



THE COAL POST

THE NEWSLETTER FOR COLNEY HEATH VILLAGES

ISSUE 13

NOVEMBER 2022

THE SIEGE OF COLNEY HEATH



The Coal Post Editors :

John Clemow and Mike Redfern, trustees of Colney Heath Village Hall

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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 cost for inclusion in this digital format) - we do not endorse products or services included this publication..

Please let us know if you spot any errors or have comments

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We must start with an apology to our contributors who have waited patiently to see their articles published. We had planned to publish by the end of October so we had called for your entries during last month.

We delayed however to hear the decision on the detailed planning application by Taylor Wimpey for the development of 100 dwellings on the farmland between Bullens Green and Roestock Park. More about this later.

It is always a pleasure to present news about our community, evidence of the strength of our village. As always words of comfort from Caroline at St Marks and a warm space there too. Interesting to hear about the care, learning and fun for the children at the School and Treasure Tots pre-school. The village hall continues to be busy and the residents association even more so.

The Smallford Station project has finally received planning permission having submitted in the Spring of 2021, and work on site has started.

The Twinning Association and the WI took advantage of the glorious summer this year for outings and social gatherings, and the Theatre Group is revving up for the autumn and bookings for new year. Ruth Herman and the history society have been busy researching, writing, editing, proof reading and collecting photographs for the second volume of the Colney Heath Chronicles which will be on sale at the end of November ready for Christmas presents. And Nicky Packman has assembled a collection of Aloe products ready for the same reason.

Cheryl Fetti has started her fitness classes in the village hall and Emma has returned to the Studio at the hall with her yoga classes.

We make no apology concluding the edition with our long and detailed article "The Siege of Colney Heath".

As you will have gathered from the front cover, it is an understatement to say the threat to Colney Heath village is dire.

100 houses on Bullens Green Lane will increase the number of the dwellings in the village by around 14%. This is already over-development in the opinion of many residents who say "enough is enough". But this is only just the beginning.

We know that the rampant anarchy of inappropriate housing development on greenfield sites is not restricted to our village. But that does not justify the pillage that is being proposed here.

It must be said that the prospects for the village are not looking good.

However, the battle is not lost and w the residents should not give up.

On page 24 we set out what actions residents can take.

The Colney Heath Parish Council has been making strenuous efforts in making objections and supporting 4ColneyHeath residents association with their effort.

4ColneyHeath is strengthening its "planning working group" with more volunteers to help with campaigning, assessing applications and preparing objections.

PLEASE JOIN THE FIGHT!

With our best wishes from the editors,

Mike Redfern & John Clemow



ST MARKS

COLNEY HEATH

Waiting in joyful hope.

Autumn is my favourite time of year because I really enjoy hot chocolates and cosy nights in! One of the things I like to do is to buy a warm take-away drink and go out for a drive with my husband to find nice spot to watch the world go by. People are often getting ready for something such as autumn parties, early Christmas shopping or making the traditional Christmas cake.

These moments for me are joyful as they are moments of waiting, preparing and anticipating something good. We make our Christmas cakes in the hope of hosting a full and happy Christmas table and we plan our parties in the hope that our guests will come and enjoy a good time with us. Preparing and planning for events that we have to wait several weeks for.

Waiting in joyful hope can be hard when the world appears bleak or difficult, but I do believe that there is hope and that life can be *and is* good. The Christian hope tells us that no matter how hard or how impossible our situation looks there is a way forward, there is hope and our lives can be turned around with Christ's help. We believe in a hope where Jesus Christ helps us to get through hard times and we can find rest in him when everything else feels restless.

I have recently found this quotation from Corrie Ten Boom who helped Jews in the Second World War :-
"If you look at the world, you'll be distressed. If you look within, you'll be depressed. If you look at God, you'll be at rest"

My prayer is that you are filled with hope this year and that you will find rest in Jesus.
I hope that you have a wonderful autumn and Christmas. Please see below some of the events we are holding in church.

Warm Space

The church is open as a warm space every Monday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm. On Monday afternoons from 2pm tea and coffee will be available. (Winter months only)

Commemorative Tree Planting

On Sunday 20th November at midday we are going to plant 3 trees in our churchyard to commemorate the late Queen's life, the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and the ascension to the throne of King Charles the Third. *Everyone* is invited to this *community* event. Refreshments will be served.

Connect

This is a new group for all young people in school years 6, 7 and 8. Meeting weekly in the church centre on a Thursday (term time only) from 4.15 to 5.30pm. Snacks, games, activities and a chill out area !

Christmas Services

Carol Service Sunday 18th December 7.30pm
Family Carol Service on Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December 4pm
Christmas Day Services Sunday 25th December
Holy Communion 8.30am and All Age Service 10.30am

Caroline

Reverend Caroline Keightley. Vicar, St. Mark's Church
Church Lane, Colney Heath, St. Albans AL4 0NH

ST MARKS CHURCH

Sunday Services

8.30am Holy Communion

10.30am Morning Worship - live streamed

Our Children and Young People's groups meet at the same time as the 10.30am service in the church centre.

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





September is the month to welcome new members of our school community and renew friendships as we return to our learning. This year Colney Heath School has three new members of teaching staff, a new Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher.

Our Nursery and Reception pupils benefit from an excellent start to their education by having skilled teaching staff, experienced in the Early Years. All staff work together to establish good relationships with families and ensure that children's needs are met.

As you can see from the pictures, we encourage the children to enjoy our outdoor area, both to develop their physical skills, but also as a place where they enjoy spending time with their Year 6 Buddies.

This innovative scheme has long been a strength of the school, with children regularly citing this as one of their most precious memories.



COLNEY HEATH JMI SCHOOL

We partner Reception and Year 6 pupils from their first day in September, enabling the children to spend time together every week throughout the year. Our younger pupils value the support of a special older friend who helps them with reading and exploring the school, whilst our Year 6 pupils develop their responsibility and empathy.

Our Breakfast and After School Clubs have become very popular with parents of children throughout the school, offering care before and after school. We also aim to provide a range of sporting extra-curricular activities in order to encourage our children to be healthy and active. Our children would also enjoy other extra-curricular clubs e.g. sewing, chess or board games. If you feel you have an hour a week that you would be willing to share with our pupils on something like this, we would love to hear from you.

We have an exciting year ahead of us, especially as we look forward to re-establishing traditional events, such as celebrations with other community members at Christmas and hope that we might welcome new families and members of our village community to our school.

Please come and visit our school if you are interested in your child joining us. We would love to meet you and show you what makes Colney Heath School so special. Applications for Reception places in 2023 open on November 1st and Nursery applications can also be made soon – come and join us!



TREASURE TOTS PRE-SCHOOL



83 High Street,
Colney Heath,
Hertfordshire,
AL4 0NS

☎ 07580100368
✉ info@treasuretots.co.uk
🌐 treasuretots.co.uk

Treasure Tots Pre-School Ltd is the village pre-school for Colney Heath but welcomes children aged 3 months to 5 years from the village and surrounding area. They have government funded places for 3 & 4-year-olds, as well as eligible 2-year-olds. Places are available for an immediate start and from January 2023.

Run by Deborah McHale and an experienced team, Treasure Tots Pre-School offers a friendly and inviting environment to prepare children for their entrance into school life. They maintain a good working partnership with Colney Heath School and other local schools and provide extended care for children who attend school nurseries. This helps enable children and families to gain the maximum benefit from their entitled funded early education.

Staff readily share information on children's learning with families and teachers and are always available to discuss any concerns. Parents speak highly of staff and the pre-school. They say their children feel safe and secure and receive a good education that prepares them well for starting school.

At Treasure Tots, children are supported and encouraged by staff to engage in a wide variety of activities and play. A child-centred approach is at the heart of the pre-school, enabling children to develop their creativity, individuality, and self-confidence in a caring and nurturing environment. All learning and development is guided by qualified and experienced practitioners who build strong positive relationships with all the children they work with.

Located in Colney Heath Village Hall, Treasure Tots Pre-School Ltd. is rated 'Good' by Ofsted and has access to the large indoor hall as well as a garden area. Two sessions run daily during term time from **Tuesday to Friday, 9:15am to 12:15pm, and 12:00pm to 3:00pm.**

Prospective parents are warmly invited to visit the pre-school and meet the team. Appointments can be made by calling Deborah McHale, Pre-School Manager on **07580 100368.**



COLNEY HEATH VILLAGE HALL

2022 CONTINUES TO BE BUSY

The main hall is busy with some availability which we are looking to fill. The Studio has some bookings but there are available sessions on most days.

It seems getting physically fit is on many people's minds, maybe to shed pounds gained during the post Covid summer excesses.

Two new regular fitness classes have started Cheryl Fetti on Thursdays – see Mike's interview with her - and Julie on Mondays 6.30-7.30pm

The trustees hosted two public meetings in the hall

- in September a joint meeting by Small Residents Association and 4Colney Heath residents association to discuss the Community Governance Review
- in October a meeting called by Chris Brazier to discuss the housing developments proposed around the village.

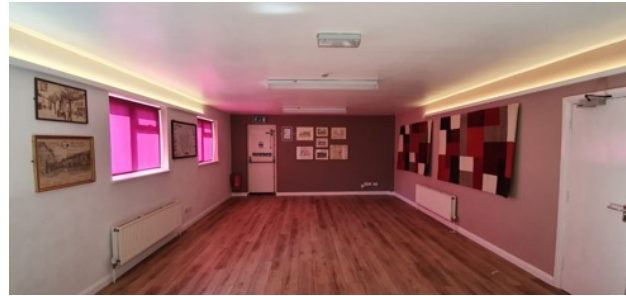
TRUSTEES NEEDED TO JOIN OUR TEAM

We are looking for people who wish to see the Village Hall continue successfully to join our management team.

We have 4 formal meetings each year with a quick catch up between, so the time commitment is limited.

Please contact John for more information.

The booking calendar can be viewed on www.colneyheathvillagehall.com/enquire This is updated regularly but contact John e: jackclemow@gmail.com or m: 07803 313 525 to check that the slot you would like is available.



Our Studio space, ideal for smaller groups



Bright modernized kitchen



The main hall with recently upgraded LED lighting and party mode uplighting

4COLNEYHEATH residents association



DECEMBER SOCIAL

We have invited our members to an evening gathering with drinks and snacks to meet other members and chat. While primarily social in purpose we will set aside a few minutes for the necessary annual formalities.

KEEPING EVERYONE INFORMED

We issue 3 Newsletters each year. These are delivered in hard copy by volunteers to every household in the village. The next issue is scheduled for December.

We also update our members by email in between newsletters. The updates are available in hard copy format on request to anyone who cannot get access to emails.

MEMBERSHIP

With our way of life under threat from all of the planning applications, the reasons to join our membership have never been greater. There is no fee to join but donations are welcome. We think £5 per household is reasonable. In addition, it's important to know that being a member does not require attendance at meetings. However, you are very welcome to contribute to our efforts in any way you think appropriate for you.

For membership forms please email 4colneyheath@gmail.com

BY JOINING TOGETHER

- We will have a much stronger voice with the planning authorities
- We will have strength in numbers, greater knowledge and resources
- We will bring residents together and improve community spirit.

If you are already a member PLEASE HELP US TO GROW – INTRODUCE ONE NEW MEMBER AND OUR NUMBERS WILL DOUBLE. Additional members of your families are particularly welcome.

4ColneyHeath Website

Please visit our website where you will find information and updates on a number of subjects <https://4colneyheath.weebly.com>

4ColneyHeath contacts

Communications michaelredfern2006@gmail.com

Secretary jackclemow@gmail.com

Treasurer graemeshaw25@gmail.com

CURRENT ISSUES

Traffic – we are very concerned about the increased amount and speed of traffic using the High Street as a through route to and from the A414. The traffic levels have increased substantially since the installation of the traffic lights at the longabout on the A414.

We are pleased to see that speed indicators have been installed and we will now campaign for additional measures to reduce speeding and, hopefully, traffic flow.

Planning

Much of our Committee's time and effort is spent on fighting unwanted planning applications which encroach substantially into the Green Belt. Our objections are posted on our website.

The effect of these developments, should they gain approval would change the whole nature of our village life, more than doubling the population of the village and stretching our already limited infrastructure beyond its limits.

The current applications / consultations are:

Bullens Green Lane – detailed approval granted for 100 homes.

Vistry – planning application submitted for 150 homes to the rear of the properties on the south side of Tollgate Road.

Bellway – consultation is in progress for 150 homes on the northwest side of Roestock Lane.

Care Home – there is a consultation in progress for a care home, 35 single bed units and 45 3 to 4 bed market homes north of Roundhouse Farm.

Site adjoining Vistry – running to the Coursers Road roundabout where a proposal for 45 new homes is expected.

Tarmac – planning application submitted for 45 homes next to Colney Heath Primary School and the football club.

SMALLFORD RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (SRA)

During the last few months, we have worked closely with Colney Heath Residents Association (4Colney Heath) to work through the implications of the potential Parish boundary changes from next April, to align with the new District Council boundaries.

If approved, the new Parish would have half the number of residents, with therefore half the income from the precept to carry out necessary activities. SRA and 4ColneyHeath hosted a residents evening to discuss the implications with ideas.

With regard to the proposed quarry on Hatfield Aerodrome, we are still watching this space and preparing for the next fight with Brett Aggregates Ltd when their second application to quarry this land is heard, the majority of which is in our Parish.

On the subject of quarrying, The County's Draft Mineral and Waste Local Plan is the document which sets out which land will be quarried and contains the policies and framework for minerals and waste management in Hertfordshire until 2040.

This draft Plan has very recently been consulted on and responses were accepted until 31st October 2022

SRA, Ellenbrook Area Residents Association (EARA) and Colney Heath Parish co-ordinated a response to the Plan, using some of the points noted on the right.

Finally, the Radio Nurseries housing development in Smallford is almost complete with half or more of the 28 homes now occupied. The name of the new road serving the development is Lawrence Close.

Steve Ross, Secretary SRA

- The cumulative effects of fine dust transmission on nearby settlements from the quarrying itself, onsite works and the HGVs taking the gravel away
- Loss of Public Rights of Way during the work – for example, over 30 years for parts of the Brett Quarry on Hatfield Aerodrome if it goes ahead. This is a significant period for the public to lose precious walking, cycling and running routes.
- Returning to the HGVs on our roads, the safety, noise and congestion across the Parish would impact all of us. In Smallford case, the existing CEMEX quarry may well be in place until the end of this decade if planning permission extension is granted. Allowing Brett to quarry the aerodrome only 400 metres away would mean both quarries would share the busy A1057 road towards Hatfield with a combined 424 lorry movements a day (CEMEX 250 and Brett 174)
- Colney Heath Parish has currently or is proposed to have more, or is directly impacted by more landfill, waste, waste processing sites and quarries than any area/parish in Herts. There are cumulative impacts living with/near quarries since 1930s and this could last another 40 years under the current plan i.e. up to 130 years in total.
- Loss of the Country Park which was promised 20 years ago as part of the planning agreement to develop Hatfield Business Park.
- Harm/loss to the Green Belt

REWILDING THE EMBANKMENT AT SMALLFORD STATION

We saw the results of our initial work in June. In October, a small group of volunteers planted a variety of native spring flowering bulbs and some more seeds – and we look forward to seeing the results this coming spring.



IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT AROUND SMALLFORD STATION

At last(!), in August 2022 we received confirmation from St Albans District Council that we had planning permission to proceed with our exciting collaborative community project.

The St Albans District Council Estates Department have already opened up access to the platform by building the ramp and opening up a section of the balustrading.

They are currently going through the process of appointing a contractor to undertake the refurbishment of the platform.

This will include

- Resurfacing it and levelling all uneven edging blocks
- The end of the platform (by the car park entrance) will be rebuilt and the current concrete blocks replaced with engineering brickwork
- A small extension to the platform will be built providing space for the public to access the goods van body which will stand on four piers that will be built.

Once the resurfacing work has been completed, we will install 'furniture' – Victorian-style lampposts and benches, railway posters, raised flower beds. Hopefully this will be completed in the spring/early summer. Later next year, our goods van body will be sited alongside the platform.



The goods van body will be placed to the left of the ramp and the balustrade in front will be removed.

SMALLFORD STATION AND ALBAN WAY HERITAGE SOCIETY

REFURBISHING OUR GOODS VAN BODY

We were given an old railway goods van body that had stood on a farmer's field in Northamptonshire for 50 years. It was moved to Oaklands College (a local builder, Rae Borrás generously met the cost of over £600!) and we've begun the process of refurbishing it.

The first major task was to reinforce it with a steel frame and over this October half-term, five of us completed the reroofing.

Once the refurbishment has been completed, it will hold our exhibition (illustrating some of the history of the old railway line) together with part of our collection of railway artefacts. It will be sited in the car ark at Smallford Station, adjacent to the platform and be open to the public on various occasions throughout the year.



Presentation to Verulam U3A: October 2022
around 100 people in the audience

PRESENTATIONS TO LOCAL GROUPS

We are very happy to provide presentations to local groups on the development of our Society and what we've been up to over the past 12 years, and our hopes and aspirations for the future.

We've given them to a wide variety of audiences – including Women's Institutes, U3A groups, model railway societies and engineering groups, students at Oaklands College - and would like to think that we've developed a good reputation for engaging our audiences and making the content interesting. We don't charge for these presentations but are happy to receive donations that go towards the costs of our exciting community projects.



OUR EXHIBITION

One of the members of the Verulam U3A audience happened to be a member of City Church in Smallford (at the end of Lyon Way, next to the Alban Way). We were invited to display our exhibition in their church. It's open on the last Saturday of each month between 11am and 3pm - and visitors are made very welcome.

Please contact us via info@smallford.org if you:

- would like to be kept informed of our work and be added to our emailing list
 - would like a presentation to a group that you're involved with
 - would like to be actively involved yourself (design, implementation, maintenance...)
and it would obviously assist us if you would let us know how you would like to be involved together with any particular skills and interest that you could offer.
- have ideas/suggestions to contribute....

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

Boat trip on the Grand Union Canal in August

A very warm and sunny morning greeted our 30 boaters at the Nash Mills Wharf. Members and their friends loaded with snacks and drinks assembled before 10am, looking forward to the day on the canal, and the fish&chips lunch.

With gentle progress and some hard work on 5 locks we moored at Grove Mill near Watford for lunch and then back in the heat of the day. The unpaid volunteers who run Waterways Experiences charity did a fantastic job.



Snacks, drinks and sun



Working the locks



Moored for fish and chips lunch



We were even allowed to steer

In October we had a barn dance in the village hall



NEXT EVENT

Our next event will be our Christmas dinner dance in the village hall on Saturday 3rd December

DID YOU KNOW? YOU ARE WELCOME
You do not need to be a member to enjoy this evening of good food, music, dancing and company.

We all need cheering up now that winter is here and the nights are dark and long.

Contact Lesley for more information and reserve your place.

lewislesley@hotmail.co.uk

THE COLNEY HEATH WI

A long hot summer with Colney Heath WI

Amanda Furlong writes :

By the time you read this the long hot summer will just be a memory. Colney Heath WI made the most the hot weather with activities outside.

Our members are avid gardeners and hosted various events which showed off their horticultural skills. Starting with a cheese and wine evening in June. The selection of cheeses filled a table with some coming from Chatsworth house! Judy's garden in Roestock Lane was at it's best before the heat wave struck.

July saw a group attending St Albans Open Air Theatre. Sitting in the Roman theatre drinking Prosecco and enjoying a balmy evening while watching "the full works of Shakespeare abridged". This was an hilarious run through all the plays in under 2 hours.

Then came an evening of Pimms & Puddings in August. Fans very much in evidence as we enjoyed Sue's garden in Fellows Lane.

August also saw an outing to the Tyttenhanger miniature railway. Age and restricted mobility did not stop our intrepid members riding the trains as well as enjoying a cuppa with cake of course!

The St Albans Heritage day in September had members offering refreshments at the Smallford Station. Several members enjoyed the guided walk down the Alban Way.

A final afternoon tea in Veronica's garden in Bullens Green Lane rounded off our summer outdoors. Despite there being a hint of autumn in the air we sat in the sun on the sheltered patio.

Thank you to all the ladies who opened their gardens and supplied us with cake!

Sadly our September meeting coincided with the announcement of the death of our most famous WI member, Queen Elizabeth II. We held a minute's silence and it was good to be together to share our sadness and memories.

In October felt strange to finish with "God save the King".



COLNEY HEATH THEATRE CLUB

Colney Heath Theatre Club has been running trips from the village and local area to see a range of hit shows in the West End for the past fifteen years.

Earlier this year, back in April, we saw Grease, the Musical at the Dominion Theatre.



On the 25th October we went to see The Choir of Man on 25th, a show that has just returned to the West End.

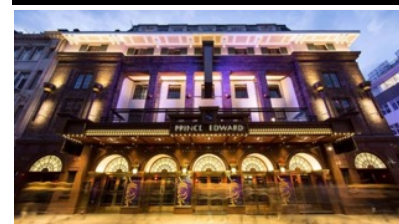


Billed as "the best night in your local you've ever had" Choir Man has a multi-talented cast of nine guys who combine beautiful harmonies and foot-stomping singalongs with dance and even some poetry. Featuring breath-taking chart topping hits from artists including Guns'N'Roses, Fun!, Adele, Avicii, Paul Simon, Sia and many more, it was a real night to remember.

Looking forward to 2023, we have just booked Tickets for Ain't Too Proud at The Prince Edward Theatre on Tuesday 9th May 2023. This is a new musical coming to the West End after a successful run on Broadway.

From the creators of the award-winning Jersey Boys, Ain't Too Proud is a brilliant new musical following the remarkable journey of The Temptations from the streets of Detroit to The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

TONY award winning choreography and Grammy award music tell a thrilling story of brotherhood, loyalty and betrayal set to the beat of the group's most treasured hits including My Girl, Just My Imagination, Papa was a Rolling Stone and many more.



The Temptations rose to the top of the charts with a staggering 42 Top Ten Hits and 14 number ones. Fortunately for us we get a chance to enjoy their music once more with tickets available at £51.00. This includes travel to and from the venue by coach.

We provide a comfortable and convenient way to enjoy an evening in the West End.

There are various boarding points in Colney Heath, Smallford and Colney Heath Lane for many a door to service!

Colney Heath Theatre Club is a not-for-profit organisation. If you would like to receive information on the theatre trips please either email colneyheaththeatreclub@yahoo.co.uk or telephone/text 07870701118

COLNEY HEATH CHRONICLES – the Sequel

After the sell-out success of the first volume of the *Colney Heath Chronicles* we decided to produce another one. This time it covers the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and showcases stories, triumphs, disasters, mishaps and mistakes that have gone into making the village we are all so fond of.

Let me give you a taste of some of the entertaining, sad and just plain weird things previous villagers got up to.

Are you interested in hearing the unfortunate story of the world's most incompetent and unluckiest spy? Or how we had a sea-faring hero in our midst?

Your curiosity will be answered along with some evidence on the Luftwaffe's competence in map reading.

While we are talking about the war, what would you do if one of your chums brought a live bomb, newly dropped by the Luftwaffe, into school. This really did happen. We're lucky the school building is still in one piece.

And talking of school, we all know that the present building is not the original one, but do you know how Victorian schools were run? Buy the book and find out.

Do you know many pubs there were in the village? More than enough for the number of drunk and disorderly arrests to be alarmingly high.

Crimes committed in the village included murder and housebreaking. I'm not suggesting that all these misdemeanours were fuelled by alcohol. But one person was certainly hauled up before the courts for selling beer on Christmas day.

On a more sober note, do you like fast motorbikes? Alas no longer there but there was a speedway track where the University of Hertfordshire de Havilland campus is now. If you like your races a little slower but just as exhilarating, there was also a greyhound track.

And here's a conundrum: where should you keep a dead body until you had somewhere to put it permanently? There is some advice on how to avoid losing the corpse.

Once again, I was surprised at the level of activity such a small hamlet. There were only 853 souls. This figure from the 1891 census does not relate to houses but to families. Even if we assume two parents and two children that only gives us 200 houses and we know that often families were considerably larger than a mere two offspring.

We expect to receive the first print run by the end of November well in time to fulfil for your Christmas present list.

Put your name on the list and be among the first to see it. If you want a signed copy let us know.

Contact jackclemow@gmail.com to be sure to get your copy

Our second volume has many interesting photographs and illustrations by local artists : a taster below



The Gardeners Arms pub



Matilda the pig



The school boys and girls

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 with us before you buy anything.

We meet in the Studio at the Village Hall the first and third Wednesday morning in every month from 10-12. It is only £3 per session and you only pay for the sessions you attend. There is no commitment to join a minimum number etc.



Unfinished acrylic painting of an owl



Unfinished watercolour



The last pub in the village



Summer holiday sketch



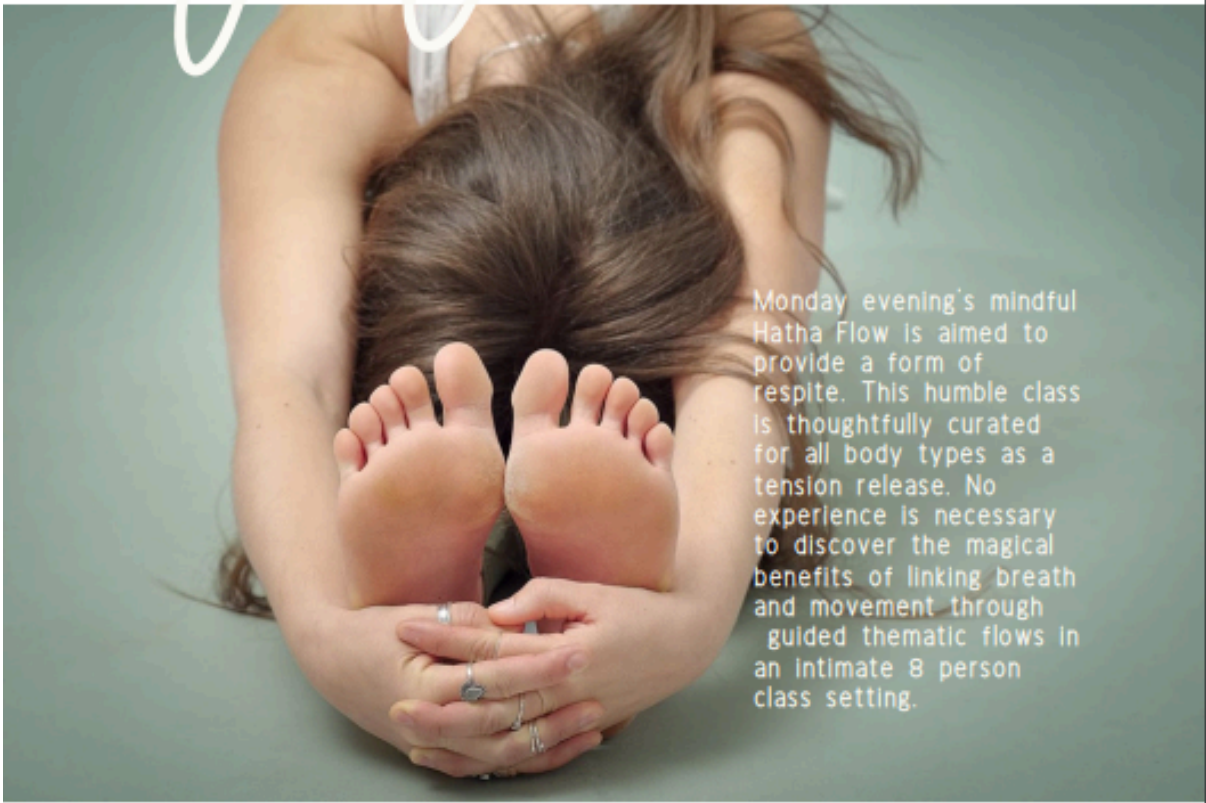
Careful composition to draw you in and stay a while



Artful light and colour draws you in to stay a while

yoga

WITH EMMA



Monday evening's mindful Hatha Flow is aimed to provide a form of respite. This humble class is thoughtfully curated for all body types as a tension release. No experience is necessary to discover the magical benefits of linking breath and movement through guided thematic flows in an intimate 8 person class setting.

Mondays
19:30-20.30

Colney Heath
Village Hall

Drop in £15
5 classes £50

Contact to sign up or request private sessions
Call/Text 07453308193 DM @Yoga.withEmma

Photo by Paul Ottavio • Colney Heath • www.kodakline.com

RDS & MRS FETTI'S FITNESS

Mike met the other day with Cheryl Fetti who has started with her business partner Richard Stunt an exciting series of fitness sessions based in Colney Heath Village Hall.

Cheryl has lived with her husband Stuart in Hall Gardens for 9 years. She is a qualified Personal Trainer, working at the gymnasium in the London Colney Leisure Centre.

Richard specialises in Strength and Conditioning leading to improved functional movement.

Their differing skill sets are combining to bring healthy activity into Colney Heath village.

They offer each participant personal attention in a programme which comprises (but is not limited to):

- Step ups
- Sledge pulling and pushing
- Boxing pads – this is very popular with the people who attend the sessions.

The high level of personal attention is intended to aid progress and prevent injury.

These activities are designed to improve functional movement and posture, as well as heart and cardiovascular health.

The sessions are held every Thursday at 7.30pm and last an hour with a warm up, activities and a cool down. The cost is £10.00 per session or £35.00 per month. A number of regular participants have already signed up but there's room for many more.

Cheryl says

"I started my fitness Bootcamp in the Village Hall to bring Colney Heath together by creating a safe family environment where people can improve their muscle strength and Endurance.

My passion is helping people reach their health and fitness goals. maintaining good functional strength and heart health while having fun and meeting new people."

Cheryl believes that the programme is perfect for your New Year resolution!



MRS FETTI

Fitness

FITNESS BLAST



THURSDAY EVENINGS


STARTING THURSDAY OCT 6TH @ 7:30 - 8.30PM

All welcome to join Cheryl for a Thursday evening fitness blast !

Are you fed up of saying "I've got to get down the gym" at our boot camp you can get your weekly fitness blast.

Whether it's your first time at a boot camp or you are a seasoned pro we can cater for all.

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EVERY THURSDAY

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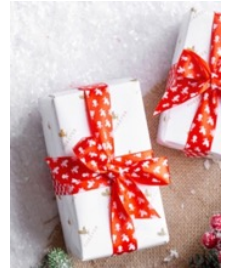
TO BOOK:

Please ring Cheryl to confirm your booking.

 **07958 041483**

Please note each class is capped at 10 people.

NICKY PACKMAN



With the festive season right around the corner, are you starting to think about the gifts you'd like to buy for friends and family this year? In these tricky financial times, I thought I would suggest a few gift ideas for under £20. I offer free local delivery and am happy to put some gift bundles together to suit your budget ... please just ask and I'll be pleased to give you some recommendations.



ALOE LIPS
A rich & nourishing lip balm blended with Aloe vera and Jojoba
£3.20

ALOE AVOCADO SOAP
Creamy, nourishing & moisturising bar with a fresh, citrus scent
£6.00



ALOE VERA GELLY
Moisturises, conditions & soothes sensitive, damaged & irritated skin
£14.00

ALOE HEAT LOTION
Soothing, warming lotion to ease sore and aching muscles & joints
£14.00



ALOE PROPOLIS CREME
A deeply moisturising blend of Aloe, Bee Propolis & Chamomile for hands, face & body. Suitable for those prone to very dry skin conditions.
£17.00

SMOOTHING EXFOLIATOR & AWAKENING EYE CREAM
Two of our award-winning facial skincare products
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ALOE BIO-CELLULOSE MASK Deeply penetrates fine lines & wrinkles more than traditional masks to reveal soothed, soft, conditioned, 'glowing' skin. Multi-award winning! £10.00 each



Contact Nicky Packman on 07973 102313 or nicky@nickypackman.com
www.shop.nickypackman.com

THE SIEGE OF COLNEY HEATH

The barrister for the developer of Bullens Green Lane appeal thinks Colney Heath is special as it opened the door to unrestricted development of green fields in the Green Belt. And this has led to the siege described on the following pages.

Colney Heath Village has around 750 dwellings with 1,250 electors. Colney Heath is a village community surrounded by greenspaces. It feels like it is deep in the countryside but step across its boundaries and St Albans City centre is but 5 miles away. This is its unique character.

We have St Marks Church, the Village Hall, the junior school, the shop & post office, and one pub. Somewhat unusually for a village we have a well established Football & Social Club (founded in 1907). The many local organizations are evidence of the strength of the community. And then we have the Common (a designated nature reserve), green open spaces, paddocks, farmed land, woods and ponds.

The village has a long and interesting history. The Colney Heath & District History Society has a collection of old photographs, maps and documents, a fascinating record of life in the village.

The Old Colney Heath Calendar included many of these pictures with the memories of village elders gathered by John Rowland. These mainly dealt with the farms farmhands and that made Colney Heath what it is, a rural community. Produced for the CBTA for nine years before Covid stopped the gathering of these stories, the annual calendar was much sought after with 500 copies sold every year.

The Colney Heath Chronicles written by local historian Ruth Herman, and published by the Colney Heath & District History Society in 2021 traced the history of the village from Roman times to the 18thC. The sequel, dealing with the 19thC and 20thC up to the WWII, is expected to be on sale in the village by the end of November.

Our history is important because it reveals the roots of our community. These are deep and strong as evidenced in the following example, a common experience.

The day John and Sue moved into Bullens Green Lane 22 years ago their next-door neighbor Patsy Howard presented them with a card which read "*welcome neighbors, we have been happy here and hope you will be too*". And Patsy introduced them to the Twinning Association, the WI, and the trustees of the Village Hall. This story a common experience.

The essence of Colney Heath is its unique character, its sense of community, and its environment. Residents who have lived here for many years, many born in the village, and more recent arrivals, accept the compromise in our location.

The disadvantages: virtually no useful bus service. almost every adult needs a car to get to work, to shop, to access primary health care, to eat out etc. Limited nursery and primary school places mean many have to drive their children outside the village. Secondary schools are too far to walk or cycle to (if a place can be found).

The advantages : our village community and our environment, and the protection of our open spaces that we believed is provided by the Green Belt. The District Council has refused permission even for small extensions to existing houses because we are in the Green Belt. The principal purpose of creating the Green Belt was to keep the land permanently open.

People coming to the village tend to initially feel they are "outsiders" and take a long time to connect with the local community. The village community will struggle to absorb the incoming population at Bullens Green Lane (maybe 200-250 adults) : around 16% - 20% increase in the adult population.

Substantially more than this influx in just a few years would totally transform this place from a village - into what? We think Colney Heath would become a "dormitory "unsettlement" populated by many more people moaning about the lack of school places, traffic congestion, flooding etc.

Any more houses than the 100 on Bullens Green Lane and Colney Heath village will simply be a subject for the historians, and a fond memory for a declining number of villagers.

THE SIEGE OF COLNEY HEATH

The battle is not lost, it has only just begun.

JOIN THE FIGHT!

Two planning applications have been submitted – 45 houses next to the Football Club and 150 houses on the field between the river Colne and numbers 40 to 100 Tollgate Road. Hundreds of objections have been submitted.

When we hear when the St Albans Planning Committee meets we will let you know the date. *attend these meeting and support the speakers against these applications.*

Developers “consult” before making a planning application. When we hear about a consultation we will let you know. These may be presentations in person and/or on line. The developer has to make a statement of public consultation when they submit a planning application.

Find out what is being proposed and let them know what you think.

When we hear about a planning application we will let you know. 4ColneyHeath residents association has a planning working group which reviews planning proposals, applications and prepares objections. This group will prepare and circulate objections that you can use and explain how to do this.

Submit your objections, best expressed in your own words, to St Albans District Council.

The 4ColneyHeath planning working group needs people to help with the fight. This may be simple things like calling your contacts, supporting a petition, or delivering leaflets. It could be gathering information or reviewing parts of a document.

Contact 4ColneyHeath residents association email 4colneyheath@gmail.com

When help is needed it will be explained. It will be your choice to help if you feel you can, and can make the time. There is no commitment in registering your support.

In the following column and pages we explain why we under siege and the battleground we have to fight on.

The failure of the “Plan-led” system

An approved Local Plan is important. Without a Local Plan the provision of schools cannot be planned being the responsibility of the Herts County Council. And Health Services provided by the NHS can't be planned.

The last approved Local Plan for St Albans District dates from 1994. The District Council has made many attempts at achieving current approved the Local Plan but faces a “Gordian knot” because 82% of the District is in the Green Belt. The Council is trying to formulate a new Local Plan to deliver a target of around 1,000 new dwellings per annum in the District which covers St Albans to the south, Harpenden to the north, and Redbourn to the west. This house building target inevitable inevitably means many houses would need to be built on Green Belt land. This is a political hot potato.

In drafting the Local Plan the Council has to agree their proposals with the adjoining district councils. Hertsmere's draft Local Plan proposed Bowmans Cross (effectively a small town of 6,000 houses) on both sides of Coursers Road between London Colney and Colney Heath. The new town would in reality be part of London Colney and rely on the facilities and services in St Albans District. But Hertsmere Council would receive the tax income. St Albans objected and Hertsmere had to shelve their draft.

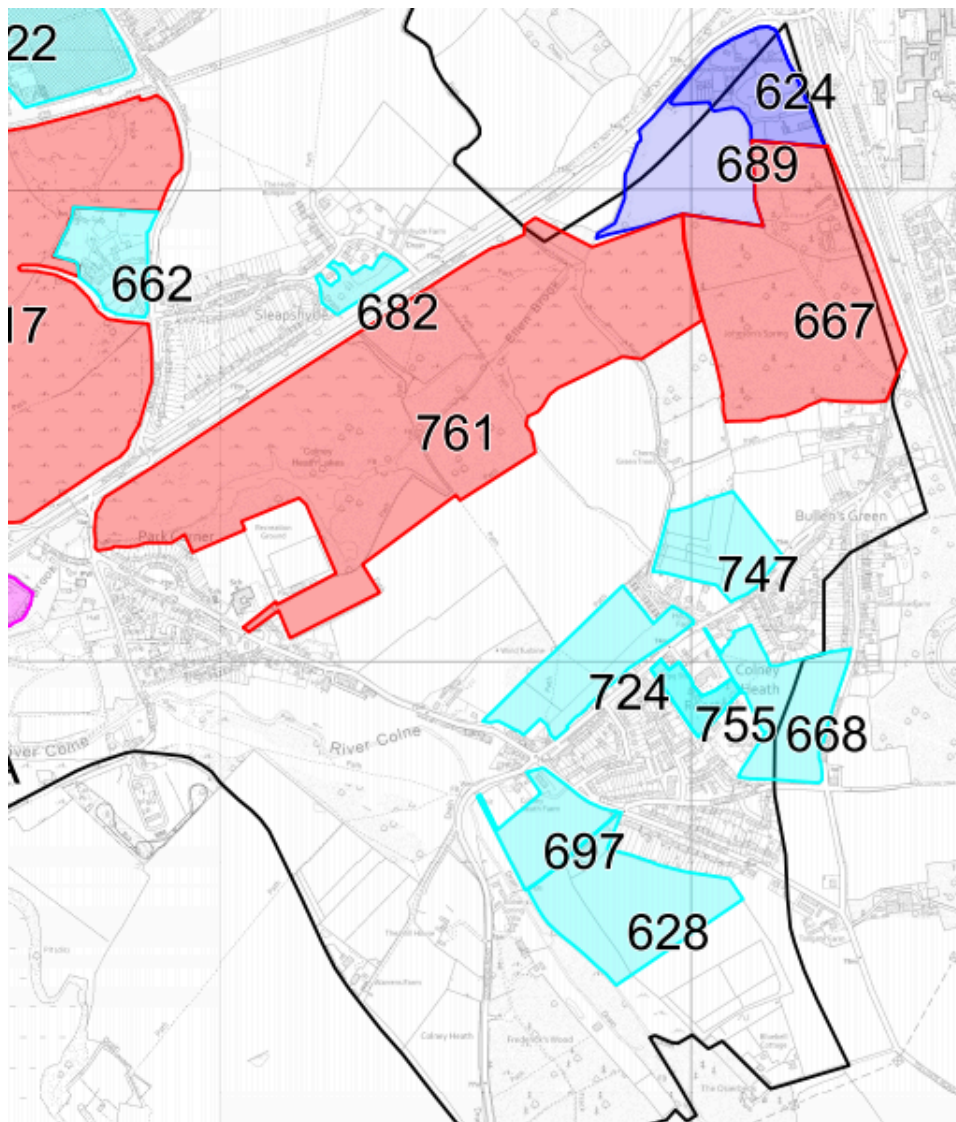
The district councils are floundering with an artificially inflated housing target, limited land to allocate for development, and conflicting local and neighbouring agendas.

Ferrets tied up in a sack being pummeled by the electorate comes to mind.

In 2020 St Albans District Council called for sites to be considered by the Council in the preparation of the Local Plan.

The map on the next page shows the sites in the village put forward by land owners and developers for consideration in the Local Plan. These include more than 1,800 additional dwellings on the village side of the A414.

THE SIEGE OF COLNEY HEATH



parcel	Dwellings	Location	Outlook
668	100	Bullens Green Lane	Taylor Wimpey, planning consent granted
761	45	High Street	Tarmac planning application submitted
628	150	Tollgate Road	Vistry, planning application submitted
724	150	Roestock Lane	Bellway, consultation in progress
747	110	Roestock Lane	Horizon Life, consultation in progress
761	700	High Street/A414	Tarmac, "housing-led mixed use"
697	50	Tollgate Road	Not clear
755	30	Roestock Lane	Affinity water, 3 previous applications refused
667	540	Roestock Lane	Site is "housing-led mixed use"

TOTAL 1,875

THE SIEGE OF COLNEY HEATH

The Developer-led “solution”

In advance of the updated Local Plan for St Albans District the landowner /developer of the field on Bullens Green Lane submitted a planning application for 100 houses, including 45 “affordable” dwellings. This was refused by the St Albans and Welwyn Hatfield councils (the site spans the district boundary between these two authorities). The Planning Inspectorate appointed Inspector Masters to hear the landowner/developer’s appeal held in May 2021.

The landowner/developer’s case was that

- the “Plan-led system” has failed to provide a 5 year supply of land for the housing requirement,
- that there is an acute housing delivery shortage, and acute affordable housing need
- in the Welwyn Hatfield area 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,
- the scale of the crisis in affordable housing and affordability is *very* substantial. These are real people in real need now, and
- there being no prospect of the Plan-led system to provide the housing needed, the solution was in the hands of “Developer-led” process.

Inspector Masters agreed with their case and deemed the housing shortage to be “very special circumstances” that outweighed the harm to the Green Belt, and judged that Colney Heath is a sustainable location with village facilities for day-to-day needs, and cycling and buses to access St Albans, Hatfield Tesco Extra, Welwyn Garden City, and Potters Bar provided alternatives to the car.

This is a very significant judgement which is being cited as justification for development on Green Belt land.

Taylor Wimpey acquired the land with outline planning permission and, as house builders, are executing the project. Their detailed planning application was approved by the District Councils on 7th and 8th November 2022. The Council’s coffers are empty and they appear to have no appetite to refuse planning applications and face the cost of an appeal.

Seeing the stable door left wide open by the Bullens Green Lane appeal decision, the landowners and developers are piling in to gorge on our green fields, chewing up the land to churn out hundreds of potato stamp boxes with postage stamp sized gardens (and harvest millions of pounds in profit). Their preferred “product” is bland 4 and 5 bed houses. The “housing mix” is determined by what they think they can get approved, not what the village needs.

And what will the developers do for Colney Heath?

The landowners/developers of the Bullens Green Lane development, allegedly now richer by £20million, will pay £16,000 towards a new bus shelter in Hall Gardens and an undefined contribution to the Scout Hut (if it’s for the Scouts).

Will the developers provide the primary and secondary schools required locally? the GP services locally? the bus services needed to replace car use? safe cycle lanes to Sainsburys or Welham Green Station?

Obviously no.

Will the developments damage the character, community, and environment of the village? Yes, totally.

The “developer-led solution” is rampant commercial anarchy, the ugly underbelly of capitalism, and a travesty of the democratic process. Residents have objected for good reasons and the District Council have refused planning applications (but now seem to be running scared).

So what does Colney Heath need?

The chair of the Colney Heath Parish Council, Peter Cook, objecting to the Taylor Wimpey housing mix as inappropriate development, noted Colney Heath needs 2 and 3 bed houses, not 4 and 5 bed houses.

Frequently mentioned are small developments on infill, brownfield, and marginal “green” sites for genuinely affordable houses for the next generation to buy so that they are not forced to move away from the village and 2 bed room bungalows for empty nesters to downsize to.

THE SIEGE OF COLNEY HEATH

Myths, mysteries, and “economies with the truth”

The housing requirement

The target for St Albans District is around 1,000 dwelling per annum. The Office for National Statistics provides data on the growth of households in each area. The Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) have used this data and the Standard Method used to calculate the housing requirement. Based on the ONS data for 2018 the requirement is 298 dwellings per year, a third of which should be affordable. Further, the ONS projection for 2022-2032 is 213 additional household per year.

So how well has St Albans District Council performed? Fairly well it would seem.

Completions since 2012/13 stated in their document “St Albans Council Housing Test Action Plan” dated Dec 2021 page 8 is an average of 412 dwellings per year and the affordable delivery totaled 677, an average of 77 per annum.

The mystery is why is St Albans District Council shooting itself in the head by adopting a disastrously damaging inflated target?

Affordable delivery

In the appeal decision Inspector Masters states “*The uncontested evidence presented by the appellant [i.e. the landowner] on affordable housing for both local authorities illustrates some serious shortcomings in terms of past delivery trends.... In SADC, the position is equally as serious. Since the period 2012/13, a total of 244 net affordable homes have been delivered at an average of 35 net dwellings per annum. (Appeal Decision Paragraph 53).*”

Why was this “uncontested”?

“Affordable” continued

Including “affordable” housing in development proposals is the current carrot in front of the donkey.

The proposal to include 45 “affordable” houses at Bullens Green Lane was claimed to be a benefit which should attract very substantial weight.

Taylor Wimpey have since said the affordable units they would be building at Bullens Green Lane would be at 80% of the market rate. The house price to earnings ratio in the area means a house will cost 17 times annual income. At 80% for the “affordable” units the cost would be 13 times annual salary. The maximum mortgage a bank will offer is 5 times joint annual income. So not “affordable” for key workers or our next generation of young people who would like to buy a house and remain in the village.

One developer has reportedly admitted their “affordable” houses would not be for low income people on the housing register.

A sustainable location

Inspector Aston refused the developer’s appeal for the Smallford Works site on station Road (St Albans District Council had refused the planning application).

He noted modes of transport for access with low emissions (use of buses, cycling) were an important consideration.

“All aspects of sustainability should be considered in planning decisions, local circumstances should be considered, and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas... locating significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes are key considerations. Ultimately, this is to reduce the effects of congestion and emissions, mitigate and adapt to climate change and ensure air quality and public health is improved.” (Appeal decision paragraph 68).

Every resident in Colney Heath knows the bus services are sparse and the timetables useless. No one in the right mind would cycle down Coursers Road to Sainsburys or Tollgate Road to Welham Green. Few would attempt to cycle to St Albans station to commute to London, to the movies at the Odyssey, or to a restaurant for an evening meal. Everyone here is almost totally dependent on their cars to work, to shop, to access schools and entertainment.

THE SIEGE OF COLNEY HEATH

Every additional child coming to the village will have to be driven to school in Hatfield or to the other side of St Albans. This would add between 1.5 and 2 tonnes of CO₂ per child per annum (equal to 5 or 6 flights to Ibiza). Sustainable? Not.

Protecting the Green Belt

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) says where the Local Plan is out-of-date, planning permission should not be granted on land designated as Green Belt unless the benefits of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the adverse effects.

Inspector Masters considered the lack of affordable housing delivery, and the need, to be “very special circumstances” which outweighed the harm, deemed to be significant, to the Green Belt at Bullens Green Lane.

But St Albans Council know they have delivered 270% more affordable dwellings that Masters stated had been delivered.

The Planning Committee meeting on 7th November 2022 approved Taylor Wimpey’s detailed application for Bullens Green Lane. They noted the harm arising from the housing would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the delivery of 100 homes on this site which had already been tested at the Appeal for this site at the time of the outline permission.

As we have seen this test was flawed. The committee were concerned that refusing the application would result in a costly appeal which they thought they would lose as they have no current Local Plan.

There are around 56,000 households in St Albans District. Using the need of 298 additional households, the growth is 0.5% per annum or 5% over 10 years.

The 100 houses on Bullens Green Lane increases the number of houses in the village from 750 to 850. i.e. an increase of 13%.

We think this is far more than our fair share.

So to the consequences

The NPPF states ‘*Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by inappropriateness, and any other harm [our emphasis] resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.*’

The coherence of a village is based on its social connections. These are formed gradually at school by class mates and parents at the gate, by neighbours over the fence, by dog walkers on the Common, when people join community organizations and clubs. New residents are integrated by the villagers – it can take years to feel at home and part of the community.

The village community would be overwhelmed by too many new arrivals in too short a time

This is the potential social harm. Another is what we think is a breach of promise. To quote but one resident

“In my 60’s I moved here 4 years ago and bought my forever home with a beautiful view of green fields. I thought this was protected, I can’t tell you how angry and let down I feel. I am now thinking of leaving.” Judging by the number of For Sale signs in the village this is far from a unique opinion.

Developing Green Belt land supposed to be permanent, and turning a village into a dormitory estate, is both undemocratic and a breach of the promise that land designated as Green Belt would be kept permanently open.

The “other harm” of unsustainable development in terms of the environmental, economic, and social considerations must be taken into account.