

Barlaston Parish Council

Gareth Jones (**Chairman**):
Whistlers, 6 Tittensor Road,
Barlaston, ST12 9DN. Tel:
01782 372349
gareth.jones90@btopenworld.com

Neil Hemmings (**Clerk**): 23
Park Drive, Barlaston, ST12
9DW. Tel: 01782 372684
neil_hemmings25@yahoo.co.uk

Tony Dodd: 4 Portland Place,
Barlaston, ST12 9BH. Tel:
01782 373228
tony@dodd2804.plus.com

Sara Fearn: The Spinney,
Longton Road, Barlaston, ST12
9AA. Tel: 01782 373188
sarafearn@fsmail.net

Paul Fisher (**Vice Chairman**):
Catnip Cottage, The Green,
Barlaston, ST12 9AF. Tel:
01782 454501
pdf@pdfisher.co.uk

Steve Hall: 1, Lakewood Drive,
Barlaston, ST12 9BH. Tel:
01782 373029
stevejhall@talktalk.net

Viv O'Dunne: 31 Meadow
Road, Barlaston, ST12 9EJ. Tel:
01782 351154 vivie-
nodunne@gmail.com

Sheila Perkin: 27 Meadow
Road, Barlaston, ST12 9EJ. Tel:
01782 372083

Elaine Philpott: Ivy Cottage,
Canal Side, Barlaston, ST12
9DZ. Tel: 01782 372192
ellyphil@hotmail.com

John Russell: 40 Old Road,
Barlaston, ST12 9EQ. Tel:
01782 372992
john.russell@ntlworld.com

Pete Stevenson: 44 Meaford
Road, Barlaston, ST12 9EB. Tel:
01782 372987
pwstevo@hotmail.com

Patrick Linehan: Wallbrook
Cottage, 31 Longton Road,
Barlaston. Tel: 01782 372878

Borough Councillors for Barlaston and Oulton

Lynne Bakker Collier: The
Bungalow, Old Road, Oulton
Heath
Stone, ST15 8US. Tel: 01785
813473.

Gareth Jones - see above

County Councillor for Stone Rural

Ian Parry
Tel: 01785 276015
E-mail:
ian.parry@staffordshire.gov.uk

The Heron



www.barlaston.org.uk

Find us on Facebook: Barlaston Parish Council

Issue 2

August 2012



Welcome to this second edition of the 'Heron' in its new format. The main focus is the outcome of the survey of villager's views on a variety of topics that was undertaken last year.

Whilst there were matters highlighted as being of concern, the overall message was that people were very happy to live in Barlaston and were proud of the village.

I am becoming increasingly aware that Barlaston is generally regarded as a prime residential location within

North Staffordshire.

The Parish Council recognizes that it needs to be vigilant in using those limited powers that it possesses to ensure that the village continues to be a special place to live. Whilst the Plan for Stafford Borough that is currently out for consultation does not envisage any major development in the village, there are nevertheless potential major development opportunities in, for example, the Wedgwood factory site and the Wedgwood Memorial College campus.

The Meaford Power Station site also remains vacant. It is important that any proposals that are developed within the village recognise that the infrastructure will need attention and the Green Belt needs to be respected.

There is a strong community spirit within Barlaston. The response to the Diamond Jubilee events demonstrated that very well. The occasion provided a very good opportunity for the village to come together and I am very grateful to the organisers of the events for their hard work.

The Parish Council recognises the importance of good communication. In addition to publishing the 'Heron' much work has gone into developing the Parish website. The 'Chairman's Blog' is used regularly to highlight matters that are thought to be of interest. I hope that you find items of interest in this edition.

Gareth Jones - Chairman of Barlaston Parish Council.

Barlaston celebrates the Diamond Jubilee in style



Full story and more photos on page 2...

Barlaston's Jubilee Celebrations...



Barlaston's Jubilee celebrations started on Wednesday 30 May with children from Barlaston First School planting heathers on the village green.

Gareth Jones, Chairman of the Parish Council then unveiled the Jubilee Stone which takes pride of place on the Green.

The Jubilee Stone has an engraved map showing the location of the time capsules in the village, which had been filled and buried by local groups from the village.



Celebrations continued on Friday 1 June with the judging of the Best Dressed Shop window. The judging panel were really impressed with the efforts made by all the shops in the village but unanimously decided that the winner was Mark's Quality Meats for his outstanding 'meat crown'. Second and third place went to Barlaston Laser and Chiropody and Barlaston Post Office respectively.



Saturday 2 June saw a group of would be singers entertaining the residents of Heyfields, Orsett House, Riverview and Meadow Court with war time songs and jubilee cakes. A good time was had by all and we were asked to go back in December for a Christmas singalong.



On Sunday 3 June a very wet Treasure Hunt took place with several teams braving the weather to take part. In the evening the Duke of York hosted a Jubilee Quiz which saw a good turnout of teams.



The sun shone on Monday 4 June for the Fun Day. Children enjoyed a tea party and parents tucked into the hog roast and bbq. Free entertainment was provided for adults and children and various village organisations were on show with well organised stalls. A very good time was had by all.

Barlaston Parish Council would like to thank everyone that worked hard to make the jubilee celebration weekend such a success.

The full set of photos can be seen here: <http://tinyurl.com/c2ostfj>



Canal improvement work set in Stone

The final piece of the jigsaw to link a national cycle path between Stafford and Stoke is to go ahead early next year.

The latest work forms part of the Trent and Mersey Canal towpath improvement project which has been a partnership between Stafford Borough Council, the County Council and the Canal & River Trust – the new charity that has taken over responsibility for waterways in England and Wales from British Waterways.

The work will improve the route from Aston by Stone to Barlaston in the north of Stafford Borough and create an open access to the canal path.

The first phase of the development is expected to begin in February of next year and due to last for around three months.

Phase two will take place the following year.

The cost of the work is more than £700,000 with Staffordshire County Council investing £458,000 into the scheme and the borough council contributing £261,870 to improvements on the whole of the 7.6km stretch. The Canal and River Trust have also contributed in kind.

The route forms part of the 650km long National Cycle Network Route 5 which connects many towns and cities in England and Wales. It will open access to the Barlaston Downs Banks and improve the area opposite the former Meaford Power Station site which will be welcomed by cyclists.

Councillor Frances Beatty, cabinet member for planning and regeneration, said: "This is an exciting project and a great

example of partnership working with ourselves, the county council and the new Canal & River Trust.

"This will bring a boost for the area and will help attract visitors to Stone and Barlaston. It will also create better links for cyclists and walkers and has the support from local communities along the route.

"I know the scheme will be warmly welcomed by cyclists and an improved towpath will allow workers living in and around Stone the choice to use their bikes to get to Trentham Lakes employment area."

Councillor Mike Maryon, Staffordshire County Council's Cabinet member for Highways and Transport said: "This is a prime of example of how our £50 million investment in making the county safer and more accessible to cyclists, motorists and

pedestrians.

"Thank to this partnership approach the important cycle link between Stafford and Stoke will allow improved access to the canal side for members of the public."

Would you know what to do in a life-threatening emergency? Learning Emergency Life Support (ELS) skills can help you keep someone alive until professional help arrives.

If you or your community group would like to register an interest in learning ELS skills via a 2-hour free course accredited by the West Midlands Ambulance service and the British Heart Foundation please contact Viv O'Dunne on 07944 239623 or email vivienodunne@gmail.com



The Churchyard Extension (Hartwell Lane)

In the last year the Parochial Church Council and Barlaston Parish Council have worked closely together in continuing to improve the appearance of the Churchyard and to plan for its future.

The problems mentioned in the previous issue have been tackled. Two trees have recently been planted—one as a memorial and then the magnolia given by the Parish Council to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. Our maintenance contractor Peter Sellers (a resident of Barlaston, hence his interest in our endeavours) noticed five Wedgwood graves - the earliest dating back to 1840 and another commemorating the life of the First Baronet of Etruria. With funding from

Wedgwood, these are now being restored to their original condition.

A major problem still exists with the area intended for cremated remains. Other Churchyards have been visited for inspiration and currently we are seeking advice from the Diocese of Lichfield about how best to proceed.

Notices are now in place advising visitors about seasonal tributes and flowers on graves and we value everyone's cooperation in helping us to maintain standards in the Churchyard.

The Church is currently preparing a letter for Funeral Directors. This will give those requesting a burial more details about our Churchyard and the care of a grave than the information currently contained in the required

legal document from Lichfield.

The Cemetery Committee now meets twice a year. Possible topics for our September meeting include: the formation of a 'Friends of the Churchyard' group, Fund Raising (maybe for flowering shrubs, plants, wild flowers) and, next year, to have an Open Day with the benefit of the little Chapel being available if it is another wet summer!



VILLAGE HALL PROGRAMME 2011



Barlaston Village Hall boasts excellent and flexible facilities, which include a large entertainment area, fully equipped kitchen, private meeting room as well as car parking.



Enquiries and private bookings: 01782 618801
Weekly programme:

Zumba: Gail Nicholls 07980 690 356
Monday 10 am then 6pm
Thursday 10 am then 6pm
Sunday 10.30 am

Defy Gravity Dance
Laura: 01782 821 195
Tuesday 4.30pm to 9.15pm
Includes: Nursery ballet and tap, adult tap, kids street dance and body blast fitness.

Stokie's Tango Dance
www.stokies.org
Tuesday 8.15pm
Argentine Tango classes

Rosemary Conley Diet & Fitness Class
kerry.corcoran@rosemaryconley.com
07917 331 904
Tuesday 10am

Kickboxing
Steve Hallam
Wednesday from 5pm
shkickboxing.co.uk

U3A Art Group
Friday: 2pm

For more details see the website
barlastonvillagehall.co.uk

Barlaston Village Show 2012

The Village Show will be held this year on September 8th and will be opened by Councillor Mrs Ellie Philpott.

The Show schedule has been out for some time and is available from village shops. It is hoped that the Show will be well supported despite the difficult growing conditions that have been experienced in June and July. There are more categories to enter this year and for the first time since the show was revived cash prizes will be given to category winners.

The committee requests that winners of last year's trophies return them to

the Show Committee before the end of August. A contribution towards the cost of engraving will be requested.

It is proposed to allow space in the Village Hall to display Diamond Jubilee photographs from the various village events. If anyone has an interesting or amusing photograph from the Jubilee please bring it along to the show to display. It is also planned to present an award to the person whose balloon travelled the furthest from the cricket field on Jubilee Monday.

The theme for this year's photographic completion is

a 'Water Scene'. There are many opportunities normally in Barlaston to capture a scene with water, but 2012 has provided even greater opportunities than usual with the deluges that have fallen on the village.

As in previous years there will be a Barn Dance in the Village Hall on the evening of the show. This is always a very enjoyable occasion but numbers will be limited. Tickets are available from Charles Aked on 350347.

The Produce Show is an important part of the Village calendar. Please support it.

Village Hall Improvements

The Village Hall continues to be very well supported and there are activities in the Hall most days of the week.

A development that is proving to be particular popular is the monthly 'pop up' restaurant. It has surprised many people how well the Hall has adapted to become a local restaurant with a distinctive ambiance of its own. It is not often that one can go into a restaurant and know most of the people sat at the tables. The restaurant is very good value for money and the quality of the food is high. The event is advertised on a blackboard located at the front of the Hall. Look out for it.

There have been a number

of improvements to the Hall. A new sound system has been installed and has attracted much favourable comment from users. A new backcloth and curtain is being acquired for the stage and grilles have been placed in the false ceiling to assist with air circulation and to make the Hall more acceptable to the more active users. The issues of noise and air circulation are greatly occupying the minds of the Hall Committee and it is felt that progress is been made.

A new clock has been installed at the front of the Hall and the floodlighting at the rear of the Hall on to the car park is now more reliable

following the installation of new lights.

The Hall Committee recognises that the kitchen facilities are inadequate for anything other than the most basic catering and is looking at ways in which matters could be improved. It will be necessary to improve the electricity to the Hall before any improvement programme could be progressed.



Village Plan - Action Groups

The Village Plan questionnaire was sent to each household in the Parish in September 2011. Please read the "Summary" in this issue of the Heron for more complete details of the analysis of the replies.

It is the intention of the Parish Council to use the results obtained to the

benefit of all in the village. Therefore 2 "Action Groups" are being established, with a brief to study the problems highlighted by the survey, propose ways to improve the situation, and implement actions within the budget allocated.

Each Action Group will be composed of 6 Parish

Councillors, together with those who indicated their interest to help via the questionnaire, and other villagers who may wish to volunteer to help. If you are interested in joining either of the groups described below, please contact the lead Councillor (Pete Stevenson: Transport/traffic, Tony

Dodd: Environment – contact details on the front page).

In proposing these actions, the Parish Council believes that it is making the best use of the Village Plan survey results, and that general village life will be improved for the benefit of all.

Wedgwood Royal Doulton

During June WWRD announced that the Company was proposing to embark on a major rationalisation programme to ensure that the factory was more appropriate to twenty first century conditions.

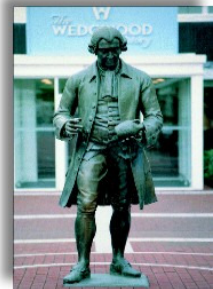
It was stated the cost of the programme would be in the region of £25 million and would involve the development of residential

housing on the campus in addition to a reorganised factory layout. WWRD management undertook an initial consultation exercise on 17th July which was very well attended by villagers. Following the event WWRD management commented as follows :-

'We had a n overwhelmingly positive response from the local community at our first

consultation event. We were pleased to speak to more than 400 local residents about our plans and discuss with them a range of options that will enable us to bring the Wedgwood estate back to its former glory and beyond. We are reviewing the questionnaires submitted by attendees and the feedback that we have received will help to inform

our designs for the site. The next consultation event is likely to take place in September and we look forward to continuing this partnership with the local community."



Network Rail

Since the last Heron was distributed, Gareth Jones, Viv O'Dunne and Neil Hemmings have met at the Barlaston level crossing with senior managers of Network Rail and a local manager from Staffordshire County Council Highways Department. The meeting was convened to discuss operational safety and the management of the crossing.

The Barlaston crossing is the safest automated level crossing type currently in use by Network Rail. The level crossing itself is protected by signals that are maintained at danger to safeguard pedestrian and vehicular user groups when

the barriers are in the raised position.

The level crossing is equipped with CCTV coverage which is monitored by signallers working the controlling signal box. The signals protecting the level crossing are not cleared to allow a train to pass until the signaller is satisfied (via CCTV monitoring) that there are no pedestrians or vehicles trapped within the confines of the barrier equipment and that the barriers and the road traffic lights have operated correctly.

The method of barrier operation used means that there is no need for a

safety telephone to be installed (as some villagers have requested) as the crossing is visually supervised.

The frequency of train movement through the village follows a similar pattern throughout the day with a tail off during the evening. The current timetable demands that the crossing be closed to allow ten trains per hour to pass at the times printed here.

It is hoped that through the provision of this information locally, villagers will be able to plan their journeys over the level crossing to minimise delays. It would seem that there is a 'window' of 23

minutes after twenty past the hour where free passage is possible provided that the trains are operating to timetable. At the time of the meeting they were!

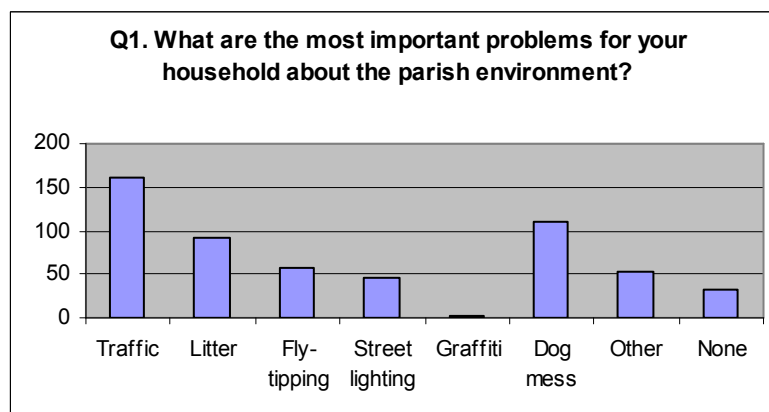
It would seem inevitable that there will be hold ups at quarter past and quarter to the hour.

Barlaston Crossing: Scheduled trains

11.00 north
11.07 south
11.13 south
11.13 north
11.16 north
11.21 south
11.44 south
11.47 south
11.49 north
11.53 north

BARLASTON VILLAGE PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY— Steve Hall

The analyses, comments and conclusions contained in this report are those derived from the 310 questionnaires returned from the 1,200 distributed to all households in the village. Conclusions and potential actions have hence been arrived at from around a 30% response rate which is considered reasonable for this type of survey. The responses have been collated in chart form, by question, based on both the boxes ticked, and also the written comments where requested.



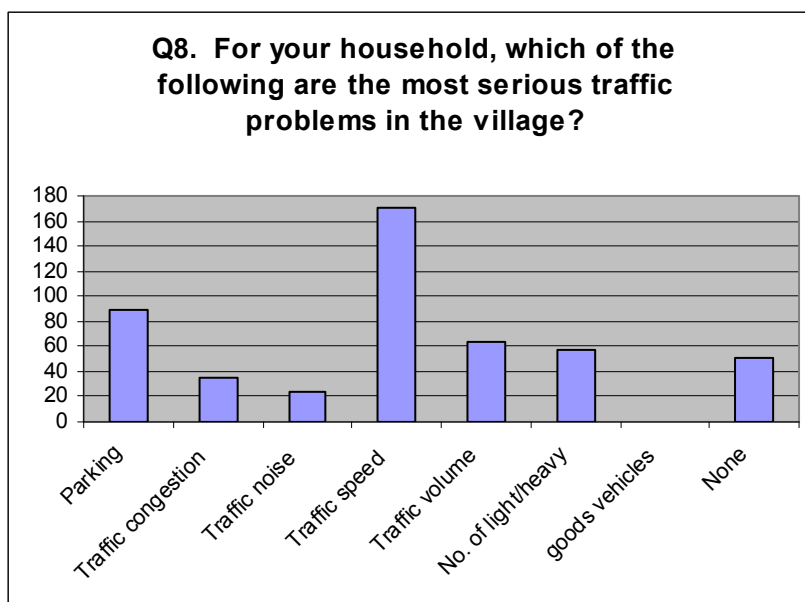
The analyses have been grouped by subject headings (eg Traffic, Environment etc), which allows information from various questions to be cross-referenced with others to provide more complete information.

The overwhelming picture that emerges is of a village where people feel safe, enjoying the friendly community spirit, rural setting, views, walks, and good transport links. It was very much appreciated that the village provides a good level of local

amenities such as shops, post office, doctors surgery. There were 40 people who indicated their willingness to volunteer in various capacities, which is a very positive sign of the “goodwill” present in the community.

The major concerns in the parish were identified as Traffic, Dog mess, Litter and Fly-tipping.

On **Traffic** issues, speeding on the two “through routes” and Longton Road was the main concern, with more policing, speed bumps and cameras being the favoured controls. A considerable number of replies (70) considered no extra action was necessary, and 48% of responses were against residents monitoring speed. Parking was mentioned as a problem on Barlaston Park, Orchard Place, and Village Hall/Post Office, and Congestion at the Level Crossings was a perceived problem.



Dog mess was a concern, mainly on the Canal towpath and Barlaston Park, and **Litter** reported generally, with Orchard Place and Barlaston Park seen as the worst areas. Lack of bins for both dog and general litter was highlighted. Action Plans for these items are proposed in the report.

Under the heading of Environment, hedges, trees and open spaces were appreciated, but concerns about

the narrowness, or lack, of pavements, potholes in roads, and untrimmed hedges were expressed. The condition of pavements throughout the village was the main concern for disabled persons.

There was an average of 2.1 people, and just less than 1 car (which was able to be parked off the road) in the households that responded; with nearly 40% of persons aged over 60 years reflecting a village population of relatively high average age.

Concerns were evident about waiting times for appointments at the surgery, and transport difficulties accessing local hospitals, dentists etc. Working persons expressed some difficulty with surgery opening hours.

Bus services were rarely or never used by 64% of those responding, with around 16% of these indicating that nothing would persuade them to do so. Amongst those who did, or would, use buses, increased destinations and frequency, along with lower costs were the main items indicated.

Of the amenities within the village, the allotments were not used by the vast majority, with only a small amount of people indicating an interest in using one. The Village Hall was well supported for Drama, private functions, dance and general sports, with a total of 19 other activities suggested. More persons thought there was no need for additional children's play facilities, than those in favour. If facilities were to be provided, Meadow Road and a "central" location were preferred.

There was an overwhelming response that any future residential development should be limited to the existing settlement boundaries, and should consist of a mixture of housing types. There was a clear majority in favour of low cost affordable dwellings for local people.

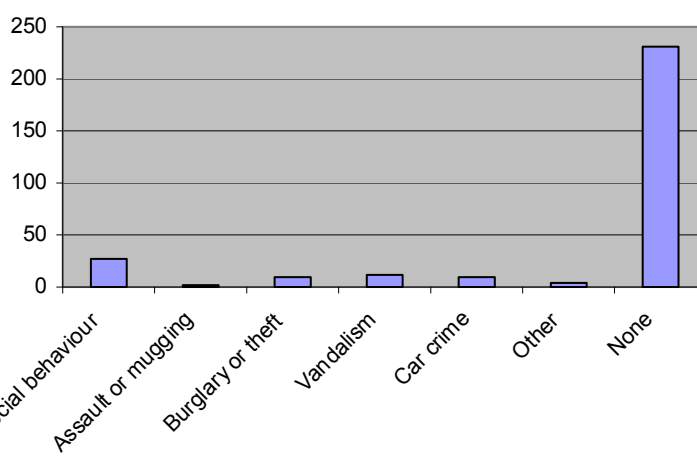
In terms of Communication of items within the village, there was a preference for the written word (Heron, Parish Magazine, notice boards), but the Parish Council website was also used by significant number of people.

To conclude, the last question asked for any other comments, and many different items were mentioned. Rewardingly the most comments on one subject (11) expressed satisfaction at the job being performed by the Parish Council, but, more interestingly, 7 comments asked for NO new housing development, 4 concerned the perceived poor image of the local pubs, 3 that the re-opening of Barlaston Station should be supported, and 3 that there are too many signs around the village.

A full copy of the report will be available to read on the Barlaston Parish Website and hard copies will be available to read at the Post Office, the mobile library, at Barlaston Village Hall and in the meeting room of the Methodist Chapel.

The Authors of this report would like to thank all persons who filled in a questionnaire.

Q20. Has anyone in your household suffered from crime in the village in the past 12 months?



Annual Awards:

Over the past few years Barlaston Parish residents have nominated Villagers to receive a Certificate of Commendation for their contribution to village life. In 2012 there have been three people chosen to receive the award:- Mrs Barbara Carter, Mrs Mavis Eardley and Miss Pam Bedford. All three recipients on being advised of their nomination said that they were not looking for public recognition for their efforts but were please to help the community.

Mrs Barbara Carter.

Barbara is a long-term resident of Barlaston and her roots are in North Staffordshire. She has been recently concerned about the upkeep of the Churchyard

extension and has been determined to make it more acceptable for visitors. Though she lives in Meaford Road Barbara looks after the refuse bins and regularly keeps the crescent around the Cemetery Chapel clean and tidy. She is a member of the Cemetery committee which meets twice a year.

Barbara says 'Barlaston is lovely village and the Churchyard is an integral part of the village. It is important that it is presented to as good an effect as the other parts.'

Mrs Mavis Eardley

Mavis, who lives in Old Road, has a fifty year association with the Proscenium Players. For the last twenty years she has been their Secretary. This role has provided the Players with excellent administrative support for their twice yearly productions. Mavis has been

responsible for ticketing, producing posters, liaison with the press and maintaining the important mailing list.

Mavis has also been responsible for organising the twice yearly fund raising events through which a lot of money has been raised for local good causes.

Miss Pam Bedford

Pam came to live in Chapel Court in 2000 and since then has made a significant impact on village life. In April 2009 Pam launched the Silver Surfers, a service dedicated to assisting the elderly to become more proficient with computer skills. Since its inception more than eighty people have attended one of the weekly sessions and many have achieved a high level of skill.

Most people when they joined the Silver Surfers had no or

little computer knowledge but many soon were able to order their shopping on line or correspond by email with friends and relations.

More recently (since April 2011) Pam has started a monthly meeting for people with a visual impairment. This service has been well received and between 15 and 20 people regularly attend.

Pam is a member of the Church choir and secretary of the Barlaston Bowls and Tennis Club .



(Howard Davies with Barlaston First School Headteacher, Mandy Clarey—photo courtesy of Steve Parry-Thomas)

At the School Sports Day, the children were delighted to receive their prizes from Barlaston's own Olympian, Howard Davies. Howard represented Great Britain's Men's Hockey team. In appreciation of his attendance Howard was given prime position on the winners podium.

We hope you've enjoyed reading this issue of the *Heron*. Please send any comments or suggestions for future articles, or questions you have for the Parish Council to the Editor, Viv O'Dunne: heroneditor@gmail.com

Computer lessons in Church?

Computer lessons in Church might seem a strange idea, but that's what happens in Barlaston! If you want to learn how to use a computer or want to update your skills, you can come along to the Parish Church of St John the Baptist.

St John's Silver Surfers started in 2009 as a way of the Church offering to the community something which they felt would be useful, especially to those of the older generation in Barlaston who were feeling left behind.

So far about eighty people have attended the informal classes which are run by volunteer tutors. We provide one-to-one teaching in a friendly, relaxed environment tailored to the needs of each individual. Not everyone has been silver-haired but ages have ranged from about 55-85! Some have started from scratch, while others have

come along to update their skills. Many have felt very apprehensive about their ability to learn new things now that they are older, but most people have surprised themselves—and their families!

Lessons are free but many members felt they wanted to make a donation, so any donations received are shared between the Church (to cover the cost of broadband) and nominated charities, including a recent donation of £200 to Barlaston First Responders.

Anyone from the community is welcome to come along and have fun as they surf the web! Anyone interested in finding out more can contact Pam Bedford on 01782 732011.

