

Colwich Parish Council

INCORPORATING WOLSELEY BRIDGE, COLWICH, GREAT HAYWOOD & LITTLE HAYWOOD

NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2013

No. 80

OPEN GARDENS



Cllr. Andy Cooper

Yet again, the Colwich Open Gardens struck lucky with the weather, enabling visitors to enjoy a fabulous day looking around the gardens of residents who had opened them to the public in order to raise funds for Katherine House Hospice. Large numbers of folk toured the area – shunning the lure of the Men’s Final at Wimbledon – and in doing so were rewarded with some spectacular displays. The photos shown here can barely do justice to the effort that had gone in to preparing for the day.

One of the many gardens opened was the Colwich Railway Memorial Garden adjacent to Crossheads, which is maintained by members of the Haywoods Permanent Way in memory of the rail crash of 19th September 1986 in which driver Mr Eric Goods lost his life. The garden also serves as a memorial to its creator, Mr Alf Taylor.



VILLAGE SIGN

Cllr. Andy Cooper

Many will have noticed the magnificent “Colwich” flower bed sign that has appeared this year on the corner of Main Road and the A51 in Colwich. This has been created by volunteer and gardening enthusiast Tom Wain who even built the container constructed from logs off a tree felled in his own garden! Tom is a keen supporter of the Best Kept Village project and is looking forward to building a similar sign at the Great Haywood entrance off the A51 next year. If you are inspired by Tom’s enthusiasm and you would like to contribute to making Colwich and The Haywoods look better than ever – then why not get involved and contact the Parish Clerk or the Best Kept Village team.

SMALL GRANTS AWARDS 2013/14

Cllr. Anne Clendon

On Thursday 18th July, Cllr. Paul Gilbert, Chair of Colwich Parish Council, had the pleasure of handing over the cheques to the successful applicants for this year’s Small Grants programme. A total of £1,669 was awarded. Cllr. Gilbert is shown with some of the successful applicants including: the Best Kept Village committee, Colwich Rangers, St Michael’s Church, St Stephen’s Church, Haywoods Voluntary Transport Scheme, Wednesday Club, the Allotment Association and Great Haywood Memorial Hall. Details of the 2014/15 Small Grants programme will be announced later in the year.



BEST KEPT VILLAGE

Cllr. Anne Clendon

Great Haywood was awarded a Highly Commended in the Large Village Category, whilst Little Haywood and Colwich won a Highly Commended too. Great Haywood was, also, the winner of a Special Commendation for Consistent Participation and Achievement over a number of years – the first time such an award has been presented to any village.

PARTIALLY-SIGHTED?

If so, we can provide the Newsletter in enlarged print, or we can arrange for someone to read the Newsletter to you. Please let us know, it would be our pleasure to help!

YOUR SAY, YOUR PLAN, YOUR FUTURE

For the first time in over 100 years the Parish Council has the real power to produce a plan that will shape your community. This plan – the Neighbourhood Plan – will be part of the Statutory Development Plan for the area. Stafford Borough Council’s Planning Committee will have to take notice of our plan when they make decisions on planning applications in the Parish.

Many residents will be aware that we have been meeting with groups around the parish and holding Community Engagement Events asking people what the issues are in the parish. We now have a team of residents and Councillors working on what you told us and soon they will produce a questionnaire for the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan cannot be produced without your help and agreement so please complete the questionnaire when it arrives. If you are part of a busy family, remember that this will take a few minutes but the facilities used by your family members and the future of the children will be affected by the answers to this questionnaire so please don’t ignore it.

The younger residents will, we hope, become older residents so a separate questionnaire is being included for them. It, too, will be available soon. The names of people who complete this young people’s questionnaire will be entered into a draw and the winners will win valuable prizes. You will need to live in the parish and be aged 11 to 17 to be entered into the draw.

John Blount, Neighbourhood Plan Consultant.

WHY WE HAVE ABANDONED THE IDEA OF A VILLAGE GREEN IN THE HAYWOODS?

Cllr. Sylvia Gibson

This item is no longer ‘on the agenda’ for our Neighbourhood Plan because once an area is designated as a village green, the rules surrounding it are so tight that no development of any kind is allowed. We have heard of an example of a local shop having to close down because they could not use even the tiniest part of the village green as a car park.

We originally wanted to try to designate the area including public footpath 43 off Main Road between the Red Lion Pub and The Garage. The Moore family Trust has expressed an interest in developing this area – which the Parish

Council is opposing. Once a developer has expressed such an interest, whether verbally or in writing, a village green status can no longer be awarded.

This very restrictive law has come about because various areas, up and down the country, have tried to combat development by designating an area as a village green after a development has been suggested. Apparently, “That’s just not cricket”. However, if you have any suggestions as to where a village green could be placed, that hasn’t already been highlighted for development, please let us know.



CARAVANS AND VANS PARKED ON THE ST. MARY’S ESTATE

Cllr. Sylvia Gibson

We have listened to you and we have done some research. You will have to bear with us because it is very complicated! Basically, we had complaints that inappropriate vehicles are being parked on the said estate. We wrote to Taylor Wimpey who say that they no longer hold records relating to the estate. They did, however, manage to obtain a copy of a transfer deed relating to one of the properties and it contains a restrictive covenant preventing the parking of caravans. They then write: “Unfortunately as our clients no longer hold a legal interest in the development they are unable to enforce the restrictive covenants. However, the residents themselves as land owners are able to take the necessary action to enforce the covenants...” We, as a council feel that residents should put pressure on Taylor Wimpey to use their own legal services to enforce this covenant.

CHAIRMAN'S REFLECTIONS

Cllr. Paul Gilbert

MANY of you are aware that over the past few months the Parish Council has been conducting Neighbourhood Plan consultations with residents of all our villages including a short survey of sites and amenities with our Summer 2013 Newsletter. These consultations are culminating with a questionnaire, which will be delivered to each home in the Parish, and I would ask that you all commit a little of your time to complete the document and return it to the various collection points located in the villages.

By completing the questionnaire you are helping to secure the identities of the villages and the values and traditions that we are dedicated to maintain, together with the future benefits that we, as a community, can all enjoy. Thank you for your commitment to our villages.

WE WERE delighted to be advised by Stafford Borough Council that its Development Plan had been submitted to Government for Independent Examination on 20th August 2013. Once the plan is accepted it will bring closer the prospect of our Neighbourhood Plan being submitted for approval, which will be completed as soon as possible.

IT IS with regret that I inform you that 'Shenley Cottage', the empty dilapidated house near the Little Haywood Garage on The Butts, has been purchased by the Moore Family Trust. One can only assume that it was a strategic purchase in an attempt to strengthen their aim to build their development which we have previously publicised under the heading "DÉJÀ VU" Summer 2013 Newsletter. Obviously, the Council will continue to vigorously oppose their plans. The Council will also oppose the recently

submitted plans to convert the Elms Business Park, behind the Clifford Arms pub, into 14 houses.

IT WAS with some alarm that, following an enquiry to Stafford Borough Council, they have declined to supply the names of their officials attending the planning meeting in April which considered the "Greenacres" application. It is believed that a Mr M. Alford, a senior planning officer, was advising the Committee that evening and indicated that the Borough Council would not defend an appeal by the developers, if the Committee did not approve the application. This supine position, prior to the debate, was an abdication of responsibility and bowed to the coercion of the developers, who have pockets of land elsewhere in the Borough – just ask the residents of Gnosall who have had a similar application for 75 dwellings (13/18821/OUT) - and are controlled by a London based company under the leadership of Dr R. Wickham.

On-going investigations have confirmed that the planning issues raised against the development were not considered and the advice given with regard to unfulfilled "land bank" targets took precedence over the planning issues. I would draw your attention to Page 3 of the Staffordshire Newsletter's 8th August 2013 edition "Inspector rules in favour of homes". A request will now go to the Rt. Hon. Eric Pickles MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, asking that he examines the procedures adopted by Stafford Borough Council and to consider overturning this approval.

Whilst considering housing issues, I have serious reservations about the intentions of some of Stafford Borough

Cllr. Paul Gilbert

Council's Councillors relating to housing policy. You will recall, from past reports, that the Parish Council has made many attempts to discuss housing policy with Cllr. Farrington who has yet to agree to a meeting. This issue has been raised with Mr Alistair Welch, Head of Law and Administration at the Borough Council, requesting a code of conduct investigation into the behaviour of this Councillor who has failed to fulfil his obligations and responsibilities.

It should be noted that Stafford Borough Council has allocated Key Service Village status to Great Haywood separately from Little Haywood and Colwich. The Parish Council has asked that this be consolidated into one status for the entire Parish, if not removed altogether. Under the fair distribution of houses, within the Stafford Plan, as a single Key Service Village we could be expected to accommodate a further sixty new houses over the 20 years of the Plan. The Borough Council, in its wisdom, has already allocated 28 of these on the "Greenacres" site. It follows, therefore, that the Parish should only expect a further 32 or an average of 1.5 new houses per year.

Moore Family Trust and other Developers please note!!

LET'S HEAR IT FOR LOCAL PEOPLE!

Cllr. Sylvia Gibson

Every quarter, when the Parish Newsletter is issued, we would like to feature a local person who has done something heroic, magnificent or just plain out of the ordinary. We know you're out there but we don't know who you are. If you tell us about these fantastic people, we can write an article just about them.

VOLUNTARY TRANSPORT SCHEME

Cllr. Anne Clendon

This is a heartfelt "Thank you" and tribute to Rosemary Bottom, the outgoing Chairman of the VTS. Rosemary has been involved in village life for many years and is still heavily involved in the Tuesday lunches at Colwich Church, and an active member of The Haywood Society. I know that all the past passengers you have helped wish you a long happy "retirement" from your work with the VTS.

At the same time, Ann Chambers is also retiring as the Secretary of the VTS. Ann has been a stalwart of the scheme and is still at work helping behind the scenes at the Haywoods's Flower and Vegetable Show.

Thank you Rosemary and Ann.

Jubilee Celebration Funds

Cllr. Andy Cooper, Chair of the 2012 Jubilee Committee

Several residents have asked what happened to the money raised during the Jubilee celebration in 2012 (just over £3,000). The original aim of the committee was to allocate any funds raised to projects on the Jubilee Field – specifically a Skate Board/BMX facility, and this is still the case. It was hoped that the Parish Council would be able to instigate this project and others during this year, however it was decided to delay commencement until after the Neighbourhood Plan is in place as we are advised that this will enable us to apply for substantial financial support from various bodies, assuming such projects are identified as appropriate amenities for our community. This will enable us to target 2014 for installation. In the meantime, the Jubilee Committee agreed to contribute £600 of the fund towards the summer activities organised by the clothing collection team.

SITUATIONS VACANT - Voluntary Drivers Required

Cllr. Anne Clendon

We all know about the sterling work of the VTS, whose services will become even more vital if any local hospital services are reduced. Unfortunately, due to recent retirements, they are desperately short of drivers again. Please contact the Parish Centre, if you or anyone you know could help out, and we will put you in touch with the appropriate people.

PROFILE OF COUNCILLOR MRS JEAN TABERNOR

I have lived at Moreton, Wolseley Bridge, for 47 years, when I married into the Tabernor family, who have lived here for 90 years. Our four children attended Colwich C of E Primary School. All now married, three at St Michael and All Angels Church, Colwich.

I was elected as a Parish Councillor in 1994 and a Borough Councillor in 1999 and have been re-elected many times since. As a Parish Councillor I chaired the Environment and Access and Rights of Way committee for many years as well as serving on other sub-committees.

As a Borough Councillor I have served on several committees. At present I serve on Health Scrutiny and the Post Office Working Group. I represent the Borough and the Parish on Colwich and Haywoods Community Association, also represent the Borough on two charities and Stafford Borough Horticultural Society. I always strive to keep politics out of my council work and to represent all Residents to the best of my ability.

I would like to thank those who supported me during my recent illness with cancer. I am now on the way to making a full recovery.

DATES FOR DIARIES...

**Bag Collection –
Wednesday, 2nd October,
2013**

**JPF Skip – 12th October,
9th November and
30th November, 2013**



Chairman:

Cllr. Paul Gilbert

E: paul.gilbert@colwich.staffslc.gov.uk

Clerk:

Michael Lennon

E: clerk@colwich.staffslc.gov.uk

Parish Office:

St Mary's Road, Little Haywood, ST18 0NJ

T: 01889 882665

www.colwich.info