



# Colwich Parish Council

INCORPORATING WOLSELEY BRIDGE, COLWICH, GREAT HAYWOOD & LITTLE HAYWOOD

## NEWSLETTER

## COUNCIL TAX



**A**s a responsible authority, Colwich Parish Council must avoid setting a budget which might result in loss or deficiency which would breach the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

The Council has, therefore, applied a cost of living increase across its budget heads for 2018/19. Further adjustments have been made to staffing costs, in part, to reflect the statutory pension auto-enrolment of all eligible staff as well as an allowance for the pay award offer being considered by District and County Council trade unions which will then be applied to the Parish sector.

Further funds have been allocated towards a number of long-term projects, supplementing amounts from the 2017/18 budget, including **£2,500** for traffic calming along Mill Lane, Great Haywood, giving a total of £25,000, and **£15,000** for the footpath link from the Memorial Hall to Hazeldene House giving a new total of £20,000.

A further **£5,000** has been allocated to continue the River of Flowers project and to support the Haywoods and Colwich in Bloom committee.

**£3,500** has been added to the Election budget, bringing the total to £7,300, to cover the potential cost of the 2019 Ordinary Election of the Council, a small portion of which will be used to cover the recent Election in the Great Haywood Ward.

The Council is looking at different ways to engage with residents, supplementing the monthly Surgeries, and so a fund of £500 has been established to cover the cost of having a stall at craft fayres etc.

The Youth Council is growing and going from strength to strength with 9 Youth Councillors who attend the regular meetings. The Youth Council will have its own budget of **£10,000** and will collectively make decisions on how it wishes to spend these funds. Proposals being considered include additional play equipment at the JPF for teenagers to supplement the younger children's playground and how to link in with the Flower and Vegetable show.

In total the budget for 2018/19 has been set at **£190,629**. This equates to an annual charge of £104.71 per Band D property; £93.08 per Band C and £81.44 per Band B. This equivalent to a **2.9% increase** or less than a £3 per year increase for a Band D property.

Spring 2018

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## ATTENTION DOG OWNERS!

Your Parish Councillors would like to offer their congratulations and sincere thanks to those responsible dog owners/walkers who pick up their dog's waste and either take it home for disposal or put it in one of the many bins located around the Parish.

Unfortunately there remains a small minority that continue to cause a nuisance by not clearing up after their pet. Dog mess is an eyesore and a health hazard. If you are in charge of a dog in a place accessible to the public, including grass verges, flower beds, footpaths, roads, bridle paths etc., you have a legal duty to clean up every time your dog defecates (only registered blind people are exempt from this requirement).

**Any person in charge of a dog who does not clean up its mess is liable to a £75 Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) or face prosecution with a maximum fine of £1000.**

Being unaware that your dog has fouled, or being without the means of collecting it, will not be acceptable as an excuse. A single reported and confirmed offence will result in an FPN being issued.

If you know of someone who is not cleaning up after their dog it can be reported at [dogs@staffordbc.gov.uk](mailto:dogs@staffordbc.gov.uk) or by calling 01785 619000, and give as much detail as possible, such as name, date, time, and location. If the information provided leads to either a successful prosecution or the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice, you will receive a £75 reward.

If you feel that the provision of a suitable bin in a specific location would encourage more dog walkers to collect their dog poo, then please contact the Parish Clerk, and we will endeavour to arrange it. Free poo bags, kindly supplied by the Borough Council, are available from the box outside the Parish Office.

A number of groups and individuals in the Parish work hard to improve our environment for us all to enjoy. We all have a part to play in supporting that objective, and those of us with dogs have a larger part to play than most.

**Cllr Jim Sarjant**





# THE COLWICH & HAYWOODS TWINNING ASSOCIATION

**M**ost villagers are aware that we are twinned with Rimbach in Germany. Signs at the entrances to our villages announce it and the sign on the Jubilee Playing Field building tells us that Rimbach is 1049 kilometres away. This all probably seems very distant from our everyday life and of little interest to many. However, the door of Twinning is open to all so please READ ON.

A German businessman who had a holiday home in Great Haywood in 1980 saw many similarities between our area and his home region of the Odenwald in Germany where Rimbach is situated. Both are rural farming areas with significant tracts of forested land. Both are within commuting distance of large cities; Manchester and Birmingham, Frankfurt and Mannheim. Consequently the mix of occupations is very similar. The seeds of Twinning were planted and in 1982 & 1983 the Twinning Charters were signed between the two communities.

Many activities and visits have taken place over the last 35 years involving sports teams, youth camps, musical groups and exchange visits between groups of individuals on an annual basis. Strong friendships have been made and at least one marriage!

Twinning offers an amazing opportunity to learn from each other's cultures. In many ways we are very alike but there are also many differences in practices and attitudes. Early in our visits we were able to observe the German attitude to recycling at a time when it hardly existed here. We have well and truly caught up on this one but there are still things to be learned. The Odenwald is a brewing area with many small breweries producing their own speciality. Alternatively, Rimbach is near to the vineyards of the Pfalz and wine abounds.



This year it is our turn to visit Rimbach in October. Over the years our original group of young, dynamic Twinners have aged somewhat and we urgently need young blood to liven us up and take over from us as we pass into our dotage. Last year the twinning Association was very much in danger of dying through lack of young support. We needed to do something and to this end we invited a group of German young people (between the ages of 15 and 21 years) to travel with the older group for their October visit. This venture, headed up by Vicky Jenkinson, was a great success. The group of 10 youngsters took part in a varied programme of outdoor activities on the Chase and visits to Birmingham for culture & shopping and Stafford for bowling and a shared meal. Such was the enthusiasm that we are hoping to do the same this year by taking a group of our own young people to meet up with friends they made at the last visit.

Whilst placing much emphasis on building up contacts between the young people **we also wish to encourage people of all age groups to join us on our trips.** When the original Twinners joined we had

teenage families and we would like to see more of this age group joining us. The cost is not prohibitive as we only pay our travelling expenses and en route overnight stays. In Rimbach we stay as the guests of German families.

The Twinning Association holds social evenings to which everyone is welcome. Our next event will be on **April 28th when we are holding a Skittles Evening with Fish & Chip supper at Little Haywood Village Hall. Come and meet us and learn more.**

Hopefully this article about the experience of Twinning has sparked your interest. Why not come and learn more. Not only is it a beneficial experience, **IT IS GREAT FUN.**



For further details please do not hesitate to contact Annette Bloor (Chairperson) on 881749 or Christine Hill (Secretary) on 808194

**Annette Bloor**  
Chairman, Twinning Association

## BEST KEPT VILLAGE

We have changed our name to **COLWICH PARISH IN BLOOM**. The next committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 14th March 2018 at 7.30 p.m. in Great Haywood Sports & Social Club.

[www.colwichparishinbloom.co.uk](http://www.colwichparishinbloom.co.uk)  
[colwichparishinbloom@g.mail.com](mailto:colwichparishinbloom@g.mail.com)

**Anne Clendon B.E.M.**



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### COUNCIL SURGERIES:

**Parish Centre**  
**11th April 7.00 - 8.00 p.m.**

**A**t the time of writing, we are seeing a mixed bag of weather with the first signs of spring plant life – (especially from all the work started on the **River of Flowers** scheme) coupled with Met Office warnings of more snowfall to come. At times like this, I'm encouraged to hear of stories where fellow residents are making a real difference to the elderly and lonely in our Parish. If you are aware of anyone that needs help please do what you can. If you are unable to lend assistance then please advise us at the Parish Centre so that we can pass the information on to the appropriate authorities.

## News from the Neighbours!

Hayley Mival, Operations Manager at Shugborough, provided the Parish Council with an update on progress on the National Trust's work on the estate. As at February this year, it is 15 months since the Trust took back day-to-day management of the site and just over 10 months since they reopened it to the public. Thousands of metres of fencing have been replaced during this time with other areas to follow allowing the parkland to open up again in keeping with its original design. Following some anti-social behaviour, new gates have been installed on the main roads in and out of the estate. The refurbished lodges on the old entrances to the Estate should be ready for occupation by the spring and the Trust is looking to increase the standards in the Mansion with greater opening hours for better access. Conservation work is planned to begin on the various monuments around the estate. Some may have noticed the ongoing demolition of the County Council's buildings on the southern area of the walled garden, which is set to continue throughout the year with the aim of converting the area into grassland.

Hayley was able to report a significant increase in NT membership and attendance through the Shugborough Estate which was very encouraging. The NT has also seen a good rise in the number of volunteers working on the estate – but were always on the lookout for new ones.

A **Patrick Lichfield** exhibition is planned for May 2018 including some of his photographs of the Queen. Other events are planned and will be advertised on their website. The NT intends to provide more update details later in the year which the Parish Council has suggested it may be willing to share on its own website!

## Finances

As in previous years, the Parish Council has carried out a detailed assessment of its

# CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Councillor Andy Cooper

## HS2

The Parish Council agreed to lend its support to the **petition** being submitted to Parliament by Staffordshire County Council and Stafford Borough Council regarding the existing HS2 plans.

**The Parish Council submitted a number of key concerns, including:**

- the number of construction vehicles being routed via the Spa Shop roundabout and down Mill Lane,
- the impact on the junction of Main Road in Great Haywood with the A51
- Contractor's vehicles using Bishton Lane.

Cllr Andy Cooper

## VOLUNTARY TRANSPORT SCHEME

The Colwich and Haywoods Voluntary Transport Scheme is always in need of additional Drivers and Coordinators. Volunteer Drivers take people, unable to drive themselves, on pre-arranged journeys. Volunteer Coordinators take the telephone bookings and allocate them to the Drivers. The Drivers use their own cars and each passenger pays 45p per mile for the journey together with any parking costs. The Scheme is available to disabled, infirm or elderly persons etc. who need to attend a hospital or doctor's appointment, go to the shops, or to see friends or relatives etc. Drivers will often provide support and assistance that is beyond the scope of a commercial transport operator. Passengers can be accompanied on the journey and any special needs can be discussed with the Coordinator when making the booking.

If you have time to spare and would like to help your community, why not find out more about what is involved in these roles by phoning the bookings number and leaving your contact details. A member of the Management Committee will then get in touch.

Bookings can be made on 01889 883033

Cllr Jim Sarjant

budgetary requirements for the forthcoming financial year and by now, you will have seen that the resulting **precept** for Colwich Parish Council (the proportion of the local council tax that the Parish Council claims) has been held below 3%, which amounts to an increase of less than £3 per year on band D properties.

We continue to plan for the potential **link path** between the Great Haywood Memorial Hall car park and Surgery car park, with consultations held with the Surgery and Hall management representatives and local residents whose land may be affected by the construction of such a path.

Much needed **maintenance work** is being carried out on the Parish Centre with planned improvements for the JPF facilities dependent on confirmation of support funding (through section 106 funds) via the Borough Council.

Our **lengthsmen** continue to work around the Parish making a real difference to our area. Besides litter picking, salt spreading and clearing footpaths of tree litter they assisted in the planting of 35,000 bulbs across the parish as part of the River of Flowers project. A more detailed report of their activities will be given in the summer Newsletter.

The Parish Council has consulted with a specialist advisor regarding the provision of **additional burial spaces** within the Parish, and as a consequence has been made aware of the very high costs (potentially 6 figure sums) for providing such a facility. We are therefore looking at alternative options.

**Traffic calming schemes** are being reviewed for a number of areas around our Parish. One that has received a lot of attention recently suggests potential changes outside Anson School and along Main Road to the existing chicane. I can advise the removal of the chicane and on-street parking has not been requested by the Parish Council and is primarily a County Council led initiative. The Council is in discussion with the County to obtain clarity on the proposals.

A major cause for concern is the extensive damage being caused by **contractors' vehicles** to the verges on Little Tixall and Coley Lanes as well as other roads and tracks in our Parish. The Parish Council is in discussion with both County and Borough Councils to assess what can be done to prevent further damage through traffic restrictions and look for reparation to the lanes.



# LOCAL CRIME CONCERNS



As many of you may well be aware, there have been a number of break-ins to properties across our Parish recently generating a lot of concern. As a consequence, the Parish Council (with assistance from Lisa Guilfoyle) organised an open evening with Sgt Tim Rees, who was accompanied by one of our three local PCSO's, to explain the current situation and answer the concerns of local residents. Approximately 30 residents/Councillors were in attendance.

Sgt Rees explained that the Police were able to use statistical information to check for patterns in crimes **if they are reported** and can then concentrate resources in those areas. He was able to confirm that our Parish had seen an abnormal spike in criminal activity over a 2 month period (which was also repeated across other neighbouring Parishes), but following the arrest of an individual (now behind bars) after an incident in Stafford, these incidents have coincidentally subsided.

Not surprisingly, criminals are often as professional in their 'business' as many others are in their lawful careers. They know how to play the game, so linking them to other historic crimes is not easy!

## The key points from Sgt Rees's talk were:

- If you see **anything** suspicious – report it – either by ringing 101 or if it is a direct emergency then 999.
- Discussing a concern on Facebook or other social media is not the same as reporting it to the police.
- Keep Social Media reports and claims in perspective – they do get sensationalised and exaggerated – stick to the facts!
- Our area call centre has to prioritise around 200 calls per day for the Stafford area.
- Colwich & the Haywoods had 14 reported incidents of which **7 were burglaries**; 3 were thefts of vehicles; 3 were associated with farm machinery and one involved criminal damage.

- There has been a significant recent increase in Police presence in our area.
- Legal/police terminology has specific guidelines so public perception may be different from how an incident is classified – and this may change in the long term as an investigation progresses – e.g. burglary and robbery are two different classifications.
- Much of the crime in the town centre is drug related.
- Statistics are affected by boundaries. For example, if an incident starts in Rugeley, but ends in Colwich where a criminal is apprehended, then this will be counted in the Rugeley/Cannock area figures.
- We have almost 24/7 Police patrol cover for our Division (over 3 shifts) – but this pattern requires 1 day in 3 weeks when there won't be any direct cover. BUT if an incident is reported, then resources from neighbouring areas would attend.

The question of a **Neighbourhood Watch** scheme was raised, but in the Police's experience, it can be difficult to motivate people for this over prolonged periods of time. *A more useful option is to download the "Staffordshire Smart Alert" app to your smart phone or tablet to get up-to-date alerts and crime facts.*

As a community we need to ensure our elderly are kept informed, and one suggestion was to share information via the many local organisations for these groups.

So – if you see our PCSO's (Mike, Rich or Lisa) on patrol, then please let them know of anything that is concerning you and above all, if you see anything remotely suspicious then report it. The Police love "the nosey neighbourhood" mentality and have more chance of success when something is reported immediately, rather than saying the next day that that something looked unusual.

**Cllr Andy Cooper**



## GREAT HAYWOOD MEMORIAL HALL OPEN DAY - 12 MAY

Great Haywood Memorial Hall will be open between 10.00am and 4.00pm on 12 May to give you the opportunity to find out what goes on in **YOUR** Hall. Refreshments will be available throughout the day.

Over the past couple of years the Hall has been completely refurbished and a new kitchen installed.

The Hall is very well used both by regular groups and by people using it for one off or special occasions. Our website shows all the regular meetings.

There are also events organised by local groups. The Hall committee holds film evenings, musical entertainments and craft shows and other voluntary groups give us opportunities to get together for meals, quizzes and fun evenings. If you would like to be on our email list, email [ghmemorialhall@gmail.com](mailto:ghmemorialhall@gmail.com).

Our village also offers you all sorts of opportunities to volunteer to help our neighbours – these range from Community Transport to the Colwich Parish in Bloom group and they will also be in the Hall on 12 May, telling you what they do so that you can get involved in the activities which interest you.

Finally, the Parish Council will have a table so that you can find out what their role is and ask any of the questions you've always wanted answers to.

**Liz Harris**  
For the Great Haywood Memorial  
Hall Committee



**Chairman:**

**Cllr. Andy Cooper**

**Clerk:**

**Michael Lennon**

**Parish Office:**

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