

Barston News Sheet

June 2025

Issue 106

Barston Lane should soon have a new speed limit of **30mph** through the village.

The current 40mph limit on a narrow single carriageway with sharp bends and two-way traffic, often including agricultural vehicles, just isn't appropriate.



Parish Council

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the latest edition of the Parish News Sheet!

After a very dry start to the year, the village is looking a little brown around the edges—and our local farmers are certainly hoping for some well-needed rain soon!

A Warm Welcome to the New Faces at the Bull's Head

We'd like to give a big welcome to Kevin and Cameron, the new landlords of the Bulls Head pub. It's great to see the pub in good hands following the fantastic work of the outgoing team. Our village pubs are a cornerstone of community life, so please continue to support them whenever you can.

Support Needed: Speed Limit Consultation

The consultation on reducing the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph through the parish is now live. We need your help to ensure this important safety measure goes ahead.

Please send your support to tro@solihull.gov.uk, quoting Barston/Eastcote drawing 9646, and copy clerk@barstonvillage.org. If objections outweigh the support, the scheme may not proceed—so every email really counts.

Solihull Half Marathon – Sunday 10th August

The Solihull Half Marathon will once again pass through the village. Whether you're running or cheering from the side-lines, let's give the runners a proper Barston welcome!

We're also looking for volunteers to help at the water station.

This year, organisers are kindly offering £20 per volunteer to go towards a community fund - so it's a great way to support the event and give back to the village. Let me know if you're able to help.

Next Parish Council Meeting – All Welcome

Our next meeting will take place on Wednesday 9th July at 8:00pm at the Institute. Everyone is welcome, and we'd love to see you there.

Thanks as always for your continued support of village life.

Warm regards,

Jeremy Emmett (Chair, Barston Parish Council)

Editor's Note

This Edition of the News Sheet marks the 1st Anniversary of my time as Editor. It has flown by!

I would just like to take the opportunity to thank all the contributors (our journalists), both named herein and those who prefer to remain anonymous, plus the team of people who help me behind the scenes with distribution: Christine Abbott, David Elliott, David Read, Denise Bates, Marci Hartland, Mary Daymond, Nicola Pickering, Pete Sumner, Sam Hodgson and Simon Pile.

Many, many thanks. It just wouldn't happen without you all!

Tony Burton

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

Airport News

Solihull planners have agreed to formally monitor the number of night time flights in and out of Birmingham Airport after agreeing an increase earlier this year.

In response to the widespread opposition from local residents a new sub-committee of the authority's planning group, described as a 'critical friend', is being formed to monitor, assess and understand the performance of the night flying policy as it evolves over time. The new committee will be led by the Chair of the Planning Group, Bob Grinsell.

We'll keep you posted on further developments...

Know Your Neighbours

Did you know that Barston is home to expert environmental services specialists **ARES UK Ltd**? **ARES** (pronounced *air-eze*) stands for *All Round Environmental Solutions* and is a start-up company run by Barston's very own Mark Wood.

Pest Control is not an area that young boys necessarily grow up with ambitions to dedicate their professional careers to, so I was really interested to talk to Mark and find out how he came to be running such a business - and living in Barston...

When he left school, like many of us (myself included), Mark wasn't sure where his work interests lay. Then one day his uncle, who happened to work for *Pest Busters* in Kings Norton, invited him on a work experience day at the company. Initially, being shepherded around various customer jobs, by the end of the day Mark had taken full control and was evaluating and running pest control activities by himself. He absolutely loved the job and customer interaction, something that didn't go unnoticed by the company's management.

Soon Mark was working as a technician for *Pest Busters* and over the next 16 years he worked his way up through the company ranks to become overall Operations Manager for the Pest Control, Waste Management, Fleet Management and HS&E parts of the business. Mark met his fiancée Charlotte at the company and they set up home and moved to Barston in 2019.

Barston was an obvious choice for the young couple because Charlotte had grown up in Knowle and had strong ties to the village, often meeting up with friends at either the *Bull's Head* or *Malt Shovel*.

Mark would probably still be working for *Pest Busters* if it wasn't for the owner retiring and selling off the tight-knit family-run business to a large national pest control company in August 2023.

Things were never quite the same for Mark from that point. He missed the dynamic, "*roll up your sleeves and get stuck-in*" environment of a small business

and by February 2024 he had branched out on his own and founded **ARES UK Ltd**. He hasn't looked back since.

Mark has registered the company with the NPTA (National Pest Technicians Association), obtained a Waste Carriers Licence and is fully insured. The business has gone from strength to strength over the past year and now counts Birmingham's Millennium Point and Royal Ballet among its key corporate customers.

ARES UK Ltd cover the whole of the West Midlands and have supported a number of homes and business local to Barston in tackling pests such as wasps, ants, rodents and more in that time.

To discover more about the company's full range of environmental services, visit www.aresuk.co.uk or email Mark on mark@aresuk.co.uk



Interesting Fact: ARES is also the Greek god of war – very appropriate for a company fighting pests!

Barston United Charities

The Barston Charities trustees are conscious that we haven't supported local folk or projects recently, and would like to do something about this! There are two charities – one for the youngsters of the parish and the other for the elderly.

At Christmas we have a tradition of giving tins of biscuits to the older members of our community, but we are mindful that we may miss someone who deserves a special thought or gift. If you know of anyone, could you get in touch with one of the trustees (details below) and let them know, please? Thank you.

Also, if there any young person in the parish who might be considering doing a special project which needs a bit of financial help? Again – we would love to hear from you!

For details, please contact:

Rev. Stuart Dimes ([01675 442339](tel:01675442339)), Caroline Hadley ([07967 553858](tel:07967553858)), Ed Cooke ([07970 190780](tel:07970190780)) or myself, Mary Daymond ([01676 523951](tel:01676523951))

Farming Life in Barston

With the days getting longer and warmer everything is in full swing now in the countryside. The livestock are all out in the fields. Sheep will be treated against worms, and their feet will be trimmed if need be. Before the hot weather lands, fly cover is administered on the sheep to try and stop blow fly laying their eggs on the sheep fleeces and causing "Fly Strike" (maggots).

In June the lambs will start to be weighed and graded to see if there are any ready to send to the market or the abattoir. The perfect weight is 45 kgs.

The ewes and rams will all be shorn before the weather heats up too much, so they are cooler for the summer.

Cattle will be tested for Tuberculosis (TB) to make sure that they are still clear of this dreadful disease.

The grass silage is being cut, transported in the high sided trailers and stored back at the farms ready for next winter. With between 3 and 4 cuts taking place over the Summer, once the grass has been cut it needs covering or bailing before rain damages the crop.

Maize (sweetcorn) is planted now ready for feed for the winter.

The Summer agricultural Shows start taking place with Kenilworth Show 31st May, Three Counties Show at Malvern 13-15th June being the most local. If you have never been to one, it really is a lovely day out with all types of entertainment taking place. Livestock Shows (pigs, sheep, cattle, goats, poultry), Horse & Dog Shows, Flower Shows, Trade Stands, Food Halls. They happen all over the country – give it a go there really is something for everyone to see.



For more information visit kenilworthshow.co.uk and royalthreecounties.co.uk

Village Hall Availability

Our WWI Memorial Institute (Village Hall) is available for hire at very reasonable rates, especially to Barston residents. Its regular use is currently limited to WI, U3A, (details elsewhere in this News Sheet) and weekly Yoga on Thursday evenings, together with twice monthly table tennis and a few ad hoc meetings.

Please bear it in mind if you are planning a children's party, a meeting or social event. Saturdays and Sundays are generally always available and there are many other times that can be accommodated.

For further details, queries or suggestions regarding use of the hall, please contact Caroline Hadley (01675 442061 or carolineshadley@btinternet.com), who is our Bookings Secretary.

David Elliott

Barston Association

Many thanks to everyone who was able to support our Allsorts sale in early May. We raised £1,400 so our hard efforts were rewarded.

We now look forward to Bank Holiday Monday (25th August) with planning underway for our annual village fete. Any suggestions or offers of support are welcome.

Pete Sumner (Chair)

Barston & Hampton W.I.

Our April meeting was a talk by Tim Bridges of the Victorian Society. Tim spoke enthusiastically about the Victorian and Edwardian buildings of the West Midlands, with photographs to back up his descriptions of the many wonderful buildings in the area. Our Easter Card competition was fiercely contested, and won by Margaret Groves with a beautiful card consisting of hand dyed fabric made into an Easter egg.

The Committee were elected at our AGM in May:

President: Debbie Kirkham

Secretary: Mary Daymond

Treasurer: Janet Bradnock

Friendship: Tracy Pearson, members Anne Oughton & Sue Bould were re-elected.

New members Felicity Davis and Dr. Debbie Biggerstaff were welcomed.

Meeting minutes and mailings: Annmarie Elliot

Brenda Smith stood down owing to health issues, and she was thanked for all of her input over the last few years. The President gave the report of the committee for the past year, and thanked everyone for their support.

Our June meeting is a talk by Roy Smart entitled 'Another Icarus – the Art of Flight'.

July will be our Annual Strawberry Tea, this year our usual venue of St Swithin's House was unavailable. We are fortunate to have received a kind invitation from Steve and Charlotte Toy to use their lovely gardens to hold the event. Due to limited numbers, members should sign the list no later than the June meeting if they wish to attend.

August will be lunch out, and September is the Annual Produce Show, entry forms will be available

at the June meeting.

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

Barston U3A

Our regular Programme of lectures and presentations take place at Barston Memorial Institute at 2:30pm 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:

10th June Warwickshire Search and Rescue,
Speaker tbc

8th July AGM followed by tea, scones, jam & cream

12th August Bonsai trees and exotic plants
Speaker David Cheshire

Recent talks and visits: In April David and Pam Humphries reminded us of the innovative housing erected in the late 1940's in what became known as prefabs and we visited Birmingham Art Gallery when Rembrandt's Master pieces were on display. In May Dr. Gillian White gave an excellent talk on the 1st Duke of Devonshire and the building of Chatsworth House. In addition, a large group of members enjoyed a visit to Priory Theatre Kenilworth to see 39 Steps

Future Events Include: In June a visit has been arranged to Warwickshire Lavender Farm, followed by lunch. In September a visit has been arranged to Broughton Castle, near Banbury.

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

Barston U3A Contact **Jane Emmett** 07887 372818

David Read

St. Swithin's News

Easter weekend proved to be a very special time in the life of St Swithin's in that we welcomed back Alan and Val Golton. They met at St Swithin's in the 60s, got married, and Alan, after taking early retirement, became the vicar for 9 years, until they moved to live in France – where they still are after 28 years! They come back to England every year to see family and friends.

Alan was delighted to help us out and took a Communion service following a meal in the House

on Maundy Thursday evening.

He took a reflective service on Good Friday, also led and presided at Communion on Easter Day. It was a real pleasure to welcome him back along with Val. Several folk who knew them in the past came to the services. A very happy time – and an Easter we will not forget.

Wedding of Jake Harry and Laura Sheridan:

Took place on Friday, 23rd May at St Swithin's – it was a very happy occasion and the service was very special. The church looked beautiful and it was a lovely day. We wish Jake and Laura a very happy and blessed marriage.

Open the Book: This is a nationwide initiative whereby teams of adults (all trained) go into local primary schools and tell a story from the Bible through drama, involving the whole school. We have a team of folk from St Swithin's, Balsall Common and Temple Balsall who go into the schools. We have actually been doing this for several years and love the opportunity to share the Bible stories in this way.

Annual Church Meeting: This was held on 25th May, after the morning service. Helen Wood offered to continue as churchwarden. We would like to thank Shirley Taylor for all she has done as churchwarden over the last year. Members were elected to the PCC (Parochial Church Council) – the body which makes decisions on everyone's behalf of St. Swithin's.

St Swithin's House: Continues to be well used. There has been a great deal of discussion surrounding its future. The trustees are very much in touch with the Diocese and we will now be able to talk to their representatives face to face. We are very optimistic and cannot envisage a future at St Swithin's without our fabulous facility.

A Special Service for Father's Day: 15th June at 10.30am Everyone welcome.

Church Missionary Society: 6th July we welcome a guest speaker from the society which we have supported for many years in the good works that they do, most recently when Tom and Verity Clare and their 5 children spent time in Uganda.

Big Breakfasts: Continue on the first Saturday of each month (7th June, 5th July and 2nd August) from 8.30am, £10 per head for all you can eat. Amazing value and delicious food... We would all like to say a big thank you to Richard and Libby for their initiative here and for doing the hard work (setting up, shopping, cooking, clearing up ...)

Also don't forget Hobby House and Tea Club on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays (3rd & 17th June; 1st & 15th July) of the month - from 10am-12pm and then again from 2pm-4pm. Everyone is welcome!

Mary Daymond