



Colwich Parish Council

INCORPORATING WOLSELEY BRIDGE, COLWICH, GREAT HAYWOOD & LITTLE HAYWOOD

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2026 No.125

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Full Council

7th May (Annual Meeting), 4th June – Parish Office

Haywoods Repair Café

10th May; 14th June; 12th July – Colwich & Little Haywood Village Hall

Tolkien in Great Haywood

11th -12th July – Great Haywood Memorial Hall

Workshop day

23rd August – Far Coley Farm

Civic Amenity Skip

13th June, 15th August – 10.00am-12.00noon – JPF

Music Evening

27th June – Colwich & Little Haywood Village Hall

Children's fun days

5th August – Colwich Primary, 12th August – St John's

Welfare Fayre & Parish Assembly

14th September – Colwich Primary School

J. R. R. TOLKIEN IN GREAT HAYWOOD

Under the leadership of local historian Dave Robbie, the recently formed 'Tolkien In Great Haywood' group are on target to present a 'Tolkien Weekend' on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th July, each open between 10 am and 4 pm in Great Haywood Memorial Hall, to which all are invited. The group is supported by local councils and organisations.

The object of the weekend is to introduce villagers to the life of J.R.R. Tolkien in the area during the Great War in the years 1916-17 and how the locality gave inspiration for aspects of Tolkien's books on Middle-earth and in which time he started to write the first tales of his epic mythology.

Also in hand and being ready for the event are five Heritage Plaques, an Information Board, finger post and a 'Tolkien Trail booklet', (available in the Spar shop and the Crave Cave cafe), all of which will be located along Main Road. In Tolkien's time it really was a main road being part of the main route from London to Chester, the original

Clifford Arms being a staging post for horse drawn coaches. In the Memorial Hall there will be many depictions of the village at this time with contributions from local organisations, including from local schools who have been invited to participate as the group feel that it is important that our youngsters should be introduced to local history. Refreshments will also be available.



CLLR KIRSTIE LOWBRIDGE

I moved to Little Haywood four years ago from Stafford, where I'd lived since 2010, and fell in love with the village and its breathtaking views and surrounding areas.



Life is lively - with a husband and three children who are in nursery, primary and high school - working full time for a government contracts business, having a food business, looking after our newly obtained allotment plot, and of course becoming a Parish Councillor in 2025!

I love photographing memories, 4x4s, country music, horse riding, decorating, and a good cheesy FBI style crime series. I'm always on the go - food, cinema, children's clubs, the gym or reorganising and sorting out. Random fact... when I worked at London Midland Railway head office, I was also a trained Conductor and stepped in to operate trains during strike action.

I've made some amazing friends here, and am proud to call this area home and am passionate about helping it continue to thrive for everyone!

BUDGET

WHAT IS THE 2026/27 BUDGET

The total 2026/27 budget was set at of £313,607.11. In comparison, the total budget in 2025/26 was £290,375. The change in budget, therefore, is an increase of £23,232 or **8%**.

HOW WAS THE 2026/27 BUDGET SET?

The Council's Finance Committee met in November 2025 and January 2026, to consider the requests from the various Committees as well as on-going costs. The Committee then made a recommendation to the Full Council meeting in February 2026.

Additionally, the Council, as a responsible employer, made provision within the budget to cover the pay claim submitted by the Local Government Trade Unions. Parish Council's, and their employees, have no say in the final settlement but are bound by it. The decision is taken nationally by representatives of the Borough/County/Unitary Councils and the 3 trade unions. Unlike other parts of the public sector, any pay claim must be met from Council funds and is not subsidised by central government.

The Council was informed by Stafford Borough Council of an expected increase in its contribution to the Ordinary Election of the Council due to take place on 6th May 2027, which needed to be factored into the budget.

Inflation was also considered as the costs incurred by the Council have risen since the 2025/26 budget setting meetings. The RPI when the budget was prepared was 4.3%.

Committee costs, including associated staff costs (gross salaries, Council NI and Pension contributions)

Communications **£14,143**

writing, printing, distributing of the Newsletters and checking noticeboards.

Environment **£66,130**

Cost of the van and other equipment for the Lengthsmen. Funds to improve the Garden of Remembrance and the ability to receive and reimburse the allotment rents. Grass cutting along Main Road from Roseacre junction to Colwich junction; Kingfisher Drive, St Mary's play area, Garden of Remembrance, maintenance of hedges, benches, clearing pavements and gullies etc.

Events **£39,524**

Organising Community events plus two Parish Assemblies, hiring of entertainment and stewarding.

Leisure **£42,032**

Utilities for the JPF building, including charging the equipment batteries used by the Lengthsmen, and the civic visits. Funds to commission additional studies ahead of the programme of works at the JPF. Grass cutting of main field, children's play area, BMX track/MUGA/Skatepark, daily cleaning of toilets, closing of the gates etc.

Resources (running the Council) **£151,778**

Utilities, telephone/internet and general waste collection, subscriptions, insurance, audit fees, IT equipment and software, Councillor training, meetings (drafting reports and compiling the agenda, clerking the meetings and writing up the minutes), undertaking actions from the meetings, answering correspondence, representing the Council with outside bodies, line management by the Chief Officer, Deputy Chief Officer and Head Lengthsman, financial management, asset register management, cleaning, payroll, continuous professional development, travel and VDU equipment (under DSE regulations)

Total - £313,607.11

BUDGET

HOW DOES THE COUNCIL FINANCE THE BUDGET?

In the last few years, the Council has used considerable levels of reserves to reduce the overall charge to residents. The Council has achieved this by cancelling projects, agreed by previous Councils, and reallocating those funds. The Council no longer has large levels of earmarked reserves, allocated to specific projects, and is very close to the recommended minimum level of general reserves.

In its 2024/25 budget, the Council allocated £56,000 from its reserves.

In its 2025/26 budget, the Council allocated £32,000 from its reserves.

In its 2026/27 budget, the Council was only able to allocate £2,400 from its reserves.

Total Budget 2026/27	£313,607.11
Income and reserves	-£13,300.00
Local Government Grant	-£12,375.70
Charge to Taxpayers	£287,931.41
Band D Tax base	1.904.94

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLDS?

BAND	2025/26 PER YEAR	2026/27 PER YEAR	INCREASE PER YEAR	INCREASE PER WEEK
A	£85.04	£100.77	£15.73	30P
B	£99.21	£117.56	£18.35	35P
C	£113.39	£134.36	£20.97	40P
D	£127.56	£151.15	£23.59	45P
E	£155.91	£184.74	£28.83	55P
F	£184.25	£218.33	£34.08	66P
G	£212.60	£251.92	£39.32	76P
H	£255.12	£302.30	£47.18	91P

Potholes can mean a bumpy ride. But it's possible to claim for damages.

What are potholes and why do we get them?

Potholes are formed when cracks appear in the roads from wear and tear, which are then filled with water from rain. In cold weather, the water in the cracks freezes and expands, causing more damage and widening the crack. Over time, these expanded cracks form potholes. As more cars drive over these potholes, they get larger and more dangerous.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU HIT A POTHOLE?

If you've driven over a pothole, check your car as soon as possible. When it's safe to do so, pull over and look for any obvious visible damage, like cracked alloys or a hanging exhaust.

Take photos or sketch the scene to show the location of the pothole and make note of its size and exact location. If there are any witnesses, ask for their contact details.

However, the damage might not always be visible. For example, you may only find out afterwards that the steering is pulling to one side or that strange noises are coming from the car.

So, if you've got any concerns, get your car checked by a mechanic. And get quotes if repairs are needed - you'll need these if you want to make a claim.

Make sure you report the pothole to the local authority so they can get the road surface repaired to prevent other drivers from being affected.

To report a pothole use the MyStaffs app on your phone or via the website www.staffordbc.gov.uk



The 7th annual Colwich and the Haywoods Christmas Lights competition took place throughout December. A total of 15 Individual Household displays were considered and voted on. A very close vote ensued, and we are delighted to announce that this year's individual and street display winners are:

★INDIVIDUAL WINNER★

MR & MRS HILDRETH



★STREET WINNER★



Congratulations to our winners and a huge thank you to all those who entered and those who took the time to vote for their favourite.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I'm pleased to take this opportunity to say hello and give you a glimpse of the exciting plans we have lined up for the coming year.

The work on the Jubilee Playing Field — including the building and the field — is progressing well. It's a substantial project, but one that will give us a valuable resource for many years to come, creating a space the whole community can enjoy and be proud of.

Because of the scale of the work involved, we're unable to host the Village Fete this year. Instead, we'll be offering a variety of events throughout the year, giving us plenty of opportunities to come together as a community while the improvements to the Jubilee Playing Field continue.

The summer events will begin with a Music Night on Saturday 27th June at Little Haywood Village Hall. There'll be live music, food, and a bar, so come along and enjoy a relaxed summer evening with some great acts and good company.

On **Wednesday 5th August** at **Colwich School Playing Field**, and again on **Wednesday 12th August** at **St John's School Field**, we'll have activities for children to enjoy.

We round off the summer with something especially for the grown-ups. On **Sunday 23rd August**, we'll be hosting a **Workshop Day at Far Coley Farm**. The day will offer a range of taster sessions in different crafts and activities, giving everyone the chance to try something new in a relaxed, friendly setting. We're currently confirming the final list of workshops and will share full details soon.

Put these dates in your diaries and keep an eye on our website, the notice boards, and our social media channels for updates as the year unfolds.

If you would like any further information, or if you're interested in hosting one of our taster sessions, please contact the Parish Office at assistant.clerk@colwichparishcouncil.gov.uk



Colwich Parish Council
presents

**CHARITY
MUSIC
EVENING**

27TH JUNE 2025
LITTLE HAYWOOD
VILLAGE HALL

ENTRY FEES
£5 - ADULT
£2.50 - CHILDREN (3-16)
FREE - UNDER 3S

27TH JUNE 2025
LITTLE HAYWOOD
VILLAGE HALL



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