

MAY & JUNE 2024

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My VILLAGE VOICE

Issue Number Seventy Six - May & June 2024

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Once you've read My Village Voice recycle it by giving it to a friend!

Village Fete season is upon us

Welcome to the May/June edition of My Village Voice, hopefully you've not been washed away with all the rainfall!

The headline on my Sunday paper last week read "England drenched after the wettest 18 months since records began in 1836"; you're not kidding, after my early years working on local farms, and out in the fields, I know all about April showers, but Jeeeeeze! There's been no let up has there?

I've been constantly monitoring my weather app, to see what percentage chance of precipitation awaits the next few days, in the vain hope of a window of opportunity to get the washing done, and out to dry on the line. (I am that dull man)

They say it's 'good for the garden' but I'll tell you one thing, it's not good for gardening, and the cynic in me already suspects there will still be hosepipe bans in force within the coming weeks.

Hopefully, by the time you're reading this, we're having a mini heatwave, or even a bit of a dry spell would be nice, I hope so, as there's a plethora of events and activities coming up locally over the next few weeks and months

inside this issue.

Village Fete season is upon us, my favourite time of the year, wandering around your villages fete brings a real sense of community spirit, with everyone coming together and mucking in behind the scenes, the chance to catch up with friends and neighbours from the village. Dates for Derrington, Colwich and Great Bridgeford Fetes inside.

Cooper Perry School in Seighford are holding a Car Boot sale, and don't forget it's **The County Show 29th and 30th May.**

Wolseley Bridge plays host to the J13 Wool Show, back this year and promising to be bigger and better than ever. There's an Art & Craft Fair coming to Great Haywood and Stafford Flower Club and holding a pop up Fashion Show in June, Bradley also have a 2nd pop up Market after their first one was so popular.

If you're looking to spruce your garden up, don't bother going to the big retail stores for your plants, head instead to Haughton and Bednall's upcoming Plant Sales, you not only get better quality plants, but save yourself pounds, whilst supporting local charities.

Dan Mitchell 28/4/24

GET IN TOUCH

5,400 copies are hand-delivered free to homes and businesses in **Acton Trussell, Bednall, Bradley, Brocton, Church Eaton, Colwich, Coppenhall, Derrington, Dunston, Haughton, The Haywoods, Hyde Lea, Milford, Seighford & Walton on the Hill**

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Read this issue online at www.myvillagevoice.co.uk

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Your partners in health and wellbeing

Welcome to The Bank of Wellbeing, a new health clinic located in Penkridge, specialising in different areas of wellbeing, offering patients the opportunity to book privately for services.

At The Bank of Wellbeing, we go beyond conventional pharmacy services to provide a unique and personalised healthcare experience.

Nestled in the heart of Penkridge, we pride ourselves on being more than just a local private clinic; we are your partners in health and wellbeing.

Founded with a commitment to community health, The Bank of Wellbeing emerged from a vision to create a space where individuals could access professional healthcare services in an environment that prioritises personalised care.



Established in Penkridge, our facilities are built on the principles of trust, compassion, and a dedication to enhancing the overall wellbeing of our community.

Visit The Bank of Wellbeing and experience healthcare with a personal touch.

Whether you need treatment or advice on managing a health condition, or simply want to explore ways to enhance your overall wellbeing, our dedicated team is here for you.

On the off chance, walk-in appointments may occasionally be available, but where possible we operate on an 'appointment only' basis. We are open Monday to Friday 9am til 5.30pm.

Our service offering is under constant review, and we would welcome suggestions as to what patients in the local community feel would be of benefit to them.

We look forward to welcoming you!



Services we offer...

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- Cryotherapy
- Weight Management

See our website for more information on any of our services



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Donation to Katharine House Hospice from Colwich & Haywoods Support Group

A cheque for £5000 was recently presented to Richard Soulsby, CEO of Katharine House, raised from the various events the Colwich and Haywoods Support Group has held during 2023.

Our thanks go to all our supporters, who have enabled us to make this donation – *your generosity makes a big difference to local people living with an incurable disease.*

We are now planning further fund-raising events during 2024. On Sunday 17th March several of our members supported the water stations at the Stafford Half Marathon (*they do the same for the Stafford 10K held in September*). Freedom Leisure very kindly make us a donation in aid of Katharine House.

Our ever popular **Open Gardens Day will be held this year on Sunday 7th July**. This is our group's major fundraising event of the year, when many gardens (*last year we had almost 20*) throughout the three villages are opened, giving residents and visitors a very pleasant day in wonderful surroundings.

Please consider opening your garden (*they are not subject to any judging procedure – it is not a competition*)



and you will be pleasantly surprised at the fun you will have.

If you would like to support this event by opening your garden, please contact Ann Jones on 01889 621372 as soon as possible.

Other social events are in the pipeline, and further information will soon be posted on our Facebook page and our website at colwickkhospicesupport.com

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Village Voice

NEWS IN BRIEF

Colwich Summer fete

Colwich Parish Council invite you to come along to our Village Summer Fete on **Saturday 8th June 2024**.

The fun starts at 1pm with entertainment, stalls, food and drink with the fun lasting into the late evening.

We have Morris Dancers, Stafford FM, live music, and the brilliant children's entertainer Lucky Lee.

There is also a chance to try archery and mini golf. Entry is free to all, so come along and bring the family.

Beautiful Bradley report

A copy of the annual Beautiful Bradley report, presented to residents at the Annual Public Meeting in the village hall in April, is available to read on the two notice boards in the village and the Parish Council website (*News/Bradley Community Plan*).

It covers the various community initiatives that have been progressed since last summer and the initiatives that we hope will take place in the next 12 months.

Bradley Pop Up market

The next Pop Up market in Bradley is set for **Saturday June 22nd** at the Village Hall between 10am and 1pm. Please put the date in your diary!

Penkridge Parent & Toddler group

Our Parent & Toddler group is on **every Tuesday 10-11.30** at the Haling Dene Centre.

It's Free to come along, lots of friendly faces here to welcome you. Free tea/coffee/juice and everyone is welcome.

Derrington Village Fete

Save the date!! Sat 6th July - See Derrington facebook for details closer to the time.

Seighford Car Boot sale

The Friends of Cooper Perry car boot sale is on **Saturday 18th May from 10am - 12pm**.

It's £10 per car for those who want to sell. Set up from 9am on the school field at Cooper Perry School via the staff car park entrance.

Buyers come 10am-12pm. Breakfast baps and drinks available to purchase.

If you would like to book a place to sell please email cooperperrypta@yahoo.com by Friday 3rd May.

Calling all local businesses!

Fancy sponsoring a paint station at the upcoming Seighford Rainbow Dash? A recommended donation of £50 in return for shout outs, and publicity for your business. Please email the Friends of Cooper Perry.

Great Bridgeford Village Fete

If you are interested in having a stall at Great Bridgeford Village Hall Fete on **Sat 6th July 2024** ring Phil on 07837 667396.



Seighford Quiz Night

Barry's Brainiacs Quiz Night Returns to Seighford Village Hall on **Friday 10th May from 7.30pm**. The cost to enter is £2 per person. Teams of up to 8. Bring your own supper and drinks, raffle prizes are gratefully recieved.

If you dont have a team of 8, just come along and make up a team on the night. Everyone is welcome.



Acton & Bednall Council Tax 2024/5

The Acton Trussell Bednall with Teddesley Hay Parish Council is focussed on improvements within the Parish, in particular, road safety (*speed, potholes, flooding*), environment, and support for the Parish Community Centre.

These all require additional funding and increased community volunteer support. Please help us help the Parish.

To assist in the funding of these activities the Parish precept has been increased by 5.5%, but it is an increase on a very small part of our overall Council Tax bill from the various parts of the local administration.

Please attend the next Parish Council Meeting if you wish to influence and contribute to the Parish Council activities. **Next meeting is Wednesday 22nd May** at 8.00 pm at the Parish Community Centre, Acton Hill Road, Acton Trussell.

You can also **visit www.actontrussell-pc.co.uk** for up to date information.

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Putting Great Haywood on the map!

As well as all our regular activities for all ages in Great Haywood Memorial Hall (*see our Facebook page*), we have our special **Craft Fair between 10.00 and 3.00 on 12 May**, where local expert craftspeople will be selling unique wares from cakes to birdhouses and from jewellery to paintings and greetings cards - something for everyone (*not forgetting the delicious refreshments!*).

And we have an **extra special Book Launch event on 22 June** when local historian, David Robbie, will be signing copies of his book: **Great Haywood, Past and Present, People and Places**.



About the Book:

Founded by Angles in the sixth century and recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, Great Haywood, with its manor that included the adjacent estate of Shugborough and the ancient Forest of Cank, became an important political, religious and commercial centre in the Middle Ages. It was involved in the tumultuous events surrounding the overthrow of Richard II in the 14th century, the Wars of the Roses of the 15th century, Tudor intrigues in the 16th century, the English Civil War of the 17th century, the Jacobite Rebellion of the 18th century, and the transport revolutions of the 18th and 19th centuries.

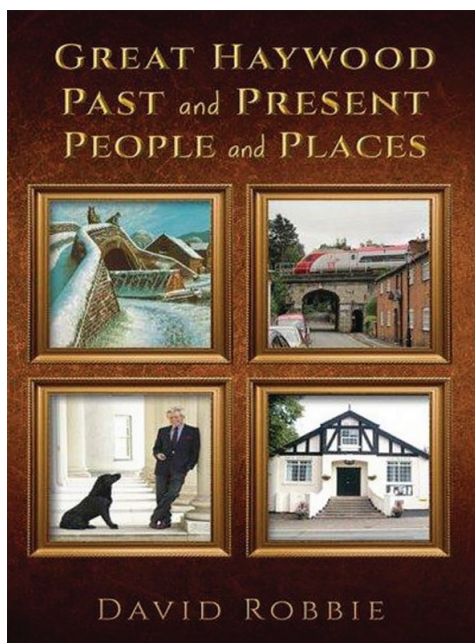
Great Haywood's location on four great highways of travel and trade has allowed it to witness the migration of early settlers, the passage of powerful kings and queens, large armies and rich merchants, as well as eminent travellers and writers. Situated on the important River Trent, it also enjoyed the golden age of coaching, was once one of the busiest canal junctions in England and saw the building of two important national railway lines.

It has been home to powerful nobles, influential politicians, fine artists and writers, a serial killer, Nazi war criminals and a large tropical reptile. And how many villages can boast of fascinating links with the Faerie Queene, the Holy Grail and The Lord of the Rings? Get your copy to find out more...

The book has 570 pages and 300 illustrations. The hardback costs £23.99, the paperback £17.99 and an Ebook at £3.50. There will also later be an Audiobook.

It will be in local bookshops, and also available from David himself at the launch event (**between 10.00am and 4.00pm on 22 June** in Great Haywood Memorial Hall meeting room), at other events to be organised later, or directly from him - daverobbie38@btinternet.com.

David is kindly sharing any profits among village organisations.



David has lived in Great Haywood for over 50 years and has worked on the book for many of those years.

It's a comprehensive history of the village, including Shugborough, from earliest times and provides a guided tour of the village today.

Then David has included biographies of the many interesting people who have lived in the village, including a detailed account of J. R. R. Tolkien's life in the area during the Great War. The final section talks about important buildings and places of interest.



Houghton Parish Council News & dates for your diary

The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will be held at Houghton Village Hall on **Monday 20th May 2024 starting at 7pm** and the June meeting will be on **Monday 24th June 2024 at 7.00pm**.

There is a public open forum at the start of each meeting for members of the public to raise issues relating to the parish.

Tender for Grazing – Dale Common

The Parish Council invites tenders for grazing on Dale Common **until 31st March 2025**.

This is not a high value tender – the Parish Council is simply looking for someone to put livestock or horses on the land, which is primarily a nature conservation site. Keeping it grazed will help increase its conservation value.

If you are interested in the grazing rights please contact the Parish Clerk, Jon Brumwell by email on clerk@haughtonpc-staffs.org.uk

A518 Newport Road – Flooding

Anyone familiar with A518 Newport Road will be aware that whenever it rains the road floods by the bus stop opposite Prince Avenue.

This has been brought to the attention of our County Councillor, Mark Winnington and we hope that with his – *and the Highway Authority's* – assistance we will be able to get this problem resolved.



Thermal Imaging Camera

Project Members of the Parish Council are continuing to go out and provide thermal images to help residents identify where their homes need additional insulation, saving money and reducing the environmental impact of domestic heating.

There is no charge for the having the thermal images produced! However, as the days grow warmer and the nights shorter we will switch to making bookings for after the summer when the nights start drawing in.

Residents interested in having a thermal survey should contact the Parish Clerk, Jon Brumwell by email on clerk@haughtonpc-staffs.org.uk

Further Information

Copies of the agendas and minutes of the previous meetings along with details of your Parish Councillors can be found on the Parish Council website

www.haughtonpc-staffs.org.uk

Additionally, minutes and agendas are also posted on the notice board on the corner of Royds Close.

29th & 30th
June 2024

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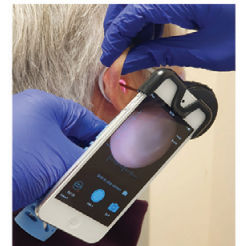


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Gavin Champions Milford Cricket Club

Sir Gavin Williamson visited Milford Cricket Club to congratulate the local team on their sporting success last summer.

Sir Gavin joined Councillors Ann and Peter Edgeller to meet the Chairman of the club, Dave Smith. Sir Gavin applauded the team's efforts last season, when they became the first from Staffordshire to win the National Village Cup. The team were crowned champions after a tense final at Lord's, which was attended by 600 Milford Hall supporters.

The club was founded over a hundred years ago and fields in one of the oldest cricket leagues in existence. They're also known for being active in the local community, coaching young and adult cricketers. For the 2024 season, they're also introducing two women's league teams.

Sir Gavin told My Village Voice "It was fantastic to visit the Milford Hall team after their big success at Lord's last summer, which was a proud moment for Staffordshire.

It's wonderful to see that the club has a strong network of support.



Sir Gavin alongside Chairman of the Club, Dave Smith, and local Councillors Ann and Peter Edgeller

Milford Hall has a great sporting calendar for the local community to rally around and I'm excited for the upcoming season."

Local schools' create blossom inspired poetry at Shugborough

As part of the National Trust's Festival of Blossom, local schools in Stafford have worked with Dawn Jutton, Staffordshire Poet Laurette to write blossom inspired poetry, which can be seen on display in Shugborough's 'Blossom Poetry Gallery' and across the Estate.

The project is part of the National Trust's Festival of Blossom, which aims to connect communities to nature. Schools that took part included Anson Primary and St Johns Primary.

Staffordshire Poet Laurette, Dawn Jutton, said "Blossom time at Shugborough is always a wondrous spectacle and I am looking forward to being involved with the team this year to bring a new poetry element to their 'Blossom Festival'.

I am hoping the schools and community will enjoy using the Blossom Poetry Toolkit we have devised and will contribute lots of haiku poems we



can install in the grounds for visitors to enjoy. Visitors will also be treated to poetry readings and workshops during the event to help their creative writing blossom."

General Manager Hayley Mival said, "We love to celebrate the blossom season here at Shugborough, and we are looking forward to seeing the school's poetry on display as well as the community poem created in collaboration Staffordshire poet laureate and our community."

When visiting Shugborough, blossom can be spotted in the Walled Garden and Lady Walk where almost 100 trees were planted in 2022 as part of the 'Queen's green canopy' project. The Festival of Blossom ran from 20 April-28 April, however, you can still visit and see the Blossom Poetry Gallery which is on display until 2nd June.



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Wolseley Bridge Welcomes Midlands' No. 1 Wool Show

On 29th & 30th June, the beautiful grounds of The Heritage at Wolseley Bridge will play host to the unique festival atmosphere that is Wool@J13, the Midlands' No. 1 wool show run by Ingrid Wagner & Val James.

Its location is opposite Bishton Hall, home to the renowned Stafford Northcote family who formerly ran the equally renowned St Bede's School at the Hall. Hilary & Hugh Stafford Northcote are thrilled to be hosting the wool event in 2024 in their extensive grounds.



Exhibitors are travelling from as far afield as Cornwall & Kent and from Yorkshire to the wilds of Wales to spend the weekend in our fabulous county – every one of them proud independent small businesses who deal with wool in all its forms and whose wealth of knowledge is there to share in the Shop Til You Drop Marquee & Gazebo Village.



There's also a full programme of superb workshops from Needle Felting to Saxon Embroidery to Solar Dyeing and musical entertainment to include London, Manchester & Oldbury based song & theatre birds. Add in the Reduce, Reuse & Recycle section and it's an opportunity for any wool enthusiast not to be missed. All well managed by the superb team of Woolly Volunteers who make the show go with a swing and a smile.



And you may take your seat when you're ready to drop, ladies & gentlemen, outside the Cricket Pavilion which once graced the sports field at St Bede's and from where

WOOL @J13



The Knitted Tearoom run by the legendary WI Ceramic Sisters from Stoke on Trent will serve their legendary tea and cakes.

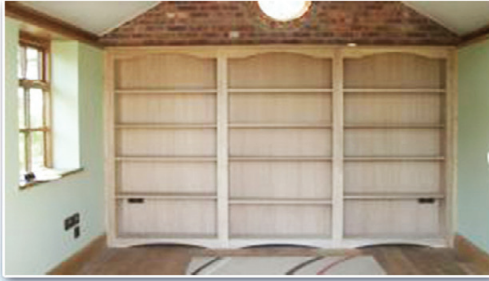
Do we feed you further? But of course we do. The Peckish Pony food court will be serving up pancakes, pizzas and pakoras for your digestive delight plus wonderful waffles (and more) from Toni at the very local Bishton based company, Treatboxes.



The show will be supporting Bishton Ponies as their chosen charity, the local riding school which lends a hoof and a hand to cared for and excluded children & teens.



To book your workshop and tickets for this not to be missed show, head to <https://wool-j13.uk>. Because, you know, you are and your weekend will be, definitely worth it! See you there!



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ART & CRAFT FAIR

Sunday 12th May
- 10.00am - 3.00pm -

Great Haywood Memorial Hall

Free Admission
Refreshments Available

Stafford Flower Club Meetings & Fashion Show

On **Wednesday 22nd May at 2.15 pm** Becca Morris is taking us *'Around the World'* with her chat and flowers for her demonstration. Becca is a newly qualified NAFAS demonstrator but she knows all about plants and flowers and will pass on oodles of information about the flowers and foliage she uses.

We will be having our Plant Stall at this meeting when you will have the chance to purchase, at very reasonable prices, a variety of plants for your flower garden, vegetable allotment or to give away to friends. *If you have any spare plants you don't want then please donate them for us to sell.* The Bee Friendly stall will also be there selling plants that are favourites with the Bee population.

If you fancy taking one of the flower arrangements home with you then buy some raffle tickets and, if your number comes up, you will have the choice of those created by Becca.

Then on **Wednesday 26th June at 2.15 pm** Joy Bradbury will be showing us the *'Joy of Flowers from her own backyard'*.

Joy is a local farmer's wife who grows her own flowers in cutting fields. With no air miles and very low road mileage Joy's flower work makes her very eco-friendly.

All the flower arrangements created by Joy will be the raffle prizes at the end of our meeting and, should your number come up, you will be able to choose which one to take home with you.

Please come and enjoy these afternoons of entertainment, with light refreshments, where you can meet up with friends and catch up with what is happening. Our monthly Newsletter will also give you an update of what is going on within our club.

Please have a look at our Facebook or Instagram pages to get up to the minute information about our Club and pass on the information. Members, friends and visitors will all be most welcome, do come and join us.

Visitors: £8 including an afternoon of entertainment & light refreshments. We meet at Rising Brook Methodist Church, ST17 9DH starting at 2.15 pm. There are lots of parking spaces so you won't have far to walk.

If you would like further information, please contact us at: staffordflowerclub@gmail.com or ring Ros on 07985 602287.

Great Bridgeford Village Fete

GREAT BRIDGEFORD
— VILLAGE HALL —

Saturday 6th July
12:00 - 16:00

Licensed Bar
Hot Food
Tea Coffee
Cakes

Brass Band
Stalls
Fun games
Welly Wanging
Ice Cream Van

Parent and Toddler Group
Activity Area

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Thursday 13th June 2024
Stafford Flower Club

Rising Brook Methodist Church, Burton Square, Rising Brook, Stafford, ST17 9DH
Sited between the High School and the Coop Shop

Doors open 6.30pm, show starts 7pm

Tickets: £6 each or 6 for £30
Tickets to be purchased in advance

Book Early to avoid Disappointment

Raffle: FABULOUS prizes to be won at the show!

For tickets and more information please contact:
Ros tel: 07985 602287 - Margaret tel: 01889 271894
or e-mail: staffordflowerclub@gmail.com



Thanks from St James' Church

Thanks to all the congregation and village community who came along to the St James, Acton Trussell churchyard tidy-up in April, armed with their brushes, spades, wheelbarrows and secateurs. What a great job you all did!



Bednall Plant Sale

It's the return of this very popular event, the All Saints Church Plant sale

Please put **Saturday 1st June**, from 10-12 into your diaries now!

It's your opportunity to revitalise that corner of your garden that looks a little sad with a selection of plants and bushes. Any plant donations are most welcome.

You can finish off your experience by sampling a piece of homemade cake and a cuppa. All monies raised will go into church funds to pay towards church running costs.

We look forward to seeing you there and we hope that the weather is kind to us.

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Bradley pop up market success

The first pop up market was held in Bradley Village Hall on March 9th with lots of stalls and plenty of delicious refreshments.

It was so successful that another will be held in June. Sue Holiday who organised the first Pop Up has chosen **Saturday 22nd June** for the second one, from 10am until 1pm. pop the date in your diary now!

Cocoa Creations of Stafford made little buckets of wonderful chocolate for Easter, and are at most local markets and fairs.

Photos from Judith Manners



Delicious cakes and pies were on offer



Two enterprising Girl Guides fundraising by raffling a wonderful hamper to fund an International Get together in Switzerland next year.



The Deerhurst Honey and Beeswax candle stall proved very popular with visitors



The beautiful Cocoa Creations Easter buckets

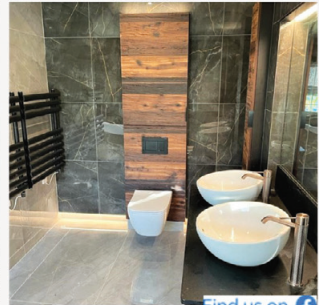


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Haughton Runners celebrate 1st Birthday - with a run!

Haughton Runners, caught here raising a glass to celebrate their 1yr Run-niversary!
It's Ok - they'd worked off the calories with a run around the village beforehand!

All are welcome to join us, whether your a beginner or

a seasoned runner, we have people who jog 3-5k and people who run up to 7-8k+!

We meet at Haughton shops at 6pm on a Tuesday and Thursday.

Photo from Hana Hall

Please, don't let your dogs chase the deer

There has been a lot of coverage in the Press recently – *and quite rightly* – that dogs should be on leads near livestock.

The distress that dogs cause by running loose can result in exhaustion, still births and injury. However, it is not just farm animals that can be affected by dogs that are not under control. Wild animals are just as susceptible.

We are now coming up to the time when fawns will be born and it coincides with warmer weather when more dog walkers will be out and about on Cannock Chase.



It is an offence under the Hunting Act 2004 to encourage or allow your dog to chase deer – even if they are not hunting. Incidents involving a dog that is out of control in a public place should be reported online to Staffordshire Police. <https://www.staffordshire.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/>

Please be a responsible dog owner and remember that dogs must be under control at all times.

Follow The Countryside Code : enjoy being a part of nature and be sure to keep all animals safe. <http://www.countryside-code.org.uk/>



Katharine House Hospice CEO Richard Soulsby receives a cheque from Stafford I.W. President Joy Jones.

End of an era for Stafford Inner wheel

The Stafford Inner Wheel will be closing at the end of this period, the end of June 2024.

President Joy Jones is pictured here presenting a cheque to Richard Soulsby, the chief executive officer for Katharine House Hospice, after he gave a talk on the hospice at a meeting of the club in April this year.

alling membership numbers and rising costs have forced the members to close the branch which celebrated 80 years of existence.

The club meets monthly at The Barbanell Conference Centre in Stafford.

Changes ahead at Oak Tree Farm Rural Project

David Moreton General Manager at Oak Tree Farm advised members at the AGM of his intention to step back from leading the Charity later in the summer.

The Charity which has been established for over 35 years provides work activities for over 50 people with learning disabilities.

David said "I agreed to spend a year at the Farm whilst the initial facilities were established. That was 35 years ago and in that time the Charity has grown and now has all of the elements envisaged by the original group of parents who established it, a nursery growing plants, gardens, crafts, a tearoom, a pottery and much more.

The time is now right for me to step back from the lead role and retire as General Manager. I am not going away, however. I will be here during the transition and be more than willing to share what I have experienced over the years. I will continue at the farm in other ways as a volunteer and possibly a Trustee in the future.

I have really enjoyed being with my Team Members, staff, and volunteer colleagues. We are a family that will endure. I have been privileged to develop and care for the farm, its facilities and land and pleased to leave it in good heart for future generations."

Chair of Trustees, David Folkes said. "David's



David (on the left) with friends at Oak Tree Farm contribution to Oak Tree Farm has been outstanding. Whilst many people have contributed to its development, David has been at the heart of everything. He has led the charity with great skill, enthusiasm, dedication compassion and kindness.

Whilst we would love him to continue forever, we recognise that is not possible and respect his decision to step aside. We are delighted that he will continue to be part of the Oak Tree family. The process of recruiting a successor is underway."

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Can you spot your house? Seighford from above

Thanks to Wayne Dix for these photos of Seighford, taken from a drone.

Wayne said "I've not had the drone long, so am just getting used to taking photos from it."

Not a bad job at all Wayne we say!



And Bradley too...

Many thanks to Rob for sending me these amazing photos of Bradley from above.

Everyone loves a birds eye view!

See many more amazing photos, from all around the area on his Facebook page [Smithy's Sky Stuff](#)





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Village Voice

NEWS IN BRIEF

Free paint from RePaint

Each year, 50 million litres of paint go to waste in the UK. But now, thanks to Community RePaint, we can help repurpose leftover paint for residents, schools and community projects in #Staffordshire.

Whether you're looking to redecorate your home or get creative on a community project, both full and part-full containers of paint are available to collect for free

Visit Stafford Household Recycling Centre to pick up the paint you need! And please donate any leftover paint you have for others to use.

Bradley Fused Glass workshop

Due to high demand we are hosting another Fused Glass workshop on the evening of **Wednesday 15th May 2024** at Bradley Village Hall. Please let Sharon Armstrong-Evans know if you are interested.

Indoor bowling

Acton Indoor bowls takes place on **Monday's between 2pm-4pm** at the Parish Community Centre in Acton Trussell.

Come and join in for a good laugh, a game, and all with tea and cakes. You'll meet friends, neighbours and make some new friends.

The first week is free, and then it's £2.50 a week thereafter. For more information contact Alan or Carol on 07411 31199.

Aqua aerobics class

A brand-new aqua aerobics class is starting on **June 4th** at Penkridge Leisure Centre.

The class will run **every Tuesday from 7.15-8pm**.

Aqua aerobics is a cardiovascular pool-based workout. It gently increases your pulse and breathing rate, so it's great for helping to improve your heart health. It strengthens and tones muscles using the resistance of the water and engaging opposing muscle groups in each movement as you push and pull against it.

Call Penkridge Leisure Centre on 01785 714152 to reserve your place.

The Arts Society, Stafford

May 21st - The Divine Sunflower in Art and Culture
The sunflower casts its golden rays across Art and culture. We trace its history over the Centuries. Lecturer Twigs Way

June 18th - The Athletic Aesthetic- 2024 Olympics.
Art and design will play a part in this year's Paris Olympics just as they have since the games began nearly 3000 years ago. Lecturer Simon Inglis

The Arts Society meet at Stafford Gatehouse, usually on **the third Wednesday in the month**. Lectures start at 1.45pm and last about 1 1/4 hours. Visit our website www.theartsocietystafford.org.uk for more details.



Derrington Spring Fayre

A lovely afternoon at the Spring Fayre in April.

It was great to see so many people from the community supporting the Derrington Millennium Green Trust to continue our work by purchasing cards.

Thanks go to St Matthew's Church, Derrington for putting on the event.





Haughton's Annual Plant Sale

Haughton and District Garden and Countryside Guild will be holding their Annual Plant Sale on **Saturday 18th May at Haughton Village Hall.**

Pop along between 10.00am and 3.00pm to see a wide variety of shrubs, vegetables and herbs, nurtured by members and for sale at excellent prices.

In addition, you may be able to snap up a bargain from our Garden Sundries stall, which could include tools, books, and indoor and outdoor pots. You may find the odd collectible, or even the one, perfect tool or container you've been looking for. Entry is free, and light refreshments are available.

Monthly meetings of the Guild are held on the 3rd Monday of each month in Haughton Village Hall at 7.30pm. At each meeting there are talks on gardening, countryside, local interest, etc, given by a guest speaker. Refreshments are available and there is a monthly raffle. Annual membership fee is £10. For guests and visitors there is a charge of £2 per meeting. New members are always welcome.

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Repairs to St. Chads Seighford

Many villagers have been asking about the scaffolding on the church tower. This is to facilitate the essential repairs to the stone finials on the roof.

Whilst the congregation of the church may be small, the church is undoubtedly the centrepiece of the village. As well as providing a place of worship, the church is an extremely important historical building and, along with the churchyard, provides a sanctuary for peace, reflection and remembrance of departed friends and family.

These repairs are extremely costly and so fundraising and support is necessary and will be welcomed.

A big thanks should be given to Great Bridgeford Village Hall who raised a very generous sum in April to support the church but, of course, support needs to be ongoing.

If you can, please help by donating at their Just giving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/StChadsChurchSeighford>

Photo by Ken Anderson

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Inner Wheel Club Of Penkrige

This is the Centenary year of Inner Wheel

In this Centenary year of Inner Wheel, the Penkrige Club has been very busy and has many activities planned for the months to come.

We celebrated St Valentines Day with dinner at the Moat House when we invited partners and friends. Our entertainment for the evening was Derek Poulson who did a very amusing talk on regional dialects.

In March we held our Charity Concert at the Peace Memorial Hall in Penkrige. Ian Hunt entertained us with 'Rat Pack' songs and songs from the Shows. He was a wonderful showman and seemed to gauge just what the audience wanted. It was a sell out and a very successful and enjoyable evening. The raffle was impressive, and the fish and chip suppers were also excellent.

In April the speaker at our meeting will be Margaret Smallman and the subject, 'Move Down the Bus'. She used to be a bus conductor and has some funny tales to tell.

The speaker at our **BirthDay Celebration in June** will be Dave Moylan who is a comedian and magician.



Looking to the future, our President Elect, Carolyn Lane is already planning activities and we begin with an **outing to Chillington Hall in August.**

Inner Wheel Club of Penkrige is very active in supporting local charities as well as the international ones. Inner Wheel in Great Britain and Ireland has raised over £2.8 million for various charities in recent years.

All this is carried out in the spirit of friendship and service. For more information about Inner Wheel go to www.innerwheel.co.uk. For information about Penkrige Inner Wheel go to margaret_taylor11@btinternet.com
 Tel.No:- 01785 712358 Mobile:- 07791 160648

Seighford Airfield honoured with memorial

Distinguished West Midlands airfields Atcham, High Ercall and Seighford were honoured in April with the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust's latest memorials.

As a result of long planning and co-operation between the Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust (ABCT) - the world's first national airfield charity - and various more local elements, three memorials were unveiled during Thursday to Saturday 11-13 April 2024 to commemorate Atcham, High Ercall and Seighford Airfields.

Atcham in Shropshire originally opened in August 1941 as a RAF fighter airfield, seeing several squadrons arrive, but became perhaps best remembered as home from June 1942 to the United States Army Air Force.

What eventually became known as the 495th Fighter Training Group provided invaluable advanced training for American pilots once they reached Britain, Republic P-47 fighters being primarily used. Once the Americans left after an exceptionally busy time here for Cheddington in Buckinghamshire in February 1945, Atcham saw further RAF use in other capacities before closing in October 1946. The technical site now forms Atcham Business Park but various traces of the airfield still remain, including one runway which now forms part of the B4394 road.

High Ercall in Telford and Wrekin was a major combined Maintenance Unit (MU), night fighter and training airfield during World War Two. Opened in October 1940, notable units based here included No 29 MU, which prepared and stored many aircraft for RAF use, No 68 Squadron with mostly Bristol Beaufighters and No 60 Operational Training Unit for advanced intruder instruction with de Havilland Mosquitoes.

After World War Two ended High Ercall's MU role predominated until the airfield closed in February 1964. A considerable part of the airfield, particularly the landing area, subsequently disappeared but this airfield has continued to play its part in the motor and road transport industry, both for training and commercial organisations, with many buildings such as large MU hangars still surviving.

Seighford during World War Two served as satellite airfield to Hixon, which has also indicated to ABCT it wishes to receive a memorial. Gradually opened during the summer of 1942, its main wartime user was No 30 Operational Training Unit which operated Vickers Wellingtons to instruct bomber crews.

Airspeed Oxford trainers of No 21 (Pilots) Advanced Flying Unit at Wheaton Aston later employed Seighford as a Relief Landing Ground until July 1946. Following a few years of inactivity, this airfield returned to use in 1956 for aircraft company Boulton Paul to maintain and modify English Electric Canberra bombers until the start of 1966.



Ken Bannerman, Andy Greaves with the chair of Staffordshire Gliding Club unveiling the memorial

Although now mainly a mixture of farming and industry, with many traces still evident, flying activity however still remains through the Staffordshire Gliding Club being present here since the 1990s.

All three memorials are of the main full-sized standardised design already widely utilised by ABCT <https://www.abct.org.uk/airfield-markers/marker-programme/>.

The charity's objective in this regard is to eventually commemorate each known major airfield in the United Kingdom with one of two forms of standardised granite memorial. Well over 200 have already been unveiled - following huge national public demand for them - to clearly major effect, with hundreds more being planned.

Photos from Sue Eld and Phil Bradshaw



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Shining a Light More Brightly at Staffs WI

When the lights at the Staffordshire Federation of Women's Institutes needed updating, a kind gesture from a Staffordshire-based electrical company was gratefully received.

Till Electrical Solutions arranged the necessary work and Luceco generously donated 8 lights.

In true WI style, cakes were evident at the installation to celebrate. Helen Mancey, Chairman of Staffordshire Federation of Women's Institutes said, *'This was a most generous donation to us and we are grateful to Sarah Thompson from Luceco and Jason Till for recognising the WI in Staffordshire on the eve of International Women's Day'*.

Jason added, *'It was our pleasure helping out today. The WI does such wonderful kind work helping so many people. And the cakes were just simply fabulous. It was a pleasure meeting you all'*.



(Left to right) Lucas of Till Electrical Solutions, Sarah Thompson of Luceco, Helen Mancey & Verity Connor, SFWI Trustees and Jason of Till Electrical Solutions

Staffs WI Told Not to Say No!

There were three very different speakers at the Staffordshire Federation of Women's Institutes Spring Event at The County Showground this week but all of them had a similar message; Don't say 'no' to an opportunity.

Gill Thomas, known as the One-Armed Sewist, taught herself how to sew and then said 'Yes' to appearing on the Great British Sewing Bee despite initially lacking confidence to appear in public without her prosthetic arm. She felt that she needed to show others what people with disabilities can achieve and she was truly inspirational.



Gill Thomas, the One-Armed Sewist

The second speaker of the day was Kerry Mason who was made redundant and decided to open a shop selling hosiery. She was soon asked if she could stock other items such as dancewear and by always saying 'Yes' has built up her business, called Thighs the Limit.

The Keynote Speaker was David Harper, best known for being an expert on BBC's Bargain Hunt. David is an author, sculptor and artist as well as being involved in antiques. He reminded WI Members that if you say 'No', nothing is achieved but by saying 'Yes' something will happen - and it might be wonderful. He regaled the audience with stories of the antiques world with a history lesson or two and what really happened when he was on Celebrity Masterchef.

There were 25 stalls selling a variety of items from cushions to handbags, cheese to plants, baked goods to jewellery for ladies to have retail therapy during the lunch break.



Kerry Mason, Thighs the Limit



David Harper, Antiques Expert, artist & sculptor

Verity Conner, Chairman of the Events Committee that organised the day said,

'It is always a joy to see The Showground full of WI ladies enjoying themselves and the Speakers are always so wonderful.'

Shopping is an added bonus. Our next event is in November when we have a demonstration by Perrys of Eccleshall and Will Kirk from The Repair Shop will be joining us. It will be another memorable event'.

For more information about the Staffordshire Federation of Women's Institutes visit www.sfwl.org where there is a link to their Facebook page.

Colwich Parish In Bloom

Good day to all you Colwich Parish in bloom gardeners!

I wonder what you have all been up to? I was recently at the committee meeting held in the Great Haywood Memorial Hall and was very impressed at the dedication you are giving to this lovely Parish.

Jim B has been busy preparing the greenhouse, and mixing compost in readiness for the plug plants which will help all the villages enter the next round of the Heart of England In Bloom, and our Chairman Bob has already made a good start by making sure he knows 'who' is taking care of every flower bed and space in our Parish.

I have been remembering how I started to get interested in nature and gardens. I think it all started by spending some Birthday money at the Midland Educational Bookshop in Birmingham and buying The Children Book of The Countryside. It was hard backed, full of colourful illustrations, and I was entranced.

We lived in a part of Birmingham quite a way from countryside and although I had a long back garden I loved going on the train to see two Grandmas, one had an interesting rather unkept back garden and the other lived in an old terrace house on a hillside with an orchard and kept hens and grew cob nuts, what a joy that was!

There was also a nearby park with a cricket pitch and I was allowed to go and behave myself for an afternoon, with a book and a small milk bottle full of cold tea, with instructions "make sure you are back in time for tea".

I used to lie in the long grass, reading and watching the wind blow and also watching the grasshoppers jump while I tried to catch them.

I think I was very lucky to be given the freedom to do whatever I wanted, my family trusted me, and I obey them, it was very good.

I have lots of jobs to be done in the garden and also in the greenhouse and I do hope that the weather will be kind to us, the months after Christmas have been cold and wet and no seed or bulb will survive.

Well, all you In Bloom friends, it will soon be May and then we can really start gardening.

*From Anne Clendon B.E.M.
President, Colwich Parish In Bloom*



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21 May 11:00-11:30am
11 June Stay for a cuppa and a chat. Find out what is going on in the village!
25 June

Reading Cafe

15 May Talking about books
19 June 3:00-4:30pm

Family History

24 June Get help in tracing your ancestors on-line
To book a place, contact family.history@gleanhub.org
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Starting 6 July

Summer Reading Challenge is back!
This year's theme is about creativity and story-telling

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'What's on' at Great Bridgeford Village Hall

For Tennis Club – Contact Hazel Waters, Membership Secretary on 01785 255 260.

Monday • The Monday Club – alternate weeks, over 60s; 1.30 – 3.30 pm. Contact Maureen on 01785 282 785
 • Garden Guild 2nd Monday in the month at 7.30pm.; contact Denise on 01785 281 691

Tuesday • Parent and Toddlers 10.00 – 12.00am. Every Tuesday in term time; Contact Joan 01785 282 722
 • Moorland Voices 8.00-9.30pm First Tuesday of the month; Contact Sue 07710 234 223
 • Village Hall Committee meeting – 2nd Tuesday of the month – contact Chairman Phil Causer

Wednesday • Coffee Morning 10.30-12.00, every fortnight - May 1st, 15th, 29th; June 12th, 26th; July 10th, 24th; Aug 7th, 21st; Sep 4th, 18th;
Oct 2nd – Macmillan Big Coffee Morning – all donations to Macmillan Cancer Support – Homemade cakes including Gluten-free and sugar reduced; Leslie/Peter 01785 282 582
 • Martial Arts/Kick Boxing 6.30-7.30pm. Contact Laura on 07880 938 027
 • Argentine Tango – 8.00 pm, contact Hannah on 07749 368 581

Thursday • Canine Partners – training dogs to assist owners with disabilities; last Thursday in the month; contact Ronnie on 07584 995 247
 • Gentle Yoga – weekly during term time; 7.00-8.00 contact Kerrie 07887 687 288

Friday • Life painting & drawing 9.30-12.45, Contact Laura on 07588 074 229
 • Argentine Tango dancing – Beginners -7.00pm contact Hannah on 07749 368 581

For more information please visit our website at www.greatbridgefordvillagehall.org.uk or you can email gbvh.bookings@gmail.com

For bookings contact Leslie Longstaff; The Pintles, 18 Newport Road, Great Bridgeford 01785 282 582

The Clothing Bank on Great Bridgeford Village Hall car park is for quality unwanted clothes and shoes. Proceeds will be shared between the Salvation Army and St Chad's Church.



Gaz Coombes announces show at Cannock Chase

Forest Live, the summer concert series presented by Forestry England, has announced that English musician and Supergrass frontman Gaz Coombes will support Johnny Marr and The Charlatans on **28 June 2024**.

Gaz Coombes first began making music at the age of 14, before forming renowned alternative rock band Supergrass in the early 90s.

The band released six studio albums, each entering the UK Top 20, before disbanding in 2010. Supergrass left behind an impressive back catalogue of sing-along singles including 'Alright', 'Caught By the Fuzz', 'Pumping On Your Stereo' and 'Richard III'.

Coombes has since released four solo albums, including the Mercury Prize and Ivor Novello-nominated 'Matador' in 2015 and 2018's 'World's Strongest Man'. As a solo artist he has continued to tour the globe countless times and has supported the likes of The Last Shadow Puppets and Robbie Williams.

Widely regarded as the best work of his illustrious career, Coombes' most recent album 'Turn The Car Around' was released in 2023.

Gaz Coombes is the final act to be confirmed for this year's Cannock Chase line-up, with the forest also set to host multi-platinum popstar **Anne-Marie on 27 June** and charismatic showman **Olly Murs (with support from Daniel Bedingfield) on 29 June**.

Forestry England uses the money Forest Live raises to maintain beautiful natural areas for everyone to enjoy, run important conservation projects and keep growing trees. Last year they planted some 7.4 million trees, caring for the nation's 1,500 woods and forests sustainably and welcoming 291 million visits in 2022-23.

Everyone in England lives within a one-hour drive of one of the nation's forests. Over two million people have enjoyed the Forest Live gigs over the last twenty-three years.

In 2024, Forestry England presents the concerts in partnership with Live Nation's Cuffe & Taylor for the first time. Gigs will take place at six forests throughout England including Delamere Forest, Dalby Forest, Sherwood Pines, High Lodge Thetford Forest, Westonbirt Arboretum and Cannock Chase Forest.

Fans can sign up for information, announcements and book tickets at forestlive.com.



Farmers Richard Bower (foreground) and Ray Bower (on tractor) are celebrating the farm being named a finalist for two prestigious awards so far this year...

Dunston Farm in the running for two prestigious awards!

Leading midlands farm attraction PLAY@ Lower Drayton farm has just received confirmation if is a finalist in not one – but two – prestigious Business Awards categories.

The attraction, which fully opened its doors to visitors as the pandemic came to a close, has fast become a popular day out destination with families travelling hundreds of miles to enjoy the farm's great mix of indoor and outdoor play, animal interactions and seasonal events all with a link to farming and agriculture.

PLAY@ has been named a finalist in the 2024 ClubHub UK awards, vying for top spot against five other attractions from across the UK. Offered across 16 categories, the ClubHub awards were set up to recognise and celebrate the amazing work of the children's activities sector, and winners will be announced during a ceremony on Saturday 11th May 2024.

Just hours after finding out the farm was a finalist in the ClubHub awards, farmer Richard Bower was delighted to receive notification that the business was also in the running in the Family Business of the Year Awards in the 2024 Express & Star Business Awards, with a judging panel set to visit the farm over the next couple of weeks to see firsthand what sets it apart from other finalists as the competition enters its final stages. Richard says:

"We've been fortunate to win some fantastic accolades since we launched PLAY@ - including being named Best New Tourist Attraction of the Year in the 2022 Enjoy Staffordshire Food & Tourism Awards; Best Small Visitor Attraction of the Year in the 2023 Enjoy Staffordshire Food & Tourism Awards and being shortlisted in the School Travel Awards 2023. Being recognised in this way is fantastic as it gives recognition to the fantastic work of our entire team and instils a great sense of pride and achievement.

We are honoured to have been named finalists in both the ClubHub and Express & Star Business Awards this year and couldn't be prouder of our team. Being nominated is a real achievement in itself, and winning would be the icing on the cake!"

To find out what makes PLAY@ Lower Drayton Farm an award-winning day out, head to playatthefarm.co.uk

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