

Colton Parish News

October 2026



Colton Parish News is sponsored by:

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

St Mary the Virgin Church, Colton



Church Services		
First Sunday	Holy Communion	11.00 am
Second Sunday	Morning Worship	11.00 am
Third Sunday	Holy Communion	11.00 am
Fourth Sunday	Morning Worship	11.00 am
Fifth Sunday	Service Format will vary	11.00 am
Keep your eyes peeled for details of other services and Special Sunday Afternoon Events		

For all Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals and any Pastoral Needs
please contact Reverend Lynne Dean

Resident Priest Reverend Lynne Dean The New Rectory Bellamour Way Colton WS15 3JW 07736 972560 lanternlit@hotmail.com	Rector Prebendary Simon Davis The Vicarage Market Place Abbots Bromley WS15 3BP	Church Wardens Mrs Rachel Bayliss 24 Moorcroft, Colton, WS15 3ND rachel.bayliss@outlook.com 07792 234720 Mrs Victoria Hawley The Old Rectory, Bellamour Way, Colton, WS15 3JW 07939 003153
Messages to the Parochial Church Council : Mrs Katie Brown 07814 729148		

Message from your editor



Welcome to the October edition. A larger edition this month as all the village groups and organisations resume after the summer break.

I hope that many of you will support the Christmas fair on the 29th November at 12:00. This is always a lovely afternoon with a wide range of ,mainly, homemade products. Great for Christmas presents.

Thank you to Colton History society for the front cover image this month. It is a photograph of Bellamour Hall that used to stand on the left hand side of the Rugeley road as you enter Colton village. Built by the Aston family in the 18th century and demolished in the early 20th. Century

Best wishes *Fiona*

All Items for inclusion in the NEXT EDITION

Must reach the Editor by 15th of THIS MONTH



coltonparishnews@gmail.com

Thank you Fiona O'Brien Editor



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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Dear friends

October brings us the feast of St Luke, the Evangelist and, traditionally, a physician. It seems particularly fitting that the writer of one of the Gospels should also have been a doctor. Luke's Gospel has a particular concern for those who are often overlooked: the poor, the sick, women, outsiders and those whom society has pushed to the margins.

Luke reminds us that healing is about much more than simply curing an illness. In the Gospels, Jesus brings people towards wholeness – sometimes through physical healing, but also through forgiveness, acceptance, restored relationships and a renewed sense of belonging.

Wholeness does not necessarily mean being free from illness or difficulty. Some of us live with conditions that cannot be cured. Others carry wounds that cannot be seen: grief, loneliness, anxiety, regret or the pain of feeling excluded. Healing can sometimes mean finding the strength to live with what cannot be changed, knowing that we are loved and that we do not have to face it alone.

This has something important to say about what our churches should be. We are called to be communities where people can come as they are; places where questions and doubts are welcomed, differences respected, and nobody is made to feel that they are somehow less worthy of God's love.

And perhaps we all have a part to play in bringing wholeness. A kind word, a listening ear, an act of forgiveness or reaching out to someone from whom we have become distant can be surprisingly powerful.

To mark St Luke's Day, **everyone across our benefice is warmly invited to a joint Benefice Service of Healing and Wholeness on Sunday 18 October at 4.00pm at Colton Church.** Whether you are seeking prayer for yourself or someone you love, carrying something that is difficult to share, or simply want to come and pray in the company of others, you will be very welcome. Together, we will reflect on Christ's healing love and pray for the wholeness we all need – for ourselves, for one another and for our communities.

Joe.

Observations From the Kitchen Window

I don't know how many of my readers have noticed how forlorn and bedraggled I have become over the last month, although I have to admit that I have not noticed any outpouring of sympathy or concern!! It is more a case of schadenfreude!



Without going into any gory details, we have had some difficult problems to contend with. 'Er Indoors has had some issues with one of her eyes which required surgery at Royal Wolverhampton Hospital New Cross to be followed by a six-week recovery period. For a start, as many in Colton will know, New Cross is a nightmare to get to. You need to double the time involved in meeting an appointment because finding parking space is fraught with difficulty in the totally inadequate facilities and for anyone with temporary impaired vision, a complete nightmare!

Over the past three weeks we have had to negotiate these access problems on four occasions which has been the least of our problems. The real issue has been that 'Er indoors has been banned from doing much of her normal daily activities following the operation so as not to inhibit her recovery. The medics were very brave in confronting her to impose the various restrictions. They were wholly oblivious to the consequences and how I would be affected. For example, she was totally banned from hoovering, dusting, washing and ironing, mowing the lawn picking up things that were dropped on the floor, washing the car, making the beds, among many others to prevent pressure on her eyes. This was to go on for six weeks!

What is a chap to do when his life is turned upside down? My learning curve was vertiginous! Everything had to be fitted around the schedule for one drop of medication twelve times per day! First, I had to find out where the Dyson was kept. Then I had to get the hang of moving it in gentle sweeps across the carpet to collect the dirt rather than spread it around. Suddenly, on its first outing, it stopped picking up the bits from off my shoes and the crumbs dropped by the dogs on the carpet. All sorts of warning lights came on, and I had to ask 'Er Indoors to give me some instructions from afar. Disconnecting the dirt box was a trial of strength. It just did not want to let go despite my tugging and colourful language. With some further instruction I managed eventually to remove it. Predictably a pile of dust and fluff dropped on the floor which generated another job that had to be cleaned up! Reassembly proved to be no easier.

Then Poppy decided to bring up her last meal on the sitting room carpet. This presented all sorts of additional, challenging problems. Clearly the first thing to do was to find some rubber gloves and old newspaper to remove the pile of

solids which was eying me. I could not just leave them in the middle of the room. But there was the additional problem of the yellow puddle in which they were floating. Now I knew in which cupboard the various household cleaners and chemicals were kept. But which of the many variants would be the right ones for me to select so that no lasting damage would result from my ministrations. I had to avoid creating a lasting stain or damage that would greet us each time we entered the room arising from my making the wrong selection. So, I sought advice from 'Er Indoors. She gave me a brand name and said what I need is in a bottle with a red band around its neck. When I looked, I found that there were four different products meeting that description with no absolute clarity about which one would be the best. So, I then had to sit down and actually read the labels (which is something I hardly ever do). Eventually I discovered a product which was apparently suitable for use on carpets. So according to instructions, I shook the bottle, pulled the trigger and a thick white foam formed on the surface of the incident. A quick reference to the instructions then told me to wipe it up. What to use? I had to be careful not to use a cloth which would normally be for drying dishes or something similar. So, I searched out what appeared to be an old rag, hoping that this was not intended for polishing silver or dusting furniture.



One benefit I have discovered in all of this is that I have been given permission to use 'Er Indoors' pride and joy, her bright red lawnmower!! This has been out of bounds for me ever since we bought it. I must just make sure that no tree jumps out at me as I run past it!!

I am not sure if I will ever get the hang of this housework malarky. When I try to tidy up or make the beds, I am met with all sorts of tuts and harrumphs which indicate that I have not exactly matched her exacting standards. I must admit that even I can see I am lacking in the deft touch of 'Er Indoors. I just wonder if I will ever acquire the necessary skills.

Roll on six weeks!!!! NO! BUT WAIT! The appalling realisation has dawned. Once this left eye has recovered sufficiently, her right eye has to undergo the identical operation procedure. Another six weeks of hell is in store. It is a good thing that she does not have eyes in the back of her head as well! On the other hand.....!

Best regards from all at Sheringham



Colton Garden and Produce Club

Hello to you All. Our September meeting was a very interesting and informative talk about the mountainous Indian state of Sikkim, bordered by Bhutan, Tibet, and Nepal, which has an extremely rich variety of plants, with plants surviving at 19,000

feet, clinging to rocks and lichen. Not a place for the faint-hearted, with narrow mountain-pass footpaths, everything having to be carried, and Yaks providing what the indigenous people need. Strangely, English is spoken by most people.

Our October meeting is on Thursday the 1st at 7.30 pm, when we will be holding the annual "Bring & Share" Harvest Supper. Remember, new members are always welcome.

How are you getting on with the slowly recovering garden? I am in the process of a very early autumn clear-up, as many plants have reached their dormancy state to preserve what energy they have left. The leaves are falling; my runner beans have decided it is too much like hard work, and even the tomatoes in the greenhouse have started to wither and die. It is therefore time to consider cutting back the roses, trimming the perennials as they dry and die and concentrate on keeping the weeds at bay, as they are growing faster than anything with the small amounts of rain we have received. At least the strawberries are producing plenty of runners to increase the number of plants for next season. I will also be able to clear dead foliage and weeds from the wildflower garden and sow some hardy seeds to produce an early display of flowers for spring, when there is very little food around for those solitary bees that will be stirring from their burrows. Many of these bees are burrowing in our garden to lay their eggs because of our very sandy soil. This soil is probably the reason my lawns are not recovering very well, so I may need to spread a mixture of sand and seed to speed up the recovery process. This seems to have worked very well on the golf courses, so it should be worth a try.

This is what I call clear-up time. Clean out the greenhouse to prevent pests and diseases from overwintering and wash the glazing to increase the amount of sunlight. Rake up the fallen leaves and tree seeds from lawns, borders, driveways and paths. I also apply a sprayed-on coating of "Wet & Forget" to rid paths and driveways of moss and algae, as it will become very slippery when it gets wet through the winter. It looks as if we may have another wet winter, so



we need to prepare ourselves, and start to think about planting more drought-resistant plants. Clean out the water butts and locate them to catch any rainfall from the clean gutters and downpipes. Don't forget to collect in the hoses and any watering systems you may have used; clean them and store them in a dry place. It is even more important at this time of year to ensure the bird baths and feeders are kept clean and regularly topped up, as

the bird population is suffering from a disease which is found in dirty feeders and watering devices. To ensure any pots with plants do not become waterlogged in the winter, they should be raised off the floor on small feet or placed on a gravelled surface to assist free drainage. Although the snails and slugs may have had a hard time this summer, there seems to be no shortage of young. The beer in a saucer, or regular evening snail hunts, may be necessary to prevent a plague of them in the spring, as they are very clever at finding places to hide and overwinter. As the dahlias die back, they should cut them down to a couple of inches above ground level.

Remember, if you have a heavy clay soil you will need to lift the tubers and dry them out to keep them for next season – I am very lucky to have a light, sandy soil, but I may need to lift some of them to divide them before they start to grow new shoots in the spring. Although the display has been great this year, they are not very drought resistant.

I was surprised to find an article which listed 5 popular plants that are considered to be invasive in our gardens. This is particularly true of Bamboo. If kept in check, we can probably live with a small clump. I believe the same applies to Pampas grass. The other plants listed were Rhododendron Particim, Leyland Cypress, Robinia (false acacia) and Buddleia agree they all need to be kept under control by cutting back yearly. The Robinia has very invasive, spreading roots; Buddleja will spread its seed widely – I cut the dead flower heads back each year as it encourages fresh seedhead growth; Rhododendron and Leylandii are best kept in large gardens where they have room to flourish. I was surprised to learn that Sikkim has many varieties of Rhododendron, with the growth kept in check by the short, warm summers. A special time of year to prepare for the spring bulb displays. The more you plant, the better the variety of colour. A proper bulb-planting double trowel will make the task much easier and quicker, so what are you waiting for? Don't forget to plant your Hyacinth bulbs so they are ready for Christmas.

With that, I will say cheerio and wish you all a bountiful harvest. Don't forget to smile while you work. Happy Gardening to you All! **Peter Brightman 07896521941/01889803678**

COLTON WI



The September meeting was our Annual Mini Show when members entered preserves, baking, art and craft in friendly competition. Judged by Gaye Lawrence and Karen Wakefield, our external judges, points were awarded for each class and the overall winner of the trophy for most points was Sue.

There were plenty of entries for the photographic competition which had to be submitted the previous month to give our judge Robin time to make his choices and prepare a presentation for the evening. Categories were Bridges and Nature. Who knew bridges could be so varied and interesting and result in some very good photos, the winner of this class being Alison. The category Nature produced a wide range of topics from flowers in close up showing every intricate detail of their formation to animals and birds. Ruth won this class and the photographic trophy with an enchanting snapshot of a nest full of young swallows perfectly lined up for their photo opportunity. She also submitted a photo of a red squirrel that came second





During his presentation Robin gave us lots of helpful tips and commented that we had some very accomplished photographers and hoped they would keep it up. To roundoff we were treated to a selection of his own photographs.

Following refreshments, we had the presentation of the various trophies and the raffle was drawn with the meeting closing around 9.45.

Next month our speaker is Stefan Wild who promises to give a humorous talk entitled Trotting on Regardless. So, if any of you ladies would like to come, then please do. The date is Wednesday 14 October.

COLTON OVER 65'S

Colton Old People's Welfare Committee are hosting the annual Christmas Lunch for residents over 65 on Sunday December 6th this year.

If you are new to Colton Parish, or are over 65 and not on our list please let one of us know so we can send out invitations. (partners are invited too if resident in the parish)

Invitations will be sent out in November, and once we have responses we will know how many to cater for.

Manda 07976 975 960

Yvonne 01889 586 689 rypd.wilson@btinternet.com

Colton History Society August meeting Meeting.

People of Significance Who have Lived in Colton Through the Centuries. By Gill Sykes.

Back in Anglo Saxon times there were three manors in Colton owned by 3 different lords. We know this because the Domesday Book written for William 1st. after he conquered England, records them. The most important of these manors in Saxon times appears to have been the one located somewhere near where Colton church is located today and the Manorial hall was probably on the site of the present day Bellamour Lodge. Through research carried out a few years ago by Birmingham University for Colton History Society, we now believe that this manor was at one time owned by an important Saxon lord called **Almund**. Research has shown that he owned extensive lands throughout Mercia, the Saxon Kingdom in which Colton was located. It is possible that he gave Colton its name. A much prized possession for warfare in Saxon times was horses and Almund was probably breeding horses here because the pastureland was very suitable. A young horse is called a 'Colt' and 'ton' was the Anglo Saxon word for settlement. Hence the settlement where horses were bred. The other significant fact about Colton as recorded in Domesday is that there was a Priest, one of only a few villages in Mercia to have one recorded. Therefore Colton must have been a place of considerable significance under Almund.

After the conquest one of the other manors in Colton, Colton Hall manor, came into the ownership of the **Gressley family** and it is probably this family that started building the stone church we see today. We know it dates back to the late 12th. early 13th century and at that time the family were installing the first priests at the church.

In the 12th century the **De Wasteneay family** became owners of the Church manor and began to develop Colton into a village of significance. In 1240 they obtained a market charter for Colton 6 years before Rugeley got one. They also gained borough status for the village and established burgage plots. Burgage plots were long strips of land rented out to trades people for them to carry out their trades. So the De Wasteneay's were trying to turn Colton into a busy market town. The burgage plots were, we think, probably sited where the modern day Williscroft Place houses are because they are sited on long thin plots of land. Unfortunately for Colton Rugeley beat Colton to it and became the more successful market town.

We then move on to the 17th century when Colton Hall Manor was purchased by **Sir Walter Aston** who was also the lord of close by Tixall. By the time the Gressley's sold the hall to him it must have been a substantial place because local legend recorded it as having over 50 rooms. It would have been a timber framed manor house because we know at a later date it burnt down. Walter Aston was an important figure in the court of James 1 and was appointed Ambassador to Spain, an extremely important position to hold. For this service he was created Baron Forfar by the King. Unfortunately this position considerably impoverished him as he would have had to pay for the privilege of holding that post. Whilst he was serving as Ambassador to Spain he converted to the Catholic faith which he could not openly practice in England. This had implications for his family in the not too distant future. We know that he divided his time when he was in this country between his house in Tixall and Colton Hall because there are letters written by him still in existence whilst he was living in Colton. His lack of money meant that his second son Herbert did not inherit vast estates but was given a small parcel of land in Colton upon which he built a house in 1634 which he called Bellamour. Remnants of this hall still exist today visible as you come into the village on the Rugeley road.

Boughey Hall Farm now a cluster of barn conversions sited behind Colton school, was originally a farm owned by St Thomas's priory in Stafford. The land had been given to the priory by The De Wasteneys family in 1246. At the reformation it was given by Henry V111 to the Bishop of Lichfield and soon after it was bought by the **Boughey** family. In the mid 17th century it was inherited by **Constance Boughey** who at the time was married to Whitehall Degge, the son of an important and influential Staffordshire man Sir Simon Degge. Whitehall Degge died and left Constance a widow with a daughter and a son. Soon after her daughter also died. It is quite possible that Constance was a Catholic practicing her faith in secret because the practice of the Catholic faith in the open had been banned by the government. . After a while she remarried a Catholic, Thomas Whitgreave of Old Moseley Hall. He had won fame by helping save the future Charles11 by hiding him and helping him flee parliamentary forces after the Battle of Worcester in 1651. Sir Simon Degge did not approve of this marriage and took Constance to court to gain custody of her son to prevent her from bringing him up as a Catholic. She lost her case and never saw her son again.

Bellamour Hall in the latter part of the 17th. century was still owned by **Herbert Aston** who became involved in an infamous plot. In 1678 a man called Titus Oates began a rumor that there was going to be an attempt on King Charles 11's life by a group of Catholics similar to the gunpowder plot. As a protestant country people who held to the Catholic faith could not practice their faith openly and many Catholics wished to

return this country to Catholicism. The plot that Oates had invented soon gained credibility and a wave of anti Catholic hysteria broke out. By then Walter Aston's elder son owned Tixall and had a bailiff working for him called Stephen Dugdale. This man had been dismissed by Sir Walter for stealing and so he held a grudge against him. At a government hearing to find out who was plotting to kill the King, Dugdale gave evidence that implicated Lord Stafford, Sir Walter Aston and his brother Herbert Aston of Colton who were all Catholics. He claimed that the conspirators had met at Bellamour Hall in Colton. They were all arrested and sent to the Tower of London where soon after Lord Stafford was executed. Fortunately for Herbert and Walter the plot was revealed to be a hoax before they met the same fate and they were released.

The next person of significance who lived in Colton was **Thomas Berry Horsefall M.P.** He had been born to a wealthy shipping family in Liverpool and had become an M.P. for the city. As he needed to go to London regularly he bought the Manor of Bellamour so that he lived a bit nearer to London. By then another far grander hall had been built next to the smaller first hall. Soon after he bought Bellamour Hall the company developing the railway down to London requested that they bring the rail through Bellamour hall grounds. He agreed to this as long as they built a station and that is why we have a main line station in Colton parish so that Mr. Horsefall could get to London faster! He was a great benefactor to the village and paid to have the school and village hall both built on land given by him. As his family had prospered from their shipping business in Liverpool it raises the interesting question what in earlier times had been transported in their ships?

In the mid 1870's **Frederic Bonney**, a Rugeley man by birth came to live at Colton house. He had had a very interesting life before he came to live in the village. In the early 1850's his brother Edward had gone out to Australia and set up a huge sheep station in New South Wales. By the time Frederic went out to help him manage the station it was at 2 and a quarter million acres, the largest station in New South Wales. Soon after arriving there Frederic met a photographer who introduced him to photography. This is in the early developmental stages of photography and not many photographs had been taken. Frederic started taking pictures of the Aborigines who lived and worked on the station recording their customs both in photographs and in words. He also took photos of other settlers in the area. His photos now form a very important collection in Australia because they are the first known pictures of the aborigines and settlers in N.S.W. His brother eventually became ill and the station was sold. Frederic returned to England and came to settle in Colton where again he started to use his photographic skills. His legacy for the village therefore is a superb

collection of photographs of Colton village life and people taken in the last 30 years of the 19th century.

The last person of significance in my talk was **Nicholas Budgeon M.P.** who resided at Malt house farm in the late 1980's and early 90's and this has particular relevance for me. As an M.P. Mr Budgeon was quite outspoken about the political situation in Ireland at a point in time when the IRA were very active both in Ireland and in this country well before the Good Friday Agreement. One afternoon 3 soldiers were shot and killed by the IRA as they stood at Lichfield station. Then one night not long after Sir Peter Terry who lived in Stafford and who had been the Governor General of Gibraltar, was shot at through a window in his house by IRA gunmen who had approached through a field behind the house. Fortunately he was not killed. That night the police turned up in force in Colton concerned for the safety of Nicholas Budgeon and closed down the village. We lived in a bungalow overlooking his house and he regularly sat in the window of his upstairs office. The police came to our bungalow and pointed out to us that our house could be approached from the fields behind and our kitchen window could be used as a place the IRA could have a go at shooting Mr. Budgeon from. That night we realized that the IRA troubles could even affect us. Fortunately nothing did happen but for at least a year after a police car would come two or three times a night to check the farm and farm yard.

Gill Sykes



HARVEST CORN PLAITING IN COLTON

The ancient tradition of corn plaiting (similar to corn dolly construction) for decoration at Harvest in church started in Colton in 1859 and continued up until approximately 10 years ago.

In the early days, a meal and country dancing took place in a tent set up in the Barcroft (field over the brook bridge) and everyone from the Parish was

invited.

Pillars in the church were encircled with leaves and wheat and flowers adorned the windows. Local farmers would cut corn and it would then be dried out ready for the ladies to use.

They would gather in the Old Schoolroom which was originally by the New Rectory then moved to the Reading Room except during the War when the Reading Room was used for soldiers so it was moved to the school.



Latterly the Village Hall was the venue. Ladies (and gentlemen) cut the corn to 10 inch lengths and it was then plaited.

At Harvest time the church was full of local farmers and the Harvest hymns were heard loud and clear.

Sadly this tradition fell into decline because there are no farmers left in the Parish who can supply the wheat and barley.

The photos, taken by Rod Williams shows the beauty of the displays.



RUGELEY & DISTRICT LIONS CLUB



— PRESENT —

An Audience with **HENRY VIII**

PERFORMED BY **JACK ABBOT**

— WRITTEN BY JOHN WHITE —



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WHEN BOOKING PLEASE LET US KNOW
OF ANY DIETARY REQUIREMENTS





Friendship Club: August Report

Seventeen members gathered to hear Gill Sykes talk about 'The Crime of Being Poor.'

Gill started her talk by illustrating how the stigma of being of being poor (and of the threat of the workhouse) remained (even within our lifetime), in a very personal way. Her grandmother, Annie Priest, was admitted to hospital after becoming ill. It was found that she had a water infection and she had become disorientated and confused. Having asked where she was and being told 'in hospital' her immediate response was "oh no, I'm in the workhouse" and in a sense she was - the hospital that she was in had, in a former life been a workhouse.

Pre-reformation

Priorities and abbeys looked after the poor at this time because they were rich and the population was not as large as is now.

At The Hospital of St Cross, Winchester (one of the oldest surviving charitable Almshouses) the poor would receive 'dole' - a glass of milk and a piece of bread and the able bodied would be helped to find work. However, as the population grew, it became increasingly difficult to obtain work.

Reformation

When reformation came along, the poor struggled to obtain work, were unable to move to other parishes to look for work and therefore, became 'agitated'. As punishment for their mis-deeds, they may be put in the stocks and have things thrown at them or be chased out of the Parish where they lived... 'the crime of being poor' through no fault of their own.

The 1601 'Poor Relief Act' was set up by Elizabeth I

This Act made local parishes responsible for taxing residents to support the poor and vulnerable. There were three categories of Poor Relief:

1. Outdoor Relief - poor were left in their own homes and relieved in kind with money, clothes and food
2. Indoor Relief - taken into either Almshouses, hospital or orphanages
3. The 'idle poor' were taken into workhouses where they would be set to work.

Over the 15,000 Parishes, there was no uniformity and great differences in treatment of the poor emerged.

Speenhamland System

It was decided that this system would be used throughout the country, supplementing low wages based on the price of bread and the number of children in the family.

The **Poor Relief Act 1662** (known as the **Settlement and Removal Act**) came into being to determine the parish to which a person belonged and that parish would be responsible for him if he fell on hard times. All men were issued with 'settlement certificates'. If a man now left his home parish, he had to take his settlement certificate with him which guaranteed that his home parish would pay any costs. If you moved parish, you were escorted to the parish boundary by a policeman.



To gain settlement in a parish a person had to meet at least one of the following conditions:-

- Be born into the parish.
- Have lived in the parish for forty consecutive days without complaint.
- Be hired for over a year and a day that takes place within the parish – (this led to short lengths of hire so that settlement was not obtained).
- Hold an office in the parish.
- Rent a property worth £10 per year or pay the same in taxes.
- Have married into the parish.
- Gained poor relief in that parish previously.
- Have a seven-year apprenticeship with a settled resident.

In 1723, **Knatchbull's Act** or **Workhouse Test Act** dictated that a person who wanted to receive 'poor relief' had to enter a workhouse and undertake a set amount of work. In the workhouses, men, women and children were segregated. This act paved the way for over 2000 workhouses being opened around the country by 1776, all built to a specific pattern and looking like prisons.

1834 Poor Law Amendment Act better known as The New Poor Law overhauled the welfare system to stop the rising cost of poor relief by forcing able bodied paupers into harsh workhouses. The old Parochial system was wound up and parishes were amalgamated into unions with one workhouse governed by a board of governors called 'Guardians'. The Guardians would oversee entry into the workhouse and each workhouse was run by a 'Master' and his wife.

Responsibility for administration of the Poor Law passed to the [Local Government Board](#) in 1871, and the emphasis soon shifted from the workhouse as 'a receptacle for the helpless poor to its role in the care of the sick and helpless.

Workhouses were formally abolished on 1st April, 1930 under the Local Government Act, although they did not completely disappear until 1948, this being the same year that the NHS was founded. Many of the old workhouse institutions were used as hospitals, much to the chagrin of patients for many years to come.

The next three meetings are as follows:

21st Oct 2026: the speaker will be Emma Purshouse and her topic will be 'It's Honorary, Bab— Poet Laureate'

18th November 2026: Jess Boydon-Juckles talking about 'Women in Aviation'

9th December: Sherry & Mince Pies with festive fun!

We look forward to welcoming existing members and any prospective new members.

Karen Hill
01889 586 379

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

1.Public Participation – Parishioner attended to update regarding speeding and safety issues on B5013 and, in particular, at the junction with Jonghams Lane. He had received an invitation from Blithfield PC and would attend the meeting on 4th September arranged by county councillors to press for further action from Highways and Police to prevent speeding and gatherings near the reservoir and to improve safety on the road. He had spoken to Dave Robertson MP, during his recent Colton visit, who had said he believed B5013 to be the most dangerous road in his constituency. Parishioner had emailed to suggest that PC write to Coroner's Office asking the Coroner to consider raising a Prevention of Future Deaths report at the inquest. If both PCs and MP would write, with potential support from County Cllrs too and the Coroner agreed, this would put pressure on Highways to take some action. Garren Edwards commented that everyone involved in the previous meeting had been disappointed at the response of Highways and Police at the time and the lack of action since. PC agreed to write to the Coroner's Office to request the report.

2.Highways, Footpaths and Open Spaces

i) Flooding and highways maintenance – It was noted that after the recent heavy rain, there had been flooding at Rugeley Trent Valley railway bridge but the brook bridge, Hollow Lane and Bellamour Lane had been ok or had very short-lived floods. PC was pleased that its efforts, and those of SCC FAIR team, appeared to have prevented further flooding issues, which was positive.

ii) State of Stoneyford Lane and Newlands Lane – SCC had notified PC of road closures for highway repairs, though not on the section of Newlands Lane towards Stockwell Heath.

iii) Parking on High Street – Parking issues on the corner of Moor Croft and opposite the end of Moor Croft had been raised but hopefully resolved.

3.Correspondence

i) Road closure notices – Received for Newlands Lane from 14th-25th September, Stoneyford Lane for 5 – 9 October and Blithbury Road from Rugeley Trent Valley all the way to Hamstall Ridware on 26-30 October, all for highway repairs with signed diversions.

ii) Local Government Reorganisation – Details received of Government decision for Staffordshire, with Lichfield District to be incorporated in a new south and mid Staffordshire unitary authority along with Cannock, Stafford, South Staffs, Tamworth and East Staffs. A new north Staffordshire unitary will incorporate Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Moorlands. The new councils will take over services on 1st April 2028 following unitary council elections in May 2027.

4. Finance and audit - PCC letter requested £1,200 to cover PC's one third contribution to magazine costs for 2026. This was within PC budget and was approved.

5. Other Parish Council matters

i) Defibrillators – Noel Talbot confirmed he had taken over the regular maintenance checks and had updated the registration of the machines on The Circuit. **Clerk** to continue with application to SCC Community Fund for a contribution to the cost of an exterior cabinet, despite potential sale of Dun Cow. It was hoped it could be sold as a going concern and it is important that the machine is outside to be accessible.

ii) Recruitment of additional councillors – Richard Monbiot stated that, due to business and other pressures on his time, he would like to resign from PC. However, having joined to help ensure the PC had a quorum and could continue to function, he was prepared to wait until a replacement could be found. It was agreed that PC should advertise again to try to recruit additional councillors and approaches should be made to anyone who councillors thought might be suitable and willing.

Road closure order for Stoneyford Lane on 5 – 9 October for highway repairs, with diversion via B5014 Uttoxeter Road and Blithbury Road.

Road closure order for Blithbury Road from Rugeley Trent Valley all the way to Hamstall Ridware on 26 - 30 October for highway repairs, with signed diversion via Abbots Bromley or via Kings Bromley and Armitage.



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If you care about where you live and are passionate about your community, we need you.

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Contact any existing councillor for more details and/or email our Clerk; Alison James at colton.pc@hotmail.co.uk



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coltonparishnews@gmail.com, or drop off at Evergreens Hight st.

Benefice Bible Book Club 2026



Not a lecture, and not a Bible study, but an opportunity to read and then talk about part of the Bible each month. Read the allocated book or books and then come along and join the conversation.

Sunday 28 June

4.00 pm at Colwich Church Galatians

Sunday 26 July

4.00pm at Blithfield Church Joel

Sunday 27 September

4.00 pm at
Colton Church Room Philemon and
Titus

Sunday 25 October

at Church House,
Abbots Bromley Ecclesiastes,
chapters 1 – 6

Sunday 22 November

at St Stephen's, Gt
Haywood I Thessalonians

For more information, contact the Rev'd Mark Davys
revmdavys@gmail.com or 07483 298725

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:booking@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 Jon Wynn-Head Teacher Tel: 01889224506 Email:stmarysoffice@tssmat.staffs.sch.uk	Colton Community Choir Ruth Jones Email: ruth46jones@gmail.com
Colton Old People's Welfare Committee Mrs Amanda Pratt Tel: 07976975960 Email: mandapratt@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	Burial Ground Trustee Ms Alison James Tel: 07969266779 Email:colton.pc@hotmail.com
Colton History Society Mrs Gill Sykes Email: gillsykes@btinternat.com	Colton Friendship Club Mrs Karen Hill 01889 586 379



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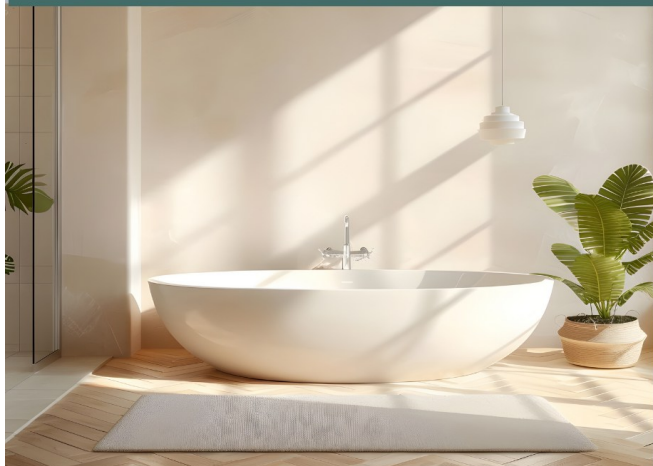
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