

**MINUTES OF THE BARFORD ANNUAL PARISH MEETING  
HELD AT THE MEMORIAL HALL ON MON 4 APR 22 AT 7.30 PM**

<b>Present:</b>	J V Murphy (Chairman) Twelve other electors
<b>In attendance:</b>	Cllr T Merrygold (Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton JPC) Cllr J Matecki (WDC & WCC)

**Introduction** The Chairman welcomed all present to the meeting.

**Minutes of the annual meeting held on 12 Apr 21.** The minutes were approved as a true record. There were no matters arising

**Report by Chairman of the Joint Parish Council**

This is the first live Annual Parish Meeting for three years as 2020 saw us entering the first lockdown, and last year's was via zoom.

I intend to keep this short as most of the items that matter to the village are covered later in the agenda anyway.

Firstly, a couple of word about COVID which is still with us. Anyone who uses the Zoe app to report Covid will know the rise in infections continues and last week WDC reported that local infections are up to 1,027 per 100,000 people. The government in its infinite wisdom only allowed us to hold virtual parish council meetings for one year despite them proving a very effective and productive way of holding meetings this is no longer allowed.

A year ago relatively few of us had contracted Covid and fortunately few had died of it. We have now reached the stage where I am sure everyone one of us knows someone close to us who has had Covid and many of us have had friends or relatives die from. Fortunately, despite the increasing spread, a combination of the majority of the population being vaccinated, combined with the fact that the Omicron variant not seeming as strong as the earlier versions means the level of hospitalizations and deaths isn't as high as before. But the fact that some of you here are still wearing face masks shows that we should not become complacent.

On the upside I have seen our community in all three of our parishes working together as never before over the past two years.

- The Village Shop quickly stepped up to the challenge, changing layout, and some younger volunteers stepping into the breach to ease the burden of some of our more mature, potentially vulnerable volunteers
- Neighbours continue to help each out and long may this continue.

As most of the current local issues, including planning, are on the agenda I want to start looking ahead at some of the things that may be coming our way over the next few years. As hopefully you know, Warwick and Stratford District councils are working together on preparing a Local Plan for the whole of South Warwickshire to replace the current plans when they expire (2029 for Warwick and 2031 for Stratford).

As part of this, they put out a 'Call for Sites' so that any landowners or developers could put forward any sites that they may want to be considered for any change of use, for housing, industrial use, mixed use, solar farms etc.

This information has now been collated and published online on a new South Warwickshire Local Plan website. This includes an interactive map covering the whole of South Warwickshire and you drill into this map and see all the sites put forward within the boundaries of all three of our parishes. Basically almost any piece of land you can think of, either within our parish boundaries, or very close to the edges, have been put forward for something. This includes four plots for housing within the village and most of the land north of the river up to the M40 / A429 for Commercial. I do not plan to go through any of these in detail now, but I suggest that when you have some time it is worth your while looking through the site and starting to understand what has been put forward. I'll make sure Cllr Murphy includes the website address in Village Voices.

Finally, I would like to thank all our councillors and parish clerk who have served their electors well throughout the year, also taking this opportunity to remind you that we a vacancy on the Parish Council for a member for Barford.

I will be here for the rest of meeting and afterwards if you have any questions.

Tony Merrygold

From the Floor:

*Q. The footpath from the Scout Hut to the playing fields in in a sorry state of repair. When will it be repaired?*

*A. It has top priority and sufficient funding, and the repair will start as soon a contractor can be appointed.*

*Q. The bus shelter opposite the Granville has windows so opaque that passengers cannot see approaching buses and bus drivers cannot see passengers in it. Can the windows be replaced?*

*A. Quotations are being sought for the work.*

*Q. When WDC and SDC produce a joint Local Plan, will the Barford Neighbourhood Development Plan be reviewed?*

*A. Almost certainly, to ensure that it conforms to that plan which has primacy.*

### **County Councillor's Annual Report for Barford 2022**

In May 2021, elections were held to select the councillors for Warwickshire County Council. I was honoured to be elected as the representative for the Budbrooke and Bishop's Tachbrook Division, in which Shrewley is located, replacing Les Caborn. The Conservatives formed the new administration with an increased majority.

Covid still continued to dominate many activities throughout the year, with vaccinating the population being a priority. As a county, 86% of those eligible for vaccination received at least one dose, which includes 70% of under 18s. In Warwick district the numbers are 86% of eligible residents receiving at least one dose, with 74% of under 18s doing so. This compares to the national figure of 80% and 60% for under 18s.

The new Integrated Care Scheme (ICS) for Warwickshire is taking shape and a formal submission to Health England will be submitted in the coming weeks. As part of the new ICS, the county has been divided into "places". The South Warwickshire Place (SWP) covers Warwick and Stratford District areas. The SWP will be able to focus on the health needs of South Warwickshire residents as priorities. These priorities have been identified as Respiratory Health and Inequalities, Children and Young People, and Mental Health, Suicide and Bereavement. The SWP Board will now be working to put in place plans to tackle these local issues.

The Fire Service had Ben Brook appointed as new Chief Fire Officer appointed in July 21. This was as a result of Kieran Amos retiring after 30 years of service in the fire sector, and as the Chief Fire Officer in Warwickshire since 2019. Sadly, only 4 months later, in November Kieran passed away after an unexpected short illness.

A national campaign for 20 is plenty was brought to the council as a motion to have all residential areas of Warwickshire reduced speed limits of 20mph. A task and finish group (TFG) was set up to look into the feasibility of such a proposal. The TFG determined, and recommended to the Cabinet, that a widespread 20mph in all residential areas would be impractical for many reasons, including defining what was a residential area or not, and would probably have a negative effect on areas that needed 20mph limits such as around schools. The TFG recommended that the decision on 20mph limits should be a decision taken more locally, where the requirements and support for such limits were better known.

The Warwickshire Minerals Plan 2018 has still not been adopted and awaiting the Inspectors further comments. The replacement of fencing along the southern end of the A429 Barford bypass has been authorized and should be installed in the coming weeks.

A request for a controlled crossing on the A429 at Sherbourne has been evaluated. The threshold for a crossing was not met by a considerable margin. As a result, the county highways team have confirmed that they will not be installing a crossing at this location.

The Youth and Community Centre was unsuccessful in its bid for a Green Shoots grant. There will be a second round of bidding later in the year. I am also looking to see if there are other funds that might be available to submit applications for grants.

Cllr. Jan Matecki

From the Floor:

*Q. Does WCC support the concept of "20 is Plenty"?*

*A. Despite the impracticality of universal application throughout the county, places where it could make a contribution to improved road safety are being considered.*

*Q. Is the unification of WDC and SDC a better outcome than the creation of a South Warwickshire Unitary Authority?*

*A. No, the latter is preferable.*

*Q. Has thought been given to using the Glebe Hotel to house Ukrainian refugees?*

*A. Not to date, which is not to say that the idea does not have merit.*

*Q. Will WCC show concern for the preservation of wildflowers in verges when planning its mowing schedules.*

*A. Always provided that it is not achieved at the cost of reduced road safety it will do so where appropriate.*

## **District Councillors' Annual Report for Barford 2022**

First my apologies for being unable to attend tonight's Barford Annual Parish Meeting.

This report is from your two District Councillors, Councillor Alan Rhead and Councillor Jan Matecki.

We can report on the District's achievements over the last period and our own involvement. One important matter is the ever-closer joint working with Stratford District Council, where the two Councils voted to approve the process to ask the Government to approve the creation of a South Warwickshire 'Super' District Council. At the time of writing this report we have yet to receive a response from the Government to the formal request submitted by the two Councils.

Report from Councillor Alan Rhead

I continue to be on the Cabinet and hold the two Portfolios of the Environment and Neighbourhood Services. In those roles I have placed emphasis on the following: -

The Climate Emergency continues to be regarded by your Council as the biggest challenge facing not only the Council, but all of its residents. During the year, having held a Peoples Inquiry, the Council issued its Climate Action Plan which set out 3 ambitions

Ambition 1 - Net Zero Carbon Council by 2025: to ensure the two Councils achieve net zero by 2025 and that services provided through contractors include carbon reduction targets to deliver net zero by 2030;

Ambition 2 – Low Carbon District by 2030: to reduce net carbon emissions from across South Warwickshire by a minimum of 55% by 2030 as indicated by the consultants' reported conclusions and, alongside this, plan how to further reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2050;

Ambition 3 – Adaptation 2050: by 2050 to enable our environment and communities to have adapted to the potential of at least 3 degrees rise in global temperatures by the year 2100. The Councils are currently working with the Met Office to better understand the data relating to the likelihood and impacts of different temperature rises which will likely see:

Wetter winters

More intense storms

Drier summers

Prolonged heat waves

The Council is appointing an Officer with specific responsibilities to work with all other parties who will have to contribute to this work.

The two largest contributors to carbon emissions are property and transport and in summary the actions taken by the Council to date include:

In Planning Policy the Council has developed a draft Net Zero Carbon Building Planning Policy Document (DPD) which, having had one round of consultation, is about to go out for a second consultation. The intention is that this important document should become part of the planning regulations by late 2022 or early 2023 for new housing, subject to a successful examination in public. The Council is of the opinion that it is too long a wait for the Government to change the national planning and building regulation policies.

Climate change has been established at the heart of the new South Warwickshire Local Plan.

New cycle routes and facilities are proposed at St Nicholas Park, Newbold Comyn, and Victoria Park. A new Park & ride facility is to be established at the Asps, Warwick and will be operated by electric buses.

There are now in excess of 50 additional public charging points in South Warwickshire car parks, and an Officer has been appointed to lead this live programme.

The Council's own fleet will be 100% electric by the end of 2022. In 2020/2021 we completed 105,000 electric miles from our current electric fleet.

The new waste collection and recycling contract, due to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022, incorporates carbon reduction requirements. The two Councils are part of the Material Recycling Facility (MRF), currently being constructed in Coventry, giving all of the participants more control of recycling.

We have appointed consultants to provide a feasibility and business case for the development of a hydrogen hub in our District, linked to a solar farm to produce green hydrogen. The report will be with the Council this month.

The Council has a car sharing scheme.

The Council has provided financial support for rural projects that have sustainability credentials and ensures that rural communities continue to thrive. I am currently working with colleagues to examine the possibility of a grant from the Council for the new Barford Youth and Community Centre.

The Council has switched to 100% renewable electricity for all of its electricity supplies.

The Council has been successful in being awarded in excess of £2million for decarbonising 50 Council homes and also retrofitting of heat pumps, thermal efficiency and solar PV.

The Council has set aside £18million in the Housing Investment programme for carbon reduction measures in Council Homes.

Work to deliver low carbon affordable homes at Europa way is complete.

WE have been successful in being awarded further monies through the Sustainable Warmth Competition (SWC) from BEIS to retrofit solar PV, hybrid Air Source Heat pumps and a range of insulation measures to low-income private sector properties to just over 200 properties.

New major projects include low or net zero carbon reduction plans for

The new Community Stadium

The new Leisure ~facilities in Kenilworth

The Creative Quarter Spencer's Yard.

Developing 43 housing units at Bishops Tachbrook.

The new HQ building of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Warwick Sea Scouts.

New cycle hire and café at Newbold Comyn.

The Joint venture housing company that the Council has with Vistry to deliver 310 low carbon homes in Kenilworth

The Council has achieved Plastic Free Champion Status.

The Council has promoted the 'Refill Scheme' where residents can refill existing plastic water bottlers at various outlets throughout the District.

We supported national Clean Air day by working with AQMesh who installed 5 air quality monitors at local schools in the District, one of which was outside Barford school.

We have commenced the tree planting programme and appointed an Officer to manage this programme designed to plant 160,000 trees in the District by 2030.

In respect of Neighbourhood Services there are the following notices:

A new 1-2-3 Waste Contract will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 for a period of 8 years. The new contractor is Biffa. Details of this will be forwarded to all households in due course since there are changes to the method of recycling.

One separate change is that the discretionary green bin collection service will now be a charged service for those that nominate to be a part of this service. Again, these charges will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

The Council is preparing a differential car parking regime based on car emissions and again details will be forthcoming in due course.

The planning application has been submitted for the first phase of the Tachbrook Country Park.

Construction will shortly commence on the cycle trails at Newbold Comyn after a successful planning application.

Cllr Alan Rhead

#### Developments in Barford – an update

- Land around Barford House – At the time of the APM there had been no progress on this site, however, members of the JPC Working Party for this site were due to meet soon with representatives of Restful Homes to review their latest proposals for access via No 3 Wellesbourne Road.
- Glebe Hotel site – Applications on this site have been refused, largely on grounds expressed by numerous residents, but also in response to Conservation Officers reluctance to allow demolition of the 1980s extensions. We will await further proposals for this site.
- Bremridge Close 2/Avonbridge Walk – No progress on a link through to Westham Lane. Proposals to remedy the foul drainage problems have foundered due to lack of liaison/cooperation between contractors and residents.
- Bremridge Close 3/Westham Lane – Whilst the JPC has seen initial plans for this site no planning application has been forthcoming, despite the fact that this site was included by WDC in our Neighbourhood Plan.
- Highways Improvements – Bypass improvements continue to work well and Wellesbourne Rd crossings are due for installation this year.
- Traffic and parking issues near Barford School – There has been recent comment on Barford Facebook concerning the use of cones to control parking on the junction of Church Lane and Church Street. The cones have been placed on behalf of the JPC with the knowledge of local police and WCC officers and are there to assist drivers to conform with the Highway Code and keep the junction safe in view of the considerable traffic (motor and pedestrian) in that area. It is anticipated that their use will be superseded by installation of Yellow Lines in due course as part of the scheme agreed with ex-WCC Councillor Les Caborn and WCC Officer Graham Stanley. There were no dissenters to the use of the cones at the meeting.

#### WRW Safer Neighbourhood Team

Over the last 3 months we have been starting to get back to the new normal. We are patrolling and targeting areas which have been hit by crime. The new structure sees us flooding areas that are being hit, but we are still in all our areas patrolling to help prevent crimes.

Over the last 6 months there have been a few incidents in *Barford, Sherbourne and Wasperton*;

ASB- Group gathering by bridge arches, drug paraphernalia found within the village, Asb in Sherbourne  
Vehicle Crime- Catalytic Converter Stolen from a Mazda, Cloned number plate,  
Burglary- Burglary in Barford  
Suspicious Circs- x2 sus incidents relating to door knockers trying to sell items, Sus Vehicle, Number plates recovered in Sherbourne.  
Damage- x2 incidents of damage to Lamppost.  
Here is the link to copy to access the crime statistics for your area. <https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area>  
The organization has launched Warwickshire connected which is a messaging site that residents can sign up to. This is our primary site for communication to the public, so we encourage as many residents as possible to get involved.  
We do still use other social media sites, but this has been scaled back for operational reasons.  
We are currently starting to put dates out for Community engagement surgeries so please keep an eye open this will be published on Warwickshire connected

### **Sand & Gravel Action Group**

I would like to start by thanking Stephanie and Andy Steel for the last six years of persistent and dedicated hard work in being key drivers in this campaign on behalf of our JPC villages. Without them we wouldn't have achieved what we have managed to do at this crucial point in time. They have now moved to Stratford and we wish them well in the future.  
As most will know through 'Village Voices' we are presently waiting to hear the outcome of the responses to the fourth, and hopefully last consultation, triggered by the publication of the recent and voluminous revised minerals plan from the Warwickshire County Council Minerals Planners. We were only allowed to respond to the revisions and not to repeat our earlier responses to the previous plan submitted in October 2020. Because we knew this would be a very technical exercise our main response was submitted by our specialist minerals planners Wardell Armstrong who had to 'digest' over two and a half thousand pages that made up the WCC revised plan. We didn't know exactly when this revised plan would be published and of course couldn't employ Wardell Armstrong until that happened. Not only that, but Wardell Armstrong couldn't give us any idea of cost for their services until they had read the revised plan. Their subsequent estimate was circa £10,000 which we had to try and raise from our villages within a very tight timeframe of a few weeks simply because the deadline set by the WCC to receive responses was eight weeks from the date of publication of the revised plan. With the combined generosity of donors in our villages and the hard work of fund raisers we managed to achieve that fee target in time.  
As in the Inspector's Hearing in October 2020, Wardell Armstrong identified many weaknesses in the revised plan which is available to view from a link on the BRA website.  
We have been informed that the Inspector's decision could be anytime soon but no date has yet been given.  
In the meantime it is in the gift of St. John's College, Oxford, who own the proposed site, to withdraw their consent to extract the sand and gravel. Our campaign is therefore currently focused on making contact with people of influence at the college to try and persuade them to withdraw that consent. We have strong evidence that 'Smith's Concrete' have bought an option from St. John's to mine the site. Again there is a link on the BRA website to view a 'Scoping and Screening' proposal by Smith's Concrete submitted to the WCC for their views.  
I am glad to say that we have been able to recruit some influential support from a few residents, largely as a result of a 'Town Hall' Sand and Gravel meeting held at the village school last December, to push our campaign forward.  
We still have a fight on our hands, and we are determined to stick with it until we can do no more.  
Malcolm Eykyn

### **Barford Residents' Association**

BRA itself has had very little to do this year with the Sand and Gravel group working as an autonomous organization and other groups putting forward their views independently on the various development proposals that have been discussed earlier tonight.  
BRA does keep the membership informed of any major planning applications via the e-mail list and articles published on our website.  
Thanks to Mike Hooper for his work managing the website and to Charlotte Morgan who will be taking on the Treasurer role from Stephanie.  
I would also like to thank Malcolm for the hours he and Val have spent on behalf of the village to oppose the Sand and Gravel Plans.

### **Barford Leisure Improvement Scheme/KGF/Barford Sports Club**

The Chairman gave a very brief report. The site was very busy and had been a salvation throughout the pandemic. Volunteers were always welcome to assist with or establish formal sports groups and or to assist with our periodic maintenance sessions.

### **Allotments PCC**

The Church's 'Allotment land' in Barford is represented by 39 separate Allotment Plots, each of which is currently allocated to a Holder; some Holders have more than one Allotment. There are no disputes between Church and any Holder or vice versa and none with world outside the Allotments. Licence Fees are £35 annually per Allotment and are fully paid up; credit and thanks are due to Jane Stamp for collection. Jane keeps a note of people who have registered with her that they would like to take on an Allotment if one comes available. A small number of Holders who have held an Allotment for many years still pay their Fees in arrears; the newer Holders pay their licence fee in advance. Allotment Fees are set to rise for the 'Year' beginning 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022. Allotments are seemingly in good order and last year was very productive of produce. We look forward to another productive season and the recent nice weather has led to a lot of activity so far.

### **Allotments JPC**

As in so many other ways the Pandemic has driven many of the changes this year. With the ending of furlough schemes and a general reduction of working from home, several people who were keen to use land in 2020 found it increasingly difficult to do so in 2021. Consequently, they have moved on and the Waiting List that was well into double figures is now much reduced.

Also some villagers have obtained Church Allotments with the result that there is now only 1 Barford person waiting on the JPC list plus 5 from Stratford and Warwick Districts.

The resultant movements mean that we have been able to welcome 6 new tenants for 2022 to our friendly group.

Routine maintenance has recently been carried out on the water system with the replacement of 2 tank isolator taps.

Routine maintenance is in progress on the communal polytunnel both by tenants/volunteers and by the suppliers Keder Greenhouses.

Proper cultivation is now taking place on two plots on the previously derelict land on the site of the Village Air Raid Shelter.

The relationship with our water supplier seems improved. The previous bug in their accounting software appears to have been addressed.

### **Barford Community Charity**

Barford Community Charity continues to welcome applications to fund projects which benefit the villages of Barford Wasperton and Sherbourne

Since the parish meeting in April 2021, the Charity has pledged a sum of £80,000 towards the Youth and Community Centre which will be available for draw down on award of building contract and providing the contract is awarded by December 31, 2022. The Trustees were delighted to see the progress being made on this project.

The Charity has also funded the purchase of a replacement flag for the village green to be flown when a 'smart' one is needed.

The Charity has received donations from the village shop which will be reported by the shop at their AGM. Uncommitted funds currently stand at £37,406.

Funds are available for eligible projects. Applications can be made to the current Chair John Murphy or to any of the Trustees: Alison Gadsden, Liz Harrison-Hall, Alice Helps, Sue Jessett, Barbara Moore, Mary Peirson or Alan Rhead.

### **Barford Relief in Need Charity**

The Charity is a 'relief in need charity' regulated by the Charities Commission and has an annual income of nearly £13,000, mainly from investments. It has 7 trustees, 4 appointed by the JPC for periods of 4 years each and 3 appointed by the trustee body for periods of 5 years. The trustees consider applications to the Charity and make grants in accordance with the Charity's terms of reference which are 'the relief of poverty, sickness, old age and the advancement of education'. Help from the charity is only available to residents of Barford, Sherbourne and Wasperton.

In 2021 grants were made to help with:

Winter heating costs

Personal alarm system

Business restart following Covid lockdown

Furnishings and disability access

Cost of therapies to help with pain management.

Parent's funeral cost.

Following 2019 and 2020 when an average of 89% of annual income was spent, some 70% of income was spent in 2021. However, current events suggest that reserves may be needed to cover spending in the current year.

The present trustees of the Charity are Gerard Veness its Chairman, Anne Braithwaite, Kate Findlay, Rebecca Fraser, Angela Watkins, John Barrott and Rod Scott. 3 of these will complete their current term of office by the end of January next year and their positions will be advertised for applications in Village Voices later this year.

### **Barford School Trust**

Barford School Trust exists to support Barford St Peter's Primary School to provide equipment, services and facilities to enhance the education of its pupils. Recently the trust was able to provide extra laptops to give support to home learning when the school was closed during the covid pandemic. Last summer every classroom was provided with a clever touch screen which are a million miles away from the old blackboard and chalk!

Additionally, it is able to assist individual pupils of the school in many other ways in connection with their educational requirements. This also extends to any pupil who has attended the school and is under the age of 25 and again it must be to further their education.

The Trust owns the old school building which is leased to Bright Horizon Nursery and the old schoolhouse which is rented out on a commercial basis. It is the income from these two properties that enable the trust to support the school financially in many ways.

The trust is made up of six local people who serve for a period of five years, the vicar is an ex officio member.

### **Barford St Peter's Church – PCC**

In common with many other organizations, the church suffered during the lockdown caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, but we are now seeing a slow return to normality as regards provision of services every Sunday. The pandemic has also affected our ability to proceed with building maintenance projects, the most pressing of which is the replacement of the main gate posts on Church Street: these are not in a dangerous state at the moment, but the stone is being eroded, and we wish to replace them before further damage occurs. We have now been able to send out a scheme of work for quotations, so are hopeful the work will start soon.

We maintain our close links with our village school, and in May we will be launching a new Family Service in conjunction with the school, hoping to attract both parents and children.

We have appointed a new benefice administrator, Katy Thomson, and wish her well as she takes up this post.

We continue to be extremely grateful for the support the church receives from the village, in particular on our annual Gift Day; the church in Barford could not continue without this support. We are also grateful to the JPC for the reinstatement of the grant for churchyard maintenance.

We are organizing a breakfast and eco-walk to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on June 3<sup>rd</sup>: this will be based at the Memorial Hall, and is an event for all the family.

Chris Murphy, Churchwarden

### **Village Voices magazine**

We are now in our fourth year of producing Village Voices community magazine that is free to every household in Barford, Sherbourne and Wasperton.

Its aim is to keep the community informed of church activities, local events, local information and articles of general interest.

During the past 2 years of the pandemic, it has been a particularly valuable means of communicating with the community and we know from resident's feedback that it has been much appreciated.

The magazine is produced by three joint editors, Helen Clay, Carole Whitely and Sue Partridge who take it in turns to edit the magazine. We are ably assisted by Jonathan Partridge who not only looks after the finance side of the magazine but casts his eagle eye over it to proofread before it is dispatched to the printer. Our main source of income is provided by the advertisers so thanks must be given to Sarah Ransome who looks after advertising ensuring all invoices are paid on time and filling any spaces as soon as possible so not losing any revenue. We also receive a significant sum from the JPC which helps towards the overall magazine financial viability.

Finally, of course and most importantly these 900 copies have to be delivered to each household and so our thanks go to the twenty volunteers who complete the circle each month.

### **Barford Scouts & Guides/Youth & Community Centre**

I think the last time I gave an update at this meeting must have been before covid and covid certainly had a major impact on provision of the scout hut for events and meetings – and so on our income – and on progressing the youth & community centre project.

We essentially lost 2 years of activity, with very limited use of the hut meaning income was well down, while some costs still had to be met, and very little opportunity for fundraising or grant applications (as grant bodies also closed down or diverted support to covid related projects).

We were able to apply for covid impact support grants, with central govt funding allocated through WDC and that was very welcome support. Such grants recognized the impact of covid restrictions on our project fundraising as well as our provision of the hut, so has helped with both.

The ending of covid restrictions has caused some problems for the project, however, with a surge in delayed construction projects increasing demand on materials and contractors – with supply chains re-booting, shortage of truck drivers, fuel price increases and now wider economic instability. All of these meant sharply increasing material prices and long or unspecified delays in getting quotes – making it very difficult to get a clear assessment of project's construction costs.

Having summarized that rather gloomy background – there is much good news to share!

With covid restrictions eased, it has been wonderful to see the hut coming back to life – with all the main user groups back in action and some new ones too – such as the family café. Although BYCC is not involved in the running of the Barford scout group, they are our most frequent 'user group' and a vital part of what we enable for the local community – and I am told there are currently 90 young people active in beavers, cubs and scouts.

There has been real progress on the project too.....

Julie Crawshaw our project manager has professional experts working on the various aspects of the project and leads on grant funding, as well as some other fundraising events  
We have formed a direct link with the JPC, with JPC members joining the trustees and the project group; that has provided useful input and also links through to WDC  
We have continued our engagement with the local community (there's a open meeting a week today)  
We are securing grants – noticeably the recent award of £65,000 from the WCC social impact fund  
Local fundraising events have been held, are happening and are being planned  
We've had several donations from individuals and local groups, for which we are hugely grateful  
We are meeting senior WDC people next week, with the aim of confirming WDC's substantial funding commitment

My latest assessment of where we are:

We have £163,000 'on hand'

We have funding commitments for £208,000

That takes us to £371,000

If WDC confirms a funding commitment of the £250,000 we have requested, that takes us to £621,000

Detailed assessment of construction and other remaining project costs underway by our QS, but the costs to completion will be above £750k

So, the £621k we will have, if the requested grant from WDC is confirmed, means we could be about 3/4 of the way there

We'll bridge that through further grant applications, continuing local fundraising and, as necessary, 'value engineering' of the design and specification

It may be possible that we can 'press go' on the construction late this year, but the first half of 2023 is more likely

Finally – great thanks from BYCC to the local community for your continuing support, which never fails to impress and humble me. The level of support counts for so much when we seek funding.

Thank you.

### **Barford Shop**

The shop has continued to provide a comprehensive service to the three villages, despite the ongoing challenges that the Covid situation has presented us all with. The adapted working methods and opening hours continued throughout most of 2021, which enabled the shop to maintain its service and welcome presence throughout the period.

A number of the operating restrictions, including the slightly reduced opening hours have been cautiously lifted during the first quarter of 2022, and it is hoped that a near 'normal' service has now



resumed. The sneeze screens will remain on the refurbished counter for the foreseeable future however.

With the resumption of more normal trading and work practices the temporary volunteer base has fallen back as people have returned to employment and some of the existing and more vulnerable volunteers have returned to the shop.

Can I express the Boards thanks to all volunteers that have supported the shop over the past 12 months, those that were 'temporary', those that were able to maintain their presence, and those that have returned. Thank you all.

Following the withdrawal of Beanstore from till support at the end of the year, a new till system, scanner, and scales has been installed.

Thanks must be voiced to exceptional efforts by Mary, Corenna, and Kirsty Healey for their hard work in researching, procuring, and installing a new system. Thanks also to the 'super trainers' that put in a lot of effort in assisting the volunteers to become familiarized with the new process. The new system has been well received and is proving a hit with most people that use it and is also helping Corenna with stock control, and data production.

The Café area reopened on 16 March in line with a more general easing of Covid restrictions in the hospitality sector.

Covid measures will continue to be monitored and reviewed as we progress through this coming year.

Shop turnover is now variable and has generally fallen back certainly from the 20/21 increases, but also in comparison to the pre pandemic levels. We consider that shopping habits have changed somewhat over the pandemic period, and one of the current challenges that Corenna and the Board face is to reinstate some of the 'lost' turnover.

The shop contributed the sum of £5000 to Barford Community Charity this last year, Mary has already reported upon this.

There has been a change in Directors in the period, and Victoria Stokes has left us, and Peter Hollier has joined the Board.

I will conclude by again thanking Corenna for all her dedication and hard work in steering this ship through the stormy waters of the last 12 months, her job has its challenges, never mind also coping with the operational restrictions faced by the pandemic. Thank you, Corenna.

M J Sheard

Post Office

A quieter year operating under increasingly less demanding COVID requirements. But it is still not easy to obtain information from customers through a facemask

The Post Office has opened 5 afternoons per week throughout the year but managing our rota with short notice of Covid or Self Isolation has been a challenge. Thanks to Corenna for organizing us and the volunteers, Ann, Judy, Rachel and Rita. They sometimes did 2 or 3 shifts a week to keep the Post Office open. Vickie Woods has rejoined us recently and has helped to give us some much needed flexibility.

Thanks also to our customers who have kept coming in for an assortment of transactions from fishing licenses to Postal Orders (yes they still exist) as well as posting unusual items to exotic places.

Lastly I must apologize for the increase (by Royal Mail) in the cost of a 1<sup>st</sup> class stamp today from 85p to 95p. The only consolation I can offer is that if you bought stamps on Saturday you would have made an investment that has appreciated by 10% in 2 days.

Rod Scott  
Subpostmaster

### **Barford Heritage Group**

In spite of Covid the group managed five meetings during the year. Thank you to members who turned up diligently to report and plan. Thank you, particularly, to officers Hilary Maynard and Doug Warne.

The Glebe

A major thrust for this year has been a concern over the Glebe Hotel plans. We expressed our concern over the development of this site and the repercussions historically and currently for the village. It was decided that we did not agree with change of use for this historical building and that the site would be severely overdeveloped. There were also concerns over traffic, parking and the Cedar tree which had been saved largely thanks to Maggie Hayward's intervention.

The main thrust of our argument was along the lines of the historical aspect of the site and our real concern about the dovecote.

Doug Warne is to be thanked for his very comprehensive objection on heritage grounds which coincided very much with Joint Parish Council objections.

Our concern remains with the state of the dovecote and the group has decided, if possible, to help save such an important building. We have some hope that the building may be granted to the village and we are currently looking into grants to repair and maintain it into the future. A Group has been set up with parish councillors to move this hope forward.

#### The bargeboards

Bargeboards from the dovecote were rescued over the year by Doug and some are in a bad state.

The others are in reasonable condition and are amazing to look at. We are concerned about preserving them in the right way so that perhaps at some time they can be put back into the dovecote suitably treated. At present they are stored in a large plastic box and Anne McDermott has sent a letter to Warwick Museum asking the curator how to preserve them.

#### WI talk

This will take place in October 2022 and the Group will do a similar presentation in the hall for the village. Carol Whitely is doing a great job of putting this all together. The presentation will be a historical walk from the bridge along Wellesbourne Road to the bypass. It will be a PowerPoint production using lots of historical photographs showing changes over the decades.

#### Cluego

This was an online treasure hunt in October and involved Working with the Youth and Community Centre group. Thank you very much to Kirsty Healey, Matthew MacFadyen and particularly Hilary for the excellent quiz questions. It went well though it did not have a great following. Those who took part said how much they had enjoyed it and would appreciate another one.

Notable Women. The booklets have now been printed and are available in the shop.

#### Village trail

Maggie Hayward has been working on this and a draft of part of the proposed trail has been distributed which looks excellent. She has enough material to provide five trails and she will continue to work on this.

#### Books

The school has been given 10 copies each of 'Becoming Barford' and 'Barford remembers'. They also have received some trail leaflets. They are very keen to work with village groups and heritage is of great interest to them.

#### Research

A great deal of research has been going on this year. Thank you so much to everyone who has been working so hard. Ann has been working with people who have contacted us via the website and has quite a lot now on Mabel and Mary Reason and also the connections with Caroline Hewitt. Other names that have cropped up oh Thomas White who lived in stationhouse when he was a policeman in 1872 and Benjamin Herring.

Stella Rutherford has been researching the history of her house and the one next door owned by Jill Jefferies. Bill Worrall has been of great help. Hilary Maynard has details of the Fretwell family who ran it as a pub and it was considered a house of ill repute.

Ken Hope has completed his research on Watchbury House and it is now on the website.

Kirsty Healey has been very helpful in putting lots of information onto the website which is great for those of us who are not very technologically minded. She very ably manages the site for the group.

#### 2022

The group are planning to

Put on the WI talk and similar for the village Put on a long-awaited Village school exhibition Continue with The Village Trail  
Continue to investigate archiving properly

### **Bar Zero**

Bar Zero is a group founded in 2019 with the aim of reducing our three villages' Carbon footprint to net zero. Before COP26 Boris Johnson committed the UK to a 68% cut in carbon emissions by 2030. To achieve this we, as individuals, need to reduce our own carbon footprint from 9 tonnes a year to 2.3 tonnes a year.

Bar Zero aims to remind people of the urgent need to reduce our own carbon footprint and suggest ways of doing so. Individually, we need to take action to cut our consumption Refuse , Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle

#### Re cycling

Keen members have provided boxes in their front gardens for recycling

Batteries 19 Gladstone Terrace, Church St

Medical blister packs 16 Church Street

Corks 16 Church Street

Crisp packets Barford Village Shop

#### Repair Cafe

Repair and re-use, rather than throw away and replace When COVID regulations have allowed we have had a slot at the Scout Hut on the first Sunday of every month. We have a team of repairers with many skills and have repaired all sorts from bicycles, zips and toys to table lamps. When lockdown was in force our repairers worked from their homes to carry on the service.

#### Media Presence

Ellie has shared many challenges and reminders on the Bar Zero and Barford Community Facebook pages. We have had a monthly page in Village Voices, and a Stand at the School Fete.

#### Greener Barford

We successfully applied for a grant from Warwickshire County Councils Green Shoots Fund to plant a hedge between the bypass and the Community Orchard. The hedge will provide a wildlife corridor, improve the orchard by protecting it from pollution and noise from the bypass, provide habitat for birds and small animals and absorb CO<sub>2</sub>. The hedge has now been planted; we just need to wait for it to grow. Thanks to J and A Growers for donating the plants and to Frank Mann Farmers for an excellent job in planting.

#### Campaigns

We supported National initiatives. Green Week in March - remember the Willow Hearts on the Village Green? No mow May, Plastic free July, Eek-Oh Halloween

#### Finance

Boosted by generous voluntary donations from users of our repair cafe, funds on December 21 were £921. This will enable us to undertake first year maintenance of the hedge, work on wildflower verges and other initiatives.

#### Plans for 2022

Continue Repair Cafe, monthly in the scout Hut

Plant wildflowers on our verges and green spaces

Encourage even more people to use Barford Buy and Sell and Community Facebook groups to recycle and reuse unwanted items.

Really focus our message on buying less, buying sustainable and buying local Cut out single-use plastic

We'd love to hear your ideas for a greener Barford. Please email us at [barzerogroup@gmail.com](mailto:barzerogroup@gmail.com) or post on FB

### **Appointment of Chairman for 2022-23**

J V Murphy was elected unopposed.

### **Closure**

The meeting closed at 9:30pm