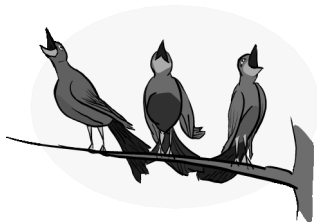


# **BIRDSONG**

**August 2020  
and  
September 2020**



**BIRDINGBURY  
NEWS**

**No 99**



## **The Village Votes**

Prize winning photograph by Julie Neal

# Birdingbury Parish Council Report

The Parish Council met on 21 July by Zoom, our first meeting since March. In normal times, we would have met every month, but these times continue to be ‘not normal’. Shops, restaurants and outdoor activities have re-opened but social distancing still applies so the current guidance is that councils might continue to meet virtually until next year.

We had a busy agenda: some of it topical and some of it ‘catch up’ from the period without meetings. Of the latter items, we discussed our annual budget, having kept the precept (your contribution) level from last year, as well as signing off the returns covering the last financial year. Our thanks to Andrew Armbrister for his auditing duties – much appreciated.

On the topical agenda we had broadband, play equipment and bonfires.

My thanks to Carmel for the energy that she has put into the recent broadband survey (see the results later in Birdsong). The meeting agreed to join the search for solutions, including liaising with local parishes and regional organisations so watch this space.

You might recall that we needed to close the play equipment following government advice about Covid 19. The government has revised these restrictions, so we are able to make the equipment available. Please do read the notices, respect social distancing and remember to take your hand sanitiser with you.



The Council will discuss Bonfire Night again next time, as we’ll need to be guided by rules as they are in the Autumn. This is a big night in the Birdingbury calendar, so we are keen to hold it if we can, but it is a lot of work by a small and willing band, so we need to be sure it is the right thing to do. Ideas, and more volunteers, always welcome!

And we discussed the village as a place of work. Many of us have now spent more time working from Birdingbury than working from our ‘place of work’ in 2020, made possible for some by mobile and broadband signals. We also discussed the workplaces in Birdingbury, like the Club and the Munro Business Park, conscious of the advantages and challenges that come from mixing business and residential. Your Parish Council will do what it can to make this mix work as well as possible.

Finally, despite rumours, we are assured by Cllr Bob Stevens (County Councillor for Southam and surrounding areas) that there are no plans to close the Stockton recycling centre permanently.

*Guy French, Chair, Parish Council*

## Pawprints Pops Up Again



We have continued to run the Pawprints pop-up shop over the last couple of months, though it has appeared in different forms and in different places around the village.

At first, we decided to serve tea and cake, so we set out socially distanced tables and chairs on the drive. We received many donations of delicious cake (many thanks to all you bakers) and spent some lovely afternoons chatting to various villagers and doing take-aways as well.

Lately, we have set up our shop at the weekend in front of the Club with kind permission of the Committee. We have continued to sell donated items and serve tea and cake.

The Pawprints shop in Rugby will be re-opening on July 20, albeit with restricted opening times. Donations can only be accepted by booking a slot: clothes will not be accepted for the time being.

Meanwhile, we will continue to supply various items as requested and set up our pop-up shop from time to time.

Many thanks for all your donations of money and items. The village has been very generous in supporting our efforts and this is doubly valuable at a time when all the usual big fundraising events and opportunities have not taken place. This includes our biggest fundraiser the Annual Dog Show.

So far, we have raised over £1200; a staggering total. Pawprints are so grateful for the donations that have come from the village, the money has helped them over the months.

Personally, we have gained enormous pleasure from getting to know people in the village who we never really knew before and from sharing a deeper friendship with people we already knew.

Long may it continue, with or without the threat of Covid19. Thank you!

*Chris Kilvington and Barbara Sweet*



## Club in Lockdown? Oh no, we're not!

So, Lesley emails and says she thinks a piece about how the Club has reacted to the challenges of the pandemic would be a good idea. Now, those of you who know Lesley will realise that this isn't a mere suggestion, so I'm doing it - but to be honest, so much has happened that I don't really know where to start ...

When this all started, we had some immediate things to deal with like financial planning and getting rid of the perishable stock, but that done, we set about working out if people wanted any sort of ongoing offer. Our tentative enquiries suggested that they would, and it all kind of grew from there.



And so began weeks of takeaway drinks and Saturday night online events – all of them good fun, but often for very different reasons! We've had Countdown, a virtual car treasure hunt, a detective academy, a race night (complete with hats), numerous quizzes and what was possibly the most chaotic game of bingo ever held. Thank you to all those people that took part, and especially to Matt & Jenny, Steve & Venice, Nick, Emma & Carol, Ian & Lynne, John & Lesley, The Cutts Clan for hosting events and of course, the Zoom Queen herself, Alex!

Now that things have started to ease, we have been able to open the Club again at weekends but the work involved in doing the risk assessments (25 pages!), the signage, the processes and everything else we now need to do to make sure everyone is safe, is just huge.

However, over the last couple of weekends that we have been open we've been able to welcome lots of villagers and locals back, which is great to see and makes it all worthwhile.

Going forward, we'll really try and keep the online element to our events, as it did seem to attract a wider range of people, and we're also keeping the takeaway service, but we're back open again, albeit on a limited service and we'll continue to look at how we need to evolve as the situation changes.



I'll finish up by saying that none of this would have been possible at all if it wasn't for a few very dedicated people, and my thanks to them all for the help they have given, but in particular to my partners in crime, Richard Cutts, who has been the driving force behind the takeaways, risk assessment process and just a complete all round legend, and also to our brilliantly miser-like treasurer, John Starley for all his work in sorting the finances and working out how to keep things straight!

So here we are, we made it to the summer, still operating, still solvent, still doing what we do – which is simply being a place for locals to meet, chat, interact and socialise. Part pub, part village hall, part community centre – but still all ours and still all here!

*Tony Flint, Club Committee Chair*

## **Your Safety at the Club**

We've spent a huge amount of time understanding the government guidelines, carrying out risk assessments and putting processes in place that are designed to keep us all safe while you're at the Club.

We understand that we're all just getting used to the 'new normal' but the pandemic is far from over and we as Club members and villagers have a responsibility to ensure we keep one another safe. We know it's different and new, and coming to the Club is not like it was - but right now it can't be anything else if we want the Club to remain open.

Please help us by sticking to the processes we've put in place and keeping our 2m social distances. We've made it as simple and clear as we can, so please help us to help you stay safe – and please don't be offended if you're (politely and gently) reminded of this collective responsibility from time to time!

Thanks!

## **Club Opening Hours**

Fridays from 6pm

Saturdays from 2pm

Sundays from 12 noon

Wednesdays 8pm to 11pm

## **Upcoming Events**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Time</b>
Saturday 25 July	Quiz Night (both on Zoom and at the Club)	8.30pm
Saturday 8 August	Pizza Night	open from 5pm
Saturday 22 August	Quiz Night (both on Zoom and at the Club)	8.30pm
Saturday 29 August	Gourmet Burger Night	open from 5pm

## **In Sympathy**

During the recent Lockdown period, Birdingbury Club was saddened to hear of the loss of two long-standing members, Gerry Wood of Leamington Hastings and Reg Swain of Marton. Our sincere condolences to their families.

## Ashes to Ashes



A highly partisan 'away' crowd witnessed a sporting delicacy in the roasting July clouds as Bourton & Frankton Cricket Club took on a 'team' with singular and various cricketing abilities from Birdingbury.



At the helm for Birdingbury were Captain Young and Captain Young the Younger, who marshalled their charges excellently, opting to field first and holding Bourton to 256 for 3, with wickets taken by Nick Thomas, Reece Moor and a superb catch from Mackenzie Stanton.



So good so far except, apparently, we also had to bat - and let's just say that at one stage we couldn't get players padded up fast enough to keep up with the falling wickets and 'scoreboard Steve' could barely keep up.



However, there were still some sterling performances from ace father and son captains Darren & Freddy Young and highest points duo Crawford Timms and Reece Moor.

Sadly, not even they could prevent Birdingbury being all out for 74, and very much coming second on the day. Oh well, back to the Club then!



A terrific day out and huge thanks to the very vocal support, to Rich Cutts for arranging, to Malc and all the guys at Bourton & Frankton CC for not laughing too hard, and lastly to Mark and Paula Taylor for all the hard work of

being our socially distanced BBQ chefs!



*Tony Flint(off)*

# Tombola

The PCC of St. Leonard's Church is delighted to report that the magnificent sum of £510.00 was raised at the Tombola, organised by Jo Cutts and her family on Saturday 20th June.

Held in Jo's front garden, it was attended by many villagers, all correctly socially distancing! This was also a lovely occasion and so nice to meet up with friends again.

Well done and thank you to Jo, Jo's Mum, Lewis & Jake

*Daphne Chippendale*



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## #Birdingburylockdownphotos Competition Winners

During May we held the #Birdingburylockdownphotos competition. The competition was a great success with over 100 entries and a high quality of photographs.

The winners in each of the adult categories were as follows:

Hope	1 <sup>st</sup>	Lesley Fleming	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Jill Drew
Isolation	1 <sup>st</sup>	John Owen	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Lewis Cutts
Family	1 <sup>st</sup>	Pete Burnell	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Lorraine Malin
Landscape	1 <sup>st</sup>	Dan Chinn	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Rich Cutts
Village	1 <sup>st</sup>	Pete Burnell	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Lorraine Malin
Village Vote	1 <sup>st</sup>	Julie Neal	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Nong Supisara and John Starley (joint)

The children's category winners were:

Hope	Erin Flint and Tom Malin
Landscape	Bella Malin and Oscar Morton

Thank you to all who took part. My special thanks to Matt Markham for his technical wizardry and Morgan Thomas for helping with the fun task of judging.

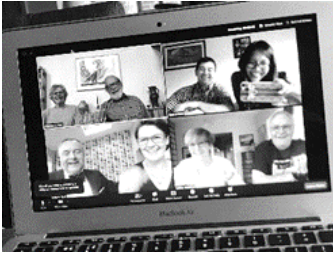
The photos are available to view on the village website ([www.birdinbury.org](http://www.birdinbury.org)) and Matt's excellent video of the winners is available on YouTube: search for <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjqandyuqeg>

*Steve Edgar*

## Virtual Progression

This progressive supper was a little different to previous years as no one actually went out! It was held virtually over Zoom, but Birdingbury's social spirit and culinary expertise was still very much evident!

30 village households took part and over £500 was raised for this year's good cause, Mental Health Together, a locally based mental health support group.



Thank you so much to all that took part. It was brilliant and fitting farewell to Simon Whitfield, as this was his swansong as co-ordinator.

Looking forward to next time: it'll be me again but joined this time by John Barr, who's kindly offered to step in to help coordinate. Thanks John!



*Alex Rigler*

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## Thank You from Bill...

A very big thank you to all my lovely neighbours and villagers for all your help, treats and socially distanced visits during the lockdown. I give my extra special thanks to Matt, Jenny and the girls, Karen, Nicky, Dick, Jo and Jenny. They have given me immense support with their home-made cakes, (delicious), other food treats and newsy notelets.

I enjoyed my excursion around the village on VE Day's 75th Anniversary, thanks to Jo for making it possible.

If I have forgotten to mention anyone by name please forgive me, however you know who you are, and I am truly very grateful for everything.

*Bill Cowley*



## ... and Happy Birthday, Bill Cowley!

We wish Dad a very happy 97th birthday on 16th August. Have a fabulous day, with our love,

*Carol and Paul King*

## St. Leonard's Future in Birdingbury Life

Following several months of online worship, we are contemplating a return to church. For some of you that will bring joy, for some, concern. For everyone, it brings questions:

Will it be safe? How will it be different? Why can't we sing? How much have I missed going? Do I want to return?

Our online benefice worship has engaged a small number of Birdingbury villagers, but not many. Our average Sunday attendance is 12-15. It's a long time since any of us were in church for services: it will be different on return and for the foreseeable future. We must be socially distant, there will be no physical contact, no singing, no sharing, limited talking and no fellowship over coffee. Communion will be in one kind (bread) only.

So, I wonder if YOU will return? What have you been doing in lockdown for church? Do you want to return with these changes in place? ***How much do you want to go back to church if it's different?***

One thing is certain. If we are to maintain **your** church in **your** village, through Covid-19 and beyond, then it needs **your** support. Not just attending services, but administratively and financially too. We currently have two services a month; our congregation remains stable, but there is no growth in regular worshippers, and hasn't been for several years. We have a few long-standing, dedicated and regular financial givers, but there has been decline in income as well. There is no likely replacement for me as Church Warden when I stand down in April 2021 after 14 years. We are getting older; our PCC now has seven members, five of whom are over 70.

**But somehow, I still feel that the church in the community is important to many of you. We know it is valued and we know the work that we do around the village is valued by so many more than just those who attend services.**

We are asking for your help and support. If you care about **YOUR** church in **YOUR** village, and you want it to remain then: ***Are you prepared to make a personal commitment to act? What could you do to support and help?***

I'm not going to detail a list of jobs, because what we require is more than that. We need people who have a heart for St Leonard's and its place in the hearts and minds of this community. We are asking you to join us in keeping St Leonard's **our** living, breathing, church in **our** wonderful village community. We need a re-think.

That will undoubtedly mean change. That's OK; we expect that and some of us welcome it. Some of us might need to be persuaded. But let's work on it together. Come and be a part of it, working for your community in your village. Contact me for a chat (01926 632030 / 07919 594559) or email me ([Karen.armbrister@btinternet.com](mailto:Karen.armbrister@btinternet.com)).

Please.

*Karen Armbrister, Church Warden*

## Have you seen one of these?

This orange spotted visitor to Birdingbury has been identified by George, a Ranger at Ryton Pools Country Park, as a Scarlet Tiger Moth (*Callimorpha dominika*).

It is a day flying moth, seen in flight during warm sunny days in May and June, usually in damp areas such as riverbanks, brooks and streams, damp woodland rides and railway cuttings. The larvae will feed on a range of herbaceous plants, but comfrey is particularly favoured (on which it was sighted in our garden).

Butterfly Conservation Warwickshire say very few sighting records exist in Warwickshire prior to 2006. We have logged our recent sighting with them.



*Karen Thomas*

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## Birdingbury Allotment Association



There will be a plot available shortly at the site in Long Itchington Lane. The size is approx 300 square yards. The rental £10 per year plus a small one-off starter fee for water.

Please contact me on 01926 632666 for further details.

*Vic Shayler*

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Birdingbury knows

emerging from the bunker

unseen danger bright

*Thin Jethro Laskey*



## Enduring Hope

The sharp frost on Tuesday, May 12 when the temperature dropped to minus three around dawn, caught lots of us by surprise and blackened leaves in many of our gardens. In more than forty years in the village I have never known this happen to the very fine walnut tree in the garden of Brook Farm House.

That this should take place just a week after the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day is perhaps significant as the tree was planted in 1945 to celebrate that important event.

At that time the Cockerill family were at Brook Farm, as they had been for about fifty years. Soon after we had moved into the village in 1978, Rhondda and I were told by Gwen Cockerill, who then lived in Longroods, that a little walnut sapling was found on the railway bank on that very important day and transplanted into their garden as a gesture to welcome peace and of hope for the future.

It is now a splendid tree that in some years produces a prodigious crop of walnuts, much to the delight of squirrels and the mild irritation of gardeners, as the little squirrel-sown saplings can be quite hard to pull up. This year, following the frost in May, at the beginning of June it was almost leafless.



However, I am pleased to say that now, in the middle of July, it has grown a new set of leaves and it should be in fine form by the time we get to VJ Day on August 15.

I hope this important memorial can look forward to many more decades of a healthy life to remind us of the end of that appalling war.

*Chris Barney*

RDSONGBIRDSONGBIRDSONG

## Lockdown Recipes

Many thanks for the recipes so far; I'm probably about half-way there for the number of recipes needed. I'm hoping to have it completed in readiness for Christmas, so please do keep those recipes coming to me at either [eira.owen61@btinternet.com](mailto:eira.owen61@btinternet.com) or at home: Thurlby, Main Street

Thank you

*Eira Owen*

## Birdingbury Broadband Update

This update is not the end of the story, but merely a staging post so that we can gather further information to help everyone. Thank you for the replies and the additional information that many people have provided.

A total of 67 completed usable replies was received. Data will be deleted once the analysis is complete and the special purpose email account also deleted as it has fulfilled its purpose. This is most likely to be at the end of September to allow for any further work.

The problem areas are unsurprisingly, Back Lane (especially around the lower end), the Wren Court grouping and some issues in the area of Master's Yard.

A draft set of the results and report was delivered to the Parish Council at the end of June for their consideration.

Reviewing the fibre rollout programme for the UK and specifically for this area, it is unlikely that the village will be prioritised for fibre to the premises (FTTP) i.e. fibre to your house. However, there are two other potential courses of action that are being followed up to provide better information for decision-making.

The first option is to find out from BT/Openreach whether it is possible to replace the aluminium connections with copper. What is unknown at the moment is how extensive the aluminium problem is. Many people do not have information about the nature of their connection. This is held by BT/Openreach and may or may not be difficult to access, and given the focus on fibre, it is possible that this remedial "fix" is unavailable to us. This is already under investigation.

The second option is to look at the cost of fibre installation for everybody and then consider if there is grant or other money available to pay for it. This is a two-stage process, with an initial scoping exercise and with the matter then going to the Parish Council for further action. Along with another village, I am looking into its use within the bounds of the data protection legislation. Meanwhile, subject to the agreement of the Parish Council, I will post the full report on the village website.

Thank you again to everybody who took part and especially those who sent some additional information or shared it with me.

*Carmel de Nahlik*



## War on Waste

War on Waste Birdingbury Marton Frankton Bourton on Dunsmore is a private Facebook group for people who want to give away or sell unwanted items from their home, garden or garage to people who live nearby, rather than loading them into the car and taking them to the tip or selling them on Ebay, which would have encouraged non-essential travel during lockdown. It has been helpful whilst Stockton Recycling Centre has been closed.

Many items have been successfully rehomed during the last three months by the 116 members of this group, with G Plan furniture being especially sought after. In many cases the grateful recipients have made donations to PawPrints, Magic Breakfast and other charities.

### Some of the items successfully exchanged!



Small furniture items	Bike Stands	Pallets and sleepers	Pavers and Slabs
Candle Holders	Baskets	Toys	Books
	Children and teens clothing	Cake moulds	

If you would like to join the group, you will need to be on Facebook, but please look for the group and answer a few simple questions to join.

As our lives return to normality, we hope this group will continue, and will complement other village activities such as Swop Shop and Pawprints Pop Up Shop.

*Ruth Adewale*

## Back in Business

What's that about old dogs and new tricks? One centenarian realised there was no option but to "go virtual" if relationships were to be maintained when Covid-19 struck.



Rugby's Percival Guildhouse, Warwickshire's only independent adult education centre, was forced to close its doors in March when lockdown struck. In common with so many households, it embraced Zoom as a means of continuing to provide classes to its students. Thanks to the tireless efforts of its staff, the charity-run centre has run a variety of classes online during June and July.

No mean achievement for the 100-year-old centre which had hitherto only ever offered courses in person at its St Matthew's Street home.

Plans are now underway for the re-opening of the Guildhouse on 28 September, when more than 70 courses will be on offer, ranging from Italian, Spanish, French, German and Japanese language courses, to a good mix of arts and crafts. To safeguard students and ensure proper social distancing, most courses will be run on a 'blended' basis, with some places in-house and others joining virtually. Full details will be available from mid August when they can be viewed at [www.percival-guildhouse.co.uk](http://www.percival-guildhouse.co.uk)

Guildhouse Chairman, David Dove, says: 'The charity was set up a century ago to provide professional, tutor-led adult education to the local community. I'm proud we've kept doing that and very much look forward to welcoming folk back in September.'

For further information, phone: 01788 542467, find us on Facebook @percivalguildhouserugby or check out Twitter @GuildhouseRugby

*Clare Turnbull.*

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## Library Services

Following advice from PHE, the decision has been made to suspend the mobile library service until further notice. But did you know you can order a selection of books to collect from Leamington Warwick and Rugby libraries? It's a bit like the 'click and collect' service you can use to buy your shopping. You must pre-order the books you'd like to borrow, and a member of staff will call you to arrange collection of your order.

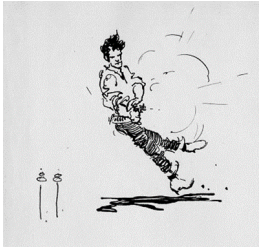
In addition, the Home Library Service is operating with some restrictions. If you are not normally able to visit the library due to ill health or disability and you do not have someone to collect books for you, the library can come to you.

For more information about library services, visit

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/information-coronavirus/coronavirus-libraries-leisure-country-parks/1>

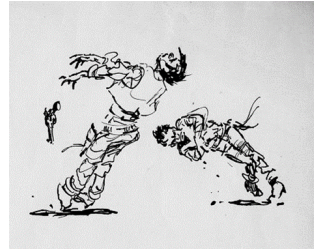
# Ballad of The Cross-Eyed Cowboys

A sombre reflection on the lack of good eye care in the Old West....



I shot my gal an' then  
I shot the stranger.

The stranger shot my gal,  
An' then shot me.



An' I'm lying here  
Wrapped up in dirt  
An' moonbeams,  
When through the pain  
My wounded love I see.

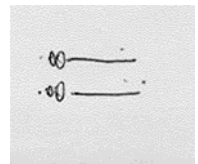


'Black Jake I'm gonna  
Drill you sideways.'  
An' then I hear  
Her Ma come a hollerin' in,

'An' I'm gonna thread  
Your rotten bits together  
With old barbed wire  
An' some red eyed ants  
For free.'

*Pilgrim*

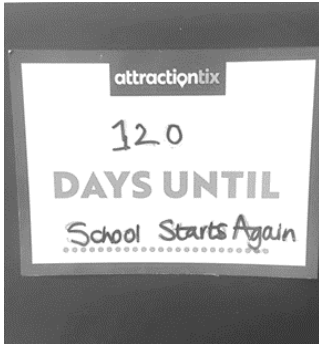
*Original sketch of a gunfight by Frank Frazette*



# Birdingbury Calendar

Pop-up events are being organised on a week by week basis. So do keep checking the Facebook pages for Birdingbury Village and Birdingbury Club. The village website and community notice board in the bus shelter will continue to capture community messages.

Meanwhile, here are the children's photo competition winning entries:



*Erin Flint*



*Oscar Morton*



*Bella Malin*



*Tom Malin*



Birdsong Editor:

Lesley Fleming  
Moonrakers, Back Lane Tel 632508  
Email: [birdsong1@btinternet.com](mailto:birdsong1@btinternet.com)

Church News Editor :

Rachel Glanville  
Olcote, Main Street Tel 633369  
Email: [churchnews34@gmail.com](mailto:churchnews34@gmail.com)

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