



NEWSLETTER

Summer 2014 No. 83

LOCAL HEROES

Cllr Andy Cooper



Some of you will recall local lad Phil Salwey's incredible performance when he and his barrow pushing partner won the village *Queen's Jubilee Wheel Barrow Race* back in 2012. Well, last year Phil and a couple of mates were approached by the Grandparents of a local girl "Kayleigh", who was aged 10 at the time and who had become terminally ill with an infection to her kidneys and was in need of a transplant. They were asked if they could do something to raise funds and awareness for the **Renal Unit at Birmingham Children's Hospital**. So **TEAM SPIRIT** was created, and after some thought, the team came up with the idea of cycling from Land's End to John O'Groats. They completed this between June 7th and 16th raising over **£6,000** for the Renal Unit. TEAM SPIRIT decided to continue raising funds and awareness for the General Fund of BCH with the aim to one day reach **£1Million**. Their next venture was to cycle coast to coast on mountain bikes, and this plus a Christmas raffle at the Clifford Arms and support from the Lewis Group Partnership and the British Culinary Federation took them to over £8,000 in 2013! LGP has confirmed TEAM SPIRIT as their annual charity for 2014.

Along with a few ideas for smaller one day fundraising events, the team are in the process of organizing the next major challenge. In 2014, they will tackle a "Climb & Ride" including the highest peaks in Scotland, England and Wales. Starting in Fort William on Saturday 9th August they will climb Ben Nevis before riding to Scarfell in the Lake District, and then on to Snowdon in Wales, whilst cycling approximately 600 miles between them and finishing at the Clifford Arms, Great Haywood on Saturday 16th August.

For more information, go to their website www.TeamSpiritChallenge.co.uk and if you want to sponsor this event, then go to www.justgiving.com/TeamSpiritClimbandRide2014,

The good news is that Kayleigh had her Kidney transplant and is now doing well.

The Team Spirit members are:

Riders: Phil Salwey, Pete Corbett, Dave Weals and Rich Weals.

Support: Rob Evans and Terry Tribe.

I'm sure everyone in the Parish will join the Parish Council in wishing them every success in their aims and challenges.

THE LATEST ON PLANNING MATTERS

Cllr S. Gibson

Recently, the Moore Family Trust (MFT) put a planning application in to Stafford Borough Council, to build 60+ houses on the Shenley Cottage site. The response from the Borough, according to the MFT, was to ask them to put in an application for 115 houses instead!

Colwich Parish Council wrote to the Borough Council opposing this application and, at the same time, asked to meet the MFT. At this meeting, the Parish Council put forward the idea of a mini retirement village, for local people only, consisting of retirement bungalows, a care home, a nursing home, a medical centre together with a few shops and a café etc., instead. This concept was based on our perception of your needs after attending village consultation events and reading the results of the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire returns. The Council was delighted when the MFT said that this was what they wanted to build in the first place but had been encouraged to build houses instead.

Unfortunately, our suggestions have only been taken on board in a limited way, as the MFT's latest application, for 65 houses, does include some sheltered housing. I believe that the Parish Council should totally oppose this new application. It is sad that something which was agreed in principle, during a meeting, has been more or less totally ignored.

I know that the Chairman of the Parish Council regards this a treachery.

WORLD WAR I COMMEMORATION

On the weekend of **2nd – 4th AUGUST 2014** there will be a Great War Exhibition to which local schools and many village groups, clubs and individuals will contribute. It is hoped to organise a Great War Walk, which will include visits to local places associated with J. R. R. Tolkien during the war. On Sunday 3rd August there will be a commemorative church service at St. Stephen's Church commencing at 4.00 pm.



Do you have any photographs or any other memorabilia associated with anyone whose name is on the villages' war memorials? If so, we would love to hear from you. If you can help in any way, please contact David Robbie at daverobbie38@btinternet.com or telephone **881794**.



NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN GETS SUPPORT

The Council would like to thank those people who came to the Great Haywood Memorial Hall on the 3rd May, and the Parish Centre on the 4th May, to give us their opinion on the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. Thanks are also due to those who filled in the feedback form.

There are many comments that we will use in drafting the Plan for you but by and large you strongly supported the vision and the objectives. Having got your support the Neighbourhood Plan Committee can now set about writing the policies that will shape the villages, settlements and landscapes of the Parish up to 2031. Neighbourhood Plan Committee meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month in the Parish Centre starting at 7:30pm. They are open to residents and there is an opportunity at the start of each meeting to talk to the committee.



ROGATION SUNDAY

Cllr Andy Cooper

This year's annual Rogation Sunday walk, which continues the ancient tradition of 'Beating the Bounds' by following the Parish Boundary, took place on the afternoon 25th May. Nearly 20 walkers were treated to a break in the generally wet weather as they followed the 4 to 5 mile route from the Punchbowl car park up the Sherbrook Valley on the Chase, returning back on the ridge and down Haywood Slade. Apparently Slade is an old word for small valley – and there are lots of them on the Chase! The route involved crossing the stream twice, with the second at the famous Stepping Stones picnic area. It is quite a surprise to realise that Colwich Parish includes a large chunk of Cannock Chase, and the border section we followed ran up Sherbrook Valley, before bearing left towards Rugeley. Cuckoos were heard calling during the route and we enjoyed some spectacular horizons when we reached the highest point near the OS

Trig Point. Rev Mark Davys held a short service to bless our Parish when we returned to the car park. Unfortunately the walk took longer than anticipated, so we were not able to enjoy the planned cuppa and piece of cake in Shugborough.

Perhaps another little challenge for Team Spirit (see the article) might be to walk (or in their case run/bike?) the entire Parish Boundary which I estimate to be between 20 and 25 miles!!!?



WHO IS IN CONTROL OF PLANNING AT STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL?

On 5th February 2014 I attended a meeting, on behalf of Colwich Parish Council (CPC), held at Stafford Borough Council (SBC) to discuss their Local Plan and how it affects the Key Service Villages (KSV). In their wisdom, SBC had designated Great Haywood as one KSV and Little Haywood/Colwich as a separate KSV, a **Double Whammy!**

Many of the Parish Councils attending the meeting were directly affected by the relentless pressure from developers housing applications. The discussions focused around the problems resulting from these applications and possible solutions to these unlimited intrusions.

During the meeting, which included Mr John Holmes (Planning Development Manager) and Mr Alex Yendole (Planning Policy Manager), Mr Ted Manders (Head of Planning and Regeneration) displayed a map of the "Haywoods" featuring the various planning applications for our Parish which had been submitted to the planning office. He described the two 'Seabridge' (Little Tixall Lane and next to The Ring) and the Moore Family Trust (Shenley Cottage and surrounds) applications as **"ridiculous"** and **"inappropriate"**.

Mr Yendole, despite being at odds with his Manager, SBC's own policies and the Government's planning policies, recommended that the Planning Committee approve the Seabridge application which will result in the

destruction of the farmland adjacent to "The Ring".

At the Planning Meeting, held on 2nd April 2014, the application was supported by Mr Holmes who demonstrated, in my opinion, a complete lack of knowledge of the area and was totally muddled by the difference between Development Boundaries and Village Boundaries. This was a prime example of the competency of Planning staff engaged to advise members of the Planning Committee.

Prior to this planning meeting, Colwich PC, on your behalf, engaged the services of a Planning Barrister whose legal opinion, together with those of the National Trust, were, for whatever reason, totally ignored by the officers and members of the Planning Committee. Similarly, the village survey, conducted by Seabridge and with almost 100 responses, was not displayed on SBC's website and the responses you forwarded to SBC's planning website were also ignored.

However, regardless of the apparent poor standard of advice, and incomprehensible decisions of the staff, it remains inexcusable that we, the electorate, are subject to the inane decisions of elected SBC representatives, from all political parties, who appear to be so inadequate to make a reasoned decision which reflects the interests of their constituents. Rather, they seem to prefer the interests of the developer. **WHY?**



Cllr. Paul Gilbert

It may be that a **Judicial Review** will resolve this erroneous decision.

One has to ask if there is a hidden agenda or even something more sinister? Why do some companies appear to receive a favourable response from Planners and obtain almost immediate planning approval?

I think it is time that the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration, Cllr. Frances Beatty, got to grips with her portfolio and department by initiating a policy which is transparent and one that the general public can understand and reflects their expectations.

I personally think that the Borough Council is a disgrace, lacks consistency and is unfit for purpose. It would seem that a root and branch investigation, by the **Department for Communities and Local Government** with the possibility of intervention and special measures may be the only method of restoring confidence in this flawed tier of government.

HS2

At least someone is doing a good job. In a recent conversation with Jeremy Lefroy MP, he confirmed that he had been successful in obtaining proper (market value) compensation for a number of properties in Hopton blighted by HS2.

For those property owners in Great Haywood who are similarly affected i.e. wish to move but unable to sell their property due to HS2, please contact Mr Lefroy's office (01785 252477) and speak to James Cantrell. Mr Cantrell will make all the arrangements for you to discuss your situation with Mr Lefroy.



Borough Councillors approve destruction of these ancient archery shooting butts

GREAT HAYWOOD MEMORIAL HALL – an appeal Cllr S Gibson

Is there anyone out there who would do some weeding and strimming on and around the car park of GHMH? We are happy to pay this person £15 per month while the work is being carried out. Own strimmer and public liability insurance required. We also need volunteers to help put some gravel down. If you are interested in fulfilling either of these tasks please contact Rosie Gray on: 01889 882340

JUBILEE PLAYING FIELD

As part of the revamp for the JPF, the Parish Council is considering the inclusion of a junior football pitch with a changing facility being retained in the room next to the toilet block. In order to approach funders to assist with this project, the Council needs to be able to demonstrate that there is a need for such a facility for local junior football teams. We would, therefore, like to hear from any junior team in the Parish who would wish to make the JPF their home pitch. You must be affiliated to the Staffordshire FA and be part of their youth/junior league set-up.

BEST KEPT VILLAGE HEART OF ENGLAND IN BLOOM

Cllr Mrs Clendon

IMPORTANT... Please keep up the good work, we need **EVERYONE** to keep picking up litter, spotting the people who hang up used "poop" bags in hedges, and maintaining their gardens and hanging baskets.

Judging is ongoing for the BKV competition. We are expecting 'The Heart of England in Bloom' judges in the Parish on Thursday 17th July. The results will be announced on the Parish Facebook page, in the Notice boards and the Autumn Newsletter.

BAG COLLECTION DATE:
Wednesday 16th July 2014.

SKIP DATES:

**19th July, 9th August,
6th September and 11th October.**

HIGH SPEED BROADBAND

Have you ever wondered about your Broadband speeds? The question was asked in the Neighbourhood survey with over 80% suggesting that they required faster rates. The new HSB will make downloading Super High Definition TV, games and videos possible.

£27m is being spent locally as part of the Government's objective of rolling out High Speed Broadband to 97% of homes by 2016. Colton will be one of the earliest to receive the facility. *Sadly, Colwich and The Haywoods is in the remaining 3%! The reasoning is our distance from an exchange, along with the size of our villages. Worryingly, when we approached SCC representatives, at a recent presentation event, they seemed unaware of the size of our Parish or of the potential need - domestic and business!!*

To get a more detailed understanding of what High Speed Broadband might mean to you, visit www.superfaststaffordshire.co.uk

If you want to check out how your own location is on the schedule of the roll-out, go to www.superfast-openreach.co.uk/where-and-when/default.aspx where you can enter your postcode and the icon keys will explain the priority system.

News from the Neighbours: SHUGBOROUGH

Cllr Andy Cooper

Even though last year's visiting figures for the Hall and grounds were down by about 20% (comparable to the experience of the National Trust on other properties around the country) it is still astounding to realise the attraction Shugborough generates.

During the year, some 17 special events were held with around 50,000 visitors including:

- A Halloween event which saw the hall at near full capacity,
- 3,500 attending the bonfire night
- 1,800 children visited Santa!
- 10,000 people visited the food fare
- Over 4,000 people visited the Christmas Event in the Hall.

For residents worried about the impact of noise from events, there will only be two with fireworks – Bonfire Night, and a special event by the Marie Curie Cancer Charity.

There are 129 volunteers who work on the estate - many from our Parish, who cover a multitude of tasks to help support the facility with the most popular area being the gardens.

Shugborough is commemorating the start of WW1 with various events and scenarios depicting life on the eve of war, including a 'war horse' housed in the stables – complete with recruiting sergeant.

The arboretum is seeing further developments for children, complete with a Hobbit house and Pixie den (recalling that Tolkien was resident in our Parish around the time of WW1).

Shugborough's Grade 1 listed buildings and lands are largely self-funded and it is also now registered for Rare Breed status, with some animals being rarer than pandas!

This year sees the West Midlands Game Fare (a major event) held at Shugborough for the first time.

So – the Hall management have reported that 2014 has got off to a good start and the good news is that there are no price increases!

Please support what is a valuable local tourist attraction – why not buy a family ticket for the season – or even join their volunteer staff!



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

facebook www.facebook.com/colwich.clerk

www.colwich.info