

Colwich Parish Council

INCORPORATING WOLSELEY BRIDGE, COLWICH, GREAT HAYWOOD & LITTLE HAYWOOD

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2013

No. 81

Merry Christmas!

Unfortunately, for most of us, it is not a happy one. Your Christmas gifts may be hundreds of new houses, courtesy of Seabridge Developments. Stafford Borough Council has only recently submitted its development plan to the examiner for approval. This lack of oversight by our Borough Councillors has jeopardised the very existence of our village life. The Parish Council would like to thank all those who attended the Open Event at the Memorial Hall to discuss the two planning proposals and the Clifford Arms for the provision of refreshments.

The vulture developers are circling the Haywoods with the intention of making the area a small town.

We need your help to fight these developers who are taking advantage of the disorganised planning department of the Borough Council. We urgently need evidence of infrastructure problems etc. If you have any photographic evidence of flooding or other problems please drop them into the parish office for the evidence to be copied for inclusion in our arguments against the applications. Alternatively, e-mail the office with your evidence. It is also important that we preserve our environment and nature resources and, similarly, a copy of any documentary evidence illustrating these parish assets will be invaluable.

It has been mentioned that there may be tunnels stretching from Little Haywood to Great Haywood and we intend to organise an archaeological survey to establish their existence. Any, similar, factual evidence would, again,

be a distinct advantage in our arguments against these proposed insidious developments.

In 2009 we were assured by the then leader of the Borough Council, Mrs. Delgarno and Ian Thompson, the current Chief Executive, and the current leader of Stafford Borough Council, Michael Heenan, that there was no intention to impose hundreds of new houses in our villages. Well, the time of insincere platitudes is over. What action are you, Mr Heenan, and you Mr Thompson, taking to prevent this monstrous assault on our villages? If the Borough think that our memories are short and we will acquiesce to these developers they are very much mistaken. If any planning applications are approved, without our agreement, the only conclusion we can draw is that, yet again, the Borough Officers and Councillors have lied to us.

In April 2009 you gave us your overwhelming support, in the referendum we held, in the fight against unnecessary and extensive developments. I can assure you all that we are still fighting on your behalf to prevent the mindless destruction of our villages. With your approval, we will use whatever means at our disposal to defeat these proposals and we look forward to your continued support during the forthcoming battles.

The owners of the Little Tixall Lane land are Mrs J M Reid of Ashbourne, who was contacted by the Parish Council some time ago when we were hoping to resolve the flooding issues in Marlborough Close.

We were directed to Mrs Reid's solicitors who advised that they were awaiting instructions from Mrs. Reid. Now we know why we did not receive any further communications. Two further owners, Mr D A Starbuck of Victoria, Australia; Mr B J Starbuck of Bromley, Kent are so far removed that any damage to the villages would not influence their decision. You would, however, think that Mr E W Astle of Dobree Close, Colwich, the fourth owner of the land, would have some consideration for the quality of life he and his fellow villagers have enjoyed instead of seeking to destroy those values.

As for the land adjoining the Ring, this is owned by the Trustees for the Earl of Lichfield's Estate. I'm sure that Patrick Lichfield would not have approved of the actions these three HOORAY HENRYS, namely The Honourable CGB Tryon, London SW6; Mr ANJ Hay, London SW6; Mr HRG Lopes, London W14 have taken in engaging the services of Seabridge Developments to present this application. The application, if approved, will bind the two villages together as their proposal straddles the boundary between Little and Great Haywood. Why hasn't *Thomas William Robert Hugh Anson*, the current Earl, intervened? Come on Thomas stop looking for the quick buck at the expense of the villagers of Great and Little Haywood, show some common decency.

There was, I understand, Seabridge Developments Ltd which was dissolved by Companies House in 2005 with five outstanding charges against the company. This would not be one and the same person involved in both enterprises would it?

Cllr. Paul Gilbert

DEVELOPERS

DEVELOPERS everywhere are taking advantage of the absence of Local and Neighbourhood Plans to put in speculative housing applications. You will have seen the recent applications from Seabridge Developments for 220 houses on the fields between Great and Little Haywood.

Stafford Borough's Local Plan, which covers the whole of the Borough, is nearing completion and the Colwich Neighbourhood Plan needs to follow soon afterwards so that we can exercise control over what goes on in our villages.

Inside this Newsletter is an important questionnaire that will give us the information to produce the Colwich Neighbourhood Plan. To assist us we need volunteer street champions to help co-ordinate this effort to encourage their neighbours to engage with the plan – to collect questionnaires, to discuss it and share ideas. We need as much information as we can get from ALL of the people in our villages. If you want to volunteer and help you and your neighbourhoods to have a say in how your villages develop over the next 20 years then please contact the Parish Clerk. Training will be provided.

Mr John Blount, Colwich Neighbourhood Plan Consultant.

Jubilee Playing Fields developments

Cllr Andy Cooper.

The changing rooms on the JPF have never been fully fitted out for a variety of reasons, and their need as a changing facility has reduced since they were originally constructed. The Parish Council has therefore employed the services of Hixon based architect Gordon Elkin, to consider what would be required to enable the relocation of the Parish Office from its current position at the bottom of St Mary's Road to the JPF. The advantages of this would include:

- A more centrally located Parish Office.
- Better parking facilities (the area at St Mary's Rd being inadequate and causing congestion for neighbouring residents and the junction with the Main Rd).

- Practical use of the JPF building.
- Potential let of the existing Parish Office as a business/shop development.
- Improved security arrangements for the JPF building, car park, play area, etc.

The existing public toilets would, of course, be retained.

In addition, the Council has employed the service of Ingestre based architect Aaron Chetwynd to assist in the enhancement and provision of new facilities on the main playing field at the JPF including a skate board park, MUGA, BMX track and CCTV. The Council has approached a number of play equipment companies and, if viable, it is hoped that installation will begin during the first half of 2014.



Colwich Parish Great War Project

August 2014 will see the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. The Parish Council plans to commemorate the occasion with events that pay tribute to the part played in that war by men and women from this Parish.

It is hoped to hold, among other things, a Great War Exhibition at the Great Haywood Memorial Hall in early August 2014. The organisers would welcome any contributions that can be made, especially any letters, photographs or other memorabilia of the men and women who served in or lived through the war. They would also welcome any individuals or organisations that can contribute displays for the Exhibition or organise other events and activities during the year.

If you can help in any way, either through provision of memorabilia or by assisting on the organising committee, please contact David Robbie on 01899 881794 or at daverobbie38@btinternet.com

CHAIRMAN'S REFLECTIONS

It is necessary for me to add to the comments I have already made on the front page regarding the recent planning applications submitted by Mr Seabridge. He attended the Parish Office on Thursday, 28th November and I can state, categorically, that the claims and statements made in his publicity material were totally unsubstantiated. He failed to provide any proof as to the veracity of his claims and his applications are a blatant attempt to exploit the current relaxation of planning laws. If he succeeds he will make millions for himself and the landowners by selling on the land to a building company. He has misled many residents with his promotion of a new health centre, which, by the way, he has no intention of building. He is unable to provide an upgrade of the sewage and drainage system. Like all confidence tricksters he entices you with the offer of goodies but disappears with the money before he has to fulfil any of his promises. Don't be duped, he has nothing to offer but heartache and aggravation.

If Mr Seabridge were a double glazing salesman you would immediately show him the door.

In the pipeline are a number of initiatives the Parish Council are currently implementing over the next few months. They include the provision of a skate park, BMX track and Multi Use Games Area (commonly known as a MUGA) to be installed on the Jubilee playing field. Parents will be reassured that the new 24 hour CCTV monitoring to be installed on the site at the same time will help to provide security for the children using the new equipment and should also eliminate the illegal siting of recycling bins which appear from time to time on the car park.

It is also our intention to convert the existing building on the Jubilee to accommodate the Parish Office. Once the office move has been completed, some time next year, the current office will be let either as an office or for retail use, subject to planning permission. If anyone is interested in the existing office please contact the Clerk.

The initiatives outlined above will all fall within the provisions of our Neighbourhood Plan which, as you are aware, has been under construction for some months. I would again urge you to take an active role in formulating the final parts of the Plan by completing the enclosed questionnaire. We have also provided a youth questionnaire for your children to complete. For ease of completion and return both of these questionnaires are posted on Facebook, adult questionnaire, youth questionnaire. It is important for everyone to appreciate that the sooner the Neighbourhood Plan is completed and approved substantial control of planning in the Parish is delegated to the Parish Council. You can rest assured that the actions of the Parish Council will represent the views you expressed through your answers in the questionnaires.

It would seem that a nerve was touched by our previous publication when I mentioned that Stafford Borough Council's cabinet member for housing policy Mr Farrington would not meet parish council members to discuss the Borough's housing policy. Mr Farrington was keen to point out that he was a solicitor and a partner in the firm of solicitors, Hand Morgan and Owen and they had branches in Stafford and Rugeley. What this had to do with housing policy is a puzzle we have yet to solve.



Cllr. Paul Gilbert

However, it did elicit a rapid response from Mr Farrington in the form of a Code of Conduct complaint against me. He made his complaint to a fellow solicitor, Mr Alistair Welch, Stafford Borough Council's Monitoring Officer and Head of Law and Administration. This is a scary business, particularly as between the two of them they were unable to get their procedures right and the fact they were wasting your valuable taxpayers money on such drivel. Of course, this may have been a clumsy attempt at retaliation for the notices I issued to the majority of the planning Members and the Planning Officer advising the committee when the Greenacres development was approved. Code of Conduct complaints were also issued against Mr Farrington. At the time of going to press none of the correspondence has received a reply from the Stafford Borough Council which begs the question are taxpayers getting value for money or is the Borough Council wasting taxpayers' hard earned money on ineffective and inept officials?

I wish you all a very Merry Xmas and a New Year free from planning applications.

**Cautionary note –
Don't Drink and Drive.**

BEST KEPT VILLAGE

2013 has been a good year for Great Haywood, Little Haywood and Colwich who were awarded Highly Commended in the Best Kept Village Competition. In the Heart of England in Bloom competition, Great Haywood was awarded a Silver, and Colwich and Little Haywood received a Silver Gilt, for the second year running. Our Annual General Meeting is on 14 January 2014, at 7.30 p.m. in the Parish Centre. Everyone is invited. At the Presentation and Thank-you Evening the Parish Room was FULL. Please come along to our interesting and friendly A.G.M.

Anne Clendon.

Secretary B.K.V. and Colwich and Little Haywood in Bloom Committee

HS2

The Parish Council has been supplied with a lap-top, by HS2 Ltd., for residents to look at the HS2 Hybrid Bill proposals. If you wish to study these documents we would ask that you please book an appointment - office hours are 10.00 a.m. to noon. Unfortunately, there are no printer facilities, and you will need to be computer literate.

DATES FOR DIARIES...

Bag Collection – 8th January 2014.

JPF Skip - 18th January 2014, 15th February 2013, 15th March 2014

Christmas Tree Recycling – date to be confirmed via website and noticeboards.

Colwich and Haywoods Twinning Association

Mr Clive Dewsnap

This year saw the 30th Anniversary of the Twinning Charter between Colwich and Haywoods and Rimbach im Odenwald in Germany. To mark this occasion a party of 34 friends from Rimbach, including the Burgermeister of Rimbach, Herr Holger Schmitt, and the Chairman of the Rimbach Partnerschaft, Herr Markus Altendorf, visited us between Sunday 13th October and Friday 18th October.

A varied programme was arranged including a meeting with the Mayor of Stafford on Monday morning followed by a tour of the historical parts of Stafford. In the evening there was a Service of Celebration of the 30 years of the Twinning Charter at St Michaels and All Angels Church in Colwich, at which over 75 people attended. This was led by Rev Mark Davys along with Rev Simon Davis and Father Julian Booth.

On Tuesday there was a visit to the Rhyl lifeboat station in North Wales and Chester. Many people in the Haywoods have a close connection with this particular lifeboat.

On Wednesday there was a visit to the Wedgwood Museum and a canal boat trip at Stone. On Thursday the group visited Lichfield and the cathedral to view some of the Staffordshire Hoard. There was a Farewell Dinner in the evening at Brocton Golf Club at which 80 people attended.

A highlight of the stay was the visit to Anson and Colwich Schools. Many of the pupils had been taking German language lessons and were able to greet their visitors in their own tongue. It is hoped this contact with the schools can be maintained.

DRIVING IN WINTER

Will all Drivers please check that ALL their lights are working including the indicator lights. Too many people are forgetting their HIGHWAY CODE - and other motorists have to guess which way the car in front is turning!

Please remember to wipe the windscreen wipers, and fill the reservoir.

Keep a good distance between cars, especially when driving in rain, ice or snow.

Please respect the 30 mph limit - these are homely villages, and not part of the A51.

The 20 mph signs at the Schools are there for the safety of our children.

Do you really need your fog lights on in normal conditions?

*My wish for you...
a safe journey home.*

Cllr. Anne Clendon



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