sector is getting more and more opportunity to control our destiny; or perhaps it is a consequence?

Difficult financial times continue and all levels of government strive to achieve best value and minimize service reductions. Once again we have kept the parish element of the Council Tax at the same level whilst still maintaining safe reserves. The WDC and WCC have also kept their requirement level although the Police Authority have required a modest increase to maintain service levels. Our good reserves do enable us to ride out the financial storm to some considerable degree but we are currently looking at various projects which may make significant demands on those reserves if alternative funding cannot be found.

During the year the JPC funded the provision of a **Public Access Defibrillator** for emergency use – located at the rear of Barford Village Shop – for use only after making the appropriate 999 emergency contact, when the pass number will be given out.

Over the last several years our parishes, all of which have very significant Conservation Areas, have seen our street lighting improved. Sherbourne was fully replaced a few years ago, Wasperton is now complete and Barford is mostly done; there being a few remaining inappropriate and ageing lamps which will need attention. Limited funding at WDC means that in the short term these will not be dealt with unless we can find the funds to complement the £10,000 that WDC can scrape together between their lighting and conservation departments. We have been successful in securing a Community Forum grant for £3000 and but still have to find the balance elsewhere.

Given the change in attitude of insurers to self-help in adverse weather we have provided **grit bins** at strategic locations throughout the parishes to mitigate for what we see as inadequate gritting by the WCC. To be fair we have provided the capital cost of the bins and WCC will ensure that they are kept adequately supplied for cold weather. Furthermore we have recently secured agreement to provide gritting arrangements for the Wasperton lane flats.

Following the installation of three new pieces of equipment under the “Big on Play” scheme last year we have established a working party to thoroughly review all of the play area provision in Barford and will soon be looking for residents’ input in how things might be improved and augmented, and also what you do and/or do not want us to change.

The boundary between the Barford Playing Fields and the cemetery has been renewed during the last year along with careful trimming of the trees in that area. The boundary is now dog-proof and provides a pleasant open aspect drawing the two areas together. There is ongoing debate about whether to reinstate the old holly hedge in that area – what do you think?

Inconsiderate, and often illegal, parking around the Bremridge Close and Wasperton Lane junctions has finally been resolved by the installation of yellow lines. These have been generally

welcomed but the problem has been partly replaced by nearby residents parking on the east side of Wellesbourne Road near the Bremridge Close junction. This has a significant traffic calming effect but can make passage difficult at times and we, along with the Police and WCC, will monitor the situation.

All three village halls have this year been supported by JPC grants with £1043 to each and the JPC also gave grant support of £418 towards maintenance of each of the three churchyards.

Following the change in government, the major planning issue has been the slow gestation of the New Local Plan. Earlier in the year we learnt of the intended housing numbers for our district – 550 homes per year – and we currently await the draft version of the Preferred Options (now due May 2012), which will indicate proposed locations for those numbers. We are assured that the rural areas will not have significant numbers imposed upon them so we wait in interest.

Affordable Housing – We have continued to work to with the Rural Housing Enabler and have identified the Wasperton Lane site as the preferred option for a stand-alone site. Unfortunately there is currently no funding available and we are advised that we must rely on a market homes scheme, sufficiently large to provide our needs through the WDC requirement for larger sites to provide 40% Affordable Homes. Currently there are two such schemes on the horizon.

Development proposals on **land around Barford House** have advanced considerably over the year and is currently the subject of an active Planning Application for 58 homes. The proposal addresses many of the issues identified in the 2011 BRA survey along with other issues raised relating to the site. The JPC voted to object to the scheme on the grounds that it was contrary to all current local policies and failed to meet our perceived local housing needs.

The site of the now closed Sherbourne Nurseries is also being considered for development and in February there was presentation by Taylor Wimpey who gave brief outlines of their involvement so far, indicating a wish to work with the community.

Coincident with the above applications the JPC has been working to develop a Housing Needs Survey to assess the requirement for both Market and Affordable homes in the three parishes. Given the Localism agenda this will significantly assist us considerably in both facilitating appropriate development and discouraging inappropriate development in the future.

Riverside land left over from the Barford Bypass construction has been taken over by the JPC and progress is well underway to establish a community orchard, a wild flower meadow and a riverside walk and seats. This has been partly funded by the LEADER scheme, supplemented by considerable amounts of self help labour. This will be one of the few public access points in our riverside parishes.

We have also taken the opportunity to rationalize the boundary between Barford and Wasperton parishes. To date all of the commercial buildings and parts of some of the houses on the old Oldhams site have fallen in to Wasperton parish despite their postal addresses and residents' rights being in Barford. To regularize matters the boundary has been moved to the east side of Wellesbourne Road until it meets the A429 Barford Bypass and then directly to the river, which is also the District boundary, and continuing to divide the riverside land the JPC now holds.

Locality Community Forums have continued to develop but there is still a long way to go before they achieve the potential which was been promised. Meanwhile we have been lucky enough to secure Forum funding for several projects this year including the installation of play equipment, the jubilee beacon and the contribution towards upgrading street lighting ahead of schedule.

We are of course now in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee year and the JPC has where possible led and coordinated celebration planning. Wasperton will have a community picnic and a Royal Oak planted; Barford will inaugurate the Riverside walk, plant a Royal/jubilee oak on the site, erect a flagpole on the village green where there will be a grand picnic followed by a torchlight procession to and from a beacon on Watchbury Hill. Sherbourne had not finalized plans at the time of writing...

All councillors have attended many meetings and generally have served their electors extremely well, working as a strong team with James Johnson our excellent Clerk/RFO. This year we managed to exchange several long serving councilors for a considerable intake of new and younger blood. With no disrespect to those who have moved on I am confident that this change will be an excellent

investment for the future. Many thanks to all for their input. Some have done much more than the expected minimum and these are particularly deserving of our community's gratitude.

Councillor attendance records:

2011-12	Meetings	Present	%
Cllr Mrs W BARLOW	9	9	100%
Cllr R CLAY	9	8	89%
Cllr Mrs J L LONGFIELD	9	5	56%
Cllr S J McVEIGH	9	9	100%
Cllr P A P MORRIS	8	6	75%
Cllr D MORROW	9	9	100%
Cllr J V MURPHY	9	9	100%
Cllr A RHEAD	9	7	78%
Cllr R A SHOTTON-OZA	9	7	78%
Cllr Mrs A GORDON	9	9	100%
Cllr Mrs NEWSOME	9	8	89%
Cllr Mrs P K PAYNE	5	5	100%
Cllr M J METCALFE	9	8	89%
Cllr N F J THURLEY	9	9	100%
Cllr J T WRIGHT	9	9	100%
Cllr J M HAWKESFORD	7	5	71%

3 **Written Report by Cllr Mrs C Sawdon (WDC)**

Alan Rhead and I were re-elected as your District Councillors in May 2011, it is an honour and a privilege to fulfil this role on your behalf.

Here is a brief outline of some of the activities we have been involved with over the last 12 months:

Council Tax - We have frozen the Council tax at the same level for a second year due to good management by the council.

Local Plan consultation – There is a lot more to the local plan than housing. This is your opportunity to comment on locations, infrastructure and open spaces. It is a chance for the public to help mould your District. What do you want? Where do you want it? Jobs, schools, public transport, hospitals, town facilities and rural community sustainability. Alan and I are working to bring the officers to meet in our ward to hear your views on initial ideas. I would urge people to attend and contribute to this plan which will mould our area for the next 20 years.

Travellers - This is also part of the local Plan design. WDC must find locations if Travellers are going to be dissuaded from settling anywhere. Before this can happen the Public need to understand that such sites have to go somewhere.

Procurement - WDC want to encourage more local businesses to provide vital services. WDC are actively involved in reducing the overall cost of procured services as one of the most important methods of savings.

Localism - We want to work ever closer with the JPC to ensure that the Localism Act has real meaning for the local community.

Queen's Jubilee - WDC is actively considering how to help local communities in their plans for this great occasion.

Rural Initiative Grant - Barford, Wasperton and Sherbourne need to continue to consider what requirements they may have that this WDC grant can help finance.

Housing Needs Survey - Congratulate the JPC in undertaking this most comprehensive survey not only of affordable but market homes. It is this kind of work at local level that can make Localism work.

Recycling - WDC continues to have one of the highest rates in the country and the public need to be congratulated on their efforts. Is there any further recycling you would like to see? Please let me know.

Neighbourhood Watch. -It is vital that we re-invigorate Neighbourhood Watch across the joint parishes. Hatton Park, Hatton, Norton Lindsey and Hampton on the Hill and Magna now have thriving groups and Paul Coleman our PCSO is very keen to help set schemes up across the ward.

In all we have around 1500 households signed up across our area. It allows us all to keep in touch with what is going on and where within our neighbourhoods. I am keen to help where ever I can.

4 **Written Report by Cllr L Caborn (WCC)**

It has been an interesting and eventful year on the County Council. The County Councils latest strapline is "Going for growth" We believe that notwithstanding the Budgetary restraints and the overall national policy, Warwickshire County Council should endeavour to contribute to the recovery by encouraging employment and businesses especially amongst the under 25's, reducing Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) and improving education standards as far as the governments academy programme involves us and make Warwickshire a safe and healthy place to live.

This will be achieved by moving resources to areas that will encourage these aims and work in Partnership with both our neighbours, Districts and Boroughs. We will engage the Residents through meaningful community forums and where applicable Parish councils. We are fully engaged with the LEP with Coventry and will soon be signing a memorandum of understanding encouraging cooperation and combined working between the two authorities. We expect to match and thus take advantage of a government grant to improve the broadband in rural areas. The fire service has formed a strategic alliance with Northamptonshire thus making more resources available and saving on back office costs. The police force too is proposing to work more closely with West Mercia police. This is being influenced by the impending elections for a police commissioner, this November, and the programme to replace the police committee with Police panels.

Adult services are now becoming more of a commissioning agency paying the private sector rather than WCC to run homes and care services. Personal payment plans are being introduced for all residents who want them. This will show a saving of over £2million a year. Public Health will be transferring from the NHS to the local authority and they have already moved to Barrack Street above the library. Together with the other major reorganizations to the Health service whereby GP's become fund holders and PCT's and SHA's are abolished and a new "Health and wellbeing Board" is being established to oversee all Health matters in Warwickshire. Added to this there will be a new body called Health Watch which will work in conjunction with Scrutiny to challenge health administration and individual complaints. All this of course is subject to the Health reform act passing successfully through Parliament.

Schools, too are going through a major transformation The introduction of academies is proving more popular than envisaged and over 60% of Warwickshire schools have opted for academy status. The rest are expected to follow. Primary Schools too are being encouraged to form federations of clusters with a view to achieving academy status. All this leads to the downsizing of the Local authorities' role in education and hence staff.

Warwickshire being placed as it is in the centre of England is vital for the long term transport strategy of any government. The main motorway and A road links are the responsibility of the highway agency but the remainder of the roads are the responsibility of the County Council. WCC grit over 46% of the A & B roads (higher than any other shire County) and have recently entered a maintenance contract with Balfour Beatty. The present budgetary restraints have led to a reduction in money available for road maintenance although this groups commitment to £2million a year for additional road improvements has helped to alleviate this.

The latest infrastructure proposals are for a high speed railway through the county which will desecrate homes, farms, factories and the countryside but not stop anywhere in Warwickshire. Despite minor changes to the route it is generally thought that this is not good for Warwickshire. At a cost of £32 billion this line does not represent value for money and the business case, even over 60 years is flawed. Why upgrading of existing lines have not been considered is hard to understand. Warwickshire has joined Buckinghamshire in a group of mainly conservative councils called 51m and are committed to opposing these proposals. Three of our Districts are also in this group although all have voted to oppose the scheme. A Judicial challenge of the decision is being considered, indications are that this will not initially cost us anymore. The adverse effect on the infrastructure is also being costed and assessed but until detailed plans for the route and construction programme have been decided there is little point in challenging these. All costs associated with the project will be charged to HS2. The county Council are meeting with HS2 to discuss further consultation over mitigation prior to the hybrid bill being introduced. Both an environmental impact assessment and a proven business case are also awaited.

Finally, this year's budget. The county's element of the Council tax (about 80% of the total) will not be increased this year. We shall be accepting the government's offer of a grant which is equivalent to 2.5% rise. 1% is equivalent to £2million. This may affect next year's budget as this is not a year on year grant. Existing programmes of closures announced in last year's budget will continue as the county strive to make £60million savings over 3 years. It is of note that we have not closed one Library and the willingness of communities to take on their own library with our technical support is a credit to all and demonstrates the Prime Minister's vision of The Big Society in action. The future format of community forums and area grants should be decided by Easter.

Taking all this into consideration the Conservative controlled County council continue to serve you well and give you value for money as our programme of going for growth takes shape.

- 5 **Barford Parish Plan (J V Murphy)** In ordinary circumstances the Plan would be reviewed and revised after five years, but the imminence of the requirement to draft a Neighbourhood Plan (which is not a renamed Parish Plan) would make any such effort nugatory. Guidance on the requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan is awaited.
- 6 **Village Design Statement (J V Murphy)** It was hoped that the VDS would prove a supplementary planning document but recent events have shown that WDC will use it selectively and in one case a Planning Inspector deemed that the JPC's Planning Committee had misinterpreted it.
- 7 **Proposals for land around Barford House (J V Murphy)** See Minute 2
- 8 **Proposals for Sherbourne Nurseries (J V Murphy)** See Minute 2
- 9 **Barford Residents' Association (R Scott)** BRA had been resurrected to establish the views of residents on the proposed development on land around Barford House (See Minute 2) and continued that role.
- 10 **Barford Village Shop & Post Office (W Worrall)**
I present this report to you this evening having almost completed my first year as a Director of Barford Village Shop.

This report will have to be in general terms without any detailed financial information as it would be wrong to offer this detail to the public forum before being announced to Shareholders at their AGM on 23rd May.

However I can report that the Shop continues to go from strength to strength with turnover, customer footfall and profitability exceeding budget. Customer feedback is almost unanimously positive with visitors and new customers universally impressed with the facility and product range.

The Post Office continues to be popular and fulfills a valuable service to the community. The opening hours were altered to five afternoons (Mon - Fri) 3:00pm to 5:15 (from three afternoons) This alteration was made possible with the assistance of three PO volunteers.

I can say without fear of contradiction that apart from the building the two most important assets are the wide volunteer base and our manager Ms Corenna Jennings. We would be hard pressed to find a more personable, dynamic and efficient manager to head up our business.

The Shop also fulfills a much needed and well used additional function in our community. I refer of course to the social commitment. In the 6½ years since opening the Coffee Shop has become the place to meet. In addition, of course, volunteers work with and meet a much wider section of the community than that they would normally come into contact with. I believe this social side of our Shop is beyond price.

To conclude if you are a shareholder come along to the AGM on 23rd May at 8:00pm in this hall where the account will be published. There will also be an election for Directors and if you fancy getting involved you could put your name forward as a candidate. See or any other Director afterwards for further details.

If you are not a Shareholder - Why Not? It is only £20 - again see me or any other Director after the meeting

11 **Barford Relief in Need Charity (T Offiller)**

The Charity is known as a 'relief in need' charity and is regulated by the Charities Commission. Its income is derived from cautious investments and a small rental on some land in the south of the County. Its income is around £10,000 per annum and has remained steady through the recent financial turmoil thanks to changes in the disbursement policy of the investment management company.

Unlike when it was established in the early 20th century, before the advent of a welfare state, the Charity has struggled to spend its annual income, and in recent years the trustees have worked hard to maximise its spending. In the last financial year it spent about 80% of its income.

Cash grants for specific needs were made to 7 applicants during the year, and a further 31 parishioners received grants of £150 to help with the cost of Christmas. Of those receiving grants for specific needs, 3 were for broadly educational purposes, 2 helped with heating costs and 1 continued help to a new mother. The seventh was, in fact, a grant reported last year but not taken up until 2011.

The 7 trustees continue to look at ways of making the charity more accessible and, concerned that its very name may be off-putting to would-be applicants, has decided to adopt a more informal title - that of 'The Barford Trust' - in its publicity.

There were no changes to the trustee membership in 2011 but two retirements are due later in 2012.

I am the Clerk to the Charity and its Chairman since 2004 has been Gerard Veness.

12 **Barford Community Charity (Mrs M Peirson)**

The Barford Community Charity has been established for 4 years with the aim to help fund community projects for the benefit of the residents of Barford, Wasperton and Sherbourne. The charity is registered with the Charity Commission and the registration number is 1122038.

The charity assisted the Community Shop in raising funds and was able to donate over £26,000 to enable it to open and be as successful as we all know it has been.

The charity's aim is to direct its activities to support projects that benefit the whole community. It will use its charitable status to raise money from grant making bodies for the projects it is backing. This year it has received a donation of £6,500 from the shop and passed on £1,500 of this to the school at the shop's request. The shop will be advising us which projects it wishes to support with the remaining £5,000.

The three original trustees (John Barrott: Chair, Kate Moyce: Secretary, Mary Peirson: Treasurer) are due to stand down under the terms of the charities constitution. Applications are invited from interested residents who wish to become Trustees. We already have volunteers from the membership of the JPC, the shop and the church, but would like to have more and it is suggested that perhaps that number could be as many as six.

If anyone is interested in becoming a Trustee would they please contact the Chair in writing either by email at jbarrott17@googlemail.com or by post to 17 Sandy Way, Barford, Warwick CV35 8DY.

The current Trustees will stay on for a period of time after the appointment of new Trustees to enable a successful handover to take place.

13 **Neighbourhood Watch (I Findlay)** It was reported with regret that efforts to galvanize residents to make Neighbourhood Watch effective had failed to arouse sufficient interest and it was moribund.

14 **Barford School and Preschool (Mrs H Clay)**

The Pre-School is flourishing now after one and a half years in its new premises and going from strength to strength.

There are no worries about numbers for this year and into next. It works really well with the foundation stage at school.

Barford St Peter's Primary school continues to be a thriving successful school with 120 pupils on role and these children are in the majority come from within our three villages.

When I think back to the days when my children attended the school it was a first school only with about 35 pupils which meant that the children had to go into Warwick aged 7 but now the children can enjoy all their primary education from the village school.

The school is always looking to improve and raise standards in all curriculum subjects and embrace new topics such as outdoor learning. We now have welly Wednesday and recently with the help of a grant raised beds have been built and a small poly tunnel erected so that the children can raise seeds and plant them out and look after them.

The village shop has recently donated, via the community charity, £1500 to enable the school to purchase two new computers for the benefit of the whole school. The school continues to benefit financially from Barford School Trust who are trustees of the old school house and the old village school now run as a private nursery.

The school will be taking part in an inter Warwick schools Olympics of which I am sure we will hear more about nearer the time.

Pupils leaving Barford School transfer to a range of local secondary schools such as, Aylesford, Kineton, Stratford, Warwick Boys, Shottery, Alcester Grammar and King Edwards.

All in all I think I can say that Barford St Peter's provides our children with a happy caring school and an excellent beginning to their education.

Perhaps I could take this opportunity to say that we are looking for a new governor for the school. If anyone feels that they have some time to spare and perhaps a skill or profession that would be of benefit to the school and you would like to play a part in ensuring that we continue to have a flourishing village school, please get in touch with me to find out more about the role of a school governor.

15 **Barford First Responders Group (Mrs a Starkey)**

Barford First Responders' Group is now in its third year, having been set up in the autumn of 2009. All our volunteers have updated their training during the year and now are trained to BTEC Level 3.

As I predicted last year, it has not been possible to provide 24/7 cover over the year but I am delighted to be able to tell you that the village now has Public Access Defibrillator which, for those who don't already know, is situated at the back of the Village Shop in the car park. Now, if someone appears to be having a cardiac arrest, the person with them can jump into the car, collect the defibrillator from the cabinet and take it home to provide help until the West Midlands Ambulance Service paramedics arrive. This is available to every home in the village.

So if you are with someone in such an emergency, this is what you need to do:

- Dial 999
- Listen to the instructions on how to take the defibrillator from the cabinet - you will be given a code to open the cabinet.
- Take it home and open the pack.
- The defibrillator will actually speak to you, giving instructions on how to use it.

IT'S AS EASY AS THAT!

For all this we owe tremendous gratitude to the Parish Council who have been hugely supportive and have funded the PAD, and to our Community Shop for permitting the PAD to be located at their premises.

Now, thanks to our First Responders' Group and the council, Barford is named by the Heart of England Defibrillator Campaign as one of the safest places to live and we shall be included in an app 'Defibfinder' for mobile phones and tablets which is aiming to map every Public Access Defibrillator in the country, which will be a great help for those away from home when there is an incident. There is not a lot of point in having PADs if no-one can find them!

A very good current example of the vital importance of a PAD has recently been seen

in the immediate treatment of the footballer at Tottenham Hotspur. Without a PAD it is doubtful if Muamba would have been revived (it took more than 10 attempts with the PAD before his heart was restarted) and demonstrated how crucial immediate treatment is to ensure survival.

Having this Public Access Defibrillator does not mean that we don't need more First Responders. A human response can do so much more in emergencies; even if it is just reassurance to the person who is unwell. We really do need more volunteers. If you feel you would like to help, please see me after the meeting or contact me later.

I would like to thank our volunteers, the Parish Council and the Community Shop for all their help and support.

16 **Barford Heritage Group (Mrs W Barlow)**

The last year has been one filled with activity and achievement.

OPEN EVENING

No sooner had everyone got over Christmas than our Open Evening was upon us on January 19th. The event was designed to highlight our many spheres of interest and hopefully to attract some new members. The displays were very diverse so that all who came could surely have found something of interest:

Pre-history - showing maps, ridge and furrow, enclosures, field names.

Research - genealogy, census, directories, newspapers, family trees, title deeds and wills.

Know your place - the stories of Watchbury and Barford House,

Reminiscences - recording machine, transcripts.

How to bring history to life - featured DVDs of our dramatic productions *A Living History* (which used reminiscences) and *It happened in Barford* about Joseph Arch.

Products - Book, trail leaflets, cards and photographs.

Latest achievements - The Tree display board and the Telephone Kiosk.

Despite awful weather, the attendance was very encouraging, many positive verbal and written comments were received and several valued new members were recruited.

BECOMING BARFORD

We still have in stock a considerable number of our successful book, *Becoming Barford*. Our most consistent outlets are The Village Shop and Gardners the book wholesalers. Copies are on sale at Warwick Books, Wellesbourne Library, Stratford and Warwick Tourist Centres, Waterstones, Smiths, the County Museum and Record Office. Members have even resorted to rearranging the local history books on the shelves of booksellers to our advantage. Shameless!

CARDS

It is important that we generate an income stream now that we are self-funding. The sepia cards using photos from our archive proved steady sellers and the black and white cards using the exquisite line drawings we commissioned from Pamela Valentine for the display map on the Green sold very well, as did Christmas cards depicting scenes of Barford in the snow.

PHONE BOX

Two of our talented members have designed stunning displays in the phone box throughout the past year: the winter snow scene diorama and Christmas presentation was followed by Valentine's Day, Pancake Day, Mothering Sunday, May Day, Summer holiday, Autumn, Feed the birds, Guy Fawkes night, Remembrance Day and Winter themes. Very many compliments have been received on the innovative decoration of the phone box which is appreciated by adults and children alike.

On the downside, two panes have been broken in the kiosk but were quickly repaired.

The opportunity to use this 'showcase' was well advertised in *Plurality* and the WI have since mounted a splendid display which will remain in situ during April and May. The Heritage Group has undertaken to decorate the phone box for the Queen's Jubilee and the Olympics (June and July) and other village organisations will be responsible for the rest of the year.

TALK

In March, a direct descendant of the Greaves family who owned Watchbury in the C19. He gave an interesting talk and showed photographs of his research on the family which he traced back to 1602. It was great to meet someone from such a distinguished family which played such an important role in the history of Barford.

MAY MEETING

There was a worthwhile 'umbrella' meeting in May of all the local history groups organised by the Warwickshire History Society.

July was a very busy month:

GUIDED WALK

The Warwickshire History Society came to the village on Saturday 2 July and our members skillfully led walks around the village.

EDWARDIAN TEA PARTY

July 16th was the day that the Heritage Group held their recreation of Barford's Tea Garden based on a century-old photograph. Torrential rain forced us to hold the event inside the Memorial Hall but, undeterred, the venue was skillfully transformed into a flower-bedecked garden accessed by a floral arch and enhanced by live piano music. So many people, both members of **BHG** and interested friends, contributed to the success of the venture either in full view or behind the scenes. Feedback from the punters was enthusiastic and positive with lots of requests for a repeat event. We were able to send a cheque for £100 to Myton Hospice.

HERITAGE WEEKEND - FRIDAY-SUNDAY, 9-11 SEPTEMBER

The St Peter's poster exhibition started with the Doomsday entry and covered the church's history up to the time of the rebuild in the 1840s. It included a plan of the notorious 'Allocation of Pews' to those who could afford reserved seats. A life-sized figure of a Trinitarian Friar in a white robe adorned by a blue and red cross presided over the display. The PCC has asked if it be left as a permanent display.

RESEARCH BEHIND THE SCENES

Emails from people doing research into family history and house history continue to be forwarded from the website and are dealt with where possible.

One of our experienced members has been doing some fascinating work on the Parish Registers between 1631 to 1674 during which time there was a great deal of illicit selling of ale and fines for non-conformists who didn't attend church. She also found that Barford Friendly Society was one of the first to be set up in the country and began in 1828.

One of our new members contacted a retired officer in the Royal Observer Corps who knew the Observation Post in Wasperton Lane and provided valuable information and photos to supplement our collection.

SOME FUTURE PLANS

Annual Festival for Leamington 26 May-10 June 2012.

This is a new venture featuring not just Leamington but also surrounding villages eg Lillington are running a guided walk on Saturday 2nd and Leek Wooten and Bishops Tatchbrook will be contributing during the fortnight. There will be 1940's picnic in Leamington on the afternoon of 10th June We have provisionally agreed to offer a guided walk on Sunday 10th June from 6.00 pm. This will be included on the website and in a brochure which will also advertise the exhibition in the church and the telephone box.

Jubilee Tree

The BHG are to plant a Jubilee Oak Tree at Oldhams' Bank (near The Riverside Walk) together with commemorative signs.

Further development of the Heritage Website which now has a link from the Barford Community Website.

All in all, this has been an innovative and successful year with much hard work, good friendship and fun.

17

Barford Allotments (J V Murphy) All plots are taken for the 2012-13 season and there is no waiting list. The public-use polytunnel is to have a structural check and new rules concerning its allocation are being drafted.

- 18 **Barford Pride (J V Murphy)** Nothing to report for the past year but it stands ready to spring into action should the need arise.
- 19 **Any Other Business**
- Mrs H Clay advertised Keep-Fit classes in Barford Memorial Hall.
- Mrs W Barlow reminded the meeting of the rejuvenation of Oakley Woods (including horse-logging).
- 20 **Appointment of Chairman for 2012-13.** Mr J V Murphy was elected unopposed.
- 21 **Closure.** There being no other business the meeting closed at 9:05 pm.