

Barston News Sheet

February 2025

Issue 104

What a village!! The *Barston Association* gave away just shy of £15,500 to 18 charities and good causes at their AGM in the Memorial Institute on the 23rd January

An amazing achievement for such a small community!



Parish Council

Hello Barston Parish!

It has been a cold and stormy start to the year, but hopefully, we have a pleasant spring to look forward to. The Parish Council has been busy with several projects, the largest of which has been our efforts to get our voices heard at the SMBC Planning Committee. Unfortunately, despite our best attempts, we were unable to prevent the increase in night flights that so many residents objected to. A huge thank you to David Elliott and Tony Burton, who worked tirelessly on this matter – it's greatly appreciated by everyone who raised concerns.

There has been a noticeable increase in fly-tipping around the parish recently. If you spot any waste that has been dumped, please share the details, including times and locations, on the community group. Accurate timing is critical, as it allows us to identify offenders using our ANPR system and report them. Without these details, reviewing the footage becomes very time-consuming, so every bit of information helps.

Another key focus for the Parish Council is improving local maintenance services. We feel that the parish doesn't receive its fair share of services from SMBC, so we are in talks to take over some responsibilities, such as verge maintenance and road sweeping. This would allow us to manage these services directly, using funding from SMBC, and ensure that they are more targeted and cost-effective for our community.

The water leak on Hampton Road in Eastcote continues to be a problem, especially in the dip before Hampton-in-Arden. This area becomes extremely dangerous when it freezes, so please take extra care while traveling.

SMBC has assured us that they are accelerating work to address the issue, and we will continue to press them to resolve it as soon as possible.

Finally, a reminder that the next Parish Council meeting will take place on Tuesday, 12th March, at 8:00pm in the Institute. Everyone is welcome to attend, and we look forward to seeing you there!

Jeremy Emmett (Chairman)

Editor's Note

Happy New Year Everyone!

In this first Issue of the News Sheet for 2025 and throughout the year, we plan to include a series of articles on *Farming Life in Barston*.

Farming is such a huge part of both the history and modern day life in Barston, but not everyone in the community (myself included) fully understands exactly what's involved, what crops we grow, what livestock we breed and for what purpose.

Across what promises to be a fascinating series of bi-monthly articles throughout the year we will be talking to the farmers of Barston, painting a broad picture of what they do season by season, and providing insights that I hope you enjoy reading as much as me!

Tony Burton

The Barston News Sheet is paid for by the Parish Council and printed by Midland Business Equipment, Knowle.

Airport News

SMBC held its Planning Committee meeting in the Civic Suite of the Council House in Solihull on the 8th January. At this meeting the Council voted to approve the changes to the S106 agreement on night-time flying proposed by Birmingham Airport. The motion was strongly opposed in the meeting by numerous Parish Council representatives and local residents, including a contingent in the Public Gallery, and number of sobering facts were highlighted during the proceedings:

- Physical and mental health effects of aircraft noise, *especially* night-time noise, are beyond doubt and fully recognised by the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), World Health Organisation (WHO) and Birmingham Airport Ltd (BAL)
- The number of residents living with equivalent continuous night-time sound pressure levels of 54dB (14dB above WHO Guidelines) or more around Birmingham Airport, is already more than that of Gatwick and Stansted put together
- The new agreement will allow over 7,900 night-time flights in 2026/27 (an **average** of 21 night flights per night, 7 days a week, 365 days a year). In the Summer months the figure will be **much higher** than 21 night flights per night!
- Birmingham Airport will have more night-time flights than Heathrow and Frankfurt by 2026/27

As Ken Flood, clerk to the Barston Parish Council put it, "One might feel more disappointment than surprise at this decision", but if you read Ken's posts on the Barston Village website you might think that this may not entirely be the end of the story... see <https://www.barstonvillage.org/blog>

Know Your Neighbours

In case you didn't know, the **Post Office in Hampton-in-Arden** has a new proprietor! Bonnie Moore, maybe best known to you as an Instructor and Personal Trainer at Hampton Gym, took over the reins in June. I popped in to find out more...

Originally from Norfolk, Bonnie has made the West Midlands her home for the past 20 years or more. Her first introduction to Barston and the surrounding villages was (like many of us) enjoying a great meal at *The Malt Shovel*. Over time those visits led to exploring Hampton where she soon became a regular customer at the local Post Office.

Bonnie loved the village feel and community spirit she saw at **Hampton Post Office** and would often muse about what it might be like to work there and what she might do were she ever to run the business. After becoming aware that the position was actually available in mid 2023, Bonnie applied to be the New Postmaster. It took almost a year for the red tape to be navigated and her musings to turn to reality.

Bonnie hasn't looked back. She has received so

many words of thanks and encouragement from the community since taking over **Hampton Post Office**.

"It's clear to me, even in this short period of time, that the locals really want and appreciate having a Post Office in the village. It's a highly valued resource that I hope we can find a way of keeping", she said.

To make it work, Bonnie juggles her job at Hampton Gym with her Postmaster role, often starting at the gym at 6:30am before opening **Hampton Post Office** at 8:30am. She does now have some help from a new member of staff, Sue, who brings 35 years of experience of running Post Offices with her.

Bonnie has already put her stamp (excuse the pun) on the business by undertaking a major refurbishment to modernise the premises. However, she is also quick to point out that she placed huge emphasis on creating a traditional country store feel for what is now a Post Office and Village Shop. In addition to the refurbishment, Bonnie has introduced New Opening Hours of Monday to Friday: 8:30am-5pm; Saturday: 9am-12pm



Bonnie (in the red dress) and her son Henry had the honour of having the revamped **Hampton Post Office** officially opened by the Mayor of Solihull – *The Solihull Observer, 22nd November 2024*.

Looking to the future, Bonnie is planning to tailor the business in whatever way meets the needs of the village and local community best. In addition to the usual Post Office services, she already offers: newspapers and magazines; confectionary; greetings cards; gift wrap and bags; and stationery.

So, if you have further suggestions for goods and services you might like to see in **Hampton Post Office**, why not pop along and have a chat with the Postmaster herself?

To find out more, visit the **Hampton Post Office** on Instagram *Hamptonnews8* or Facebook Page on: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61560889526765>

Memorial Institute

The Memorial Institute AGM will be held at 7pm. on Wednesday 12 February 2025 in the Institute.

Everyone is welcome to attend, especially if you may like to find out more about what goes on in the Hall and its organisation.

Financially, the Institute has had a reasonably good year, details of which will be discussed at the AGM. There will be an opportunity to make suggestions for improvements or ideas for future usage.

The Hall is available for hire at very reasonable rates. For details please contact Caroline Hadley (442061) or David Elliott (442177)

Barston Association

First of all, thank you to everyone who supported our events during last year, and to those who attended the AGM on 23rd January. As we reported at the meeting, we distributed £15,435 to 18 local charities, all of which were nominated by one or more Barston residents. We will be profiling the work of some of those charities in the Barston News Sheet during the year.

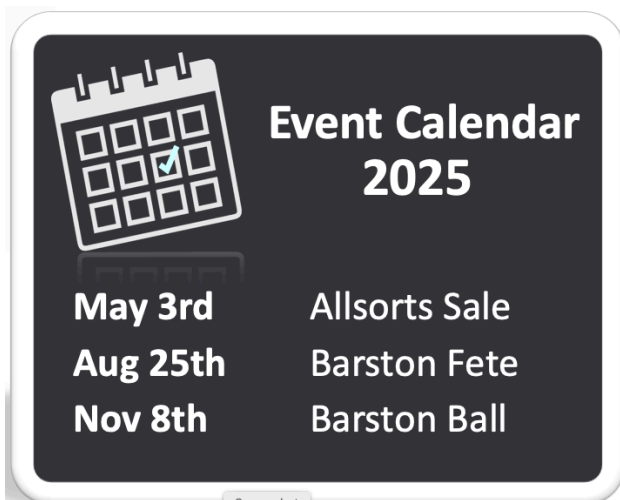
For 2025 we are again planning three events. We will be running another Allsorts sale on the 3rd May. This was a very successful new venture in 2024 and we hope to repeat that success this year. The annual Barston Fete will be on the 25th August this year. Finally, the 2025 Barston Ball will be held on 8th November.

That is our plan, but we are also keen to have feedback from Barston residents on our activities.

Do you have ideas for new or different events you would like to see organised in the future? We would like our events to appeal as widely as possible to the local community while at the same time, being cost-effective ways of raising funds for the charities and good causes we support.

In putting forward your ideas please bear in mind that we are a small team, so three or four events in the year is the most we can manage to organise!

Please send your thoughts and ideas to: pete.sumner@btinternet.com or call me on 07870 483505. **Pete Sumner.**



Barston & Hampton W.I.

In December we held our Annual Christmas Party in St Swithin's House.

We were entertained by local keyboard artist Alan Smith, who made the party complete by playing while we had pre-lunch drinks and then after lunch treated us with some Christmas songs and Carols. Thank you Alan!

January was our Resolutions meeting, followed by a fiercely fought Beetle Drive, won by Mary Daymond.

The Resolutions put forward for debate were:

1. Let's talk about incontinence

It is estimated that 14 million people in the UK of all ages are suffering from bladder problems and a further 6.5 million with bowel problems.

2. Bystanders can be lifesavers

There are over 30,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests a year in the UK, and less than one in ten people survive. Women have a lower chance of surviving than men. Early cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and defibrillating can more than double the chances of survival.

3. Join the repair revolution

There is a huge excess in clothing production which has devastating consequences for the environment.

4. Eliminate landfill of medication packaging

Medication packaging, due to its complexity, is not routinely recyclable through local authority collections.

Members voted for resolution 2, Bystanders can be lifesavers, which fitted very well with the talk at our October meeting given by Charlotte about her art exhibition 'Heart Charged'. The exhibition is now being shown at the Hoyt Gallery in the University of Southern California Keck School of Medicine. Facebook banned the advertisement for the exhibition for showing 'offensive' painted images of topless women with defibrillators attached. Which is rather the point of why women are less likely to survive cardiac arrest.

Barston and Hampton WI normally meet in the Memorial Institute at 2.15pm on the second Wednesday of the month. All ladies are welcome.

For details, please contact:

Tracy Pearson 07977 430733,
Annmarie Elliott 0167544 2177 or
Debbie Kirkham 01676 532233

Debbie Kirkham

Farming Life in Barston

Historically, Barston Parish a farming community with three estates; "Lady K" (Lady Katherine Leveson) of Temple Balsall, the Fisher family of Eastcote and the Jackson family who lived at the Gate House in Barston and owned the largest

proportion of land. The Lidgate family have farmed in Barston for over 200 years whilst others have moved in since 1930.

Barston is a mixture of soil types and not suited to vegetable production but mixed farming which includes livestock and a broad rotation of grassland and arable crops.

January sees the first ewes brought into sheds to lamb and the new lambs and their mothers can be seen outdoors within a couple of days depending on the weather to feed on the grass. Most sheep in Barston are a breed called North Country Mules and are bred for meat production.

The beef cattle are housed indoors for the winter to stop the grass fields from being turned into mud baths. They are fed on grass and maize silage plus home grown wheat. The beef herds calve from February onwards with the progeny being sold for meat or to other farmers for breeding. Aberdeen Angus and Parthenais are the breeds used in Barston.

There are two pedigree Holstein dairy herds in Barston. One supplies milk for Ben & Jerry's ice cream, the other sells milk to the Cotteswold Dairy for local doorstep deliveries. The cows calve throughout the year with the resulting female calves kept as replacements for the herds whilst the bull calves are reared and sold for quality beef.

All livestock farms work 365 days of the year (yes including Christmas and New Year's Day) caring for the animals and there is never really a quiet time of the year. Other winter jobs include hedge cutting, fencing repairs, ditching and machine maintenance all ready for the spring turnout.

Barston U3A

Our regular Programme of lectures and presentations take place at Barston Memorial Institute at 02:30pm on the second Tuesday of each Month, the aim being to provide interesting talks on as wider variety of subjects as possible. We are a small friendly group of approx. 50 members and would welcome anyone who would like to join us.

Our next talks are:

11th February *Would I lie to You, Again!*, John Lloyd
11th March *Gardens of the Italian Renaissance*, Adrian James
8th April *Those Damn Tinned Cans*, David and Pam Humphries

Recent talks and visits

In December nearly 40 members enjoyed a Christmas lunch at Copt Heath Golf Club and as usual we received a warm welcome, excellent food and superb service

In January Nigel Metcalfe took us on a *Nostalgic Trip Down the High Street* and brought back memories of

all those shops that no longer exist and reminded us of how little traffic there used to be.

Future Events Include: A visit to Compton Verney to see the exhibition 'Portrait Miniatures'. A visit to Batsford Arboretum to see the snowdrops, which are expected to be very good this year. Lunch at the Old Mill, Baginton followed by a 2-hour visit to Sherbourne Recycling in Coventry.

Groups

The Book Reading, Table Tennis, Stem, Mah-jong and scrabble groups have met on a regular basis.

If any of the above interests you or if you would like to have more information about any aspect of

Barston U3A Contact **Keith Fraser** 01564 777262

David Read

St. Swithin's News

Christmas seems a long time ago and we are already in the lead up to Lent and Easter. Ash Wednesday falls on 5th March with Easter Sunday on the 20th April. Look out for details of arrangements and services in the next issue here.

Mothering Sunday is on the 30th March. We have a very special service lined up – the theme will be 'Women of the Bible' and the ladies of the church will have considerable input! As usual, bunches of daffodils will be distributed too to the many mums who deserve recognition for all they do and have done for us! Do come and join us at 10.30.

A special date for us is Saturday 8th February when at 11am in Birmingham Cathedral, Craig Taylor, along with several others from the diocese, will be licensed by Bishop Michael as a lay reader. They have completed 18 months of training in order to reach this step. We shall then have two Readers – Martin Maxfield (who has been licensed for 35 years) and Craig.

Campanology: Have you ever thought about learning to ring church bells? It is a long time since we had any learners and it would be really nice to have some new folk join in. It takes a few weeks to become proficient but it is good fun and a sense of achievement is guaranteed. Just come on a Thursday evening from 7:00–8:00pm and see what it's all about! There's no age limit – well, maybe, from 12 to 82.....

The Big Breakfast will be back – on Saturday 1st March – from 8.30am – all you can eat for £8. You will be pleased to know that Richard Stretton is recovering well following major surgery. He and Libby were so disappointed to have to cancel January and February's offerings, and I am sure they will make up for that!!

Mary Daymond