



NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2021 No. 106

Christmas lights



The Parish Council were delighted to host the Christmas lights competition for the second year. This year we were careful to ask everyone to stay Covid-19 friendly and ensure that there was social distancing. Despite all this, many of you took the opportunity to take a walk around the villages and enjoy the lights. Many homes had lovely displays but did not enter the competition. So, if your favourite house did not win it could be because they did not enter. Did you decorate your home and not enter the competition? Maybe this year you could enter and have a chance to win the coveted trophy. Look out for the details in the Autumn Parish Newsletter.

The Parish Council were delighted to receive 14 entries from home occupiers, and in two instances, whole streets joined together to enter. The entry fee was £5.00 but in the true spirit of Christmas, we raised £420. The Parish



Council will be donating this to 'Little Laura', our current nominated charity, along with the Scarecrow competition funds bringing the total to a fantastic £595.

The worthy individual winner was 1 Tylecote Crescent. Well Done. Congratulations also go to the residents of Devereux Gardens who won the Best Street category.

Thank you to everyone who entered their homes in this competition, it really was a joy looking at all the entrants and seeing how brilliantly decorated so many homes across the villages were this Christmas. This was a great competition to try and lift our spirit whilst we all had a quite different Christmas from normal.



COLWICH & HAYWOOD'S VOLUNTARY TRANSPORT SCHEME - SPRING 2021

Following the Government's lockdown in March 2020, the Committee members of the Colwich and Haywood's Voluntary Transport Scheme (VTS) made the difficult decision to suspend the service due to the coronavirus/COVID19 until further notice. At that time, all of the VTS team - drivers and co-ordinators - found this a hard decision to make; it felt as if we were letting our clients down, especially those who needed to get to medical appointments. Around that time, the number of regular drivers we had was slightly down due to a few leaving us for reasons other than Covid. We therefore asked our remaining drivers and co-ordinators whether or not they would be happy to continue volunteering and, taking into account the Government's rules and guidelines and also the health issue of some of our volunteers, it was not feasible to continue with our voluntary service with such depleted numbers. And, so we have not been able to offer our services during the 3 national lockdowns.

I speak on behalf of our drivers and co-ordinators when I say that we all felt deeply saddened with the temporary suspension of the VTS. We are all enthusiastically hoping to get back to providing a car service for our clients as soon as we possibly can.

You will be pleased to know that at the beginning of March, the committee and our Chairman, Geraldine Prescott, will be discussing the issues of recommencing our service when we are officially able to do so. I would anticipate that the way things are going at the moment with many people having had their 1st vaccine and with their 2nd to come shortly, it may not be too long before we are up and running again and this will be 'shouted from the rooftops' of our 3 villages. But, we do need some more manpower.

We are therefore appealing to YOU, yes YOU and asking if you would
(continued at bottom of next page)

COLEY LANE MEMORIAL GARDEN

Several years ago, concerns were expressed that there was no burial space available locally as the Church graveyards were full & consequently all burials needed to take place either at Stafford or Style Cop, Rugeley. Several villagers formed a group which became known as CURB (Colwich Union of Remembrance and Burial) with the intention of locating and purchasing a plot of land within the villages to provide local burial space. This group was separate from the Parish Council. A considerable sum of money was raised but the task proved difficult to realize as there was no appropriate piece of land available at the time and the regulations surrounding burial were such that it was going to prove almost impossible to achieve.

For some time, the project came to a standstill and some of the original founders left the village. However, over the last few years the Parish Council, mindful that the considerable sum of money that had been collected was lying unused, liaised with CURB. Jointly they made a decision to purchase a small piece of land that was available just off Coley Lane (near to the A51 bridge) for use as a Memorial Garden. The regulations around the burial/scattering of ashes are not as restrictive as for full burial and so it will be possible to use this piece of land for that purpose.

The purchase of the land, financed by the Parish Council and CURB, was

completed in last summer and we are now in a position to move forward to plan how the Garden can be created. The restrictions surrounding the Covid pandemic are slowing down the planning process but nevertheless consultation with the village and interested groups can start to take place and a Parish Council working group has had an initial meeting to formulate ideas.

It is felt that part of the field should be used for tree planting as a commitment towards a green environment and that consideration needs to be given to conserving the wildlife & natural vegetation of the area whilst also creating a Garden of Remembrance that villagers can visit, walk around and just sit quietly in. The commitment to planting trees could also give villagers the opportunity to adopt/plant a tree in memory of a loved one if they would so wish. Footpath Colwich45 runs through the top part of the field and connects with other Footpaths across the parish. This gives those who like to walk through the fields the opportunity to encompass the Garden as part of their walk and even to stop for a rest on their way round. It is envisaged that the area can become a Family garden as well as a Memorial garden and could incorporate some

features to give young people a focus whilst visiting the garden.

No definite plans, other than the inclusion of a Garden of Remembrance somewhere on the site, have yet been made and the Parish Council would like to encourage all interested villagers to give us your ideas either individually or as a group as to how you would like to see this project develop. This is essentially a village project and we wish to include the ideas of as many people as possible. It is going to take some time to achieve and may need to be developed a bit at a time. However, once we are free of the restrictions of Covid 19 we hope to be able to move forward to provide our villagers with an area of peace & tranquillity where they can walk, sit and remember.

All ideas can be passed on to the Parish Clerk and will then be considered and acted upon by the working party as it begins to meet.



GREAT HAYWOOD MEMORIAL HALL

We never imagined in March 2020 that we'd only be open for a few weeks through the year, or that we'd have to cancel all our Committee-run events. We kept closely to government regulations and in touch with our user groups so that we allowed activities as soon as it was safe and legal to do so. How Karate managed to maintain the 2-metre distance rule, we'll never know - the National Martial Arts Association did say that instructors would have to use their imagination!

The main regret is the cancellation of our monthly coffee mornings. These have been great opportunities for 50-60 people to chat over coffee, tea and home-made cakes. So many people have asked 'when are the coffee mornings starting again?' that, to

let them know they're not forgotten, we've taken round boxes of homemade cake with a note from us. We intend to hold craft fairs, movies at the Memorial Hall and coffee mornings and lunches and to welcome back our community groups as soon as we can. And we're hoping to be able to celebrate our 100th birthday in style in 2022!



deeply and seriously consider how you can make a difference to the Voluntary Transport Scheme.

Drivers

You don't need any qualifications other than a current driving licence. You can choose which drives are convenient for you. A mileage allowance is given.

Co-ordinators

Take telephone calls from their own home, on a dedicated mobile phone number, a week at a time. You will be asked to listen to the recorded messages and liaise with the drivers.

Now that you have read about us, please consider becoming a driver or a co-ordinator. By joining us you will feel a great satisfaction knowing you are helping others.

Geraldine 802358
Linda, Secretary 801962

TIXALL VIEW - STREET NAMES

As preparations are now being made to commence the Lovell development on Little Tixall Lane (under the title of Tixall View), suggestions were made by the developers and the Borough Council as to what the street names should be for the 4 roads on the estate. The suggestions put forward were for names of towns in the County of Essex, based on the fact that Essex Bridge was located in the village of Great Haywood. These suggestions were completely irrelevant to the village as Essex Bridge was so named because the Devereux, family who owned Chartley Castle in the 15th and 16th centuries, were the Earls of Essex. The Haywoods have absolutely no other links with the County of Essex at all and the Parish Council felt that street names that reflected people connected with our villages would be much more appropriate.

After some discussion, taking into consideration ideas from Parish Councillors and villagers, the following names were selected and passed to the developers and Borough Council who have posted a consultation notice near the site.

Clifford Place: after the Clifford family who owned Tixall Hall until 1845. The Cliffords married into the Aston family in 1762 & thus inherited much of the land around Tixall through to Great Haywood and up towards Coley. They probably owned the land where the proposed development is taking place. The family continued to live at Tixall through the next 3 generations and were considered to be good landlords who were fair to their tenants. They owned the land where the Clifford Arms (& the preceding coaching inn) now stands and also built St John's Church, originally as the family chapel at Tixall. The estate was sold in 1845 when the family moved to Burton Constable Hall in Yorkshire. Prior to leaving Tixall they arranged for the removal of the church, stone by stone, to its present position in Great Haywood.

Amyas Mews: after Amyas Stafford Northcote who died early in 2020. Amyas had been a Borough Councillor and member of Colwich Parish Council for many years, acting as Chairman of the Parish Council for a considerable time. His dedication to serving the Parish was exceptional, participating in many Parish Groups of which the Twinning Association and Colwich

in Bloom were just two. He considered his attendance at meetings to be a matter of duty and was known to attend two or even three a night if there was a clash of dates. He continued to devote himself to the service of his community even when ill health made it difficult for him to do so. Amyas lived for most of his adult life at Bishton Hall where, in partnership with the rest of his family, he was involved in educating young people. The Borough Council would not agree to Amyas Northcote Mews due to Northcote Close on the St Marys estate.

Foster Court and Wilson Avenue: Dr Foster and Dr Wilson were both well respected village doctors in the Haywoods during the late 1960s and 1970s. They were as different as chalk and cheese and yet complimented each other perfectly. Dr Anne Foster took over the Great Haywood practice in the mid-1960s from her husband, Dr Stack. She was always smartly dressed, efficient and a highly proficient GP. She worked tirelessly to care for the sick of the villages and gave kindness, time and attention to those who were ill. Equally she did not suffer gladly anyone who she felt was wasting her precious time. Dr Foster was the first medic on the scene at the Hixon rail crash in early 1968 and administered aid to those who were trapped; an horrific disaster to have to encounter. The GP practice in the 1960s was located at High Meadows and consisted of an outbuilding attached to the main house where Dr Foster & her family lived. She was joined in the practice by Dr Wilson who was extremely relaxed, well able to turn up at the surgery in her wellies and an equally proficient GP. It was not unknown for her to stitch up a cut finger at the kitchen table if the surgery was not open. Dr Wilson lived at Hazeldene House and her husband commenced a small horticultural business in the then large garden of the house. Together Dr Foster and Dr Wilson served the needs of Colwich and the Haywoods at a time when there was very little back up for GPs outside their own practice, when home visits were expected on a regular basis even for minor ailments and nightly 'on call' visits were a regular occurrence as many villagers were lacking in transport & A&E was not an option. Over the coming years the Surgery moved from High Meadows to

its current location at Hazeldene to meet the demands of a growing population in the rapidly expanding villages. Dr Wilson eventually moved from the village to Devon and remained in touch with some of our villagers until her death in September 2016. Hazeldene House was sadly demolished in 1975, the present Surgery being located in what were the outbuildings to the house. Dr Foster retired some years later as Hazeldene House surgery developed and expanded. She had moved to Ingestre when the surgery was re-located and continued to live there until her death in 2006. Both these Doctors lived and served the community through an era of significant change and expansion in our villages and are well remembered by those long-standing villagers who experienced those changes. The current Hazeldene House surgery was opened by Dr Foster on 10th November 1994.

The families of Dr Wilson and Dr Foster have sent the following messages of appreciation to the Parish Council.

The Wilson family are greatly honoured to have a road named after our dear mother. She loved working and living in Great Haywood and made some life-long friends there who came to stay with us in Devon for over thirty years. We moved to Devon in 1971 where Mother became a partner in a small practice and remained there until she retired in April 1993 but carried on doing occasional locums for several years after her retirement. Mother was really sad to leave Great Haywood as she loved the people and the area so much and loved our home which stood where the new surgery now stands. She passed away on September 16th 2016 peacefully. As a family we would like to thank you for recognising such a Great GP and a beautiful person in every way. Kind regards.

Harry, Peter and Jenny Wilson

Our family think this would be a great honour to a GP who worked tirelessly for 40 years in Great Haywood and the surrounding area. She always went the extra mile to give the best possible care to her patients and looked after several generations of families.

Dr Foster's daughter Caroline

It is wonderful to hear from the families of the two Drs that so many of our older villagers will remember so well.

BUDGET 2021/22

The Parish Council appreciates that this has been a difficult 12 months. One that none of us have ever experienced before and, hopefully, never will again. It has also been challenging for the Council and its staff. In the Spring 2020 edition of the Newsletter we highlighted the planned budget with the corresponding works we aimed to undertake. Clearly, many, if not most, of these have been delayed due to lockdown and social distancing. We have achieved some goals including the purchase of the field off Coley Lane, with support from Colwich Union of Remembrance and Burial, for the development of a memorial garden, as detailed above. However, other projects, such as the link path from the Memorial Hall to Hazeldene House have stalled.

The Council considered its various options at its meeting of 4th February. The Council decided that the best way forward was to carry forward the project underspend from 2020/21 into 2021/22 into earmarked reserves and to decrease the precept accordingly.

Earmarked funds carried forward include

Roads	£2,500
Parish Office	£4,900
Play	£9,690
Benches	£500
Defibrillator	£1,000

Other projects, such as the link path, were always envisaged as long-term projects with finances built up over a number of years. These earmarked reserves will remain with no additional funds added in 2021/22.

	2020/21	2021/22
Budget	£201,730.00	£164,435
Income and Grants	£11,435.85	£7,443.24
Precept	£190,294.15	£156,991.76
Tax base	£1,841.71	1,824.66
Band D equivalent	£103.32	£86.04
Change	-£1.15	-£17.24
% Change	-1.1%	-16.5%

Cost Centre	2020/21	2021/22
Administration	£23,275	£22,170
Staffing	£105,800	£106,305
Community Engagement	£3,400	£3,400
Events	£6,500	£4,000
Parish Maintenance	£12,020	£4,240
Footpaths	£500	£0
Green infrastructure	£2,000	£2,000
Mill Lane	£0	£0
Parish Centre	£9,385	£10,330
JPF	£29,100	£2,240
Allotments	£0	£150
Grants/Donations	£3,800	£8,000
Earmarked reserves	£0	£0
Total	£195,780*	£162,835*

*excludes anticipated income and grants

IMPROVEMENT OF FACILITIES AT THE JPF

Previous Newsletter articles have advised on the Parish Council's intention to improve the recreational facilities, access to the site, and the car park at the JPF. Feedback was sought from residents on the improvements they would like to see and a number of ideas have been received and thank you for these.

The first area that is being tackled is the car park and the Council has engaged the services of a specialist drainage and construction consultant to undertake both a drainage survey and porosity tests to help determine and design a drainage solution to eliminate the flooding being experienced in the car park area. You may have noticed two large holes were recently dug in the car park and filled with water to determine the porosity of the ground; not surprisingly the water did not drain confirming the provision of soakaways is the not Consultant's preferred option.

Similar work is also ongoing to assist in providing a solution to the recent flooding in the car park at the Great Haywood



Memorial Hall. The Council is also arranging for a desktop survey of the drainage and flooding issues across the villages.

You will also have noticed that a number of trees have been either crown raised, pruned or removed in recent weeks. The Council decided, at its meeting of 13th January 2021, that it wished to remove the overgrown conifers on the slope by the children's play area and to remove the central reservation in the car park

resulting in the removal of those trees.

These decisions were in addition to a tree survey undertaken in 2019 advising that various trees needed either removal or crown lifting. Additional tree work is also required at the Council owned Allotments on Coley Lane.

As mentioned above, the Council is looking to allocate a part of its new site off Coley Lane for planting of trees. These new trees will balance out the ones it has had to remove at the JPF.





CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Lockdown Life is soon to be replaced as we start the journey to return to our normal lives. In our various ways, we have had new routines and different ways of living. Some of us working in essential jobs, some home schooling, and some exploring hobbies, never having had the opportunity to explore before. No matter how we have been living, most of us know of someone who has found life difficult. Mental health and loneliness have never been so talked about. It is important to open up and tell people how you feel. Talk to those you share your home with, ring a chatline or engage in an online community.

The Covid-19 journey is now at the beginning of the end. However, the legacy of the pandemic is likely to have an impact into 2021 and beyond. Invisible but present, many will carry the effect of the pandemic and its impact on our lives for some time. Sharing is healing. I am inspired when I read stories how people have helped others and how much they get back from offering support.

LITTER PICKING

The majority of residents in the Parish are aware of and appreciate the sterling work carried out by the Colwich Parish In Bloom Group in planting and maintaining the numerous flower beds and containers around our villages.

But another important aspect of our work aimed at improving the environment where we live is picking up litter. The quantity of discarded rubbish and dog mess on our roads and footpaths seems to have increased considerably during recent months. In addition, there have been more items thrown from vehicles travelling along the A51 bypass between Colwich and Hixon. Although the debris ends up on the footpath and in the hedgerow along the whole length of this stretch, it is particularly concentrated in and around the four lay-bys. Apart from bottles, cans and food packaging, some of the items left where vehicles can stop are very unpleasant and have to be left for Stafford Borough Council to remove.

Members have designated areas of the Parish to cover, at a frequency related to the volume of litter dropped on their patch. So, the individual responsible for the A51 litter pick for example has a very busy time, usually going out every day of the week and always returning with a full bag!

If you would like to help, have you considered volunteering? Besides the Helphaywoods Group, mentioned above, there are many groups in the community including groups such as The Voluntary Driver Scheme. The scheme is not operational at present, but they hope to be offering their services soon. Colwich in Bloom would welcome new faces. If you are interested, contact me and I will put you in touch with the organisers.

Alternatively, you might like to join the Parish Council? It is a great way to help your community and give something back. If you have any thoughts and want more information, please contact me by email or phone.

As this is the first Newsletter of 2021, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our hard-working team, our Clerk, Revd Mr Michael Lennon and our Deputy Clerk, Mr Anthony Egan. Their expertise and diligence serving our community is highly commendable. I must also mention our Lengthsmen, Phil and Ian. They are often to be seen in various locations around the village, working in all weathers. I am delighted to hear such

positive comments as they add to our beautiful villages. The Parish Council is working hard to plan for the future as we try to improve the villages. There are a number of projects which have been difficult to bring to fruition during the Pandemic, but we will get there. The future projects include the creation of the footpath to connect the Great Haywood Memorial Hall car park and the Hazeldene House surgery. It has been in the planning for a while, but there are many issues which we have had to contend with. On a similar note, we are working with County Highways to progress the traffic calming measure for Mill Lane. We are also working to develop the Jubilee Playing Field so don't be surprised if you see activity at the JPF over the coming months.

If you have any suggestions that you would like to see in the parish, please let us know. Contact me, or the Parish Clerk. We want to know what you want.

Finally, do not forget that we have the Parish Council small grants scheme. If you wish to apply, please contact the Parish Clerk for an application form.

We have recently developed a greater collaboration with StreetScene, the Stafford Borough Council Department responsible for emptying Council litter bins throughout the Borough. StreetScene now supplies us with litter picker grabbers and green plastic bags and collects full bags from pre-arranged locations. This level of support has made an enormous difference to the task of litter picking and we are very grateful for its help. Previously we had to take the often very heavy filled bags in our cars to the tip or put them in our own wheelie bins. We plan to ask StreetScene to provide more litter bins at key locations and would welcome suggestions of where they might be located to meet the greatest need.

We have enough volunteers to collect litter from most of Great Haywood, but not all of Little Haywood and Colwich. Consequently, we are always looking for additional community spirited residents to increase the coverage of Little Haywood and Colwich. Apart from along the A51, the volume of litter in the residential areas is not great. Picking up on a regular basis is not particularly onerous, perhaps taking just an hour a week at your convenience. You will be provided with a high visibility vest, a picker, bags and an information sheet. It

need not impact on your compliance with lockdown restrictions or your personal exercise allowance since it is regarded as permitted voluntary work. Members of our current team have found that they now know a number of new people in their neighbourhood and receive many plaudits from passers-by each time they go out.

If you need more information about becoming a volunteer, please contact any of the Committee Officers whose contact details appear on the Colwich Parish In Bloom website.



GREAT HAYWOOD WI

Tracy Nixon, W.I. President

(at the time of writing)

Our planned meeting for March 2020 didn't go ahead. It was supposed to be our first meeting in our new venue of Colwich Community Centre, after having outgrown the capacity of the small hall in Great Haywood Memorial Hall.

Since lockdown, there has been a meeting every month, from April. The focus was very much on learning, inspiration, sharing and social time. Our planned programme of events pretty-much was thrown out the window and I am pleased that all the unplanned plan B's went ahead without a hitch. Every member has received newsletters by email or by hand-delivery those to ladies with no internet access.

In the summer, a tea fairy delivered 'positivi-tea & chocolate biscuits'. In February, because people are generally fed up and it is freezing cold, the same fairy delivered a 'cuddle in a cup' of hot chocolate and a chocolate biscuit. For our festive on-line meeting in December, 'In a Bag', our members were provided with sustainable and hand-made gifts, games to play and a festive quiz, with the encouragement to dress up and don some sparkle.

There has been some form of social media post, almost every day, some being 'fun social' posts, some sharing NFWI inspired information and some sharing SFWI & NFWI posts. To keep in touch, committee members have had telephone conversations with different members. Other members met up, when they were able to, and supported each other and opened their homes to encourage engagement in the on-line meetings. WI friendships have been maintained.

This year has forced us to look at doing things a different way, and, it encouraged us to learn something new. The National WI has proposed some constitution changes, in order to bring the WI into the 21st century'. The WI has been more value for money this year, than ever. Courses have been more accessible, college and university lectures have been available, and many have been free to attend, other WI members have offered courses, and many were free, at low cost or on a pay what you can afford basis, there has been availability to attend many other WI meetings and there has been many coffee, cake, and support groups.

The WI is what YOU make it. I hope that with what we have provided this year, our members can see that they have been in our thoughts throughout the year and we did all

that we can to ensure our WI gave value for money. It is only £44 for the year, and the year runs from 1st April to end of March, but you can join at any time.

My time as president of your local WI has now come to an end. I will remain a member of the WI and I look forward to future meetings, virtually and face-to-face and the chance to dress up and party.

HANDFORTH PARISH COUNCIL

A response by Colwich Parish Council guided by the National Association of Local Councils.

Most of England's 10,000 local (parish; town and city) councils are run well by councillors, clerks and council staff, who collaborate to deliver their communities ambitions. People get involved in their local councils because they are passionate about their communities and committed to making a difference.

Colwich Parish Council is aware of the negative impact poor behaviour can have. We strive to follow national guidelines and are committed to promoting and supporting good governance and the highest standards of conduct and behaviour in local councils, by councillors, clerks and council staff. We have a series of policies on our website detailing how the Council will operate. Furthermore, councillors strive to work within the 7 Principles of Public Life and our agreed Code of Conduct. Moreover, we have a specific policy detailing the "Protocol between Councillors & Officers" (PD112).

Parish Councils play an essential and growing role in democracy, delivering public services and building stronger communities. They have continued to evolve, take on additional responsibilities and innovate by tackling challenges such as health, housing, climate change, transport, and public spaces. Many local councils mobilised quickly to be at the forefront of the national coronavirus response, stepping up to support local communities by using the flexibility of remote meetings, to continue to make decisions and engage with their community.

Communities thrive when people volunteer to get involved and come together to take action on local issues. This can be a fantastic opportunity for more people of all backgrounds and experiences to stand as councillors and make a change in their community.

Come and join us...

...COME AND JOIN US

What is a Parish Council?

It is the level of government closest to the community, with the county and district authority above it in the hierarchy.

As the authority closest to the people, we are invariably the first port of call people go to with their concerns or ideas.

For this reason, we are a vital part of any community.

Why become a Parish Councillor?

As a parish councillor, you become someone your community will look to for help, guidance and support. A community leader with the power to influence decisions for the benefit of the people you serve. Seeing your community change for the better because of decisions you have helped make, is something that will give you a sense of achievement.

What decisions do Parish Councils make?

Probably the most common topics that parish councils get involved with are planning matters, managing open spaces and campaigning for and delivering better services and facilities. On their own, parish councils have limited powers to make decisions. However, they do have the ability to negotiate with influence other organisations that do make the final decisions and, in this respect, parish councils are extremely powerful as they give the best reflection of how a community feels about something and our views are taken seriously.

How long does a Parish Councillor serve for?

Once elected, parish councillors sit on the council for a term of up to four years.

Am I eligible to be a Parish Councillor?

To be able to become a councillor for Colwich Parish Council, you must:

- be an elector of the parish, or;
- for the whole of the previous 12 months have occupied (as owner or tenant) land or other premises in the parish, or;
- during the previous 12 months have worked in the parish (as your principal or only place of work), or;
- for the whole of the previous 12 months lived in the parish or within three miles of the parish boundary.
- be a least 18 years old.
- be either British or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union.

Don't take our word for it!

The best way to find out what it's like to be a parish councillor is to talk to someone who's doing it now.

Come along to a parish council meeting, or speak to one of our councillors and find out what they think of the role.

TWINNING ASSOCIATION

REQUEST for a CORRESPONDENT

As with many other aspects of our lives, Twinning Activities are very much on hold at the moment. The biennial exchange visit in October had to be cancelled. Our counterparts in Rimbach have invited us to visit this coming October instead but there is little indication at present that this will be possible. Contact with our Twin Town nevertheless continues and the Twinning Association was very pleased to be able to send 45 copies of this year's Haywood Society Calendar to the Rimbach Association for distribution to our friends.

It was received with great enthusiasm reminding them of the beauty of our villages and surrounding area.

The Association took a major hit in November on hearing of the death of a long-term member, Lloyd Dulson. In addition to all the other activities that Lloyd was associated with in the village (the RLNI in particular), he was a committed supporter of the spirit of Twinning seeing it as being a source of peace, reconciliation and understanding. He had served as Chairman and then Treasurer of the Association over many years. He will be greatly missed.

In the absence of any personal visits, a request has been received from Rimbach for a couple/family who would like to

correspond with a similar couple in Rimbach. The couple in Germany, who wish to form a link by e-mail/post, are a married couple in their 50s describing themselves as 'open minded and positive thinking'. The husband works in a neighbouring large town and speaks good English. The wife works from home having established a craft business that constructs articles from recycled materials. She is learning & trying to improve her English. If there is anyone in our villages who is interested in the challenge of forming a correspondence link please get in touch with Annette Bloor (01889 881749) or Jill Powell (01889 991695) and we will be only too happy to give you further information

THE HAYWOOD SOCIETY CALENDAR

The Society's normal programme, of convivial meetings with talks on local and historical interest by an invited speaker, has obviously not been practicable for the past year; but "normal service will be resumed as soon as possible"!

The annual calendar has however provoked a lot of interest in the Parish. The photographic competition for inclusion in this year's issue, with 12 prizes of a free calendar, has met with a record response. Almost 300 images were submitted, making the final choice very difficult, but we are grateful for everyone's efforts. Sales were also far more than "normal" years with just over 250 sold. The distribution has been international; not only to our twin village in Germany, but to friends and family in America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, The Caribbean and even Nepal.

Although the original idea of the scheme was to make only a marginal profit, we have realised about £400 this year. We intend to donate this surplus to local charities whose fund-raising events have been hard-hit by the pandemic.

Our thanks are due to villagers and members who bought copies, to Barry Owen whose initiative it was and to all you enthusiastic photographers. Barry tells me that he has already received entries for the 2022 issue!

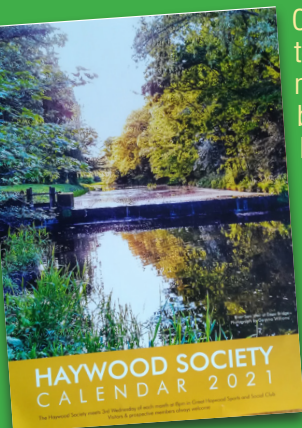
**Alan Bloor,
Chairman**

1ST COLWICH BROWNIES, GUIDES AND RANGERS

1st Colwich Brownies, Guides and Rangers are run by a leadership team of enthusiastic volunteers and during a normal year, girls go along to camps, day trips and sleepovers as well as getting together with their friends at regular meetings. However, last year was anything but 'normal', and we became familiar with the word 'Zoom'! During the first lockdown, the 1st Colwich team started doing virtual meetings, adapting the programme so that girls could do activities at home while on Zoom, with craft packs being delivered to girls' homes when restrictions permitted.

Unfortunately, many planned events in 2020 had to be postponed including a weekend at Gulliver's Kingdom, a survival camp on Cannock Chase as well as the Summer Camp in the Peak District. On the plus side, the girls were able to participate in several virtual weekend events organised by Girlguiding Rugeley. As the restrictions eased in the Autumn, the leadership team planned for returning to face-to-face meetings in a Covid Safe environment, but those hopes were dashed as Lockdown 3 was imposed so the weekly Zoom meetings continued! Another lockdown casualty was the pre-Christmas activity weekend at Whitemoor Lakes although the Christmas parties went ahead on Zoom!

As 2021 arrived, and with no end to the lockdown in sight, the leaders organised a virtual weekend at Hogwarts for the girls. Over the weekend of 12th-14th February, 64 girls took part in Zoom meetings and did activities at home. A great time was had by all and many parents sent messages of thanks saying it was just the lift their girls needed. At the time of writing, the roadmap out of the lockdown has been announced and the leaders are keeping everything crossed that we can get back to face-to-face guiding soon!



MILL LANE

You may have seen the yellow notice near the railway bridge on Mill Lane indicating works which are planned to commence in the summer. We recently received the following from County Highways about this project the names of individuals have been redacted to protect their right to privacy.

"The basic plan remains as previously discussed with the following main objectives of the project:

- Installation of an improved footway facility on Mill Lane with traffic signals used to control traffic as pedestrians walk underneath the arched rail bridge.;
- To control traffic speeds entering the village through the extension of the current 30 mph speed limit on the approach to Great Haywood from the Stafford side and the introduction of a 40-mph speed limit to act as a buffer to the 30 mph section.
- No Waiting At Any Time parking restrictions to protect sections of the highway on the eastern approach.

I can confirm that we have met with a planning officer of the Borough Council and he has suggested a further meeting takes place week to consider the impact our proposals would have on the conservation area status of the village. This is likely to require amendments to the preliminary design to be made in order to satisfy the conservation officer's comments.

Assuming we can reach agreement with the planning authority we intend to then begin negotiations on the terms of a land transfer between the current owners and the highway authority. This land is needed to accommodate the improvements to the footway. Plans have been prepared and subject to the above will be issued to the residents. Please note that timescales associated with land transfers are notoriously difficult to predict.

We have re-entered discussions with Network Rail over various approvals and permissions to undertake the highway works in the immediate vicinity of the rail bridge. Network Rail seem to have received our preliminary plans positively but we still need to agree certain details.

Please note that this essential project is

complex due to the involvement of a number of third parties – Stafford Borough Council, Network Rail, various utility companies and, not least, the [home] owners [near the site]. There is also the requirement to make a legally enforceable traffic regulation order in relation to the speed limit and parking restrictions. Traffic notices are also needed for the installation of the traffic signals equipment. Dealing with each of these parties and the various matters pertaining to the project's delivery is time consuming and not risk free.

The County Council is committed to the delivery of this project and intends to commence construction later in 2021. Currently we are planning this to be in the summer but as with all projects of this nature there are a number of challenges to meet, most of which are outside the direct control of the County Council."

HELPHAYWOODS

Back in the Spring of 2020, as we began to realize the full impact of the Covid 19 epidemic, a group of local villagers came together to offer support to those who were shielding or self-isolating. Co-ordinated by Anne-Marie and Colin Rattray, the group provided an excellent service to the community by shopping, collecting prescriptions and lending a friendly ear to those people who were unable to get out and about.

As the first wave of the epidemic waned there was less need for the service but by October Covid was back with full force and restrictions and isolation began all over again. Helphaywoods sprang into action and began to feel that perhaps a more formal Good Neighbour Scheme was needed rather than just responding when a crisis struck. Consequently, a questionnaire was sent out with the Winter edition of the Parish Council Newsletter asking for people who would like to use such a scheme and also people who would like to volunteer to help to respond. The outcome of the questionnaire was that there were few responses requesting support but several offers of help in operating the scheme. As a result of this feedback the Helphaywoods Group

has decided at the present not to formalise the support being offered under a Good Neighbour Scheme. However, Helphaywoods will continue to operate on an informal basis as previously and the group encourages anyone who is in need of support in any way to contact them.

Helphaywoods can be contacted on 01889 808252. Please do not hesitate to ring if you need assistance, you can always be sure of receiving a friendly ear and assistance whatever your need may be.

SUSTAINABILITY IN COLWICH and THE HAYWOODS (SinCH)

Previously known as 'Plastic Free Colwich', we currently organise a number of initiatives as a group:

A monthly Green Drinks evening social takes place at the Sports and Social Club/ Zoom on the 1st Tuesday of the Month at 7.30pm involving inspiring individuals and organisations.

We are still not be able to hold our Coffee Morning at the Lamb & Flag but Nigel from Roots Larder will deliver directly to your home 'doorstep', free of charge, on one Wednesday a month. You can take Terra recycling items as listed on our Facebook pages to 12 High Chase Rise anytime on the Tuesday before and leave them inside the front porch. All items must be separated into the categories as listed and everything is then placed into a sealed bag.

A Green Directory of local businesses which can help us live more sustainably.

We want to do more- so much more. We would like to improve biodiversity and protect and enhance the green spaces available within the community and help foster a flourishing community spirit, a sense of pride in our villages and to support residents' sense of personal well-being. We have some pretty big ideas. As a community led group it would be great to have as many people on board with our projects as possible. Does this sound like something you could support?

Please keep up to date on our SinCH facebook page.

Rob Horton



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