



Colwich Parish Council

INCORPORATING WOLSELEY BRIDGE, COLWICH, GREAT HAYWOOD & LITTLE HAYWOOD

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2019

No. 100

COLWICH YOUTH COUNCIL

In its third full year of operation, the Colwich Youth Council is celebrating a year of the arts and its relationship with young people. We aim to inspire the youth of the village and surrounding areas to participate in arts-centred events, giving them the opportunity to develop their arts skills.

We are delighted to announce that we will be hosting our first ever Arts Exhibition and Festival, on 7th April at Colwich and Little Haywood Village Hall, Chilwell Avenue. This will be an afternoon to celebrate young people's art, announcing and displaying the winners of various competitions we will be running between now and then! We are also proud to welcome several local professional artists who can provide an inspiration for the competitors, and offer workshops and stall to peruse.

To kick off the long-anticipated summer holidays, the Youth Council will return on Saturday 27th July to host a Music Festival, this time at the Great Haywood Memorial Hall, Main Road, Great Haywood, showcasing promising musical acts from the local area.

To conclude the Council's year, and following last year's success, the Youth Council will be present at the Flower and Vegetable Show, running a final fun festivity before school sets in again.

So please, come along and support our programme of activities. Everyone is welcome, from the tiny tots, to the talented teens, even the creative parents! Enticement in the form of prizes and refreshments will be available.

On 11th September we will hold our Annual Meeting when we elect the Chairman of the Youth Council for the year ahead. We will also bid farewell to our retiring Youth Councillors, as they prepare for life after High School, and say a big hello to any Year 6 pupils, or others, who wish to join the Council.



Finally, on Wednesday 16th January we were delighted to finally hand over the monies raised during the 2018 fete, held as part of the Flower and Vegetable Show.

We presented cheques for £51.15 each to the Donna Louise Trust, which supports children with life-limiting conditions and their families, and House of Bread which provides a meal, advice and support as well as a safe and welcoming place for all vulnerable people in Stafford.

TWINNING

Following our very successful visit to Rimbach last October, we are now drawing up plans for the reciprocal visit by the Partnerschaftverein in the summer. As was our visit last year, it will incorporate not only the Twinning Association but also young people from the village. We will again be joined by representatives of the Stafford & Rugeley Lions who have also formed a partnership with their counterparts in the Rimbach area.

In a break from tradition, this year's visit, Sunday 28th July to Friday 2nd August, has been arranged to fit the overlap between the German and English school & college summer holidays. We hope this will

encourage more young people to participate. The Twinning Committee, in conjunction with the Rimbach PaRi are organising a programme of visits and events for the visit.

We have organised a series of fundraising events:

AFTERNOON TEA - on Sunday 17th March, at the Great Haywood Memorial Hall, from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm

SKITTLES EVENING - with a Fish and Chips Supper on Saturday 18th May at Colwich & Little Haywood Village Hall, from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

The Twinning Association is open to all residents of the Parish and anyone wishing to join would be most welcome. Younger blood is particularly encouraged. There is no membership fee, and everyone pays



the costs of their visits to Germany, though accommodation is provided by their German hosts. Likewise, our members provide accommodation for their German visitors.

Any interested villagers who would like to join us at either of the above fund-raising events or if you would like to learn more about the Association please contact Keith Butler on 881690.

REFLECTIONS AND RUMINATIONS

Looking through back editions of the Newsletter reminds us of past events which have recognised and acknowledged significant achievements, provided pertinent information or announced a loss to the community. This article looks back at some of these.

The inaugural Staffordshire Ironman 70.3 event took place in 2015, followed by further events in 2016 and 2017, which included a half marathon around the villages and finished in the majestic setting of Shugborough. Many local residents turned out to support the competitors including those from our community who accepted the challenge and competed in the event.

The Colwich in Bloom Committee (provisionally known as the Haywoods Best Kept Village/Colwich and Little Haywood in Bloom Committees) work tirelessly each year to fill the villages with both natural colour and scent from their plethora of displays and planting arrangements. This hard work and dedication is regularly recognised when the villages win awards or are highly commended.

The Twinning link between our villages and Rimbach was set up some 35 years

ago and is administered by the Twinning Committee. Visits take place each year and are meticulously planned by the Twinning Association with visitors staying with hosts who take them into their homes. Recently, the Twinning Association has reached out to the younger members of our community to encourage them to make links and friendships with other young people in Germany and this culminated in 5 young people travelling to Rimbach in October 2018 as part of the biennial Twinning Association trip.

In 2016 the Haywood Society received a grant from the Heritage Lottery fund for a project on 'JPR Tolkien in Staffordshire 1915-1918' marking the centenary of the time Tolkien lived in Great Haywood. The Haywood Society created a touring exhibition that visited many venues including a week in the Great Haywood Memorial Hall, which was well attended and enjoyed by local residents.

There was a significant local reaction to the news that the National Trust was taking back Shugborough Estate from Staffordshire County Council. Since it has reverted to the Trust they have developed the site and parkland whilst conserving the house and its contents for the enjoyment of the many visitors.

2016 also saw the Colwich Neighbourhood Plan formally made by Stafford Borough Council. Many residents voted for the Plan and subsequently it was instrumental in preventing the large development that would have joined Great Haywood and Little Haywood resulting in the potential loss of their individual identities. The Neighbourhood Plan continues to be instrumental when determining local planning applications within the community.

In response to local concerns of speeding vehicles through the villages December 2016 saw the inauguration of the Colwich Community Speed Watch (CSW) Group and from Facebook postings it's a bit like marmite – you either like it or you don't! The objective of the CSW initiative is to monitor vehicle

speed in the community, raise awareness of speed and help change the mind-set of those drivers that exceed the speed limits. The CSW volunteers regularly hold events throughout the villages and recently, with the installation of permanent CSW signage, funded by the Staffordshire Safer Road Partnership, the temporary signage is no longer required and this has seen a circa 20% rise in vehicles logged for speeding – hopefully a reduction in speeding vehicles will be observed. Further initiatives on the provision of traffic calming measures in the villages are being considered.

Recently, we've seen the creation of a local project 'Plastic Free Colwich' which has as its objective to encourage the reduction and ultimately elimination of single use plastic by residents, business and organisations. An inaugural event was held at the Great Haywood Memorial Hall in October 2018, which was well supported by local residents, and further events are planned including a Repair Café.

Finally, in response to local requests a working group was setup to oversee the provision of a festive display and 1st December 2018 saw the switch-on of the Christmas light displays in both Little Haywood and Great Haywood. The switch-on ceremony was attended by some 400 residents and saw local school children turn on the lights accompanied by the Haywood Community Choir. Both the ceremony and Christmas lights were a great success and it is hoped to repeat it this year.

To conclude, a large **THANK YOU** is due to all the voluntary organisations and individuals in the parish who continuously devote their spare time to provide assistance to so many people within our community and who endeavour to help to maintain a pleasant and safer environment in our village for us all to enjoy. We also need to recognise the support provided by the local businesses and without their help and assistance some of these events may not have occurred.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

FULL COUNCIL: 4th April

COUNCIL ELECTION: 2nd May

New Councillors take up role: 7th May

ANNUAL MEETING: 16th May

PARISH ASSEMBLY: 23rd May

YOUTH COUNCIL: 17th April and 15th May

ARTS FESTIVAL: 7th April

MUSIC FESTIVAL: 27th July

CIVIC AMENITY (SKIP): 4th May 10:00 – 12:00 JPF

The New Year is normally a time for making resolutions and fresh starts. However, with the local council elections on 2 May 19 this Council's tenure, and my recent appointment as Chairman, will soon be over. Before then there is a need to complete or consolidate a number of important objectives.

The Parish Council's Precept is increasing roughly in line with inflation but sees a slight reduction for Band D properties due to an increase in the number of properties in the parish. The Precept, in conjunction with s106 monies, will enable the Parish Council to continue with its 'day to day' work and its plans to: continue to investigate and hopefully provide a path between the Surgery and the Gt Haywood Memorial Hall Car Park; develop the JPF including the refurbishment of the Changing Rooms and Toilet Block, and continue with the River of Flowers project.

Another significant event was the recent deposit of a proposed set of amendments to the High-Speed Bill in Parliament in the form of an Additional Provision (AP2) on 8th February. This time last year the Parish Council supported the Petition submitted by Staffordshire County Council but this year, in response to AP2, the Parish Council is considering submitting its own Petition by 15th March. Councillors met with representatives of HS2 to better understand the implications of the recent submission and held a Public Consultation in the Memorial Hall.

The "River of Flowers" project has sought to be proactive in the protection and enhancement of our natural environment. As part of this you may have noticed a new type of planting taking place at key locations throughout the villages with an increase in biodiversity and the creation of green corridors to hopefully attract bees and other winged insects which are in decline. Over 50,000 specialist spring bulbs including Snowdrops; Crocus; Bluebells and native Daffodils chosen specifically for the attractiveness to early emerging bees and their propensity to naturalise and spread.

Soon the local elections will be upon us and I would encourage everyone in the parish to consider standing for election and



hopefully there will be sufficient candidates to necessitate a poll at which time everyone will get the chance to exercise their right to vote. The work of a councillor is often both demanding and challenging but if you are passionate about something that will benefit the local community then please consider becoming a councillor.

which might breach the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The Council has, therefore, applied a cost of living increase across its budget heads for 2019/20 as well as an allowance for the revised pay scales issued by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) and the corresponding second year of the current national pay award effective from 1st April 2019.

COUNCIL TAX

Colwich Parish Council must avoid setting a budget which might breach the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. The Council has, therefore, applied a cost of living increase across its budget heads for 2019/20 as well as an allowance for the revised pay scales issued by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) and the corresponding second year of the current national pay award effective from 1st April 2019.

Further funds have been allocated towards a number of ongoing as well as medium to long-term projects.

An additional £10,000 has been allocated towards the link footpath between the Great Haywood Memorial Hall car park and Hazeldene House. Discussions continue with the Painsley Catholic Academy.

A further £2,000 has been allocated to continue the River of Flowers project with a further £8,500 has been allocated for the lengthsman for additional hours and equipment.

The Council continues to improve the Parish Centre to make it fit for the 21st century. The Council has allocated £3,000 for further building work and £1,000 towards its goal of paper free council meetings.

The Health and Safety of residents is important to the Council. Consequently, £2,500 has been allocated for an additional defibrillator to be installed at the JPF. The Council has also allocated £15,000 towards gully cleaning along Main Road, Coley Lane and Meadow Lane to support Staffordshire County Council

The Council is now looking to improve the sports facilities at the JPF following the resolution of its legal case. An initial budget of £15,000 has been allocated for this purpose.

The Council has been offered a number of open spaces within the new housing developments and has allocated £3,000 for conveyancing works

The Youth Council has been allocated £1,500 towards its Arts Festival on Sunday 7th April, the Music Festival on Saturday 27th July and involvement with the Flower and Vegetable show in September.

In total the budget for 2019/20 has been set at £194,640 including £5,280 Central Government Grant giving a charge to local taxpayers of £189,360. This equates to an annual charge of £104.47 per Band D property; £92.86 per Band C and £81.25 per Band B or a 0.2% decrease on the 2018/19 level.

ELECTION 2ND MAY 2019

What is the Parish Council?

The Council, formed following the 1894 Local Government Act, is the first rung of local government. The majority of its funding comes through a charge on the council tax, known as the Precept which it uses to improve the environment across the villages and to support local groups. Fuller details of the 2019/20 proposals are overleaf.

Colwich Parish has 14 Councillors (7 from Great Haywood and 7 from Little Haywood/Colwich). Once elected these Councillors represent the entire Parish.

Why should you vote?

Democracy works best when the community gets to vote for whom it wants to be its representatives. Simply by voting sends a clear message of your opinion to the Council.

It is said 'people get the local council they deserve'. Do you know who in your community is standing for election and what they hope to achieve? The names of candidates will be published in the parish noticeboards and website. Speak to them to help you decide who to vote for.

Councillors live side by side with you in your community; they are the most local level of government, being easily contacted and directly answerable to the community every time they walk out of their front doors. The Council spends your council tax so be sure that you have voted for the people you want. If you do not vote, others will and their views may change your life.

Please ensure you have registered to Vote. If in doubt contact the Borough Council **BEFORE 12th April**.

What does a Parish Councillor do?

Day-to-day contact with local people is the most important role of a Councillor and to bring their concerns to the Council. Yes, there are meetings, but these serve as an avenue for Councillors to bring matters to the attention of colleagues so as to agree a Council position. More and more Councillors are being encouraged to research issues and bring possible solutions to Council for discussion and agreeing. Consequently, it is important that new Councillors be prepared, wherever possible, to work electronically so as to reduce the paper used by the Council and to readily access papers ahead of meetings and to aid research.

Why should you stand?

Becoming a Parish Councillor provides you with a real opportunity to influence what happens in the parish and to make a difference to the lives of the people who live and work in our villages. Democracy requires involvement from all corners of the community. Nationally only 39% of local councillors are female; only 1% come from the 18-25 age group and only 2% are from BAME backgrounds.

"If everyone sat back and let 'other people' do it, we'd soon have no community"

**Councillor Fairbourn,
Wroughton Parish Council.**

By becoming a Parish Councillor you will be the person to whom the community will look to for help, guidance and support. Your main qualification is that you care about our villages and want to see them develop in a sustainable way. There is no one size fits all and indeed there is real strength in having



Councillors with diverse backgrounds and interests. Be the Change you want to see.

How do I become a Parish Councillor?

All 14 seats are to be contested on 2nd May. Nomination papers will be available from the Borough Council, or the Parish Office, from 27th March and **MUST** be returned to the Civic Offices in person by no later than 4pm on Wednesday 3rd April. You will need to satisfy certain criteria as will those who propose and second your nomination. The Statement of Persons Nominated will be published on Thursday 4th April and, should a poll be required, which we hope there will be, then the 'Notice of Poll' will be published on Wednesday 24th April for polling day on 2nd May. The current Councillors will all retire on Tuesday 7th May when the successful candidates take office.

What happens after I am elected?

During the week commencing Tuesday 7th May, all successful candidates **MUST** attend the Parish Centre on St Mary's Road to complete their Acceptance of Office. Failure to complete this declaration before the Annual Meeting will automatically mean that the seat becomes vacant. The first meeting of the new Council will take place at 7:30 pm on Thursday 16th May with the first act to elect a Chairman for 2019/20. The current Chairman and Vice Chairman will remain in post until their successors are appointed even if not re-elected as per Local Government Act 1972 section 15(4), (7) and (8).



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