



ISSUE 9

MAY 2021

WELCOME ALL READERS

We hope you like the new name and masthead for this edition of our newsletter.

We have rebranded to reflect changes with Mike Redfern joining as co-editor, and the reality of our readership : the Colney Heath villages.

Our thanks and credit go to relatively recent newcomers to the village, Helen Vaux for coming up with the name and Nick Pettit for the graphic design.

FIND BACK ISSUES

If you are a new or recent reader Editions 1 to 8 can be found on the "Coal Post" tab on the Colney Heath Village Hall website
www.colneyheathvillagehall.com

The first issue was in Spring 2019. We issued 4 newsletters in 2019 and 2020. This year we are reducing to 3 issues, this allows our contributors a bit more time. And regular readers may have noticed our newsletter is growing in size, matching the growth in the distribution, so this gives the editors a bit more time too.

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The Coal Post Editors John Clemow and Mike Redfern, trustees of Colney Heath Village Hall

Contact jackclemow@gmail.com 07803 313 525 or michaelredfern2006@gmail.com

Please share this newsletter and print pages for folk who don't use the internet or have e-mail.

Contact us if you have a story, would like to promote an organisation, an event or a cause, or to advertise a local service or business (there is no charge for inclusion in this digital format) **or if you spot any errors or have comments**

New and old

Great to see newcomers to our community appreciating where we live and volunteering to help. Ollie writes about his experience and Helen and Nick on how they came to design The Coal Post masthead.

The reports from community institutions and organizations from page 34 illustrate the strength of the community and variety of interests.

The “John Dean Affair”

The front page of the Herts Advertiser April 22 shocked everyone

“Parish Clerk behind £250k cash scandal”. “Colney Heath Parish Council has revealed unauthorized payments of £254,767.09 between April 1 2004 and July 10 2015 following a probe by police and external auditors”...“this included £100,000 in petty cash which was never accounted for”

all termed by the Parish Council as “losses to the Parish Council”. As some of the money went to support local organizations and to run a nursery and pre-school, “losses” seems an odd way of describing the position. This affair raises many questions. Read more about this on page 21.

The “de-confinement”

Meanwhile, we are now in Step 3 of the Roadmap out of Lockdown, and supporting the pubs with a pint or two is in order. Many businesses have had a hard time so this month we feature a number of businesses that provide local products and services on pages 16 to 20.

The “roadmap” is based on a combination of the numbers vaccinated and cases in the community. Vaccinations are now being offered to people in their 30’s and the number of people who have had both jabs is growing. But 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 don’t have symptoms so getting tested is really important. The virus has not gone on holiday and vaccination does not provide 100% protection. More on this on page 5.

For young people

The relaxation of restrictions has seen an increase in the number of activities and services for children. Mike has been interviewing the people involved, read about this on pages 9 to 15. Apart from the Football Club there are no facilities or functions for people in the later teens and this gap should be filled somehow.

For everyone

The first step is being taken by 4ColneyHeath residents association and the Village Hall planning a community BBQ in the afternoon followed by a disco in the evening. [Look out for the announcement of the date on the village Facebook page.](#)

Promotion

The Colney Heath Football and Social Club confirms that the first team has been promoted to the Southern League Division 1 Central. Read about the club and Mike’s interview with their chair, Martin Marlborough on page 34. Martin is, we think, too modest about the role the club plays in the village.

Housing

A Planning Inquiry was held in March for 100 houses (including 40% “affordable”) proposed on the Smallford Works site, also on Green Belt land. [The Planning Inspector has been rejected the proposal.](#)

The proposal for 100 houses (up to 40% “affordable”) on the field between Bullens Green Lane, Fellowes Lane and Roestock Park (the so-called “Roundhouse Farm”) has been identified as a high concern for almost everyone who has responded to the opinion survey by 4ColneyHeath. The developer’s appeal was heard at a Planning Inquiry which ended on 6th May. See page 28 for the report on the Inquiry. Colney Heath waits with anxiety for the decision.

Parish Council Matters

There has been some unexpected interest in the Parish Council with an election in May for a casual vacancy in Colney Heath ward in 2020. Another casual vacancy has arisen in this ward. If contested the poll will be on 27th July 2021. This is the 5th casual vacancy in Colney Heath ward since the election May 2019 election. Read about this on page 26 and 27.

The Parish Council is applying for the Local Councils Foundation Award.

The Local Council award scheme is designed to celebrate the successes of the very best local councils and to provide a framework to support all councils to improve and develop to meet their full potential.

www.blackbirdbrands.co.uk

When we moved to Colney Heath in January 2020, there were two things we didn't know: one, that the first lockdown was on the way, and two, what a beautiful village we'd moved to.

If something positive came out of lockdown it was the chance to explore the local area. We soon realised how lucky we were to be able to access so much beautiful countryside on our doorstep. We've met many people in the 18 months - lovely neighbours (many of whom have lived in Colney Heath for years, some their whole life) and people who care passionately about the future of Colney Heath, whether it be potential housing developments or the gravel pits and the wonderful tree sparrows. Most of all, we found that people look out for each other and we're happy to have become part of that.

When we had the chance to redesign this newsletter, we jumped at it. Communication is all-important for not only pulling people together but also keeping them together. We combined the Colney Heath kingfisher with one of our local coal posts (freshly painted!) to give a new look and more colour to the newsletter.

Hopefully it shines in your inbox - a reminder that the future is bright and that we have a history and environment to be hugely proud of.

We're a small, but big thinking, creative design studio based in Colney Heath.

Whether it's launching a new brand or website or refreshing an existing brand, we help people translate their ideas into visually exciting design.

We love working with local businesses so please do get in touch if we can help.

Nick Pettit and Helen Vaux



Ollie writes

Sadie (my fiancée) and I have recently moved from Hertford to Colney Heath as we planned to be slightly closer to our parents and Colney Heath appeared to be an inviting, friendly village from an outsider's view.

First impressions are positive, with neighbours either side introducing themselves on day 1 and quickly making us feel welcome. It's great to have the local convenience store a few minutes walk away whilst being so close to major towns either side of us.

We're looking forward to trying out the local takeaway and supporting the one pub in the village! Also looking forward to some new walks and exploring the local area having ventured around Hertford a lot during the 3 lockdowns!

We are very supportive of the local community's view to not build on Roundhouse Farm as we don't believe the infrastructure is there to accommodate another 100 dwellings.

We're certainly interested in taking part in any local events and look forward to finding out what the village has to offer.

Editor's note

Like Helen and Nick, Ollie and Sadie have joined 4ColneyHeath Residents Association and are keen to volunteer for an issue interests them.

In case evidence were required on what makes Colney Heath special, look at these photos all © Marko



Rural Support Networks are village voluntary support groups, mostly established in response to Coronavirus, in 175 villages and hamlets across Hertfordshire helping over 2000 people.

The Colney Heath Community Support Group was very active in the early stages of the pandemic. Family, neighbours and friends quickly rallied together to provide support. Our role now is re-defined to mainly providing information continuing, where we can, to “connect people in need with people who can help”.

CDA Herts provides updates to Covid-19 Information Champions, and these updates are available on our website.

- Covid-19 has not gone away on holiday.
- get both jabs - please
- get tested, you may not know you have it
- the pubs, restaurants etc are open, but be cautious
- get “true facts” not fake news
- help is available

The number of coronavirus cases in Hertfordshire is falling but now is not the time to get complacent. In some areas, including nearby Bedfordshire, cases of a new variant of COVID-19 are present in communities.

Those aged 34 or over are now eligible to be vaccinated. Everyone who is newly-eligible will either be contacted by their GP practice or can choose to ring 119 or go online through the [National Booking Service](#). The National Booking Service offers an alternative to the AstraZeneca vaccine, enabling pregnant women who are eligible because of their age or priority group to have the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine.

For those in the top 9 priority groups (aged 50+, residents in care homes for older adults, frontline health and care workers, the extremely clinically vulnerable, and with an underlying health condition) the recommended interval between first and second doses has been reduced from 12 weeks to 8 weeks. People aged under 50 will continue to get their second dose 12 weeks after their first dose.

As of 17 May, indoor hospitality can reopen, and indoor entertainment can resume. Up to 6 people or 2 households can meet indoors and up to 30 people outdoors. All holiday accommodation can open, including hotels and B&Bs, this can be used by groups of up to 6 or 2 households.

1 in 3 people with Covid don't display any symptoms. Rapid testing sites are offering 'lateral flow tests' across Hertfordshire. Now there's no need to book – just walk in, or order rapid Covid testing kits to use at home, or collect them from a local site or a pharmacy. Twice weekly rapid testing helps find cases and prevent the spread of infection.

False information is often being shared online which can lead to some serious consequences. The government have created a [SHARE checklist](#).

You can find more information about the vaccination programme, [Click Here](#)

Videos have been created by some of Hertfordshire's Covid Information Champions in different languages about the coronavirus vaccine [Click Here](#)

If you or your family need financial or practical help and advice with the cost of food or fuel, please get in touch with HertsHelp

Visit www.hertshelp.net email info@hertshelp.net or call **0300 123 4044**

With 4ColneyHeath residents association we are trying to establish which households in the village do not have good access to the internet so that we can provide hardcopy information.

If you know people who would be helped with hardcopy please help them get in touch with us.

The Community Support website is <https://communitysupportgroup.weebly.com>

where you will find the contact for information or [if you would like to volunteer](#).

While the risk of hospitalization and death from Covid-19 decreases very significantly down the age groups, “long covid” has emerged as a debilitating side-effect of the viral infection.

Thanks to Jeff Lewis for providing the following information.

In April a new Long-Covid exercise hub was opened at Herts Sports Village to help those suffering with the long-term effects of COVID-19.

The Long-Covid exercise hub will provide one-to-one support, both in person and virtually. Clients will be offered fitness and better eating habits advice to help aid their recovery from the virus.

Our specially trained clinic team will assess the client’s health and fitness at an initial appointment to understand how fit they were before they had COVID-19 and what their fitness and health goals are. We will then create a plan of action to help sufferers progress and achieve these goals. Goals can range from being able to walk short distances, to being able to participate in strenuous exercise activities again.

Most people with COVID-19 will recover after a few days or weeks. But according to the [Office for National Statistics](#), one in five people who have tested positive for COVID-19 will continue to experience symptoms after five weeks. This is often referred to as post-COVID-19 syndrome or ‘long COVID’, and it can be debilitating for those suffering with it.

The [symptoms of ‘long COVID’](#) can vary greatly from person to person and can last for five months or more.

The symptoms include:

- fatigue
- shortness of breath
- chest pain or tightness
- problems with memory and concentration
- difficulty sleeping

Exercise is a [key part of the rehabilitation process for those suffering with ‘long COVID’](#). It can help the sufferer return to full function and it can help prevent long term disability.

“Although the number of COVID-19 cases has decreased over the past few months, ‘long COVID’ is still affecting thousands in Hertfordshire and the surrounding areas. For some people, ‘long COVID’ can make it difficult to walk short distances and do other forms of light exercise – activities they could do before they became ill. Not only does this affect a person’s health and fitness, it can also have a big impact on their mental health and wellbeing. And it’s clear that there is still an urgent need for more support for people with ‘long COVID’. We hope the launch of this exercise hub will help many recover from the long-term effects of the disease and return to their normal way of life.”

Stephen Leslie, Fitness Manager at Herts Sports Village

Exercise Hub at Herts Sports Village

- Available to both Herts Sports Village members and non-members
- Non-member clients will receive a free Herts Sports Village membership - usually £40
- All appointments will be made with a coach and are FREE of charge
- Other visits to Herts Sports Village will be offered at a discounted rate - £5.50 off-peak/£7.50 peak

Are you suffering with Long-Covid symptoms? Book your appointment with our clinic by calling 01707 284466 or email our specially trained team [HERE](#).



www.stmarkscolneyheath.co.uk
Tel: 01727 825175. Email:
office@stmarkscolneyheath.co.

Sunday Services

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30 Morning Worship - live streamed

Our Children and Young Peoples' groups meet at the
same time as the 10.30am service in the
Church Centre.

We are delighted that we can begin to re-open some activities and events at the Church. From the 9th June we see the return of Smartees, and the evening service, Equip, has now restarted with a series on wellbeing. Men's Breakfast too returns, look on our website for future dates.

If you are interested in finding out more about life and faith please contact us.

In a time of transition many can feel angst and discomfort and when we feel this way, I am reminded that we can trust in God to work all things together for good.

Jeremiah says, *"I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord. "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek with all your heart."*
Jeremiah 29 v:11-13

I pray that as some normality returns to life, you will know your value and the part you play in contributing to a better world. I pray also that you will live in the hope that God has good plans for you and a future. Let us keep being kind, doing good and find peace in that God listens to us when we seek him.



Revd Caroline Keightley
Vicar, St Mark's Church



Equip - meets on 1st Sunday of the month at 7pm

Everyone welcome! We are delighted to announce that Kate Peacock will be talking to us on **6th June** on the theme of emotional wellbeing.



SMART EES



Baby and Toddler Group

Re-opens on **Wednesday 9th June!**

10am to 11.30am (term time only)

Suggested donation £1 per family Covid guidelines in place

CONNECT 20

A social group designed to be fellowship and community for people in their 20's from the local area and beyond. Email the church office for more information.

Digital and Online

You can view all our Digital Services through St. Mark's YouTube channel or visit our website www.stmarkscolneyheath.co.uk

The Clergy are available for baptisms, wedding and funerals.

Please contact the office for more information

Office: **01727 825175**

email: office@stmarkscolneyheath.co.uk

SPORT FOR KIDS

S4K Football – the best football coaching experience for your child!

Sport4Kids, particularly football comes to Colney Heath on 20th June and every Sunday from then on in Colney Heath Village Hall



There will be coaching for 2 age groups:

- Tots - 18 months to 3 years.
S4K Toddlers is for babies and younger children beginning their active sporting lives
- Kickers – for 3 to 4.5 year olds

S4K Kickers is the second stage of development where we build on the skills that have been learned at [toddler football](#) age and evolve these into more complex football skills. The ball is tailored to their size and children are encouraged to participate in structured games and imaginative play, adding yet another dimension to their already flourishing footwork.

There are introductory offers – 50% off for the first full month and a free taster lesson.

To register and to claim your discount and free lesson, and for much more information go to WWW.sport4kids/football-venues and select Colney Heath from your postcode.





INTERVIEW WITH KATIE SAZANOVA

Music lessons

- ◇ Flute
- ◇ Saxophone
- ◇ Recorder

To contact Katie

Call 07773 707750 or
email katie_sazanova@yahoo.co.uk

Mike met up with Katie before her lessons one Tuesday. She told him about her background and her classes.

“I was born in Birmingham to Russian parents who emigrated to England in 1992. My family is very musical, although my father is a scientist. My grandfather is 80 and still teaches the trumpet at Moscow Conservatoire and my grandmother was a violinist.”

Katie has been involved in music her whole life. Her musical journey includes 10 years attending the Guildhall school of Music & Drama and she was an undergraduate in the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

She did a Masters Degree at Trinity Conservatoire in Greenwich while she was starting to teach. She’s also played with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in concerts broadcast by the BBC.

She did have a break from more formal music when she joined Giffords Circus to play the flute in their band.

Katie has been teaching kids and adults on a one-to-one basis for more than 7 years.

She teaches at the Greenwich Music School and Alban City Primary School as well as in our Village Hall in Colney Heath.

She enjoys performing for Special Schools and Care Homes with the company Live Music Now and has recently joined the Nicola Benedetti Foundation as one of their Ambassadors, where she will lead workshops for budding young musicians from all over the world.

“I am passionate about providing fun and inspiring music lessons for children and adults of all ages. Lessons are tailored to student’s needs, whether they would like to learn for fun, competitions or ABRSM music exams. All my students have access to an affordable instrument hire scheme, as well as the opportunity to work with accompanist Karen Dore for upcoming performances.”

If you or your kids have an interest in music lessons and would like to learn more about what Katie has to offer, please get in touch with her.



TREASURE TOTS PRE-SCHOOL

The most recent Ofsted inspection rated the Pre-School as good in:

- Effectiveness of leadership and management
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare Outcomes for children.

Treasure Tots Pre-School is for children aged 3 months to 5 years. They have government funded places for 3 & 4 year olds, as well as eligible 2 year olds.

Run by Sophie Yates and Deborah McHale, Treasure Tots is a local family pre-school, working in partnership with Colney Heath School to prepare children for their entrance into the school environment. Sophie and Deborah have good relationships with staff at local schools. The pre-school provides extended care for children who attend school nurseries. This enables them to gain maximum benefit from their entitlement of funded early education. Staff readily share information on children's learning with teachers and discuss any concerns they have. Parents speak highly of the staff. They say their children feel safe and secure and receive good education that prepares them well for starting school.

The Treasure Tots staff provide opportunities for children to complete their activities without interruption. For example, when children show they want to continue painting instead of joining a group activity, staff support them to do this. This helps children to engage in effective learning.

Sophie says: "Our aim is to provide children with a safe, secure, happy, healthy and caring environment. We provide a child centred approach to encourage the children to develop their creativity, individuality and self-confidence within a secure surrounding. Our children's learning and development is guided and supported by highly trained, qualified and experienced practitioners, who have been carefully selected for their ability to care for, and nurture each individual child".

Treasure Tots is based in Colney Heath Village Hall, where they have access to the garden as well as the large indoor hall. They have 2 sessions daily from Tuesday to Friday, from 9.15am to 12.15pm and then from 12.00 noon until 3.00pm, providing a lively fun start to children's education.

Prospective parents are encouraged to visit Sophie and Deborah.

Make an appointment by calling Sophie on 07594 489465.





Mike met with Kourtne Perry recently. She has classes every Monday in the village hall. Here's what she said.

Bebes Tranquillos - Bringing parents and their children closer together to create a more relaxed family life. We are here to support families on their biggest journey in life, Parenthood. It's the most natural thing in the world and yet the most challenging job you will ever have. But it's all worth it!!

Kourtne's sessions include:

Baby Massage (0-1)

By now most of us have heard of baby massage and specifically its benefits so I will just say this. "It's a great way to connect with other parents with similar age babies, a good time to have a coffee and a wind down and an even better activity to bond over with your precious little bundle. Oh yeah and did I mention it promotes better sleep!!

Educational Sensory Sessions (0-5)

Off the back of 2020 and parents having to spend so much time with their children. A common question asked was any more ideas on play? My child seems bored all the time?

We are here to help show you ideas to keep the kiddies entertained but without having to go WILD, get OVEREXCITED and end up being told off with both children and parents in tears at some point or another!!

More than anything this is a safe place to learn and play alongside your little ones. This does mean however, that we are not a usual stay and play and the Children need to be supervised by their parent/carer at all times. We are also geared toward additional needs so EVERYONE IS WELCOME.

We will be keeping all stations spaced out and low key so that it doesn't get overwhelming and we have taken a lot of time and effort in choosing the right toys and equipment to ensure children do not get too heightened and over stimulated. So no loud noises such as musical instruments.

BEBES TRANQUILOS

You can contact Kourtne Perry via her website www.bebestranquillos.com or e-mail kp@bebestranquillos.com

Sleep Support (0-10)

Using a Sleep Consultant is understandably often regarded with caution and suspicion and on top of that you have hear that they are extremely pricey. Put simply, it's about EMPOWERING parents/carers to understand and optimise sleep in a GENTLE & NURTURING manner and the bonus is I offer a cost effective plan from just £65 which is the most popular with fantastic results.

We all need sleep, amazing things are happening to all of us when we do. Think of it as a total re-set for your body and mind. It's no coincidence that doctors tell us to get some sleep. But let's now think about how much sleep impacts your baby. I couldn't begin to document all the incredible things the body is doing whilst sleeping but to name a few it improves attention, behaviour, learning, memory, and overall mental and physical health. This is why it's important to ensure that your WHOLE FAMILY are getting the sleep you all need and deserve. Let's not forget parenting is an exhausting job after all.

LET'S START WITH A 20 MINUTE FREE CONSULTATION, IT MIGHT BE ALL YOU NEED!!

Behaviour Support (0-10)

Behaviour support plans are a plan of action, full of strategies and ideas to implement for Behaviour in your little ones, birth to 10 years.

It is a great way of addressing a pain point at home such as major meltdowns or even separation anxiety. Without committing to long term webinars, courses or an abundance of reading material that you just DON'T have the TIME or ENERGY to read. The bottom line with children is, they just want to play, ALL THE TIME

So the question is "How do I keep things fun and playful but without letting them get away with everything?"

This is where I can help.



INTERVIEW WITH AIMEE MAD SCIENCE

Mad Science is a not for profit organisation whose local representative, Aimee tells Mike that “Mad Science of Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire is a leading science enrichment provider.

We deliver unique, hands-on science experiences for children through after-school programs, birthday parties, workshops, special events, and summer camps. Our innovative programs are as entertaining as they are educational!”

Mad Science has been in existence for more than 30 years, inspiring kids in over 20 Countries. Aimee continues “we are on a mission to inspire the next generation of great British scientists. She believes that “awareness of science is essential in everyday life”.

Beginning on 27th July at the start of the school holidays, the Mad Science course runs in Colney Heath Village Hall from 9.30am to 4.00pm on Tuesday to Friday every week for 4 weeks. It is geared towards kids aged 4 to 11. They will operate a strict Covid policy and the courses will be conducted by trained scientists and are incident free. As well as local kids from Colney Heath, the course will attract kids from St Albans, Harpenden and Wheathampstead.

The courses are designed to engage, build confidence, encourage creativity and encourage new friendships. Kids will build, discover, learn and play with gooey potions, messages written in secret code, robots, rockets, catapults & more. Examples of the topics covered are Dinosaur excavations, Shipwreck and the science needed to get back to civilisation, Creepy Creatures, Digital Discoveries and the Science of Magic.

A typical day starts with registration and some games to get the kids excited, then an experiment block of 45 minutes, a 20minute break and a second experiment block. A break for an hour for lunch is followed by 2 more experiment blocks before packing up for the day and summarising the day’s activities.



The 5 weeks of courses are:

27-30 July
Adventurers Week
3-6 August
Explorers Week
10-13
Adventurers Week
17 – 20 August
Investigators Week
24 -27 August
Explorers Week

The full cost of the 4 day course is £170.00 and there are various discounts available: £20 off for anyone booking by 30th June, a 10% sibling discount and group discounts are also available. Bookings can be made online at the Mad Science website – www.hertsbeds.madscience.org – where additional information is available. You can also contact Aimee on 01727824700 or by email aimee@madsciencehb.co.uk



Colney Heath FC has a vibrant youth section overseen by Youth Chairman Gavin Child and run by a strong committee.

There are currently 6 teams and there are plans to add another for the 2021/2022 season. The club is affiliated to the local Hertfordshire leagues. As many as 17 coaches are involved in developing the skills of the youngsters and there is a succession through to the under 18s and eventually to the senior set up.

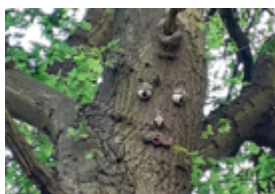
The boys come from far and wide: as well as Colney Heath, there are team members from St Albans, Watford, Borehamwood and even London.

The boys ages range from 10 to 17 and new recruits are always welcome.

They are also looking to start a team for girls, so if you're interested, please get in touch with Gavin.

For more information check out the club's Twitter and Facebook accounts as well as the official website, www.colneyheathfc.co.uk or contact the club directly.





BEAVERS

Unfortunately last year due to the coronavirus we were unable to meet, and although we had made plans to meet outside in January, this again had to be put on hold. However we decided to meet on Zoom.

During these meetings we made pouches to collect used stamps in, bird feeders out of pine cones and joined in the British bird count weekend in January. We also made Chinese lanterns for Chinese New Year. The Beavers also enjoyed many zoom games. After half term we were joined by some new children, although not all wanted to join the Zoom Meetings.

In February Sara from Kidslingo gave us a French lesson on zoom, we then made chocolate crispy cakes and nests for Easter. The highlight of the term was making wooden men. We took the homemade kits round to all the children and then talked them through how to assemble the pieces to make the woodman. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed this meeting.

After Easter we were able to meet outside face to face. We met in Roestock Park, where we played games, learning to skip etc. We then went for a walk to see how many wild flowers they could identify. More children joined us and 18 Beavers did their Cycle Badge over two weeks. We also had a mini beast hunt on the Heath, and this week we invested eight Beavers at Nast Hyde Halt after waking from Smallford Station looking out for all the things Nast Hyde Mike has put in the trees. We will have more children joining us after the half term break when we will be cooking dampers and other things.

We have two new parent helpers and many supportive parents who help out when we go for our activities outside Roestock Park. We give a big thank you to all of those.

Patricia, Sally and Daniel
Colney Heath Beaver Leaders

CUBS

Colney Heath Cubs have been running alongside London Colney Cubs for most of the last year and we have been using Zoom sessions for our Cubs meetings. Some of the activities we have been doing include, Mug cakes, cooking a cake in a mug, making tin can lanterns, grass heads and Santa pegs. This year we started the spring term with making some bird feeders and also sent the Cubs out to find some wild life. We made some shortbread and for the Chinese New Year we made a dragon and coloured it in. Cubs made some pancakes and at the end of the spring term went on an Easter egg hunt. At long last after the spring holidays we could go back to face-to-face scouting and the Cubs started the summer term doing some fire lighting and then onto the Cub Olympics and we have just completed a chippy hike.

SCOUTS

Like the Cubs the Colney Heath Scouts have been running alongside London Colney Scouts and we started the autumn term with a Zoom session before we were allowed to go back to outside face-to-face scouting for a brief period, we did a night hike, scout skills and a wide game. We then had to revert back to Zoom sessions and some of the activities included, Among Us, GeoGuessr and a race night. We then did a Code Breaking Murder Mystery session, some cooking and a scavenger hunt. In the spring term it was, escape room, The Unbelievable Truth, quiz night and a virtual camp. We made some pizzas and played Virtual Monopoly. After the spring holidays we could go back to face-to-face scouting and for the summer term we did another night hike, some scout skills and a wide game. Back to basics pitching some tents and fire lighting.

Many thanks to the London Colney Scout Group for all their support with the Cubs and Scouts.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL BUSINESS



We are emerging from what has been, for businesses, a really difficult period. Many have been forced to close or operate under severe restrictions. The businesses which serve our local requirements need your support more than ever, and hope that this will encourage everyone to give them as much support as possible.

It is appropriate that we start this section of The Coal Post with our local coal merchants, Day Brothers. And they do much more than coal!



Day Brothers was originally formed in 1933 by Les and Ron Day. In the late 60's, Barry and Colin (Les' sons) joined and Barry continues to run the business together with his wife Sandra, son Ross and daughter Becky, and their respective spouses Kate and Dave, along with Richard who has worked for them for over 40 years! It is a small family-friendly reliable business providing a traditional personal delivery service into your home. For smaller quantities, a cash and carry service is available on all products from their depot in Bullens Green Lane.

DAY BROTHERS

www.daybros.co.uk

01727 822 710

sales@daybros.co.uk

Products include (of course) many types of coal and fuels, seasoned logs and kindling, and fire lighters. BBQ charcoal will be in demand now as will wood chippings and soil conditioners. You may not expect to find they even sell water softener salt, dog food and can deliver sand and gravel.

Haulage is very much part of the business so if you have a large or heavy item that needs to be transported have a chat with one of them and see if they can help

COLNEY HEATH SHOP AND POST OFFICE

Manesh and Jayshee have heroically kept the shop open right through the pandemic and deserve the thanks of everyone in the village for their efforts. They are now back to their normal opening times, so please give them all your support. We really do need the shop and PO to thrive.



THE RICE, HIGH STREET

The Rice, situated right next to the Post Office and Village Shop serves an extensive menu of delicious Indian takeaway food. They are open 7 days a week from 5.30 until 10.30pm. There's a discount available for orders placed directly either by phone 01727 821171, via their website www.therice-direct.co.uk, or download the app.

MEJULIES

www.mejulies.co.uk.

Facebook : mejulies home cooked thai food



Over the past several months MeJulies has had the privilege of being able to prepare traditionally cooked Thai meals for local residents and many others from further afield. They have built up a great reputation for authenticity and quality in the food they prepare. In memory of James' late mum who passed right at the start of the pandemic, he began this amazing food adventure while his current employment was badly hit by the lockdown.

Having made some kitchen adjustments they are now back up and running with some new and exciting plans to come. MeJulies has been lucky enough to cook at the Crooked Billet for which they will be returning to very soon on a monthly basis. They have supported local causes and raised over £1300 which have been donated to Colney Heath PTA, Guides & Brownies and the repairs needed for the Scout Hut roof fund.

They have had several POP UP Spring Roll bars for what we hear to be "THE BEST SPRING ROLLS WE HAVE EVER TASTED" and recently they have supported the football club by cooking for their recent BINGO NIGHT.

A few weeks ago James held a live cooking demo and had great fun showing locals and people from as far as Birmingham how to prepare and cook one of their new dishes which is on the menu this week, Thai Crispy Sweet Chili Chicken in Lime & Coriander sauce.

James says: "My aim is to be able to share all the things my mum taught me so people can enjoy the amazing flavours Thai Food has to offer. Thai Food does not always have to be 'TOO SPICY'. There is a delicate balance to make sure you get to taste the authentic flavours at the level which will never spoil your experience."

In light of this and to allow everyone the ability to ensure authentic flavours, MeJulies will soon be launching 500ml jars of **Green Curry Sauce, Red Curry Sauce & Massaman Sauce** made using the same ingredients they use for their meals so you are guaranteed the flavours as they should be tasted. The great thing about this is you simply add the other produce and any spices to the heat level you enjoy. More information will be made available very soon via their Facebook page and website – www.mejulies.co.uk. Simply find us on Facebook by searching for mejulies.

COLNEY CUTS IN THE HIGH STREET

Anita at Colney Cuts Unisex salon is now open for business again. Anita has been in business for many years and is a talented and very professional hairdresser. You can book appointments by phoning the salon on 01727 826600. There is parking outside, so no walking is necessary.

If you are bored at home and you looking for a new vocation after lockdown Anita is looking for a volunteer. She would love to hear from you. Training will be given for all salon duties, so don't be shy! The position will be unpaid (at first). For anyone that is familiar with Colney Cuts it's a very sociable. Anita has told us how much she "loves and enjoys" the village.

If you feel you are Team player and you are looking for an interesting and sociable challenge, please call on 01727-826600.



THE CROOKED BILLET

The last remaining pub in our village re-opened on 17th May with a great selection of beers and lagers, wines and spirits and soft drinks.



The Billet has been recognised many times by Camra for its consistently excellent cask beers – here are a couple of examples.



A wide selection of home-made food is available at lunchtimes from Wednesday to Sunday and they are continuing with the takeaway service which was so popular during lockdown.

Chef Caroline has devised an interesting menu – real home-made pub food including a pie of the day, lasagne (meat and vegetarian), bangers and mash with onion gravy, gammon egg and chips, soups, scampi & chips, jacket potatoes with various toppings, filled baguettes, and a variety of kids' meals....and the legendary Sunday roasts.



And Caroline is planning themed food evenings featuring pub classics such as Fish and Chips, Pie and Mash and Lasagna. Look out for announcements on facebook, on the Crooked Billet website and on the boards outside the pub.

The garden is a lovely space to relax in the summer sunshine and let the kids play on the climbing equipment and slides. Dogs are very welcome so long as they are well behaved.

**THE TEAM AT THE BILLET IS DETERMINED TO MAKE THIS SUMMER
“THE BEST SUMMER WE’VE EVER HAD!”**

www.shop.nickypackman.com

nicky@nickypackman.com

07973 102313



NICKY PACKMAN FOREVER LIVING

Nicky Packman became an Independent Distributor of Forever Living Products (the Aloe Vera Company) back in 2009. She's passionate about helping her customers with the products and fits the role in part-time around her family commitments.

During the pandemic the products have continued to be in demand, in particular the nutritional supplements and Aloe Vera drinking gels which contain over 75 nutrients to help support immunity, digestion, skin, hair, nails and mobility. Existing and new customers have been grateful for the gentle Aloe based soaps and creams she can provide to help combat the effects of over-washed hands and irritated skin caused by mask-wearing.

In addition, she's been working hard over the last few months to help several new distributors get started and trained up so that they too can promote the products and build their own business with Forever. She's always happy to chat to anyone seeking another way of bringing some income into the home alongside what they are already doing. Give her a shout if that sounds like you or someone you know!



MAMACYNTHS YARD FOOD – HOME FROM HOME

Sonia McDonnell continues to offer Mama Cynth's Yard Food providing the tastiest Jamaican food in St Albans and the surrounding areas. The menu is large and varied and suits all tastes. She thanks everyone for their support during the pandemic. You won't be disappointed!



If you want to enjoy a mellow environment while getting a taste of Jamaican food, you can call Sonia on +44 800 970 8676, or visit her on Facebook @mamacynths or Instagram @mamacynthsyf where you will see the many complimentary posts from satisfied customers.

J DAY STONEWORKS, CHURCH LANE, COLNEY HEATH

J Day Stoneworks is a family run company trading since 1964 with nearly 60 years of expert knowledge.

We specialise in the supply of fireplaces and stoves for home and garden, granite and marble worktops, bespoke masonry and natural stone products.

J DAY STONEWORKS



We are delighted to be open. Visit us 9am - 5pm Monday to Saturday or call us to book an appointment.

We are operating a safe Covid environment and request our customers wear face coverings unless exempt.

Like both our pages on:



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AND bring this advert

FOR 10% Village discount



Choosing a stove or a fireplace is an important decision, see it in person, if possible, and check with your installer that it is suitable for your home before making a purchase.

There are many types and brands of stove to choose from and many considerations with respect to design, size and features. We are here to help every step of the way.



Visit our website jdaystoneworks.com Call us on 01727 823326

Email us jdaystoneworks@btinternet.com

Church Lane, Colney Heath, AL4 0NH

Boundary Review Confusion

The Parish Council newsletter Edition 2 dated February 2021 reported on the Local Government Boundary Commission Electoral Review as follows :

"From May 2022 the 9 Parish Councillors will be in the following Wards :

Colney Heath Ward - 3 (includes Smallford & Sleapshyde);

Tyttenhanger - 1;

Highfield - 3 (the two former hospital sites to an eastern boundary of Hixberry Lane) ;

Alban Park - 2 (north of the Alban Way)".

We queried this with Jo Bateman, Electoral Services Manager, St Albans City & District Council and she responded as follows :

"The changes to the parish wards do not come into effect until the elections in May 2023. The current parish ward boundaries will also apply at any by-election before May 2023."

Elections and Musical Chairs

The Parish has 3 wards, Highfield (4 seats), Hill End (1 seat) and Colney Heath (4 seats). Since the 2019 election there have been 6 resignations in two years. Is this a high turnover for a Parish Council?

The resignation of Councillor Jones in 2020 (previously co-opted to fill a seat in Colney Heath ward resulting from earlier resignations by Councillors Blunt, Hathaway and Ouzman in 2019) resulted in an election being called. The election, delayed due to the pandemic restrictions, was held in May this year. It was contested by Graeme Shaw (433 votes) and Salih Gaygusuz, a former Mayor of St Albans (251 votes). The turnout was 37%.

Councillor Chris Brazier resigned from his seat in Highfield ward in March. Councillor Mulroney resigned from her seat in Colney Heath ward and was then co-opted to fill Brazier's seat in Highfield.

This now leaves another vacancy in Colney Heath ward. A call for an election to be held has been submitted to the District Council. Jane Llewellyn intends to stand.



Parish Council new Logo

At the Council meeting on 22 April 2021 proposals for a new logo were discussed. The design aims, it seems, to be more inclusive by including the names of the Parish areas and replacing the kingfisher (which is the Colney Heath bird) with a tree. This is the selected design to be further developed.

To be legible it will need to take up quite a bit of the page header. Anyone heard of "Alban Way South"?

Rebranding is a bit like renaming so an academic's thoughts (edited) on this subject may be of interest.

Toponyms (which include street names) are embedded within broader structures of power, authority, and ideology. They express a particular set of values so consequently are instrumental in substantiating the ruling socio-political order. Naming (and re-naming) is one of the most familiar acts accompanying revolutionary political change. New names attributed to streets and landmarks introduce a new political agenda.

Sale of Community owned land

The Parish Council is proceeding to get a valuation of the land, Horseshoe Field in Smallford, and Gloucester Park, Hill End Lane. Once valued the evaluation criteria for bids received and future bids would be agreed.

The Council confirmed that there would be a Parish wide consultation on the options for both sites.

The Scouts met with the Parish Council on 13 May for lease negotiations on the Scout hut. During the meeting the Parish Council read out the following letter dated 12 May, signed by 13 residents, that the Parish Council had received.

“We are writing of a group of village residents who have been involved in both groups for over 30 years before your meeting tomorrow

We want to let you know how we feel because using social media will just produce trolling of the usual vile comments. We know that some of our wider group have suffered personal abuse of an unacceptable kind, particularly those more closely involved with the Guides and the parish Council

You should be aware that the Scouts are family run group, [the family and leader of the group] treat the group as their own and are control freaks. They control the money as it seems to be an income stream for [the leader] who controls everything. Any changes suggested by parents over the years have been ignored. When raised face to face she is manipulative of her family and rude, bullying, and aggressive to others.

The family stick together, including being paid to do jobs (without quotes) and she is paid to clean the hall. No one knows where the money goes for other users. They have involved [a mediator] who holidays with the [family] as a supposedly independent person.

Also, the postings of the [Scout District Commissioner] are surprising for someone who represents the area. Is she being bullied by the [family, mediator group?] The video sums up their maturity.

We stuck with it for our children who attended with their friends and we don't envy anyone that has to deal with this toxic group of individuals in the future.

We are happy for you to mention this to the Scouts without our identities being disclosed for our personal safety and welfare

Names and addresses supplied 13 people”

Apparently all the Councillors agreed that this “poison pen” letter should be read out at the lease negotiation meeting with the Scouts.

The allegations could not have been checked in one day.

This kind of conduct is unlikely to help in “bringing the current situation to an amicable and acceptable agreement”.

The letter was published as a Freedom of Information response on the Parish Council's website with the named personalities in brackets.

For those readers who are not familiar with the Scout Group personalities

“[the family]” is the Halls and Goughs

“[the leader]” is Patricia Hall

“[a mediator]” is David Barker

“[Scout District Commissioner]” is Annette Payne

THE SCOUTS RESPOND

We are continuing in our efforts to get a lease back preferably on the land as it has always been. There have been very many obstacles in our way. Lastly a ridiculous, libellous and untrue letter was read out at the end of a meeting between CHPC and members of the group & District Scout Team, supposedly from 13 anonymous residents. This letter was read out without due investigation and naming individuals. What this has to do with any lease discussions we are completely unable to understand!

Scouting is well known as a large family and it is not surprising that members of the same family are involved as it's in their blood.

Sometimes the only way to get new Leaders is to cajole family members. Without this, over the years sections of the Group would never have been able to keep going.

Patricia has been running Beavers in Colney Heath for 36 years and has never once received a complaint from parents. In fact the current parents are very complimentary of what all the Beavers Leaders are doing for their children and the sections have had more parents than ever offering to come along and help.

All decisions are made by the Executive Committee, discussed and voted on. The Guides have always been a part of this. No decisions concerning the Group and its running could ever be or were ever made by individuals. Until the Guides decided they no longer wanted to meet at the HQ and left in December 2017, they were always a part of the democratic process.

The Cleaning was undertaken by Patricia when nobody else could be found to do it. Two of her grandsons helped her as it needed to be done on a Friday evening in time for any weekend bookings. The "wages" for this were £6.00 an hour between the three of them, all put through the group accounts.

With regards people holidaying together, this is just laughable, and we assume has been picked up from a picture posted on a personal Facebook page. This happening was pure coincidence, the families involved discovered they were both skiing in the same area for a few days. It took both families all morning skiing from different directions to meet up for lunch on one day.

Accusations about Patricia being rude and abusive when meeting face to face is untrue as she has never been abusive to anyone. The only time she might have spoken to the people referred to, both Guiders and members of the Colney Heath Parish Council, would have been at Exec meetings where there were other people present and who would openly deny this.

Since publication of the letter we have collected 250 plus signatures in our support from Colney Heath residents, and past members, who we would like to thank.

Parish Council “Losses”

The big news was the article in the Herts Advertiser on 22 April on the Parish Council's Report in the Public Interest concerning the Parish Council's governance and ultra-vires payments April 2004 – July 2015 dated 19 April 2021.

“More than a quarter of a million pounds was illegally paid out of parish council coffers”

“Unauthorised payments of £254,767.09 and £100,000 in petty cash never accounted for”.

“The clerk made verbal reports to the council on audits, and there is no evidence councillors were ever provided with copies.”

“Payments made to various organisations including Smallford Residents Association, the Scout and Guide Association, Charles Morris Hall, Treasure Tots nursery, the Neighbourhood Plan project manager, Colney Heath Village Hall, and Colney Heath Football Club.”

Expect to see their reaction in due course.

The Parish Council's report terms these payments as “losses to the Parish Council” so the Herts Advertiser was not sensationalizing the story, but many people are annoyed at the misleading impression that has been created, possibly gratuitously.

Jeff Lewis, the Neighbourhood Plan project manager, provides his response in the next section of this newsletter.

A former parish councilor, Jamie Day, notes “I believe the headline figure of £250,000 in ‘financial irregularities’ is misleading, as the majority of this sum was clearly spent on parish assets and community activities under the direction of parish councillors. I suspect that some of the criticism may reflect the fact that some aspects are regulated differently today that they were then.”

Readers of the Herts Advertiser article probably have the impression that audit reports were not seen, and perplexed that unauthorized payments could have been made. A quick skim through minutes of Parish Council meetings for a few years record the following regarding the authorization of payments and presentation of audit reports.

Parish Council meeting October 2012

FINANCE

731 REPORT-APPROVAL OF CHEQUES-PAYMENTS-OCTOBER 2012

The Clerk presented a report of the payments to the meeting and gave explanation to council. The approval of cheques for October total £9637.81 net was **Resolved:**

732 AUDIT & ACCOUNTS 2011-12

The eternal auditor's report was noted and approved for the year 2011-12; notices will be published for public examination. The Clerk is to copy in the next Chronicle.

Parish Council meeting September 2013

FINANCE

1089 REPORT-APPROVAL OF CHEQUES-PAYMENTS-SEPTEMBER 2013

The Clerk presented a report to the meeting with payment explanations. The approval of cheques for this month totals £12628.09 was approved and **Resolved:**

1090 OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS-APPROVAL OF AUDIT 2012-13

The Clerk reported on the return of the audit for 2012-13 from BDO LLP for members to agree the report and annual accounting statement the council accepted the report and the annual governance statement. The Clerk will now put out the notices of the completion out in public places. It will also be featured in the parish magazine the Chronicle

Parish Council meeting November 2014

FINANCE

1526 APPROVAL OF CHEQUES AND PAYMENTS NOVEMBER 2014

The Clerk presented a report to members and explained the details to the meeting. The Cheques this month amounted to £19,868.91 including large sums to insurance audit and biscuits, CMH and legal fees for purchase of land. .

1528 AUDIT REPORT 2013-14

The Clerk presented the report to the members who noted the recommendations and noted the details for improvements we have to make for next year. Members resolved the actions.

It is public knowledge that I was the Neighbourhood Plan Project Manager referred to in the Colney Heath Parish Council's "Report in the Public Interest" and reported on in the Herts Advertiser. The Parish Council provided me with a copy of their documents before The Report was published but did not ask me for my response; I take this opportunity to do so.

The impression from this Report is that I received money that was illegally paid to me which "contributed to losses within the Parish Council". The Parish Council's report states I benefitted from "ultra vires" payments which they define as follows :

Payments listed were made ultra-vires for one of the following reasons:

- *The payment was not approved by Council or an appropriately delegated Committee or by delegation to the Clerk*
- *The Parish Council had no legal power to spend the public funds under the 1972 Local Government Act or other relevant legislation*

Neither of these reasons are valid in relation to my work for the Parish Council. Based on the Invoices I still have on file, both the **period of my appointment and the sum I was reported to have been paid are incorrect.**

In addition, not included The Parish Council's Report is the fact that they received Grants to meet some of the costs of creating a Neighbourhood Plan through the Government's Community Development Fund.

Before I was appointed, the Parish Council had already set up a small Committee, chaired by Cllr Chris Brazier, to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and had paid a local Town Planner to provide advice. After several months, I believe very little progress had been made.

I was invited to apply for the role of Neighbourhood Plan Project Manager on the basis that a colleague and I had researched Neighbourhood Planning when it was first announced by the Government and had subsequently spent quite a lot of time producing a Draft Plan for where we lived, Smallford, so I was quite well-informed. However, what really attracted me to the role was the opportunity to engage with and involve local residents in a potentially truly democratic process to make important decisions on the future of our Parish.

The role of the Neighbourhood Plan Project Manager was advertised on the Parish Council's website. Before being appointed, I provided a presentation to a full Parish Council Meeting illustrating a draft structure of a Neighbourhood Plan Document and how we could establish one that could engage and involve as many residents as possible.

A Steering Group plus 7 Local Working Groups (one for each part of the Parish) was established and over 100 residents got involved – something I remain very proud of – and we provided a series of presentations and workshops to support Councillors and interested residents.

There was an Agenda for, and Minutes were taken at, every single meeting and are still available on file. Each month, I provided the Parish Council with a detailed daily log of the work I had undertaken, an invoice for this work, a detailed written progress report (all are still available) and presentation on the work undertaken that month – all of which had been agreed in advance with The Clerk. I also wrote Reports that were published in the quarterly Parish Magazine.

Every invoice was agreed at a Parish Council Meeting and cheque signed by a Councillor.

I set up a Google Drive where all the documents were filed. This was available to Councillors and Chairs of each of the Local Groups: all the documents produced are still on this drive. I also copied all documents onto the Parish Council Office Drive.

A Contract was drawn up – but never signed by the Parish Council: a copy is available should anyone wish to see it. This may be the reason for the work I did being determined "ultra vires" but not a basis for stating that a contract was signed and then overspent, nor that some of the invoices received for payment were not appropriately approved.

I feel honoured to have served as Neighbourhood Plan Project Manager and I am 100% clear that everything that I did was open, above board, undertaken with honesty, integrity and with the full knowledge and agreement of the Parish Council. As a result of the work that I had been doing for Parish Council, in May 2014 I was very fortunate to be offered a similar role with Sandridge Parish Council: their Neighbourhood Plan has just been agreed following a recent Referendum.



MR : Who is Graeme Shaw?

GS : I have lived in the St Albans area since 1982. In 1989 I moved into Roestock Gardens where I stayed with my wife Jackie and our two children until 2006 when we moved to Highfield, so we've lived in the Parish for more than 30 years. My children both attended Colney Heath JMI School. I am a committed Christian and have attended and been an active member of St Marks since 1983.

I have a degree in Engineering and worked for Oracle in computing for many years before setting up my own computer software business. I have travelled extensively for business, principally to the USA but also to Australia, India and Thailand, where I lived and worked for 2 years. I am now retired and this allows me more time to devote to my interests in local issues. I am a Trustee of the Village Hall, Treasurer of the 4CH Residents' Association and Vice-Chair of the Twinning Association. I am therefore in a good position to represent the views and concerns of the village.

MR : Why did you stand for election to the Parish council?

GS : I would like to bring my view of fairness and integrity to the workings of the council by providing a balanced view. I particularly want to hold the Parish Council to account for their decisions and their actions and **I intend to be a voice on the Council for the interests of Colney Heath village.**

Mike met up with Graeme before the election and asked him some questions on behalf of the residents of Colney Heath.

Graeme was elected to represent Colney Heath ward at the election on 6th May.

MR : What do you consider to be the role of the Parish Council?

GS : The Parish Council should and must represent the interests of the community it serves. It should help build a community spirit and provide a good environment in which people can live and work. It should support local organisations, especially those working with young people, such as the Scouts and Colney Heath Football Club, and it should work to prevent any feelings of isolation by our older residents.

MR : Do you think you will be able to effectively influence the Council's decisions?

GS : I appreciate I may be in a minority on many issues. However, if elected I'll try. I will certainly strive for common sense and sensitivity in the decision-making process and in the implementation of those decisions.

MR : What improvements in the village would you like to see?

GS : I would like to see support for organisations that provide activities for children and youth and support services that serve senior citizens.

I would argue for money to be spent effectively and rebalance expenditure towards community services and minimise legal costs.

I would fight to protect the character of the Village, and protect the Green Belt and minimise inappropriate development.

Crime prevention, and issues of litter and speeding along the roads in the village need to be tackled.

John had a chat with Jane

John

I hear you intend stand for election for the casual vacancy in Colney Heath. Why would you want to be a Parish Councillor at this time?

Jane

I have lived in the village for 10 years. My grandchildren went to the village school have been involved in the Brownies and Guides, and Taekwan Do. I have a reasonable knowledge of the area.

I hope I will be able to have influence on some of the issues that concern residents. There is not enough for young people to do in the area. The bus service is very poor which affects both the young and elderly. We have to oppose building large housing estates in the area which is protected as the Green Belt for good reasons : the quality of the rural environment, the infrastructure is simply not able to cope, and the developers cant, or wont, provide the facilities and services that are required.

I would like to see more community events that bring people together - for example the Larks in the Parks (which have lapsed) and a celebration of Christmas, with a tree in the village and a carol service with the church.

John

The election may be contested; how do you plan to canvass support for votes in the Colney Heath village, Smallford and Sleafshyde?

Jane

I have already had some support since saying on the village Facebook that I intend to stand. Whether it is contested or not, I plan to leaflet the houses in Colney Heath ward on both sides of the A414. The traffic lights on the longabout have made it much easier to move between. However, it seems more HGVs are coming through now. I understand that about a third of the people in the ward lives on the northside of the A414 so I want to connect with all the residents.

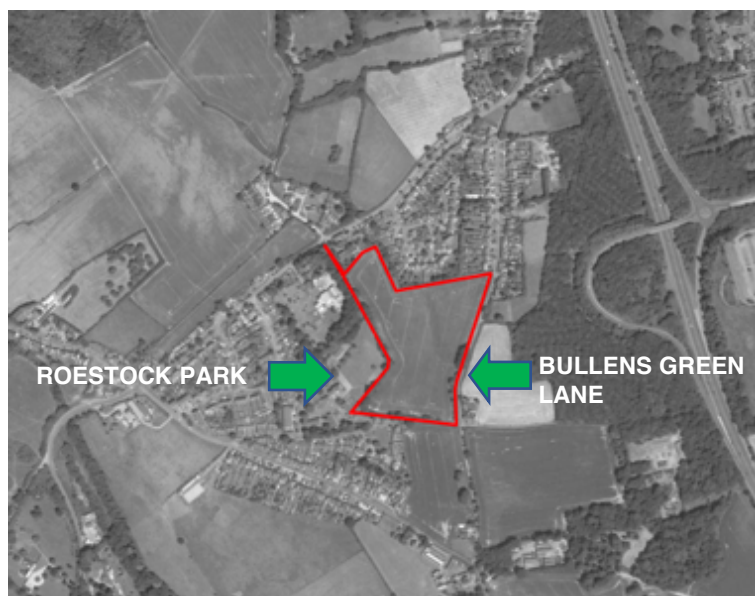
John

Given that your husband Tom is the chair of the Colney Heath Scouts Group do you think you will be welcomed by the Councillors who don't seem to be getting on too well with the Scouts?

Jane

Tom has to deal with the problems over the Scouts and their hut. I expect there may be some antagonism towards me from Councillors. I am not standing for election on this issue alone, and expect I won't be allowed a say on this issue anyway.

The Scouts are a focal point in the village and the issue is not going to go away. I hope I can influence the Parish Council to find a sensible solution. Reading out that disgraceful letter with the names withheld during the last meeting with the Scouts was not helpful.



The proposed development is in the Green Belt on the field between Bullens Green Lane, Fellowes Lane and Roestock Park, outlined in red.

The proposal is for up to 100 dwellings including up to 40% affordable housing and 10% self-build plots accessed off Bullens Green Lane.

The planning application was refused as the site is in the Green Belt. As many residents have found, the Local Planning Authorities refuse most planning applications for even small extensions. The developer appealed.

The Planning Inquiry into the appeal was held between 27th April and 6th May.

THE PLANNING APPLICATION

The boundary between Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and St Albans District Council divides the field between Bullens Green Lane, Fellowes Lane and Roestock Park. An outline planning application for up to 100 dwellings on the field was submitted to St Albans District Council in August 2021 and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council in September 2021. It was rejected by Welwyn Hatfield. St Albans did not decide within the 8 week time limit. The developer appealed.

THE PLANNING INQUIRY

The Inquiry was held by the Planning Inspectorate to hear the appeal by the developer Canton Land into the refusal of their planning application.

The Planning Inspectorate for England and Wales is an executive agency of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government of the United Kingdom Government and deals with planning appeals. The Inspector provides an independent decision based on planning law and the evidence given.

The Planning Inquiry was held over 6 days between 27th April and 6th May. The main parties to the Inquiry were the developer, the LPAs (Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and St Albans District Council), and 4ColneyHeath Residents Association who were accepted to formally participate as the 4th party in round table debates and questioning witnesses.

Colney Heath Parish Council make a good statement pointing out errors in the developer's data and Mike Rawlins provided 4ColneyHeath with data and points to raise. North Mymms Parish Council were invited but did not attend.

SUMMARY

After hearing the developer's appeal, the Planning Inspector is to decide if up to 100 dwellings including up to 40% affordable housing are allowed.

If permission is granted this may open the floodgates to develop the fields around the village.

The case for the development is the shortage of housing and, while within the Green Belt, the loss of Green Belt and impact in this location causes less harm than the social impact of the housing shortage.

The case against the development is that site is not in a sustainable location which is a pre-requisite for development on Green Belt land and would not be considered as a suitable site in a Local Plan.

The arguments for and against the development are finely balanced. In the section Developments in the Green Belt, The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states

Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances

and
When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. "Very special circumstances" will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

The Planning Inspector will have to weigh up the "balance" in making their decision.

The complete closing statements can be read here
<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/roundhouse-farbullens-green-lane-inquiry>

SUMMARY OF CASE FOR DEVELOPMENT

For either Local Planning Authority to meet its needs for housing, the use of Green Belt land is inevitable. 79% of Welwyn Hatfield is in the Green Belt, and 82% of St Albans.

The LPAs concede that – on either side of the district boundary – important Government objectives are not being met. In particular, they accept that there is no framework for addressing their needs for housing (which they accept are “substantial and serious”) and in relation to affordable housing, the position “unacceptable”, and the future “bleak”.

In St Albans, only 6% of the need for affordable housing has been met over the last 7 years. The net shortfall during that period has been over 4,000 homes.

In Welwyn Hatfield, the position is even worse. Only 3% of the need for affordable housing has been met over the last 5 years. The net shortfall is almost 4,000 homes – almost 4,000 homes short in only 5 years. Over 2,200 people are on the housing register. People are waiting – on average – between 10 months and 2 years for an affordable home. More and more people are being forced to rely on temporary accommodation.

Those needs must be met by planning applications just like this one. This means that Green Belt approvals will inevitably be required applying the planning balance at Section 144 of the NPPF.

Both LPAs now agree that the scheme’s impacts on its local landscape will be “contained”, that any effects on the wider integrity of the Green Belt would be no more than “limited”, and that there are no other technical constraints to the scheme’s delivery.

The site is a pleasant but unremarkable, undesignated field on the edge of a sustainable settlement.

The Councils now accept that if permission is granted, the scheme would then be “in a suitable location for housing development” in line with the NPPF. If they ever want to start meeting the shortfalls of not tens, or hundreds but thousands of homes on both sides of the district line, this is the kind of scheme the LPAs must start approving.

Its benefits clearly outweigh its harms, the balance at Section 144 of the NPPF supports allowing the appeal and granting planning permission.

SUMMARY OF CASE AGAINST

The provision of market (including self-build) and affordable housing is clearly an important consideration in favour of the scheme in this case.

The developer agrees that

- two Green Belt purposes will be harmed.
- there will be harm to openness from a visual and spatial perspective
- there will be less than substantial heritage harm.
- there will be negative visual and landscape effects
- accessibility of location is a point of dispute, but if the Councils are right then the Site is not in a sustainable location,
- there is no draft allocation in an emerging plan, and/or no support for an allocation in an adopted plan.
- The profits will all go to the landowner and the developer,
- the reality is that the “other considerations” of this scheme fall cumulatively far short of “outweighing” the harms, let alone “clearly outweighing” them as required by NPPF para. 144.

In short, there is nothing “very special” about the circumstances of this case.



EDITED VERSION OF THE CLOSING STATEMENT BY 4COLNEYHEATH (*We gave it our best shot*)

In a nutshell – the proposed development site is not in a sustainable location

Colney Heath is a village, not of the chocolate box variety, but it has the traditional basic components – church, pub, village hall etc. It has a strong local community.

Our community would not object to “limited infill” housing in the village, a few houses in some of the gaps, especially if these were genuinely affordable. A very large number of objections were made to both Local Planning Authorities with many real concerns about the overstretched important public facilities for education and medical services, the traffic congestion on the roads, as well as the loss of open space and visual impact on surrounding houses.

The scheme is not of sufficient scale to add any other substantial benefits to the village other than maybe some additional patronage to the village shop, pub etc.

The “contributions” in the proposed Section 106 agreement provide little to our village

- a. £16,000 to two bus stops in Hall Gardens where 2 of the 3 bus services are on one day of the week only, and the other provides with a limited daily service to St Albans and
- b. An undisclosed amount payable to the District Council for use towards improvements to the Roestock Park Scout Hut

The remainder of the proposed “compensation” are contributions on the other side of the A1M, not accessible other than by car

- refurbishing and reconfiguring the existing Queensway Health Centre in Hatfield
- sports facilities at the University of Hertfordshire and/or Hatfield Swimming Pools
- £1,384,290 to a proposed new primary school located to the south of South Way (A1001)
- £1,494,006 to a proposed new secondary school adjacent to Hatfield Garden Village
- improving drainage of grass pitches and/or towards repairs to the bowls ground at the Welham Green Recreation Ground
- a wildflower meadow in Angerland (this is the open area on the other side of the A1M).

In the real world of our village, apart from access for local recreation and leisure in the village, private motor cars and taxis are the only realistic and practical means of access (other than our primary school). Beyond the village Coursers Road and Tollgate Road have no footways and are too dangerous for most cyclists. Access to St Albans is an extended cycle route on busy roads or the unlit Alban Way.

Access to Hatfield on foot or cycling is via the A1M underpass which is subject to flooding and feels unsafe at the best of times, and not acceptable cycling to school in the dark.

There is one daily bus service to St Albans which returns too early for anyone working normal office hours. Bus services have deteriorated over the years and it is not realistic to imagine additional services will be provided for a development of this scale.

Most adults have a motor car which means in our “real world” parked cars in Tollgate Road, Fellowes Lane near Tollgate Road, and Bullens Green Lane up to number 58 are effectively single track roads. Traffic has to wait in turn to pass through resulting in both traffic queues, and cars speeding through when its their turn to pass.

With no 3D visualisation of the proposed development, the claimed low visual impact is not believable.

The location is the lowest out of 6 categories in the “settlement hierarchy” - a village that would not be selected by either LPA as a suitable for development in the Local Plan. It has limited facilities and does not have sustainable modes of access.

AFFORDABILITY

The proposal to provide up to 40% affordable homes would carry “weight in the balance”. “Affordable” means 80% of market price or market rent. 4ColneyHeath wanted to know if the so-called affordable housing was *genuinely affordable* and asked a simple question : what is the estimated market price of say a 3 bedroom house on the site, what is the income for the people who would be offered the affordable houses (eg people earning less than the national average wage), and therefore what would the house price be as a multiple of income. This is important because mortgage lenders will lend up to 4.5 times income, and a few up to 5 times income.

The experts were question was asked of the question on three separate days but were unable to answer (“its very complicated” they said).

So let’s try to answer this question. A 3 bed house is for sale in Colney Heath (Franklin Close) this week for £415,000. At 80% of market rate the “affordable” 3 bedroom houses would be offered at £332,000. In the area, the average household income for people who would be offered the affordable houses is £31,000 a year.

A mortgage of 5 times annual income would be £155,000 so the family would need a deposit of £167,000.

Just how “affordable” housing is supposed to work is a mystery, but it certainly does not mean that most local families can look forward to their offspring staying in the area and buying a house on this site .

The two main items over the past few months for Smallford Residents Association have been the Quarry Application on the old Hatfield aerodrome, and the application to the Colney Heath Parish Council to improve the land known as Horseshoes Field at the North East corner of Smallford Roundabout.

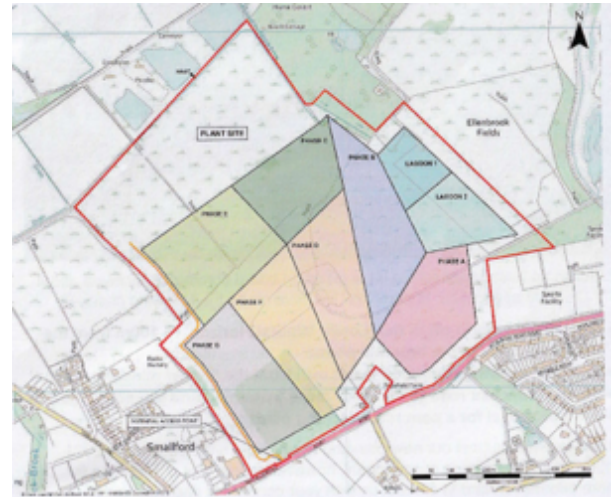
We have just heard that Brett wants to submit a revised proposal later this summer to quarry minerals on Hatfield Aerodrome. The company has leafleted residents living close by, and listed the changes as :

- Increased stand-off in the 'Lower mineral horizon' to 100 metres from the closest edge of the bromate plume (this relates to the bromate contamination of groundwater in the whole area)
- No de-watering (pumping water out) from the 'lower mineral horizon'
- Moved access road to allow for more screening and sound mitigation
- No proposal for a concrete batching plant

Smallford Residents Association will be monitoring this very closely with Ellenbrook Area Residents Association.

In addition, a letter about establishing the Country Park Trust has now been sent to the landowner by the councils involved. The latest information we have is that no reply has been received from the landowner, which is disappointing given the longstanding lack of progress on this issue.

Extracts from the Brett leaflet



"The development will involve quarrying around 8 million tonnes of sand and gravel at a rate of approximately 250,000 tonnes per year...The materials will be extracted in phases of around 5 years each, with much of the land remaining accessible for public use throughout."

(the plan shows 7 phases so 35 years of quarrying? Ed)



"The restoration scheme at Hatfield Aerodrome is designed to create a country park with public access and enhanced nature conservation. The outline scheme proposes a field pattern similar to that which would have existed prior to the aerodrome being built...the aim will be to create a diverse landscape of grass habitats..."

(The promised land...Ed)



<https://4colneyheath.weebly.com>

Newsletter

Our first newsletter was delivered in hard copy by 15 volunteers to all households in Colney Heath village. It was well received and feedback on the format and content has been very positive. Our next update to members is planned for late June. If you have any news, thought or ideas which affect the village or its residents please send them to michaelredfern2006@gmail.com

Membership

We have seen a good increase in membership and interest following the hardcopy newsletter to all households in the Area. **We need as many residents as possible to join us, so PLEASE encourage all your neighbours and friends to join us.** The more members we represent, the stronger our voice will be to influence the relevant bodies on the issues which concern us. It is encouraging at around 40% of the members have indicated willingness to volunteer to join a working party for an issue of their interest.

Survey: the results

In our newsletter in April and the update which we sent out by email in February, we asked residents what issues they were concerned about. A large proportion of our members responded, demonstrating the strong feelings about the local issues which affect them. The full report is set out on the attached sheet.

Roundhouse Farm Planning Inquiry

4Colney Heath Residents Association was represented by John Clemow who attended the 6 days of the virtual hearing, “enjoying” around 36 hours of video conference. He participated in round table discussions, listened to submissions and statements by the developer, the Local Councils, and various “experts”, asked questions, and made a stirring closing statement. The outcome of the appeal by the developer will be published as soon as we hear.

Litter Pick

Following the strong opinions expressed by respondents to the survey (see attached), we are discussing how to get this task done regularly by volunteers. The Parish Council are promoting a litter pick **on Sunday 6th June 2021** to support the Great British Spring Clean.

Community Summer Party

We are planning to hold a Summer BBQ followed by a disco in the Village Hall.

Details will be announced when the working party has agreed the plan.

Community park

Congratulations to Derrick Crump and the volunteers who have agreed collaborative arrangements with Herts County Council. for the maintenance of the pocket park

Thanks to all those who responded to the survey. Your concerns will help us to focus our actions on your behalf on the things that really matter to you.

The top 10 concerns of the respondents and the % expressing the issue as a priority were:

97%	The proposed development of 6,000+ homes garden village on both sides of Coursers Road
95%	The proposed development of 100 houses on Roundhouse Farm on Bullens Green Lane
83%	The incidence of litter on our streets and in our hedgerows
81%	The Travellers' Camp on Coursers Road
77%	The potential loss of the last pub in the village
76%	The condition of the surface of Coursers Road
74%	The weight and speed of traffic passing through the village, particularly along the High Street
70%	Antisocial behaviour, e.g. racing motor bikes in the village surrounding areas
69%	Flooding on Bullens Green Lane
58%	Maintenance of the heath and the removal of trees

All of the topics not mentioned in the above “Top 10” were of concern to the respondents and will be acted upon by the 4CH Residents Association. In addition, several other topics generated considerable concern, notably

- Dog Fouling on pavements and the Heath;
- Lack of maintenance of the River Colne and consequent flooding;
- The rising level of crime
- The future of the community park;
- The need to plant trees on streets around the village

Derrick Crump writes

The good news is that the threat of closure of the Community Park arising when the Parish Council decided not to renew the peppercorn lease from the County Council has receded.

Thanks are due to County Councillor John Hale who worked with local residents to agree a management plan.

Contractors for the County will be cutting the amenity grassland (church side of the river) on a regular basis and mowing the wildflower meadow on the A414 side in late summer as well as cutting peripheral hedges along the roadside. This mowing regime should provide the cowslips in particular time to set seed and it will be interesting to see what other flowers show themselves as this rather wet and cool early summer progresses.

The meadow was re-seeded as a wildflower meadow by the Countryside Management Service on behalf of the Parish Council in 2018 but subject to rather erratic management thereafter. It is hoped that community involvement in managing the site in the future can be co-ordinated by 4Colney Heath Residents Association calling for volunteers.

For now regular litter picking and checking for any problems (fallen branches etc.) is appropriate while leaving the wildlife some peace and quiet during the main breeding season.

Recording of flowers, butterflies, birds etc seen during passing walks would build up knowledge about the site. At least one bird box has blue tit residents this year. Come late summer/autumn then some active management of the woodland and scrub, creation of log piles for wildlife, dead branch fencing, improved signage, and maintenance of the footbridge are a few ideas that could be taken forward by volunteers.

So do take time to enjoy your local pocket park and maybe also admire the profusion of flowers in the churchyard nearby.



COLNEY HEATH FOOTBALL CLUB

The history of [Colney Heath Football Club](#) started in 1907 when a small group of players established a football club from Colney Heath, England. Colney Heath FC is best known as a 'Semi-professional football club' with numerous league participation. Colney Heath FC played their first league match in the Hatfield District League.

LATE NEWS 1: Colney Heath FC is delighted to confirm that the first team has been promoted to the Southern League Division 1 Central.

LATE NEWS 2: Colney Heath FC won the Brocky Cup (Colney Cup) in a two legged match versus local rivals London Colney 4-2 on aggregate, winning both home and away 2-1.



Known as 'The Magpies', today hundreds of football enthusiasts from Colney Heath and surrounding areas join (to spectate, practice) the Colney Heath FC players for matches.

Colney Heath FC is a much bigger institution than one would expect to find in a village the size of Coney Heath. Affiliated to the Hertfordshire County Football Association, they are currently members of the Spartan South Midlands League Premier Division.

The Club has several teams: 1st Eleven, Reserves and Under 18s, as well as a substantial youth section (see details elsewhere in this issue) and 2 Ladies teams.

On 15th May the first team played in the semi final of the Gladwish SSML Spring Cup against Shefford Town & Campton FC whom we beat 2-0.

The final was held on 25th May at Leverstock Green where we played London Lions. After a hard fought match CHFC lost by the odd goal in three, having been much the better side in the second half.

The following is from is from an interview with Martin Marlborough, Chairman:

"As the lighter days are now with us, we are all trying to get back to a 'new normal' hoping that all of our friends have come through the Pandemic relatively unscathed.

To those who have lost loved ones and those who continue to struggle may the NHS continue to pull us through with the sterling job they do.

The Football and Social club plays a small part in our village community and hopes to offer a little bit of light at the end of the tunnel. We have offered the club building for the use of testing and vaccinations should the Government wish to use the facilities, but our first use / opening came on Monday 12th April where we can socialise again outside within the eased lockdown restrictions.

Games again for all teams will commence in August.

From 17th May the restrictions are lifted further to allow customers 'back inside' albeit with certain dos and don'ts applying.

On 21st May we had a Bingo night with Thai Food provided by "Mejulies".

From the poster below you can see what we are trying to 'put on' for members and we would welcome you to come along, visit us and join us.

Print the poster and bring it along and see us.



The 21st June, all being well, will see the new normal.

Dates will be known by then for all the events for your attendance and entertainment.

A new brewery is also on board where you can try a Speckled Hen or an IPA along with the holiday favourites of a San Miguel or a G and T.

Teas coffees and soft drinks along with hot and cold snacks are also available.

For the sporting fan the Euro 2020 football tournament starts in June, delayed of course by Covid for a year.

It is hoped the Olympics will follow in late summer. Follow us on twitter and Facebook, look out for the dates for events and fixtures.

We look forward to seeing you soon.



COLNEY HEATH VILLAGE HALL

www.colneyheathvillagehall

enquiries email jackclemow@gmail.com or call 07803 313 525

The hall has remained open since May last year for activities permitted under the Covid-19 restrictions.

Since our report in January this year, we welcomed Mike Redfern who joined the team of trustees.

Most of the activities in the hall this year have been for children – Treasure Tots pre-school and Mad Science during the school holidays. Since 12 April, which was Step 2 the Government's "Roadmap out of Lockdown", activity has increased with new regular users including Bebes Tranquilos on Mondays and music lessons with Katie Sazanova on Wednesdays. Returning regulars include Taekwan Do (juniors only) on Saturdays, and A Different Dog have been meeting outside on Sundays. The Election was held in the Main Hall on 6th May.

With Step 3 in the "Roadmap out of Lockdown" commencing on 17 May we have bookings for regulars including Art groups, Badminton, and Taekwan Do seniors, and a new regular user Sport4Kids on Sunday mornings. For Step 4 it is expected that (most) restrictions will be removed. This is set for "not before 21st June". Due to the increase in the "Indian variant" of the virus there may be a delay of some restrictions will continue.

The new charity that took over the hall from the original charity completed its first financial year ending March 2021. During the year we were unable to have a fixed budget and worked with forecasts for various income scenarios, while rigorously managing our expenditure. Covid-19 support grants from St Albans District Council protected our reserve fund set aside for medium and long term maintenance, repair and replacement of the hall's facilities.

The increase in bookings has allowed us to prepare a budget for the financial year April 2021-March 2022. The outlook is more positive although we remain cautious.

The trustees have issued notice to the Colney Heath Parish Council to give up the small space in the hall that they don't use.

We plan to set up a digital training facility and a "near from home" office for people working from home. The Parish Council moved out of the space in 2017 considering it not fit for purpose but want to retain as a back up while refusing to pay the contribution that was agreed and previously paid.

The Parish Council have made a claim of £2,112 against trustees of the original charity for legal fees the Parish Council spent, apparently, investigating the ownership of the Village Hall as the Parish Council believed they owned the hall.

Trustees are volunteers who give their time for the benefit of the community without any remuneration.

The trustees of the original charity being sued include two former chairs of the Parish Council, two octogenarians, and a young mother.

The trustees proposed mediation in the hope of resolving matter. The Parish Council refused and issued a money claim in the "small claims track" in January this year. It was then hoped that the Colney Heath Parish Council would select mediation by the court as they had resolved to do this at the Council meeting last December. However, we understand the Parish Council have not selected mediation before the hearing and refuse to answer our questions about mediation.

We have also requested details of the "losses" regarding the Village Hall noted in the Parish Council's Report in the Public Interest concerning the Parish Council's governance and ultra-vires payments April 2004 – July 2015 dated 19 April 2021.

We will provide a full response when we have clarification.



The Colney Heath School Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a charity that raises funds for equipment and experiences to enrich the education of the children who attend the school.

Since our last update it's been great to see the children back at school and we've agreed that this year we're focussing our fundraising on helping to purchase a new large item of playground equipment.

We're also very aware, however, that many of our parents and supporters have had a hard year with regards to finances so our main focus is on fun for the kids and family events. Since January we've raised £795 from Silver Smarties (the children get a packet of Smarties and once they've eaten the sweets they fill the tubes with coins), an Easter Quiz and a second hand uniform sale.



Many village residents will have previously come to our annual summer fair. Last year, due to Covid restrictions, we couldn't hold it and it is still uncertain this year. However, rest assured, if we're able to have an outdoor get together, on a sunny Saturday, on the school fields, with safe and friendly games and refreshments - then we definitely will and everyone is welcome!



Finally, just a quick reminder that our 200 Club is the easiest way that you can help the PTA to raise money. **For just £6 for the entire year** you can be entered into our lottery style monthly draw. If you'd like more information or to buy a number (or two!) please email us at PTA@colneyheath.herts.sch.uk

With best wishes
Claire Oliver
On behalf of Colney Heath School PTA



contacts

Joanna 01727 828003 or
 Debbie 01727 824185 or
 email
colneyheathwi@gmail.com

Eileen Francis writes.

I recently asked our president Joanna what she likes best about being part of the WI and she answered "being involved with village life, with a group of terrific women, most of whom are now my buddies". I agree with those sentiments entirely and often wonder what life would be like for me without the WI.

I moved to Colney Heath nine years ago when I was busy working full-time with very little leisure time. Meeting new people and making friends would have been very difficult but I was lucky enough to get to know Diane, a lovely friendly neighbour who invited me to the annual WI 'Bring a Friend' evening. I was nervous about going to the meeting because I really didn't know what to expect and wasn't sure it would be my kind of thing.

I needn't have worried as I discovered there are many things to like about the WI, most importantly a network of local women who were willing to welcome me into their group and share their vast array of knowledge and skills on just about everything.

We usually meet in the village hall on the second Thursday of the month at 7.45 pm. Each meeting includes a speaker, learning a new skill or being entertained and yes, there is always cake to enjoy with our tea or coffee.

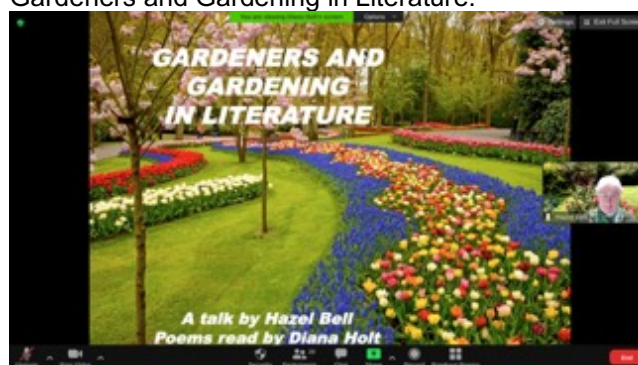
We also have outings to places of interest or the theatre and summer garden parties. Smaller sub-groups include drama, book club and craft that get together throughout the year.



During these more unusual times when meeting in person hasn't been possible we have enjoyed seeing each other and speakers on Zoom.

Dr Ruth Herman, historian, gave us her presentation in April that included excerpts from her new book *The Colney Heath Chronicles*.

In May we had a talk from Hazel Bell & Diana Holt on Gardeners and Gardening in Literature.



We hope to be back in the village hall in June, if not an outdoor meeting might be possible. Look out for our new banner and swing board with meeting details next time you pass by.

We are a friendly bunch with a warm welcome for new members and if you would like to find out more please call Joanna 01727 828003 or Debbie 01727 824185 or email colneyheathwi@gmail.com

The CBTA is a local organisation providing opportunities to meet and socialise in both the local community of Colney Heath and the community of Boissy in France (optional) Membership is not required to enjoy our social events, which are not priced to be fundraisers.

The exciting news is that with the easing of restrictions in the UK we are starting to plan a number of events during 2021. Beginning on 18th July with a social gathering to be held in the chairman's garden, please find opposite a diary of proposed events for the rest of the year.

CBTA Twinning visit to Boissy

Our visit to France this year has had to be postponed again. We hope that these can recommence next year. It is possible that a few of us may be able to make a visit to Boissy later this autumn.

The Committee continues on Zoom – wellbeing of members, planning events, 100 club draw including the Super draw in April.

Try our topical word search (in French)

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L A T E X J X K V N C E N D J
T N E M E L O S I O P Q P E U
A Y J H Z K Z Q N I R Z L S M
G T S I C X H F K T L E S I E
S A B S N N I V U A N U P N L
J B N C I N A Y Z N R L A F A
O I P T E O B M U I W A N E G
P A W M S A B T V C D T D C E
F I E V R E B A P C A I E T P
Q N K S B S N A F A V P M E N
T H C V T O X M I V A O I R E
J J B X R M A S Q U E H E O Q
Y Q U O H T A E H Y E N L O C
Y O C S N O I T C I R T S E R
T N O I T A I C O S S A C Q D
    
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ABAI
Association
Boissy
CBTA
ColneyHeath
Confinement
Coronavirus

desinfecter
Fievre
Gants
Hopital
Isolement
Jumelage
Latex

Manche
Masque
Pandemie
Restrictions
Toux
Tunnel
Vaccination



Upcoming Events in 2021:

- Summer Event 18th July
- Boules and BBQ 5th Sep
- Cocktails and Mocktails 16th Oct
- Christmas Event 4th Dec

Message from our Chair

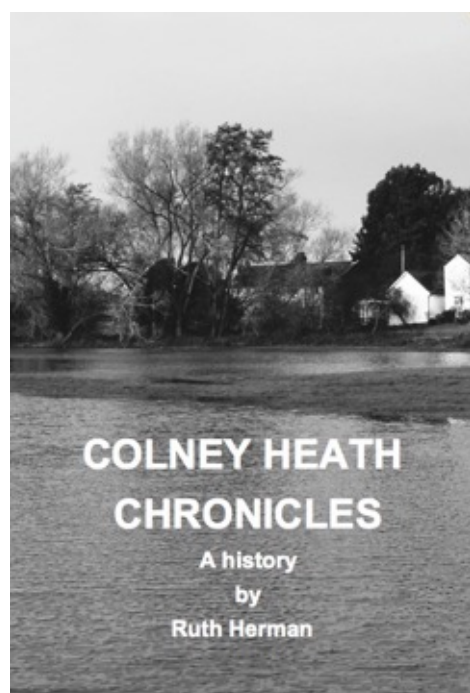
After many months of what our French friends call the “confinement” we have at last started to plan our social events. The committee is fed up with meetings on Zoom but the monthly catchup on the wellbeing and support needs of our members has been an important part of this meeting.

Our committee would normally meet by rotating between committee members’ homes and enjoys our evenings together, enhanced by nibbles and a glass (or two) of wine. These are the pleasant privileges of being part of a team of volunteers who enjoy the job – which, in reality, is mostly party planning! We know many of our members have sorely missed our social gatherings and have found the isolation difficult.

For a second year we have waived the membership subscription of £7 per adult in recognition that the CBTA has had few benefits to offer our members.

So now is a good time to join! Please e-mail our Secretary lewislesley@hotmail.co.uk for more information.

We will have to wait for the final phase of the “de-confinement” – Step 4 in the Road Map out of Lockdown, set at “not earlier than 21 June”, to meet indoors. This may be delayed and, like everyone, we are watching closely for the green light.



Book review by Barbara Young

What a fine, rollicking ride I have been on, through several centuries of history in Ruth Herman's little book : Colney Heath Chronicles. Ruth never strays too far from her central subject, though the phrase "I digress" does occur occasionally. But Ruth's stories are always fun, interesting and relevant.

With her special lens and spot-light she swept me along at galloping pace over landscape, through religion (some of those monks and Abbots were not always as good as they were God-fearing); family life, bureaucracy, social structure (and upheavals!) from peasant to king, and politics.

Most changes for the good have been hard-won, in Colney Heath and environs, as in many other places. I'm sure that there are towns and villages around where I live (Edinburgh), which would recognise some these essentially universal stories from their own histories.

Her style left me with some vividly visual impressions...plus it is well illustrated with some lovely photographs and paintings.

Thanks to Ruth and her production team for an excellent read. I look forward to volume two! Never mind the Romans, what happens after the Victorians?

Published by the Colney Heath and District History Society the first print run of the **COLNEY HEATH CHRONICLES** was "on the shelves" in February and had sold out by mid May.

The second print run has been ordered.

Priced at £7.50 for local delivery or collection at the village shop. P&P is £2 for orders from further away addresses.

To order a book or join the Society (membership is free) contact jackclemow@gmail.com or call 07803 313 525

Proceeds from the book are being donated to a charity supporting people with Parkinson's.

Book review by Jackie Taslaq

I recently purchased this book from the local village shop. It is certainly interesting, full of facts written in an entertaining way that adds flavour to the book. I found the subjects covered are a good foundation for the second book that is to follow.

Its amazing that a small sleepy hamlet saw so much happenings over the centuries. Just to think that when we walk over the Heath it is the land that was graced by Henry VIII and his entourage. As a villager that has been here for ten years and I have agriculture ancestors that lived in the village. Through this book I discovered a lot and gave me the opportunity to join the Colney Heath & District History Society.

Thank you to Ruth Herman for putting together a lovely first class book and I eagerly await the next one.

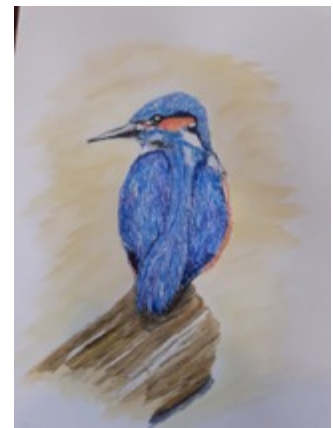
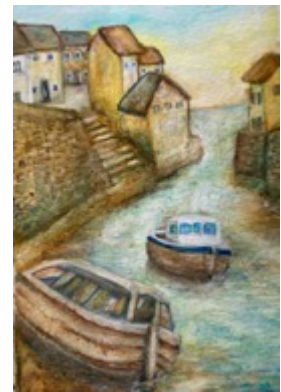
We are all amateur artists of varying ability. Beginners are welcome, and will quickly improve with the help and support of the members of the group. We have list of what you really need to get started so check before you buy anything.

Since the "Christmas is cancelled" lockdown in December we have continued during lockdown using our WhatsApp group to share how our "working from home", to (gently) crit and encourage each other, and to keep motivated.

We have booked the first Wednesday in every month from June for two hours starting at 10am at the Village Hall.

It costs just £3 per session and you only pay the sessions that you attend. If you would like to join contact irisbond8@gmail.com

Some of our "working from home" examples show the range of styles and subjects that interest our group.



For the past thirteen years, Colney Heath Theatre Club has been running trips to London's West End to enjoy a wide range of musical theatre from classics such as Les Miserables to the latest theatrical releases and, of course, the annual pantomime at The London Palladium.

After a tremendously busy 2019, we sadly drew a blank in 2020, with all shows cancelled due to theatre closures.

As I write this a number of theatres have opened their doors once again and others plan to follow slowly but surely. All being well I intend to resume our trips in the late Autumn of this year; however, safety will always be our first consideration.

If you would like to receive information on theatre trips as they recommence or have a request for a certain show, then please either email colneyheaththeatreclub@yahoo.co.uk or telephone/text 07870 701118

Colney Heath Theatre Club is a voluntarily run not for profit organisation.



Our Committee continues to meet online via Zoom – we’ve held nine since our last AGM in October.

Our Collaborative Community Project: Improving the Environment around Smallford Station

This exciting collaborative community Project remains our most important activity and we’ve been able to sustain several parts of it – even through the COVID Crisis.

Applying for Planning Permission

By the time you read this report, formal Notices of our Planning Application will be on display at Smallford Station: because Smallford Station Ticket Office is a listed Building, there happen to be two such Notices –

- 5/2021/0803 – on blue paper
- 5/2021/0864/LB – includes Listed Building Consent and is printed on green paper (so that the two Notices can be distinguished).

Any written comments must reach St Albans District Council by 12th June. Hopefully, in our next report we can confirm that Planning Permission has been granted and work on the platform begun!



What The Goods Van Body looked like when we received it

Fundraising

We applied for, and have been lucky enough to have been awarded, two generous grants
Colney Heath Parish Council - £1000 and
HCC Locality Budget (John Hale being our Local County Councillor) – £500

We estimate that, with the donations we’ve already received and the funds we have set aside, we still need to raise over £5,000 – a considerable sum!

Renovating our Goods Van Body

An old goods van body, which had lain on a farmer’s field for over 50 years, was donated to us and moved to Oaklands College.

Once the renovation work has been completed, it will be moved to the Car Park at Smallford Station, sited next to the platform and hold our Exhibition illustrating the history of the Hatfield and St Albans Railway; this will be open to the public on various occasions throughout the year.

We’ve started working on it. Over the coming half-term, we will be welding a new steel frame (which cost £1200!) onto the somewhat rusted underframe to strengthen it and then we will move the whole van body to a new site at Oaklands as the area around where it currently stands is being redeveloped.

If you’re interested in getting involved, why not email me? We can arrange a visit to Oaklands, providing you with an opportunity to see it in situ and possibly to meet our small team of enthusiasts – and all of this without any pressure or obligation on you to get involved.



How it looks now - in May 2021

Once Planning Permission has been granted, and with COVID restrictions lifted, we will set up a ‘Just Giving’ webpage, approach local companies and residents and arrange fund-raising activities.

If you’d like to make a contribution (which would be fantastic!), simply email info@smallford.org

Collaboration with Oaklands College

As mentioned in previous reports, staff and students from 6 Departments at Oaklands College will be involved in our exciting collaborative community project, especially once the regulations relating to COVID allow, namely

- Agriculture
- Horticulture
- Art and Design
- Graphics, Multimedia & Photography
- Trowel Trades
- Special Needs

The first group to get involved have been Art & Design Level 2 students who have participated in a competition to design Railway Posters in the Art Deco Style of the 20's/30's.

We have chosen the five winners and hope that they will be displayed at the back of the Station platform before the end of term – this obviously being dependant on receiving Planning Permission from SADC.

Here are the 'raw' versions: since the winners were announced, the students have been working on their designs, finishing them off and adding 'a poster message'.



Planning for the Future

The Heritage Open Days (organised by The National Trust) are due to take place between the 10th and 19th September - and we will be participating, probably on Sunday 12th September. Perhaps we'll meet you at Smallford Station on that day?

Once local community groups and organisations (such as Women's Institutes and other Societies) begin to meet again – we would be more than happy to provide a presentation on our research findings and especially on our exciting community project to Improve the Environment around Smallford Station! We provide Presentations to societies and community groups for free – although a donation to our Society and its work would obviously be most welcome!

If you'd like to know more about us (including becoming a Friend or Member of our Society)

Take a look at our website – www.smallford.org – where you can see part of our extensive collection of historical photographs, download several documents (including a booklet of our exhibition) and see scenes from two B&W movies (made in 1928 and 1933) showing trains arriving at the station.

Also of interest might be Roger Taylor's photographic collection - <https://smallford.org/the-roger-taylor-collection/>

Items available from us

We have a number of items that might be of interest to you; we don't sell them – but would appreciate a donation to our funds.

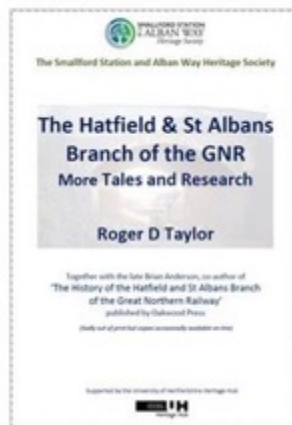
Fridge Magnets



Minimum suggested donation
£2.50 + £1 p&p

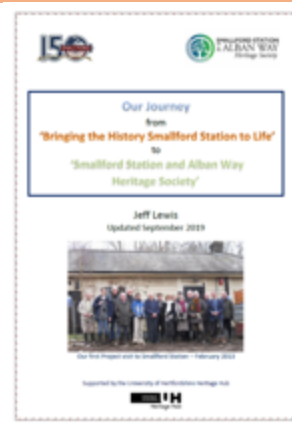
Roger Taylor's 'More Tales'

1. Introduction, Biography
2. Railway Memories
3. The Branch Line on Film
4. Specials on the Branch
5. After the Line Closure in 1969
6. Halts, an Incident & Others
New Research & Corrections



Minimum suggested donation
£3.00 + £1 p&p

Our Journey From Bringing the History of Smallford Station to Life To Smallford Station & Alban Way Heritage Society



Minimum suggested donation
£1.00 + £1 p&p

Jeff Lewis

Chair: Smallford Station & Alban Way Heritage Society Email: info@smallford.org