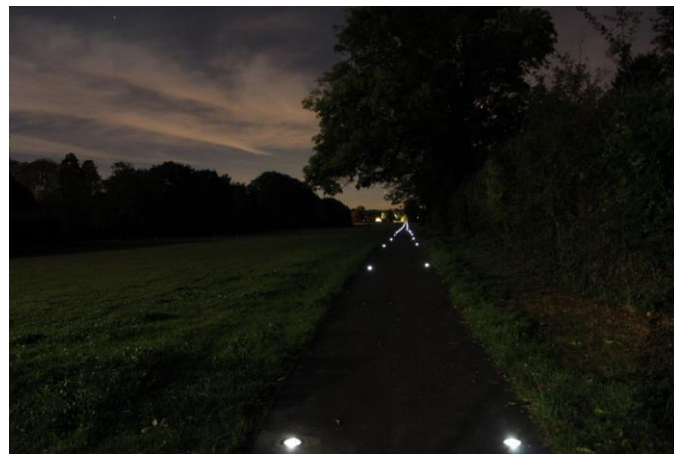


**BARTON PARISH COUNCIL****Patrick De Backer** Parish Clerk**9 Roman Hill, Barton, Cambridge CB23 7AX**<http://barton-parish.web44.net/>**Chair Margaret Penston**[bartonpcclerk@btinternet.com](mailto:bartonpcclerk@btinternet.com)**Tel 07771 923710****BARTON PARISH COUNCIL****ANNUAL REPORT 2015**based on **The Annual Parish Meeting**which was held on **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015**

at 7.30pm in the Village Hall, Barton CB23 7BD.

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<http://barton-parish.web44.net/>

**Chairman of Barton Parish Council – Margaret Penston**  
attendance

<b>2014-15</b>	May	June	July	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	<b>Total</b>
John Bailey	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	<b>8</b>
Bev Edwards	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	<b>9</b>
Hugh Greenfield	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	<b>10</b>
Mary MacDonald	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	<b>11</b>
Margaret Penston	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	<b>10</b>
Mike Radford	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	<b>7</b>
Tim Scott	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	<b>9</b>
Nigel Siddall	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	<b>9</b>
Karen Wilkins	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	<b>6</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	
Francis Burkitt	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	<b>4</b>
Stephen Frost	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	<b>5</b>

**Meetings:** The first Tuesday of every month except August from 7.30pm

Prior to every meeting, and for up to 10 minutes if required, members of the public are invited to bring any matters to the attention of the Council. Thereafter they may listen to Councillors debate at their meeting.

In August we (normally) do a walk around the village as a group. This is useful for highlighting any problems (potholes in pavements, overhanging trees, problems with notice boards, the village signs, etc)

**The May Meeting:** The PC Annual Meeting at which committee and working group members are decided.

- Chair – M. Penston, Vice Chair – T. Scott
- Committee Chairs:
- Planning – M. Penston
- Recreation Ground – H. Greenfield
- Highways – N. Siddall
- Representatives:
- Barton Recreation Improvement Group (BRIG) – N. Siddall
- Village Hall representative – K. Wilkins
- Neighbourhood Watch liaison – B. Edwards
- Barton Energy Group – B. Edwards, M. Macdonald, M. Radford.

**Keeping you informed:** come to a meeting, raise issues, listen to debate.

Minutes of meetings on the Conkers Notice Board

Parish Jottings in the Parish Magazine

The Barton website (currently under reconstruction)

Speak to Parish Councillors around the village

**Planning** In the calendar year January – December 2014, the Council considered 26 planning applications. This included: 8 for alterations or extensions, 2 for new build (one had 4 separate

applications), 8 for tree work, 1 for change of use, 3 miscellaneous. Councillors visit most sites where there may be any doubt. Our 'tree officer' is asked to comment on tree applications.

At the appropriate time the PC will consider any future plans to redevelop Hines Farm. There was an Open Day for the public in November 2014

### Highways traffic problems

Traffic along the A603 during the morning rush hour. The PC has received £10k funding towards a crossing or pedestrian refuge here, but discussions about how and where are still to take place.

Crossing New Road at the start of the school day:



last November Councillors joined school governors every day for a week between 8.30 and 9.00 am to survey traffic along New Road, counting vehicles, bikes and the number of children and adults crossing. The volunteers also noted poor driving, the number of parked cars and the school bus which stayed for several minutes until a staff member came to collect the pupils. Unfortunately there were not enough children crossing (average

>15) to qualify for a school crossing patrol. This is a problem that has not gone away.

**Traffic Speeding** – How do we control it? Can you help? Volunteers needed for 'speedwatch', training provided

The Council is looking to set up a working party to investigate and work on speed reduction measures. Is there anyone out there with road or traffic expertise? Only well-researched and viable proposals can be approved by the County Council.

Signs have been replaced with shiny new ones. Some cleaning needed.

**Have you noticed?** Several of the concrete posts round the pond were cracked or broken. By the time I went to photograph them (last Saturday) they had been repaired.

**The Recreation Ground and the Leys:** they are well used and enjoyed by all generations. The Council has responsibility for the football pitches and all other areas. A clear sign indicating the Recreation Ground and Pavilion has been purchased.

**The Leys car park and footpath:** the improved car park was opened on a cold day in November. Representatives of donors joined villagers for a cup of tea and cake.

Donations and grants were given by Amey Cespa, WREN, BRIG, Agricole, South Cambridgeshire Community Chest and Cambridgeshire Highways, the project underwritten by the Parish Council.

**The skate ramp:** older children and teenagers use the ramp with skate boards or bikes, but younger children use the skate ramp for a variety of other games and we have had reports of an increasing number of splinters. The present surface was installed in 2013, so this is disappointing. We are currently trying to find a solution – perhaps ship varnish or a poly-something material fastened to the present surface.

### Recent work

You will be pleased to see the results of recent work on the old pavilion. The old toilet and urinal are now part of an enlarged storage area. The Parish Council is giving the tennis club a grant towards the cost of repainting the courts before the new season.

### Who empties the bins on the Rec?

Five Parish Councillors have a rota for emptying bins and clearing rubbish from the Rec.

On the day the photo was taken the rota had 'run out', but you don't often see the bins like this.

### What else does the Parish Council do?





Village problems – eg hedge cuttings causing bike punctures, overhanging branches, ... Call or Email the Parish Clerk (the only employee)!

Puddles on the road? Call the Parish Clerk! Gritting pavements. Highways will warn the PC of forecast icy weather. (Only once in 2 years! Then the band broke and we had to use an old milk bottle and spread by hand.)

**The Barton-Grantchester bridleway/cycleway** was improved considerably in the past year under the supervision of John Boocock, grants and materials were received from the CambsCC Access Team.

**The Telephone Box:** finally ours, but a lot of work is needed to convert it into a Book Share; Val Baines and Elizabeth Tompson are collecting books and will manage the kiosk.

Barton Village Cambs– Community Facebook page – please use it

**Stumpy:** Enthusiasm for a carving has died away, since the cost estimate of nearly £5000 (excl scaffolding) was received. The PC decided against supporting it. Villagers were given until April 15th to offer pledges of donations. M.Belbin offered some honeysuckle for planting.

**Barton Village Cambs- Community Facebook page** - please use it.

**Future Projects** This pump is in the grounds of a house on Wimpole Road. We believe it belongs to South Cambs but whose responsibility is it to look after it? What would we find if we removed the wooden surround?

One of the six Notice Boards in the village. It is clearly in need of some TLC.

**Electrical waste collection:** there was a doorstep collection by 'Wiser Recycling' of household Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment on December 8 for which the Parish Council will receive £97.50.

There will be another collection on Monday June 8. Wiser Recycling will take 'anything with a plug' and reported that they collected 2541 kg in Barton in December. To avoid unauthorised collectors, please be vigilant and do not leave waste out before 10am on the day of collection.

**What else?** The Parish Plan, Emergency planning, street lighting, rats, fly tipping ...

Not a PC event, but a village milestone - **presentation to Richard Sockett** in July.

**Fibre Broadband** available in Barton since last September. What speed are you getting?

My 'max achievable' download speed is 56 Mbps but my max download speed is ~10 Mbps. BT are 'working on it'.

**Congratulations to our Village Hero:** The Parish Council nominated **John Boocock** for a 'Village Hero' award and he duly received a certificate from the Chairman of South Cambs at a ceremony in April. To quote from the nomination:

"Unpaid, John has devoted days and weeks selflessly to improve facilities for the benefit of the Barton village and its residents. In particular, the past three years have seen a number of exceptional achievements. As an agricultural engineer by training and now in retirement he is frequently called on by the Parish Council to take on both large and small projects and his work is always of a high standard."

### **Parish Council Elections on May 7th**

First, many thanks to the retiring Councillors: Karen Wilkins, Mary MacDonald, Tim Scott. They have ALL been most valuable Councillors and they will be greatly missed.

There are 13 candidates standing for the 9 places on the Council in the election on May 7.

John Bailey, Jean Burns, Bev Edwards, Andrew Friend, Hugh Greenfield, Lin Heaton, Lorraine Mooney, Margaret Penston, Mike Radford, Nigel Siddall, Sarah Thomas, Barbara Tones, and Jonathan Woods. A leaflet will be circulated to all houses in the village with the names, photos and short bios of all 13.

### **Thanks also!**

Particular thanks to Patrick DeBacker (Parish Clerk) and the other 8 Councillors for their help and support, patience and good humour.

Thanks also to Francis Burkitt and Stephen Frost (District and County Councillors) who keep us informed on the bigger picture.

Thanks to the BeaVers (Barton Volunteers) and Richard Newstead for all they have done in the village.

Thanks to Lin and Barbara for making the tea and coffee this evening

### **County Councillor – Stephen Frost**

Stephen stated in his second report that it was always a pleasure to be in the village. Business was going on as usual under a new committee structure. The County Council very much supports the City Deal. In general it has been difficult to find savings. County officers are always busy dealing with streetlights, potholes and overhanging hedges. He wishes to continue to support the parish. He was reminded of drainage problems throughout the village.



### District Councillor – Francis Burkitt

Francis noted a happy, well-run village.



Dustbin collections: the reduction of collections and change of routing had been more efficient, saving £500K, or £10 per house.

Council houses: there was renewed pressure from people with local connections trying to get on the housing list.

The Local Plan was currently being assessed by the government inspector to see if it was "sound".

The City Deal will shape the future of the area; Francis is on its main board.

£500 million of funding should accrue towards a housing and transport plan from 2019. Key issues will be how to get Cambourne area residents to work at major Cambridge locations including Addenbrookes: a move by P&R to Maddingley Mulch, a bus or cycle way along the A1303 or via the Coton footpath, an extra lane on the M11. Villagers should be ready to express their views.



### Matters raised by Parishioners at the Annual Meeting 2015

Mary MacDonald outlined ideas for time-banking, where a voluntary exchange of skills could be offered. This would require a coordinator.

Comments were also made about: dog fouling, the difficulty of seeing past the protruding hedge at Mailes Close, the need for a crossing at Conkers, the poor state of the footpath along Wimpole Road, and the issue of speeding.

Villagers were thanked for using the Foodbank Collection Point.

Val Baines thanked Councillors for doing a thankless task in the preceding year.

### Clerk to Barton Parish Council – Patrick De Backer

The accounts for 2013-14 had been audited satisfactorily by both internal and external auditors. The draft accounts for 2014-15 were now available for inspection, showing a breakdown of expenditure £77,285 and income £81,718, and reserves earmarked for specific projects. The Council had a healthier balance than previously. The focus had been on the Leys Project, nett cost £2,314, as well as the improvements to the bridle way to Grantchester, nett cost £2,230. The precept for 2015-16 has been maintained at £18,000 or £47.29 per band D household. Expenditure on crossing improvements at Wimpole Road is expected. Barton remains a prudent council with a low level of precept compared with neighbouring villages.

**BARTON PARISH COUNCIL***draft***ACCOUNTS 14-15****2013-14****Page 1****2014-15**

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
<b>Salaries</b>	Clerk nett salary	3,729.62	3,787.70
	PAYE	928.80	936.60
<b>Training</b>		50.00	25.00
<b>Audit</b>	Internal audit fees	75.00	75.00
	External audit fees	200.00	200.00
<b>Utilities</b>	Water	199.71	328.76
	Phone	30.00	35.00
<b>Premises</b>	Clerk's office	100.00	100.00
	Church Close	50.00	50.00
<b>Grants &amp; contributions</b>			
	Village Hall, inc 10% contrib. to release AmeyCespa cladding grant	500.00	1,236.99
	BRIG	1,000.00	1,000.00
<b>Section 137</b>	magazine	250.00	250.00
	churchyard	150.00	150.00
	Quarter to Six Quadrant	-	-
<b>Maintenance, repair &amp; renewal</b>			
	Rec. Ground cut	935.00	1,056.48
	Rec. Ground general	107.00	2,100.18
	Playground equipment	5,415.00	-
	Verges cut	1,250.00	1,140.00
	Street lighting	572.28	932.05
	Parish paths	40.00	40.00
	Bus shelters	134.23	20.00
	Bus shelter cleaning & gate duty	60.00	-
	Notice boards	20.00	20.00
	Litter bins	20.00	147.00
	Seats, benches	50.00	20.00
	Other maintenance, repairs, improvements	63.50	271.82
<b>Speed reduction</b>		3,417.49	-
<b>Leys Project</b>		5,218.00	47,943.78
<b>Barton-Grantchester bridleway</b>		-	3,730.65
<b>Administration</b>	Subscriptions	463.71	488.74
	Postage	14.00	32.77
	Stationery	30.00	40.00
	Other admin.: website, etc.	61.00	75.00
	Computer essentials	76.60	70.00
	Expenses - petrol, copying, etc	150.00	252.23
<b>Insurance</b>	Council cover	698.14	676.51
	Village Hall grant	-	713.96
<b>Election expenses</b>		-	-
<b>VAT on payments</b>		1,512.22	9,339.62
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>		<b>27,571.30</b>	<b>77,285.84</b>

BARTON PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS 14-15		Page 2
INCOME	2013-14	2014-15
<b>Precept</b>	16,400.00	18,000.00
LCTSS grant	833.00	-
<b>Bank interest</b>	7.43	4.43
<b>Reimbursements:</b> VAT	1,437.27	9,404.50
water	157.30	282.76
pitch use	780.00	750.00
<b>Agency:</b> village verges	2,404.51	2,404.51
S106 new housing grant	-	2,671.80
CambsCC Bridleway 10 grant	-	1,500.00
<b>Donations:</b> Leys Project donations	1,175.00	-
SCDC grant	1,000.00	-
AmeyCespa grant		15,400.00
WREN grant		30,800.00
BRIG / Burwash curved slide; Pavilion paving	3,550.00	500.00
benches, fencing	150.00	-
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>27,894.51</b>	<b>81,718.00</b>

Year end Summary	31st March 2014	31st March 2015
Balance brought forward previous 1st April	17,185.71	17,508.92
add Total <b>Receipts</b>	27,894.51	81,718.00
total	45,080.22	99,226.92
less Total <b>Payments</b>	-27,571.30	-77,285.84
<b>Balance carried forward on 31st March</b>	<b>17,508.92</b>	<b>21,941.08</b>
<b>Reconciliation</b>		
Bank balances at 31st March Investment Account	13,871.63	10,547.86
Current Account	4,324.03	11,394.22
Balance as shown in Receipts and Payments account	18,195.66	21,942.08
less unrepresented cheques	-686.74	-1.00
<b>Bank Balance</b>	<b>17,508.92</b>	<b>21,941.08</b>

<b>Leys Project</b>	nett cost to PC <b>£2,314.98</b>
<b>Bridle Way 10</b>	nett cost to PC <b>£2,230.65</b>

PROJECTS earmarked funds	31st March 2014	31st March 2015
Leys Project	3,000.00	-
Leys fencing	1,000.00	-
Barton-Grantchester bridleway	3,000.00	-
Play equipment	1,000.00	1,000.00
recycling credit	2,500.00	2,500.00
speed reduction / Wallis crossing	500.00	3,000.00
<b>TOTAL earmarked</b>	<b>11,000.00</b>	<b>6,500.00</b>
GENERAL RESERVE	6,508.92	15,441.08
<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<b>17,508.92</b>	<b>21,941.08</b>

## Barton Parish Council

revised Jan 2015

<b>Clerk</b> Mr Patrick De Backer 9 Roman Hill Barton Cambridge CB23 7AX 01223-262577 <a href="mailto:bartonpcclerk@btinternet.com">bartonpcclerk@btinternet.com</a>		<b>Chair</b> Dr Margaret Penston 3 Holben Close Barton Cambridge CB23 7AQ 01223-262465 <a href="mailto:margaret.penston@btinternet.com">margaret.penston@btinternet.com</a>
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Mr Hugh Greenfield	262005	114 High Street, Barton, Cambridge CB23 7BG <a href="mailto:thegreenfields114@gmail.com">thegreenfields114@gmail.com</a>
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<b>Facebook:</b>		"Barton Village Cambs"



**Barton Parish Council  
Members**

**Patrick DeBacker,  
Parish Clerk**



**Margaret Penston  
Chair**



**Tim Scott  
Vice Chair**



**John Bailey**



**Bev Edwards**



**Hugh Greenfield**



**Mary Macdonald**



**Mike Radford**



**Nigel Siddall**



**Karen Wilkins**

### **Report from Barton School – Cathy Martin, Chair of Governors**

Barton School continues to be a popular school of choice, attracting children not only from its catchment villages of Barton and Grantchester but also other villages and the city of Cambridge. Our current roll is 105 and although there is some variation it has been consistently over 100 for the last seven years.

In March 2014 Ofsted inspected our school. This inspection, which was carried out under a different framework from our last inspection, judged our school as 'Requires Improvement'. Although it was a disappointing recommendation for the school, the inspector did make many positive comments and noted many of our recent improvements. The inspection identified several areas of good practice which needed rolling out, to be consistent across the whole school. In line with a 'Requires Improvement' judgement, we had a visit from an HMI inspector at the end of the Summer term, and were pleased that he was able to report that plans for rapid progress were in place and being executed. A substantial package of support, which is more intensive than the regular LA and DBE support, has been given to the school from the LA to accelerate the process of school improvement,

Our biggest change this year has been the appointment of a new Headteacher. Miss Carpenter had been with us for almost 12 years and decided that the time was right for her to take on new challenges. Her time at Barton was celebrated at the end of the Summer term by the children, parents, colleagues and the local community with a tea-party in the school grounds. In September 2014, Mrs Claire Coulson took over a school which had already started on its post-Ofsted journey of school improvement. She has continued to work hard with staff, governors and the local authority in leading us through the next phase of Barton School's development. There is still some way to go but there are very positive indicators that initiatives employed are having impact on raising standards and that there are distinct improvements in many of our targeted areas.

There has been some movement of staff over the last year, with job changes within the school and new staff appointed to cover a maternity leave. Any staff changes, especially in a small school, have the potential to be unsettling, but they have been managed very well and we are especially grateful to our team of dedicated staff for their part in offering the best education for our children.

We are always well supported by the church and were pleased to be able to welcome Rev Rebecca Gilbert to our school. She has taken over from Rev Corin Redsell and is warmly welcomed into school to help support the spiritual needs of the whole school.

One of our big projects this year has been the re-vamping of the school library. The FOBS (Friends of Barton School) helped to support this project and we now have a welcoming newly-furnished area with quality up-to-date fiction and non-fiction texts. This has been extremely well-received by the children and is really helping to inspire a love and enjoyment of books.

We have recently elected a new Parent Governor to our Governing Body and are now in the process of recruiting for another Foundation Governor to fill a further vacancy on our governing body

My last comments are the ones I make every year but they remain as strong and true as ever. The school community is a team of people: teaching and support staff, governors, parents and many individuals from the local community who all work together to make sure that the children have the best possible opportunities and education that we can provide. We continue to be very grateful to all the members of that community who give their time and energy to Barton School in so many different ways to enhance the learning experiences of all our children.

## 5. Reports from Barton Village Institutions and Groups\*:

### Parish Report. Barton Baptist church. 2015.

Since our last report in 2013, significant building and renovation work has been carried out at the Baptist church. I am glad to report that due to the kindness and generosity of both our own church members and folk from the village, the work was completed on time and has been fully paid for. One of the positive outcomes of this work was an overhaul of our back room, which now provides a warm and welcoming venue for our fortnightly tea and chats. These are well attended as are the men's breakfasts run jointly with the parish church. Relationships between the two churches is excellent, with joint meetings being held during Lent and Advent, as well as regular songs of praise. Tomorrow, we will be holding our first "Pop up café" in the village hall, to serve the village, provide a great cup of coffee with cake and to get to know some of the school children's parents. This is another joint venture between the two churches. In summer 2014 we hosted a "Tea on the green" primarily for the residents of Great close and Allens close. The weather was fantastic, the food delicious and the response very positive. We hope to repeat this year. We are pleased to be part of a lively village and are here to show and share the love of God within this community.

Rev Ken Jones

### **Bridge Club** *David Barnes*

The Bridge Club moved to Barton in May 2006. Since then we have used the Hall just about every Wednesday evening that it has been available to us, except for Bank Holidays. The membership, which is drawn from all points of the compass, is currently about 50. In the past year or so the average number of attendees has been

27. The Club is not affiliated to the English Bridge Union (EBU). There is a Joining Fee of £10, an Annual Membership Fee of £10, and table money of £1 per member and £2 per guest. We play Duplicate Bridge which involves several pairs playing the same hands. Each pair is ranked alongside other pairs that have played the hands in the same "direction" (i.e. North/South or East/West) and points are awarded for a pair's position within the hand's rankings. These points are totalled and the final pair rankings determined.

Each year we hold our "Xmas Do" which is usually attended by most members, because it is free (Paid for from Club funds) and at which a hot meal is provided (And has been catered by one of our members for the last few years).

The Club does not envisage changing anything in the way it operates and at the moment there is adequate space for the sessions.

- **BRIG** *no report*

### **Community Car Scheme** *Meta Greenfield*

In October 2014 Meta Greenfield took over the running of this long standing car scheme from Ann Killen and Bryan Goshawk. Many thanks go to them for running the scheme for over 10 years. The scheme itself has run in the village for a very long time. It provides lifts to people who need transport to the surgery, the dentist and to any other medical appointments. The scheme itself is supported by the County Council.

From April 2014 to 2015 the scheme has provided 107 journeys—71 to the surgery and 22 to hospitals.

There are 17 volunteer drivers who do a wonderful job providing this service. 2 are retiring this year so more volunteers to drive are very welcome. Contact Meta Greenfield to discuss this.

The organisation is in two parts:

1. The organisation of the journeys regularly throughout the year
2. The episodic administration which has to be done to supply figures to the County council team and do the admin. for signing up new drivers.



Ideally this is done by two people, but I am doing it all on my own at present.  
I would be grateful if someone would offer to help particularly with the admin side.

The scheme provides an important service to our villagers who are less fit and well.







## Report for the Annual Parish Meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015

The drama group was formed in May 1981, so we will be 34 years old next month and some of the founder members are still involved. The aim of the group is to stage two plays a year (usually spring and autumn) and to have social events for members during the year. Our last report to the annual Parish Meeting was in April 2013.

The productions since then have been:

- November 2013 - Biting the Bullet, a comedy by Frank Vickery, about a woman whose husband of 32 years leaves her and about how she copes and soon forges a new life for herself.
- March 2014 - Soapsud Island, a play with music by Phillip Sheahan, about the men and women who worked in the laundries in West London between the two World Wars servicing the hotels and rich houses in London. A photo from the play is in the BRIG 2015 calendar for the month of November.
- November 2014 - Curtain Up!, a comedy by Peter Quilter, about five women who inherit a dilapidated theatre and plan to bring it back to life with the help of Liza Minelli and a life size Teddy Bear!
- March 2015 - The Memory of Water, an award winning comedy by Shelagh Stephenson, about three sisters who come together after their mother's death and who have very different memories of past events.

They were four very different plays, but all very good in their own way and enjoyed by the audiences.

We aim to have four main social events each year and in the last year we had a Pimms & Buffet Evening in the Village Hall; an Evening with Nick Warburton, a well-known local playwright who gave a very interesting talk (this was also open to non-members); a Christmas meal at The White Horse in Barton; and a New Year Party in the Village Hall with entertainment by Mr. Rainbow, The Punch & Judy Man, which was very good.

In addition, we have a social evening at the White Horse on the first Tuesday of each month and occasionally other events are organised.

We hope to have a production in November this year, but for the group to have a long term future we need new members, particularly young men and women wanting to act, and people to help with all the jobs involved.

We are a very friendly group, with a high standard of productions and would love to hear from anyone who might be interested in joining us. If so, please give me a call on 01223 262720 or have a look at our website [www.bartondramagroup.com](http://www.bartondramagroup.com).

Geoff Nicholls  
Chairman

- **Friendship Club** *Brian West*

### **Barton Friendship Club**

#### **Report for Parish Council 2015**

During the last year the club has reduced the number of meetings from twice a month to once a month. We now only meet on the first Tuesday afternoon of each month. We still have a speaker every other month and normally a games afternoon on the other month.

Topics covered by the speakers have included: Travelling with Royalty, Touring the black sea, Being president of the WI and Hearing dogs for the deaf.

Each year we have two coffee mornings with a bring and buy stall. One of these is usually for club funds the other for a charity. Last year we gave £300 to cancer charities.

Our programme also includes a Birthday tea and a Christmas lunch.

Our numbers have fallen over the passed year and we will miss the services of Brian Ross who produced wonderful posters for us.

**Brian West**

#### **Guides/Rangers** Valerie Ridgman

- There are 36 girls in Barton Guides, between the ages of 10 and 16. They come from several villages in the area: Barton, Comberton, Coton, Haslingfield and Harlton. The Guiders come from Coton and Barton.
- March 2014 was the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the forming of the current Guide unit, so we started the year with a big party, where lots of former Guides and friends were able to reminisce and celebrate – with cake, of course!
- We wanted to have a special camp to mark the anniversary, so we went by train to the Welsh Guide House, Broneirion, for a week in August. The girls were able to go on several hillwalks, and we went to Aberystwyth, and the Elan Valley. We also went on a mountain railway, and the girls particularly enjoyed the beach at Aberdovey.
- The Guides had a day trip to the Harry Potter Studios Tour in December, and have recently had an evening learning how to juggle, and ride a unicycle (not at the same time!)
- We are planning another camp this summer, at an activity camp near Brentwood that we have been to before. The fully qualified instructors there help the Guides take part in kayaking, abseiling, archery, climbing, raft-building and so on. All food is cooked on wood fires, and the girls take turns in helping to run the camp. Campfire songs are very popular, and they learn to tie knots and build gadgets from wood, just like we always have done.



## Barton Lunch Club Report 2015

We continue to serve a meal in the village hall on the first Friday of each month, for anyone from the village who cares to book a place and come along; there are usually around 50 people attending, but obviously this number does fluctuate each month. We have a team of dedicated volunteers who cook, lay up tables and help serve, and a very regular clientele, several who have been coming for a very long time, and others who are more recent residents, it seems it does not take long for our reputation to reach newcomers, which is very encouraging to those of us who are involved in the organising.

The cooking each month is shared by several people and the food is mostly prepared and cooked in homes and brought to the hall hot and ready to serve. We have been serving a monthly meal now for 21 years, and I believe this social event is very much valued by all who come, especially those who live alone. Each meal, at the moment only costs £3.00 and consists of two courses followed by tea or coffee, and we also cater for diabetics and vegetarians. Sometimes the children from the school come after the meal to give us some entertainment which is always appreciated. The December meal is normally offered free, but donations are requested for a local charity. This last year we supported Arthur Rank appeal for the new hospice

Anyone interested in coming to the lunches or helping with preparing them please let me know. We are desperate for more people who might cook; new cooks and helpers on the team, would mean no one has to cook every time, and would make life easier for us all and hopefully would also ensure the Lunch Club can continue for a while longer. *If we cannot find more cooks soon we will struggle to continue*

### • **Neighbourhood Watch** *Bev Edwards*

This will be a fairly long report, as there has been a lot happening in Barton since my last report to this meeting two years ago.

Neighbourhood Watch is about local people working together to create safer, attractive and friendly places to live, places where crime is less likely to happen and people are less likely to turn to anti-social behaviour. It's about you looking out for your neighbours and them looking out for you.

We have a team of 5 Neighbourhood Watch coordinators in Barton covering various parts of the village and, on behalf of Barton residents; I want to thank them for their efforts. This team needs to be expanded.

Barton is a low-crime area but is certainly not free from crime. On average, there are 3 crimes a month here. The most frequent is burglary (about one a month, out of around 370 houses in the village), and then there's antisocial behaviour, violent crime, various types of theft, criminal damage, an occasional public order offence and other types of crime. Recently, there has been an increase in drug-taking on the rec. This is mainly cannabis use but also use of nitrous oxide or laughing gas (*show a cylinder found by Margaret Penston*). The police take nitrous oxide use very seriously as it can

cause brain damage and even death, so they have been increasing their patrols on the rec to try to catch the drug-takers and to warn them of the dangers.

Barton has recently been visited by police calling door to door to offer security advice - Operation Oaklands. There was also a surgery to help and advise people on how to improve the security of their properties. Window locks, shed locks and smart water were on sale, Many burglaries are carried out by people who break into people's sheds and then use the tools that they steal to break into nearby houses. Shed security is therefore very important, and £6 shed alarms and £2 window alarms can be a valuable deterrent. Police also advise that burglar alarms and good quality CCTV are very valuable in reducing burglary.

Personally, I am particularly concerned about burglary. It causes people to feel violated and possibly unsafe, and can result in the loss of items of great sentimental value, even if they are not very valuable to the thief. Nearby villages, especially Coton, have been even more affected by burglary than Barton, another reason to remain on our guard. Our proximity to the M11 makes it easy for burglars from Essex and elsewhere to target our properties and then make a quick getaway. I believe Neighbourhood Watch benefits our community by helping to reduce burglaries, and other crimes, in our village. We discussed this recently with the police, and they advised us to expand our Neighbourhood Watch team, so that we have more eyes and ears helping to protect Barton, and to reduce crime further. They offered to help with this if we need it. We need to recruit more Neighbourhood Watch volunteers, so please put yourself forward if you are able to help. It doesn't take up a lot of your time, as most communication is by email, it's more about keeping your eyes and ears open for suspicious activity.

Police are thinly spread and have to deal with a wide range of crime including various types of abuse, terrorism, theft from farms and online fraud. A recent example of the type of issue that they have to deal with is Arrington Hand Car Wash, where the illegal-immigrant employees were exploited by a Luton-based gang master, made to live on the premises in poor conditions and given very little pay. These abuses have now been stopped.



There are frequent cases of doorstep callers committing fraud and Barton has been targeted by the "Nottingham Knockers" - fake charity collectors and door to door sales people with criminal connections. With Neighbourhood Watch help, we have been able to keep them at bay and prevent people from being exploited by them. We also need to be on the lookout for distraction burglars and people impersonating police officers or public officials. An unpleasant example was a case in the Fens where a criminal claimed to be a council official looking for a rat, and taking away a large amount of cash that he said needed to be fumigated. I hope Barton villagers are less gullible!

Please don't let this list of crimes make you feel nervous. We are in a low-crime area and a little care will help to keep it that way. Please join Neighbourhood Watch if you would like to help in making Barton safer - it won't take up much of your time and it could be very helpful.



## St Peter's church Report 2015.

In the absence of both our vicar and church warden it seems to have fallen to me as PCC secretary to give the report this time. 2014 was an important year in the life of St. Peter's as we welcomed our new team vicar, Rev Rebecca Gilbert to our parishes in October. Our group of parishes was once again re-organised and we welcomed Coton back after several years so we are now a group of 4 parishes, Barton, Coton, Harlton and Haslingfield with Rebecca living in Haslingfield. If you have not already met her I'm sure you will before long - in fact tomorrow could be a good opportunity as we holding an early morning cafe here from 8.45am and this will be open for anyone in the parish, so if you are free do come along.

As well as our usual Sunday services we have held several fund raising events over the year, Jumble Sale, Open Garden teas, Safari supper, Coffee morning and we held a concert. As a church we do have to fund raise in order to pay our ministry share of around £15,000 a year to the diocese which helps to pay for stipends and pensions for the clergy; and this is on top of trying to keep our beautiful medieval building in good repair. We are very grateful for all the support we receive from the parish both financial and practical. We have also supported several charities over the year, notably WaterAid, the Childrens Society and Farm Africa

*churchyard*

We have had our church organ repaired; it was completely taken to pieces and rebuilt which took almost 4 months but we had it back in playing order just in time for our Carol and Christmas services, we were fortunate to receive a grant towards this expense and the organ now sounds great. New gates made by Henrik Zelinka at Burwash Have been installed recently and have been much admired. The gates were given to the church as an in memorium gift.

Several of the congregation volunteer in the school in various roles, listening to children read, helping on outings, assisting with the gardening club and other activities and our clergy team regularly take assemblies in the school and they work closely alongside Mrs Claire Coulson the head teacher. We have also shared Advent and Lent courses with Barton Baptist church and we also held two joint Songs of Praise services for Epiphany and for summer.

All in all we have had a successful year and are in good heart, and feel <sup>hope</sup> we are a valued and important part of our village community. The church building itself is a special place for quiet reflection and prayer and is always open during the day; I know it is used regularly, and appreciated; it is good to know it is well used.

- **Village Day Committee** *Lorraine Mooney*
- The Committee is now in its third year of operation, having grown out of the committee formed for the Jubilee celebrations in 2012, and reports here for the first time.
- The Committee comprises Tim Deer, Chris Ellson, Hugh Greenfield, Matt Lindon, Richard Miller, Lorraine Mooney, Sarah Pitchford, Mike Radford, Amy Winterbourne.
- Village Day runs in conjunction with the Barton Gardeners, and the two bodies share the cost of the big marquee, and the administration and proceeds of the Grand Draw.
- This year's event is on 11<sup>th</sup> July.
- Building on the format developed for Jubilee, the event takes place on the Recreation ground, using the facilities offered by the pavilion, and hosts a traditional fête from 2-5pm (with pet show, children's performances, Maypole dancing, tug of war) and horticultural show, with stalls and sideshows operated by village groups, who use the occasion to raise funds, outside

stallholders, and other amenities, such as ice cream stalls, funfair, foodstalls. The Committee will also run two sideshows – coconut shy and plate smashing – and hold a champagne draw to raise funds.

- From 6pm the site will be rearranged for dinner and entertainment through until midnight. The Committee provides barbecues for those who want to bring their own food, and this year there will be an Indian foodstall as well as burgers etc on sale. Guy Robinson, who grew up in the village, is playing with his band and Jeremy Bond (JezO) and his team are compèring and providing the entertainment system and stage for the whole day. Both these very high quality operators charge us less than their normal rates.
- Tim Deer and his staff from the White Horse, will run the bar voluntarily and donate proceeds to the Committee.
- Amy Winterbourne created a design for us last year, giving us a recognisable image that we have used in posters and, significantly, in a programme which carries advertising. Having tried various formats to fund the day's entertainment, we are now trying to cover costs, and perhaps make a profit, by selling advertising in the programme.
- Our first year of operation made a loss of about £300, our second year made a profit of around £500. It is the aim of the Committee to use profits made to contribute to village projects.
- This year marks the end of WWII, and government funds have been made available for community activities commemorating this. The Committee successfully applied for £500, which we propose to use on themed entertainments and decorations, but more importantly, on display of village archive material pertaining to the 40s and the war, with the view to form an historical society.

#### **Village Institute**      *Sue Clemo*

Villagers were much more comfortable since the addition of wall insulation and cladding. 45 new chairs had been added. The loo windows would be replaced soon and a new microphone would be purchased.



## **Report from the WI for the Annual Parish Meeting 2015**

Barton WI has 41 members. We meet in the Village Hall on the second Tuesday of each month, at 7.30 pm. The meeting starts with a short business session followed by a speaker, then tea or coffee and a chat.

We have had another busy year. Our very varied and interesting meetings have included a workshop making *Christmas baubles*, where we all went home with our professional looking decoration, a *singing workshop with Hi5*, and a *watercolour demonstration* where we watched Titchwell beach skilfully appear before us.

We had historical talks – *the Grand Arcade Archaeology*, it was fascinating to hear what was in the area before the big shopping centre was built, the *History of Herbal medicine* – a whistle stop tour showing the tweaking of chemicals in plants and our bodies to produce drugs for, amongst other things, asthma relief, and the *History of Local Folk Songs*, many of which were collected from Cottenham.

In August we met in a member's garden on a chilly but dry evening for a 'bring and share' supper.

October brings the annual Harvest Supper, an event for the whole village, catered for by our WI. More food and good company was enjoyed in February at our 94<sup>th</sup> birthday dinner at the White Horse in Barton.

Members Evening in February included a fascinating talk from a villager Peter Clarkson on Antarctica. In December we had our usual fun Christmas party, a mixture of games, choir, and delicious food provided by the members.

We are an active institute with plenty going on to interest all tastes. As well as the monthly meetings we have a walking group, and a campaigns group, and some members sing in a village choir. Members have attended County events and as usual one member won a bursary for a course at Denman College. We have a stall at the Village Day.

We are looking forward to celebrating the Centenary of the WI this year with many County and National WI events, and our own special meeting in Barton in September.

