

Colton Parish News

August 2025



Colton Summer festival 2025

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The Parish Lands Trust, St. Mary's Church & the Parish Council



Church Services at St Mary's Church Colton

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|----------------|
| First Sunday | Holy Communion | 11.00am |
| Second Sunday | Morning Worship | 11.00am |
| Third Sunday | Holy Communion | 11.00am |
| Fourth Sunday | Morning Worship | 11.00am |
| Fifth Sunday | Service format will vary | 11.00am |
| Keep Your eyes peeled for details of special Sunday Afternoon Events | | |

Colton Community Choir

Invite you to come along and join our group of Jolly singers. A group of enthusiastic amateurs who enjoy singing a variety of music. We meet every Monday at 7pm at St. Marys Church Colton.

Do come and join us.



Message from your editor



This months edition shares some very sad news, the passing of Tony and Judy Winter. Two respected and very valued members of the community. Sincere condolences to their family at this sad time.

The Colton Summer festival took place in June and there are plenty of articles and photographs in this months edition celebrating what was a fantastic day and evening. A massive thank you to all those who worked so hard to make it a success and the Parish Council for their support.

I hope you all have a happy and healthy August.

Best wishes *fiona*

**All Items for inclusion in the NEXT EDITION
Must reach the Editor by 15th of THIS MONTH**



coltonparishnews@yahoo.com

Thank you Fiona O'Brien Editor

Music Lessons

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music theory

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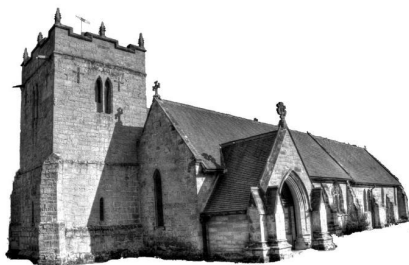
Call Karen on
07508 988 718



St Mary's Church Contacts

For all Funerals, Weddings, Baptism & any Pastoral Needs

Please contact Revd Lynne Dean



St Mary's Church
Colton

Church Warden

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Messages to Parochial Church Council

vacant

Resident priest

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The New Rectory,

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07736 972560 lanternlit@hotmail.com

Rector

Prebendary Simon Davis

The Vicarage

Marke Place

Abbots Bromley Ws15 3BP

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revdsimon@gmail.com

Mrs Olive Ballard

Reader Emeritus

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Colton

Church Warden

Mrs Victoria Hawley

The Old Rectory

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01889576050

07939003153

Messages to Colton Parish Council

Ms Alison Parnell

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Handsacre Court

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Colton Parish Council

The Parish Council meet on the first Wednesday of the month in the Village Hall commencing at 7:30 pm unless advised to the contrary.

Members of the public are welcome to attend and should note their participation is limited to a maximum 20 minutes at the beginning of the meeting when questions and comments from the public are taken

Parish Council Elected members

Chairman

No one elected at Annual meeting.
Councillors will take turns to chair meetings

Clerk to the Council

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“One Thing Is Needful”

Many of us know the story. Jesus visits the home of two sisters, Mary and Martha. Martha is busy preparing for their guest as many of us would be! Meanwhile, Mary sits at Jesus' feet, listening. Martha, understandably, feels the weight of it all and asks Jesus to tell Mary to help. But instead, Jesus gently says: *“Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part.”*

It's a story that speaks differently to each of us. Some feel sympathy for Martha after all, someone has to get things done! Others see the wisdom in Mary's stillness and attention. Perhaps what Jesus offers here is not a criticism, but a loving reminder to pause and return to what truly matters.

Many of us in the church, at home, in our communities know the feeling of being stretched thin. There's always something that needs doing. And much of that doing is essential: welcoming others, offering hospitality, caring for family or neighbours, keeping things running. Whether or not we would call ourselves “busy,” we often carry a lot.

This is why the story of Mary and Martha feels especially important. It's not about choosing between work or rest, action or prayer it's about remembering why we do any of it. It's about finding that “one thing needful” in the midst of it all: connection with God, presence, peace, love.

This time of year, might bring a chance to slow down a little. Perhaps routines shift during the summer. Or perhaps not for some, life stays just as full. But wherever we find ourselves, Jesus' invitation is the same: make space to be present, to listen, to be renewed. It doesn't have to look a certain way. For some, it might be sitting quietly with a cup of tea. For others, it might be music, prayer, walking, gardening, or simply breathing deeply in a moment of stillness.

Church life, too, holds this balance between activity and reflection, service and sanctuary. We give thanks for all who serve so faithfully in our parishes, often quietly and behind the scenes. And we remember that even in all the doing, we are called to just *be*, perhaps to be with God, to be with one another, to be fully present.

So, let's not forget to take time however we can, to pause, to breathe, and to reconnect with what truly gives life.

After all, it's from that place of stillness that love flows out again.

Summer Blessings Revd. Neale Wright



Come and Sing Concert

Monday 14th October

St Mary's Church

7pm

Come and join your friends and neighbours in a concert of storytelling songs.

You are encouraged to come and sing along to some well-known folksongs and to listen to songs from the musicals by smaller groups and soloists from the choir.

For more information about the choir see <https://www.facebook.com/colton.community.choir>

In celebration of

Tony and Judy Winter

As many of you know, Tony passed away on 16th June with Judy following shortly afterwards on 3rd July. The family have organised a joint funeral on 25th July at 11am at Colton Church.



Tony and Judy were active members of the Colton Community and so, as a friend and neighbour of the Winters, I have asked various institutions to give me their thoughts to put together (with the family's blessing) a tribute to this remarkable couple.

Tony was a member of Colton Parish Council for many years, finally

Parish Lands Trust: *Tony was a loyal, respected, good natured trustee serving Colton Parish Lands Trust from 2003 to the present day.*

Tony's priority was always the best for the parish, often participating in good lengthy discussions to achieve this.

All of the trustees have enjoyed working alongside Tony and we will miss him.

Roger Wilson, Chairman.

resigning in 2013. He was also on the Village Hall Committee which included fundraising for the new village hall to be built, as well as organising village events such as his annual Beetle Drive, auction and performances, the Colton Festival committee and the Parish Lands Trust; putting hours into our village institutions.

Friendship Club: *Judy (with fellow founder, Christine Calkeld by her side) worked tirelessly for the Friendship Club for 25 years, only handing over the mantle in April of this year, when her cancer diagnosis meant that she had to focus on her health. Judy leaves a huge void in our Friendship Club but her legacy will live on within it.*

Judy was a very kind, gentle lady, who could turn her hand to most things and she will be greatly missed by all who were lucky enough to know her.

Karen Hill

*Judy was a founding member of **Colton Community Choir** and sang with us until she was no longer able. Her lovely soprano voice, her positive attitude and her knowledge of all the songs was an inspiration to us all.*

We will miss her dearly.

Karen Foster, Choir Master

Judy was joint founder of the Colton Friendship Club, an active member of the WI, a founding member of Colton Community Choir and also sat on the Festival and Village Hall committees. She told tales of barn dances in Coachman's Walk, stalls all along the road and activities around the church and village hall attracting many people to the village.

Women's Institute: *Judy was a valued member of the WI and always willing to lead or help with the many events we held. Her shortbread was the first item to be sold whenever we had a cake stall. She designed and created the banner that we use for International Women's Day each March and is displayed above our planter on Pedley's Croft.*

Judy will be greatly missed by us all, but we have her beautiful handiwork which will always be treasured.

Colton WI



In addition, Tony was an active volunteer for the Samaritans and regularly went into Stafford Prison to teach the prisoners how to be listeners for their fellow in-mates; he has potentially saved hundreds of lives. He was a member of the Round Table and was the Rotary Club's International Officer, helping to raise funds for international aid.

Meanwhile Judy started the Stroke Club which meets in Rugeley and raised funds for equipment and outings for the members.

Both were active members of the parish church and Judy ran the

Sunday School and organised the yearly Christingle, raising money for the Children's Society.

St Mary's Church: *From our first meeting, Judy and I felt as though we had known each other for ever. Tony and Judy were both gentle souls and an example for us all, with community at the heart of their lives.*

They were models for the rest of the world really - something for us all to aspire to.

Stephen Hill, Neighbour

I'm sorry that I haven't managed to contact everyone with a wonderful memory of the Winters; I know that there are many.

We have Tony to thank for the beautiful daffodils which line the entry to the village each spring – he got them from LDC and planted them (with assistance) along the verges. As a tribute to the couple, I would like to fundraise for some snowdrop bulbs (*Winter* flowers) to add into the verges as a tribute to the couple. If anyone feels that they would like to contribute by fundraising within their groups, or give a donation, please contact me: karenfosterhome@gmail.com or 07508 988 718.

I know that many of us will miss this lovely couple and will want to send our heartfelt condolences to their children, Simon and Rachel, and their wider family.

Karen Foster, neighbour

Tony and Judy's family:

When we moved to the village as a young family, Mum and Dad were delighted at how much they were welcomed into Colton. They threw themselves fully into the village life and relished being part of the community.

We have been overwhelmed by all the cards, flowers and kind tributes that we have received, it has been very comforting to hear how well thought of they were. Mum & Dad would have been very touched to hear all the lovely comments. They would be thrilled to learn of the plans to plant snowdrops in their memory.

Rachel and Simon Winter (Tony and Judy's children)

Observations From the Kitchen Window

By golly it ain't 'alf 'ot Mum!!

July 7th is definitely going down in the annals of Sheringham, and probably in those of Colton! What a day that turned out to be.



I was due to travel by train to Edinburgh to attend my daughter's academic award ceremony. I was catching a train at Lichfield and was awaiting the arrival of my taxi. About ten minutes before the vehicle was due, Hector showed himself to be in acute discomfort. He had obviously trodden on something very sharp or had been badly stung by an insect. We examined his offside rear foot which appeared to be the source of the problem. We saw a gooseberry sized swelling which had suddenly appeared between the pads on the foot and one of his toes had been licked absolutely raw. He clearly needed an urgent visit to the vet, It was just like trying to get a GP. "I could give you next Monday!!!!" was the unhelpful suggestion. Anyway by the energetic use of sharp elbows by 'Er Indoors secured Hector's position at the head of the queue for any cancellation. We then had to sort out the logistics. 'Er Indoors had surrendered her driving licence and I would incur the fearsome wrath of a very disappointed daughter if I failed to turn up to the event.

So, arrangements were made with a daughter-in-law who lives locally to act as ambulance driver. Anyway, my taxi turned up bang on time for a change, and off I went confident that this would be a straightforward journey to Lichfield Trent Valley now that the seemingly interminable road works on the A51 had been lifted. Not a bit of it!

As we drove up Brereton Hill a standard, undated, temporary "Road Ahead Closed" red sign was propped up by the roadside. Half a mile later there was another one. Then a third. At Longdon there was a barrier across the road and absolutely no information on length of closure, the purpose or the name of the contractor. Even more irritating was there were no diversion signs. Now we had a serious additional problem. The driver was definitely not a native of these parts! He had moved to Dudley 6 months ago and had been driving his taxi for just three weeks. We had to find our way to Lichfield through the narrow back roads through Gentleshaw, and other villages (an area with which I have absolutely no familiarity). The taxi's Satnav simply refused to plot an alternative route, insisting that we continued along the A51 which was closed.

As a matter of faith the driver followed a Severn Trent van which he was sure would lead the way. Unfortunately that turned into a private drive. Poor chap had no idea where we were going and there I was harrumphing beside him that I had a train to catch. So I took control and told him to turn left and then right. Just at that moment the Satnav sprang into life to show that I was directing him in exactly the wrong direction. We turned round and found ourselves going down a series of single track roads and I

prayed that nothing was coming round the next bend as it seemed we were travelling at motorway speed to make up lost time!



Eventually we made it to the station with two minutes to spare and a serious laundry bill in prospect. I jumped out and ran into the waiting room only to find that the train was running ten minutes late!!! Now, I very rarely use the train and I had not appreciated that trains from Lichfield to Crewe stop at Rugeley. Had I realised that I could have saved myself some elevated blood pressure, a taxi driver dicing with death and £35.00!

. Having made it to Crewe I then had to find a departure board urgently because I had a nominal 5 minutes left for my connection. And there it was. Running 40 minutes late!!! Whilst waiting to board I took a call from 'Er Indoors. Hector had succeeded in obtaining a cancellation appointment at 17.15. There was a loud "Phew!" all round.

The first I knew about the vet's appointment was when we eventually pulled into Edinburgh, I opened my emails and found an invoice for £119.00 which included a list of medications. What had the investigation found on the poor dog?

The cause of Hector's suffering had not been identified, so we had to deal with the symptoms. The prescription was for a mixture of antiseptics, antibiotics, a pain killer and a hood big enough to fit over a lion's head.. In my absence the whole responsibility fell to 'Er Indoors, so she had to rummage around in the bottom of her cupboard to find her nurse's uniform. Bathing Hector's foot in diluted iodine several times in the day was potentially a messy business, and keeping him off the carpet and favourite chair until his foot dried was a real problem. Fortunately pieces of cheese and chicken ensured that the other medication was taken without any problem

The major issue was the hood. Hector would have none of it!. He whimpered and whined the whole time it was on and it was even too big to allow him to drink! How else to stop him licking? A bandage had been ruled out by the vet because the area had to be kept dry..

In desperation at 10.30 that evening, 'Er Indoors, having decided she could not go to bed whilst Hector was still complaining about the hood and he still had to be prevented from licking the wound, got herself organised to sleep with Hector (without his hood) on the sofa. Hector thought this a grand idea and settled down to a quiet night. ' Er Indoors thinks she only slept for 30 minutes. The problem was that she had to repeat the procedure for the next night too!

Fortunately, Hector responded well to treatment, to the extent that when I returned home, we agreed that we could leave him over night, so we went to bed for a good night's sleep. (Naturally no vested interest in question!).

Best wishes from all at Sheringham

COLTON GARDEN & PRODUCE CLUB.



Hello once again. I hope you have all enjoyed the rather early summer weather and been able to keep on top of the watering, as well as keeping the weeds under control. We had a very enjoyable Garden Party at the beginning of July, which was very kindly hosted by Sarah and Robin at the Stables. There will be no meeting in August, but that does not mean we can take the month off from looking after the gardens. If the warm weather continues, the problem of watering could become more difficult, as we will probably be confronted with a hosepipe ban.

If you intend to go away on holiday, a friend will be needed to carry on the chore of watering. It has been suggested that we can help to reduce the amount of water required by moving many of the pots and plants into a shady area, and even stand them in trays of shallow water. Spare a thought for those good neighbours and friends who are helping you while you are basking in the sun (we hope)! Up to present, I have been able to use my new hoses purchased – the old one developed a clothes-soaking split! What amazing inventions these new flexible expanding hoses are. From a wrinkled, innocent-looking small bundle of cloth and other materials, a long thin snake writhing and expanding as the water fills it – plus it expands to 3 times its original length. A word of warning. Do not try to disconnect the hose before you turn off the tap and open the spray-head nozzle. You will receive more than a shower – a significant soaking, as witnessed by my daughter! I do not regret the purchase, but I hope I will just be able to use it for a bit longer.

In spite of the hot temperatures, the weeds have continued to grow, needing constant attention. It is good to see some of the flowers and vegetables seem to have adapted to the higher temperatures, as the Geraniums, Fuchsias, and Dahlias have produced some good early blossoms. Remember to deadhead all the pot plants, perennials, and sweet peas to encourage them to produce new blooms, so as to extend the flowering season. Although you may still have blooms on your roses, providing you have deadheaded, they may well start to look rather jaded and sad as leaves turn yellow and black spot starts – remove the guilty leaves and bin them.



Wildflower areas. Once they have finished flowering and scattered their seeds, they can either be mown or strimmed. It is also a good idea to remove any persistent weeds, such as couch grass, thistles and dandelions. Wearing gloves, you can use a neat weed killer, such as Roundup, on the leaves as it will go right down the stems and into the roots. On a dry day you can collect the ripe seeds such as aquilegias, sweet peas, and love-in-a-mist. The Potty Plotters suggested you use a wine bottle bag to put the whole stems upside down in the bag of the drying aquilegia, and the seeds will collect at the bottom as they dry out. I hope to do this with a rather delicate and eye-catching white poppy that has grown in my vegetable patch. Perhaps a relic from days gone by, as I have certainly not planted it, but I will try to preserve it and encourage it to multiply.

Remove the lower leaves from the tomato plants, up to the first truss, to allow more light and air to reach the fruits. Picking the tomatoes, cucumbers, French beans, and runner beans regularly will allow new fruits to set and extend the harvesting season. If the very hot weather continues, spray the inside of the greenhouse with a fine mist and pour water over the floor to increase the humidity – the white fly will not like this treatment anyway! Beware of the black fly on the beans this year and treat at the first signs. Some later-flowering perennials may start to flop, such as Japanese anemones, and will need a little support with canes and string. You can now start to cut those dreaded laurel hedges, but use your secateurs rather than a hedge trimmer, to avoid half-cut leaves turning brown. See you next month. Cheers.

Keep smiling – *HAPPY GARDENING TO YOU ALL.*
PETER BRIGHTMAN – 07896521941 / 01889803678

Colton Friendship Club: June Report



Karen welcomed nineteen members to the June meeting and had the very sad duty of informing members that Tony (Winter) had passed away. Members stood for one minute to remember Tony, a dear friend to many at our club.

Our speaker, Cliff Kirby-Tibbits, was introduced and his topic was 'The History of Jabez Cliff & Co.' charting the fortunes of this family company.

1793: George Cliff, who worked in the leather trade, lived in Badger's Yard in Park Street, Walsall, where he made leather breeches. He and his wife Elizabeth had five children, four boys and a girl. In 1793 his son, thirteen-year-old George, followed his father into the trade and began an apprenticeship in bridle preparing. In time his own son Jabez, whose brothers and sisters all died in infancy, carried on the family tradition.

1873: At this time, horses were virtually the only form of transport, carrying both goods and people, and the saddler and bridle-maker occupied a position of prime importance. Jabez Cliff started up his own saddlery business, Jabez Cliff and Co, in Portland Street, Walsall.

1881: Jabez Cliff and his two sons Samuel and George all died during the typhoid epidemic that swept across Britain. His wife and daughter, Mary, kept the business going until Mary married skilled bridle maker, Frederick Tibbits, in 1882.

1902: Their only son Jabez Cliff Tibbits joined the company.

1906: Not far from the 'Cliff' factory were the premises of the world renowned saddle making company J. A. Barnsby and Sons, who were situated at Globe Works in Lower Forster Street, Walsall. Jabez Cliff Tibbits put in a bid for the firm. Their offer was accepted, and the two companies amalgamated. The 'Jabez Cliff and Co' saddles retained the prestigious 'Barnsby' label, whilst the high quality bridles were manufactured under the 'Cliff' name, thus creating the saddlery brand 'Cliff-Barnsby.'

Their main export markets were Germany and Russia - an unfortunate position for a company to be in during the decade that saw the international tensions which eventually led to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914. Jabez Cliff Tibbits realised that the time had come to diversify into other areas of the leather trade. The company began to manufacture a wide range of sports products and leather goods, including cricket balls and other hard and soft-balls, golf bags and holdalls, travel goods and leather cases.

1920's: The company patented the Globe non-tear football. The innovative new ball gained fame when it was used in four FA Cup Finals and the 1928 Olympic Games.



1939: The years of the second world war saw a change of direction for the company towards the production of Bren gun pouches, ammunition belts, webbing and leather goods for the Ministry of Defence. The links with the military that began during the 1940s continued to flourish through the years.

1948: Jabez Cliff Tibbits was knighted by King George VI for his services to the town.

1982 – Falklands Invasion: When British task forces in the Falklands realised that the country's inhospitable terrain called for four-legged transport, it was to Jabez Cliff and Co that they turned with their urgent request for pack saddlery so that vital equipment and weapons could be transported by mules.

1990 The company was later honoured by Her Majesty the Queen, who awarded Jabez Cliff and Co the Royal Warrant as Saddler and Loriner.

The company's capabilities included the manufacture of saddlery equipment to the military units of the Kings Troop, Royal Horse Artillery, the Household Cavalry, the Metropolitan Police and the City of London Police. They supplied military units throughout the world with ceremonial equipment.

Unfortunately, after the seventh generation of Jabez Cliff and Co, the company entered into administration in 2014 leading to the closure of the company and the loss of 26 jobs.

Cliff was thanked for his very informative talk.

Our Speaker for our meeting on 16th July will be a return visit from Damien Griffiths who will entertain us with Song, Dad Jokes and possibly a bit of a Quiz!

The following month (20th August) we will welcome Trevor Bevan and his talk will be 'Pickwick Bicycle Club – A Dickens of a Tale'.

For any members who would like to attend our Lunch (at the Dun Cow on 17th September, 12.30pm) and have not yet paid and selected their menu choice, please let me know as soon as possible.

Karen Hill
01889 586 379

Colton WI Report July 2025



This month some of our members went to The Dun Cow for our annual meal. We spent a lovely evening with friends eating good food and socialising. It's not often that we can spend a whole evening just catching up with each other so I think we all enjoyed ourselves.

Sadly we were missing our dear friend Judy Winter, who passed away earlier this month. Judy will be greatly missed; she was a valued member of our group. Always happy to help in any way, especially if we needed any sewing or handicraft help. Judy designed and made our International Ladies Day banner, organised the making of our beautiful bunting, which is used for celebrations in the Village Hall, and organised and ran a patchwork workshop which ended with two beautiful quilts made from everyone's efforts.

Judy's delicious shortbread was legendary, selling out so quickly at our Christmas Fair stall.

Our heartfelt condolences go out to her family, as they also lost their father, Tony, only a few days before Judy.



On 2nd July several members visited Quirky Flowers in Cheddleton. We were treated to wonderful flower demonstrations, after a tour of the flowers that grow on the farm. Two of our ladies were presented with arrangements of flowers that were made on the day, very lucky members!

Colton WI manned the kitchen for the Colton Festival, and members donated some beautiful cakes. We did wonder if we would run out as the event was so well attended, but donations were so generous we had a couple left over, which were sold on with people being very happy to donate to our club.



Notes for our diaries:

20th July - potato in a bucket competition weigh- in.

Thursday 18th September – our local group Meeting at Armitage – Jane Darling singing 40's songs.

Friday 26th September – Curling in the village Hall

Wednesday 17th December – our Christmas meal at Riverside Restaurant, Stafford.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday 13th August, 7.30 in the Village Hall. The speaker is Rose, the Good Zest Company, taking about reflexology. **Do come along and her this interesting talk, you will be made very welcome.**

Polly Macmillan

Wine Tasting with a Twist.

After many fabulous years arranging the Village Wine Tasting evenings Richard Monbiot has stepped back and asked Mark Sargeant and Nigel Parry to follow in his footsteps. To kick off this new season Mark and Nigel (along with Rose & Hilary) have arranged for the fantastic Sip and Style guys from the Festival to come back and give a Cocktail Class ,

Tickets are available as below and we are looking forward to seeing you all there:



COLTON
**Cocktail
Class**

A FUN EVENING INCLUDING
CANAPÉS, GAMES & 'TUNES!

TICKETS NOW ON SALE

£27.50PP

FRIDAY 29TH AUG, COLTON VILLAGE HALL,
FROM 7PM

HOSTED BY **Sip & Style**

ENQUIRE NOW FOR A TICKET:
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ROSE@THEGOODZESTCOMPANY.CO.UK

SUMMARY OF COLTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 2ND JULY (Full minutes will be available at www.coltonpc.org.uk after approval at the September meeting)

1. Public participation -

- a) Grass cutting - Parishioner did not wish to pursue previous request for a 'No-mow May' policy next year, as it had met with several comments on social media from others in village who felt that the village entrance looked very untidy and did not present a good impression, particularly compared to other local villages. However, parishioner's main concern had been the loss of the special flowers that grow in the corner patch below the WI trough, which had not been clear in the shortened PC minutes. It is understood that the PCC have adopted a no-mow May policy around the church and it is responsible for mowing on Pedley's Croft (although PC contribute to cost). The verge from the bridge to the main road was left before cutting to allow the wildflowers to seed. Apparently there has been some controversy in Little Haywood about the cost of the flowers paid for by its PC, even though volunteers plant and maintain. Councillors discussed further during the meeting (see later item 6 b)).
- b) War Memorial - Mike Pyle returned all the records he had kept about the War Memorial refurbishment and other information, as he was about to move out of the parish. It was agreed these records should be offered to the History Society. Clerk to retain the additional meter box key. Mike was thanked for all his work on the War Memorial during his time in Colton.

2. Chair's Announcements – PC was sad to note the recent death of Tony Winter, previously a long serving parish councillor. He had also been responsible for much of the daffodil planting in the village. A minute's silence was held to remember him.

3. Staffordshire County Council issues raised with County Cllr Janet Higgins

As Janet Higgins (JH) needed to leave by 8pm, it was agreed to take all the agenda items on SCC matters at the start of the meeting.

- a) Speeding - The main concern is the Rugeley to Admaston road (B5013) where there have recently been several accidents. The police are aware of the 'boy racers' but other drivers are thought to go too fast on certain sections, particularly in the bends near Hamley Heath. The situation on Bellamour Way is in hand, as PC is

pursuing installation of an electronic device to monitor speeds. JH said she had raised various issues at SCC and had a meeting arranged with Highways later in the week.

- b) Flooding - JH said that the Reform county councillors are making it a priority to sort out flooding issues. An update received by the Clerk from the Flood Risk Management team at SCC was read to the meeting. This included notification of a planned 'dig down' on 6th August to survey the culvert on Bellamour Way near 'Wyvern'. PC asked **JH** to establish with Highways at her meeting whether this would require a complete road closure. SCC email also raised the suggestion that Highways could install a debris screen to reduce the potential for blockages in the culvert and whether PC could take ownership and responsibility for its maintenance. SCC is also looking into whether a level gauge and/or CCTV camera might be of use to the village and at providing community dedicated website pages to hold monitoring information so people could check routes in advance. A meeting to discuss these issues with the PC was suggested. **Clerk** to see if SCC officers could attend prior to the September PC meeting. No mention was made in the SCC update of the situation at Hollow Lane so **JH** was asked to raise that with Highways too.
- c) Newlands Lane - The poor condition of the road was raised and JH had already been contacted direct by a parishioner. JH said SCC was also giving priority to sorting out potholes, but it was recognised that this lane was not designed for the size and weight of agricultural vehicles which use it.
- d) Overgrown Bellamour Way yew hedge - The concerns and history were explained and **JH** was asked to raise with Highways again.
- e) Village Hall signage - It was unclear the source of funding Richard Cox had in mind when he had offered to help if re-elected. It may require a formal application from VHMC. **JH** to ask Highways about this.
- f) Solar farms - JH said that SCC cannot affect the planning applications already passed but is trying to find reasons for new applications to be rejected, concentrating on health and safety issues e.g. batteries catching fire and the need for 2-way road access. JH asked to be notified if there were any new applications in the parish.

4. Payments – A large number of payments relating to the Festival were approved (hall hire, band, bouncy castle, dog show expenses, Morris men,

signage etc.), as well as regular magazine delivery, Clerk's pay and expenses, grass cutting and Village Hall weeding.

5.Planning Matters – No comments made by councillors on recent application for various changes at 27 High Street.

6.Highways, Footpaths and Open Spaces

- a) Newlands Lane hedges - It was noted that a parishioner had kindly cut some of the hedges on Newlands Lane as HS2 was not meeting its responsibilities. The issue needed to be escalated. **Clerk** to contact parishioner for confirmation of location(s) and pursue further with HS2.
- b) Request that PC adopt a 'No mow May' policy in 2026 for the verges approaching the village – Further to discussion during Public Participation, it was noted that there are differing views about encouraging wildlife vs keeping the parish looking tidy. LDC had clarified that, for the areas they cut on SCC's behalf, SCC do not have a 'No-mow May' policy. LDC do not have such a policy for their own land either but have instead set aside a few specific areas in the district to be wildlife havens. There would be maintenance and cost issues if, for instance, planters were wanted in Colton. **Clerk** to respond to another parishioner's email, about the appearance of the parish, encouraging them to put forward any proposals for consideration. PC is happy to listen and see what might be done.

7.Colton Summer Festival - It was agreed that the Festival had been a major success, much helped by the good weather, with an estimated attendance of at least 250 people. A wash up meeting would be held the following evening. Whilst it would be nice, in principle, to hold another Festival next year, there was a lot of work involved and more helpers would be needed, especially on the day, if it were to go ahead. Duck race proceeds to be given to the school PTA. Further money from stall fees and bar and ice cream van donations to help offset PC costs. Various thank yous to be sent. As JH understood that applications could be retrospective, **Clerk** to apply to the newly-opened SCC Community Fund for help towards Festival costs.

8.Burial Ground Committee – At the June meeting, the need to pay for large bins was raised, with the suggestion of using a compost heap instead, alongside smaller or cheaper bins and this was being explored.

9.Date of next meeting – Wednesday 3rd September at 7pm (No meeting in August)

EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS CONTACTS

| Name | Contact No or E-mail | Web site Address |
|--|--|---|
| Lichfield District Council | | |
| Customer Services | 01543 308000 | https://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/ |
| Out of Hours | 01527 406643 | https://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/ |
| Waste and Recycling | 0345 002 0022 | https://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/recycling-bins-waste |
| District Councillor – Keth Vernon | 07711758852 | |
| Miscellaneous Numbers | | |
| Age Concern Advice Line | 0800 678 1602 | https://www.ageuk.org.uk/ |
| Childline | 0800 1111 | https://www.childline.org.uk/ |
| Citizen advice - Lichfield | 0808 278 7977 | https://www.casestaffs.org.uk/ |
| Crimestoppers | 0800 555 111 | https://crimestoppers-uk.org/ |
| Cruise Bereavement Line | 0808 808 1677 | https://www.cruse.org.uk/ |
| Deer casualty Line | 101 | https://www.deeraware.com/report-incident/ |
| Domestic Violence | 0808 2000 247 | https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/ |
| Drug/Alcohol Information line | 0300 123 1110 | https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Health-wellbeing-and-leisure/Keeping-well-and-staying-healthy/ |
| Electrical Power Loss | 105 | National Grid ED (West) |
| Gas escape | 0800 111 999 | |
| Highway repair Hotline | 0300 111 8000 | https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/ |
| NHS Direct | 111 | https://www.nhs.uk/ |
| Neighbourhood Watch | Back Page | https://www.staffordshiresmartalert.co.uk/ |
| Relate | | https://www.relate.org.uk/ |
| Rugeley Library | 01889 869063 rugeley.library@staffordshire.gov.uk | |
| Samaritans | 116 123 | https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/ |
| Social Services | 0300 111 8010 | staffordshirecares@staffordshire.gov.uk |
| Staffordshire County Council | 0300 111 8010 | https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/ |
| Staffordshire County Councillor- Richard Cox | 01543 490758 Richard.cox@staffordshire.gov.uk | |
| South Staffs Water | 0800 389 1011 | https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/contact-us/ |

Colton Organisation Contacts

| | |
|---|--|
| Colton Local nature reserve John MacMillan Tel: 01889 575394 Email:mrjkmac@sky.com | Colton Parish Council Ms Alison James Tel: 07969266779 Email:colton.pc@hotmail.com |
| Village Hall Bookings Fiona O'Brien Tel: 07784497048 Email:bookings@coltonvillagehall.co.uk Management committee John MacMillan Tel: 01889575394 Email:mrjkmac@sky.com | Parish Lands Trust Claire Collier Tel: 07966637044 Email:clerk.cplt@gmail.com |
| St. Mary's Primary School Mr John Wynn-Head Teacher Tel: 01889224506 Email:stmatysoffice@tssmat.staffs.sch.uk | Colton Community Choir Ruth Jones Tel: 01889 570724 Email: ruth46jones@gmail.com |
| Colton Old People's Welfare Committee Mrs Amanda Pratt Tel: 07976975960 Email: mandspratt@msn.com | Colton Women's Institute Email:secretarycoltonwi@gmail.com |
| Colton Produce Guild Mr Peter Brightman (Chairman) Tel: 07896521941 Email: pd.brightman@hotmail.co.uk | Colton Almshouses Email:coltonparishnews@yahoo.com |
| Colton History Society Mrs Gill Sykes Email: gillsykes@btinternat.com | Colton Friendship Club Mrs Karen Hill 01889 586 379 |
| Burial Ground Trustee Ms Alison James Tel: 07969266779 Email:colton.pc@hotmail.com | |

Colton Village Festival 2025

The day arrived with eager anticipation for how the whole day would unfold after months of planning and meetings in The Greyhound. Saturday 28 June 2025, was a warm, bordering hot day even at 10.30 am when villagers and visitors started



arriving and parking around Pedley's Croft (ably managed by Mick Scoins). Around the church a fine selection of classic and cherished cars from residents gathered in perfect order. The range of vehicles demonstrated the variety of people's pride and joys from a tuck tuck to a Massey Ferguson tractor to a couple of Bentley's and a Ferrari.

The first event of the day, the duck race, under the watchful eye of Noel Talbot and family and friends. With over 220 entries the race started promptly at 11.00 in the low water summer flow of Moreton Brook. An advance party the day before had cleared some of the debris and tried to create some sort of flow in the brook. With cash prizes for the winners (1st to 4th) the crowds busily chatted and followed the slow floating ducks, with a bit of human help, to the mini weir the finish line. After the prize taking place on the bridge attention then switched to



the eagerly awaited and contested tug-of-war. With volunteers, from the Ye Old Dun Cow and The Greyhound public houses, the teams assembled. After deciding who would have either the church or B5013 roadside of the brook (with a clear advantage becoming obvious for those on the flatter ground side of the church), for the best of three pulls. The winners were declared to be The Greyhound.



The church had been decorated the night before with an excellent assortment of wedding apparel, organised by Marie Havelock. Amongst the 24 garments (wedding dresses, a bridegroom's attire, and bridesmaid's dresses) as well as floral displays. Each wedding attire was accompanied by a photograph or the bride (or groom) at the time of the wedding along with a commentary of their special day. A special WWII

wedding display, loaned by Sue Wilkes, highlighted the unusual lengths that couples went to get married. The display highlighted the dresses and military style at that time and the very different way weddings were organised in the war years. To have enough food for guests and the bridal party, friends and family would collaborate with their share from their ration books to buy food to cater for those attending. The Church meeting room provided some light refreshments in the form of tea, coffee and Pimm's for passers-by in what was becoming a bit of a scorcher of a day.



At 12 noon prompt the 16 strong Colton Community Choir, led by the choir's maestro Karen Foster and wonderfully accompanied on the keyboard by Ruth Haigh, sprung into song with a rendition of songs selected by the choir themselves. Such favourites included: Any dream will do, Edelweiss, castle on a cloud, mad world, summer nights, yesterday, a trio (swing lo, when the

saints, and I wanna sing), summertime, Londonderry air, and what shall we do with the drunken sailor.



In the village hall Colton WI served a fantastic selection of cakes with tea and coffee, while the History Society had a display of former festivals. Outside the field was awash with people enjoying the fine weather in the sun or for some the shade. The playground and football pitch were full of children merrily playing, while others browsed the many stalls

selling a range of goods from food and drinks to crafts and a plant stall hosted by the Garden and Produce Guild. The afternoon also featured the dog show, organised by Nigel and Hilary Parry and aided by Ed and Jo Tucker, provided an opportunity for 14 4-legged family pets to engage in some fun as well as compete for prizes. Plenty of water was on-hand, as well as snacks to keep the 4-legged entries sustained in the mid-afternoon sun, with one of the entries a collie, with handler, from the village's Border Collie Trust (GB). Finally, the Stafford Morris Dancers led a fine dance in the field as the culmination of the afternoon's entertainment.



The evening entertainment started promptly at 7.00 pm with villagers and visitors thronging into the field laden with chairs and picnics to listen, dance and enjoy each other's company to a splendid rendition of modern classics from the 1980s to the present day by Late Moran. Late Moran, a local band, as well as playing some great tunes and singing engaged the gathered crowd with some jolly banter in between each song. This was highlighted by the 'comedy' of watching a person assemble a camping chair in the middle of the field and in front of the stage as well as the solitary AC/DC fan and his family, all shared in good humour. With an outside bar and a pizza van the crowd were well supported with drinks and food.

Thank you to the Parish Council and all the village groups (St Mary's Church, Colton Community Choir, Colton Women's Institute, Colton Garden and Produce Guild, and Colton History Society) and St Mary's Church of England Primary School Parent Teacher Association as well as all the numerous volunteers who made it all such a fantastic festival.

Rev. Lynne Dean
On behalf of Colton History Society.

Colton Summer Festival: A Summery Performance by the Community Choir

The Colton Summer Festival was a resounding success, with the community choir providing a highlight performance in the church. The church was filled with people who had been enjoying the morning's exciting activities, including a duck race and tug of war. The venue was beautifully decorated with an abundance of gorgeous personal flower arrangements, adding to the festive atmosphere.

The choir delighted the audience with a summery-themed repertoire that encouraged lots of audience participation. It was wonderful to see friends, families, and familiar faces from the village joining in and enjoying classics like Cliff Richard's "Summer Holiday," songs from "Grease," and ABBA's "Take a Chance on Me."

Adding a touch of sophistication, the choir also performed "In the Mood" and "Moonlight Serenade" by Glenn Miller, as well as Gershwin's "Summertime," which ended on an impressive 19-beat note that wowed the audience.

The performance included a mix of old and new favorites. The choir's rendition of "Greensleeves" was a gorgeous and well-loved audience favourite, while Kylie Minogue's "Can't Get You Out of My Head" sounded truly fabulous when sung by the choir.

As an encore, the community choir ended on a high note with a percussion-accompanied rendition of "Yellow Submarine," leaving the audience in high spirits.

It was a privilege and delight to share our passion for singing with you. We encourage anyone who enjoys a good sing-song and wants to meet fellow villagers to join us. We really mean it when we say we are non-judgmental – everyone is welcome, all ages and abilities! We meet at the church every Monday night at 7pm (excluding August). For more information, please contact Ruth on 07963 559580, or visit our Facebook page; <https://www.facebook.com/colton.community.choir>.

We look forward to our next performance, a folky offering, on Monday, October 14th, at the church. Keep an eye on the village notice board for more details. We can't wait to see you there!



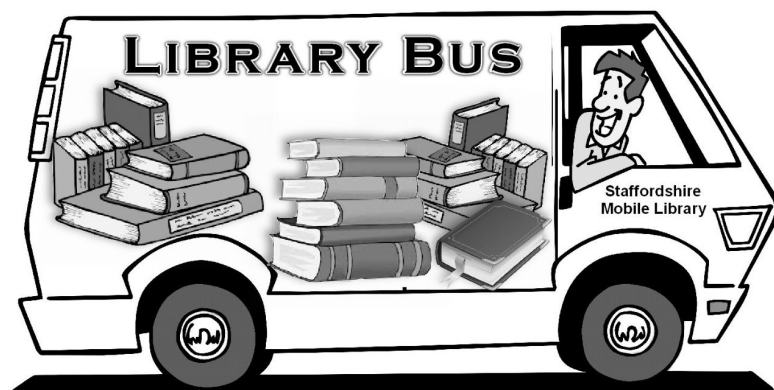
***I think everyone I met that weekend had a great time
from the early morning ducks to the choir and
fabulous wedding gowns in the Church, with all those
wonderful cars outside.***

***Before long, we were in the Village Hall field, with the
excitement of the Dog show and Morris Dancers
before the brilliant Late Moran performance in the
evening.***

***Of course, the weather helped and then everyone
asked - are we doing it again next year??***

***Well to help decide
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|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|
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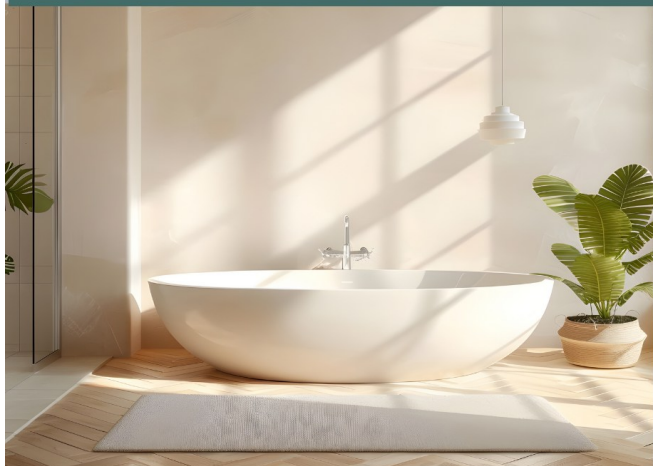
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Everyone participates at their own pace & I provide guided tuition throughout each session to encourage personal development of your own ideas & knowledge.

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Simply turn up if you fancy giving the club a try or if you would like to treat someone who is interested in attending the art club, I now offer **GIFT VOUCHERS** which can be bought in advance for single or multiple sessions and can be used on any Wednesday.

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Just come along or for more info please contact Della Welch;

mrswelchsartclub@gmail.com or 07792 741219



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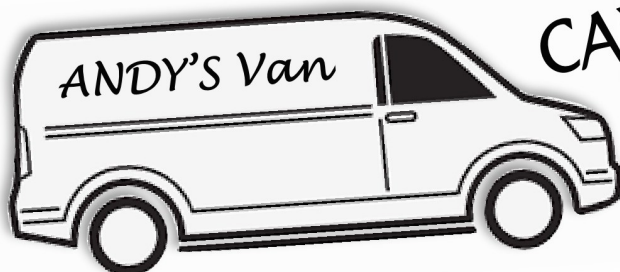
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