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March 2023 Issue 69



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Details on page 6



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The Post Newspaper Group is an independent hyper-local tabloid newspaper publisher distributing 2 titles with over 14,000 copies to homes and businesses in Coleshill and Castle Bromwich each month, free of charge.

Our main aim is to provide hyper-local news and information to the community where it would otherwise not be accessible. We also offer the most effective platform for local businesses to promote themselves to their target audience. This benefits the entire community and improves social-cohesion.

Any views, articles and columns expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Publisher, nor indeed their responsibility.

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**Monday 27th February
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&

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**For more information contact Meda on
07549037477**

WARM FRIENDS



**Water Orton Warm Hub and Cost of Living help,
and Exercise Sessions to Boot!**

Great news, we are hosting a Warm Hub and Cost of Living weekly help sessions at the new Old Salts Rugby Club clubhouse, Coleshill Road, Water Orton (B46 1QE) on Thursday's from 10am to 3pm, up until the end of March.

We're providing:

- fresh cakes
- daily newspapers and magazines
- games and entertainment
- hot drinks
- soup and a roll at lunchtime

Best of all we are offering a warm welcome and friendship at every session.

We can help with access to Council approved experts if you would like a bit of confidential help or advice on dealing with cost of living pressures you may be facing both at home and when out food shopping. All help is given in the strictest of confidence.

From 1pm until 2pm every Thursday our professional physio will be running **FREE** age and ability fitness sessions in the new clubhouse and will also be on hand to give **FREE** professional advice about any aches or pains that may be hindering you getting out and about. **How good is that!**

So, please come and join us, come for cake and fun at any time from 10am, and if its just the fitness and physio sessions you fancy then we'll see you before 1pm. Everyone warmly welcomed if you fancy a bit of company and somewhere warm to save on the heating.

Our thanks to North Warwickshire Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council for their help and sponsorship of these events. With kind regards,

**Cllr Dave Reilly and Mick Lee,
Chair of Old Saltleians Rugby Football Club.**

JUST POP IN!
NO APPOINTMENTS NEEDED

Scott Bevan History Column



Earliest engagements of the English Civil War

For many years it's been thought that one of the earliest engagements of the English Civil War, if not the earliest, between the Royalists and Parliamentarians troops took place near Curdworth Bridge in the August of 1642.

However, during the recent development of HS2 in the area, the foundations of a building once known as Coleshill Manor have been excavated in a field situated

between Smithswood and Coleshill. Evidence uncovered by the archaeologists excavating the remains of Coleshill Manor might suggest that one of the earliest Civil War skirmishes in fact took place here, just a couple of miles from Curdworth Bridge. For on the stone facade of the gatehouse and the two octagonal towers that once stood as the entranceway into Coleshill Manor, they discovered hundreds of scars and divots left by fired musket balls. Not only that but lots of musket balls have also been recovered from the area around the Manor House

which would've once been the moat. The English Civil War raged across the country between the years 1642 & 1651 and during this period, the owners of Coleshill Manor were staunch Royalists loyal to their King, King Charles I. However, many other people were not and they supported the Parliamentarian cause. We also know that both Parliamentarian and Royalist forces were in the immediate vicinity in August 1642, so just maybe the Parliamentarians decided to let the Royalist owners of Coleshill Manor know that they were about

just prior to engaging with Royalist forces near Curdworth Bridge? Of course this is just conjecture as there's no way to be sure when the Manor House was attacked, but the Civil War was almost certainly the best explanation for the damage that it sustained. It appears that the Civil War didn't go unnoticed in these parts and it's amazing to think that for the best part of four centuries, evidence of the goings on lay just below our feet. I wonder what else we'll discover about the area over time and during alterations to the landscape.



Chamber reveals expanded global trade offering at conference



A new drive to create international trade opportunities for Greater Birmingham businesses was announced at the Chamber's Global Trade Conference yesterday.

From 1 April, the Greater Birmingham Commonwealth Chamber of Commerce (GBCCC) will evolve into the Greater Birmingham Global Chamber of Commerce (GBGCC) to provide opportunities for Chamber members in more international markets.

Mark Smith (pictured), president of the new GBGCC, made the announcement to delegates at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

Mr Smith, the executive director of business engagement at Aston University, said: "We need to evolve to allow great opportunities to members including all countries and so from 1 April we will enhance the Commonwealth Chamber division to incorporate further markets for the purpose of bi-lateral trading opportunities.

"This will add great value to the division and as an existing GBCCC member the benefits to you expand across the globe, not just the Commonwealth.

"We look forward to speaking with you in the coming weeks and seeing you at the Greater Birmingham Global Chamber of Commerce events.

"Your membership is valuable to us and we look forward to embracing the evolution of the GBCCC to the GBGCC together."

Mr Smith also announced Ginho Europe Precision Manufacturing Co Ltd as the GBGCC's first patron.

Ginoh is a Burton-based manufacturer of fabricated metals for the automotive sector.

Managing director Shaun Gray, who is president of the Burton and District Chamber of Commerce, said: "We're delighted to be a partner and founding patron of the new Global Chamber.

"As a company who trades internationally, being able to make connections with places like Mexico, Japan and other countries is very important us.

"We've never previously been able to find a global chamber so for Greater Birmingham to be leading on this is fantastic – particularly for us as a Midlands company."

More details on the new Greater Birmingham Global Chamber of Commerce will be announced in April.

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Pirate's Pantry Recipe of the month Chicken Domoda

It's been a while hasn't it? I should say so!

We've made it through the dark evenings, the days are getting longer and we can all expect to start doing without the central heating soon.

While we wait for the weather to begin to give our wallets a break, here is a really rich and wholesome dish to stick to your ribs and keep you warm and toasty.

Gambian peanut stew, or Domoda is known in west Africa by different names; Durango by the Mandinka and Mafe by the Wollofs of Senegal.

I'm sure that many traditionalists will take umbridge at my tweaks with this recipe, and should you wish, you are welcome to change the potato for pumpkin or sweet potato. This is my take on a West African classic.

Play about with the level of chilli until you have this attuned to your own taste. Simple to cook, amazing to share. Serve on its own, with Tapalapa bread or plain rice.

As always, please send any and all feedback to piratespantry@gmail.com

Serves 6

Ingredients:

- 6 chicken thighs
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic minced
- 2 cloves garlic sliced for garnish
- 2 cans chopped tomato
- 480g crunchy peanut butter
- 2 chicken stock cubes
- 2 litres water
- Scotch bonnet chillies diced, according to heat preference
- 4 medium potatoes, cubed
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method:

Heat the oil in large saucepan. Seal the chicken thighs until browned all over.

Add the water, the onions, garlic and tomatoes and chillies. Bring up to a boil and keep on high heat for 10 minutes.

Add peanut butter, potatoes and stock cubes. Stir to combine, bring to a boil and keep on a high heat for 10 minutes before reducing heat and simmering for 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add squash, cover, and continue to cook for 35-40 minutes until the potato is soft.

Season with salt and pepper and serve with chilli and garlic slices for garnish.





Castle Bromwich
Hall Gardens

March News blowing in from Castle Bromwich Historic Gardens



Spring has sprung, the weather is warming slightly and we are welcomed by beautiful bursts of colour as flowers like daffodils emerge. We love the greenery of our 18th century formal garden but welcome the sunny yellows that visit us this time of year.



The jolly bobbing Daffodils should be seen in abundance this month under the trees lining the entrance to the Gardens and in clumps in the Upper Wilderness and around the Mirror Pond and the early

tulips - so beloved by the 17th and 18th century gardeners here - should just begin to show.

March winds and spectacular clouds might prevent relaxed picnics in the Gardens but there are still plenty of reasons to visit this month.

Our popular Forest School sessions bring the young ones and their grown ups in for Tuesday afternoon and Saturday morning sessions .. Den building and pond dipping are great favourites at this time of year. Our new "Grow Your Own Veg Club" is already full and active too.

On March 25th it's the first Canine Cafe of the year too. We welcome our doggy friends (on short leads) in the Gardens anytime, but the monthly free Canine Cafes are a chance for all kinds of dogs and their owners to spend a little social time together in the courtyard.

There are usually free Doggy Muffins or Puppaccinos available (with every human hot drink bought) available all day. You can turn up any time we are open, but 'Doggy meet and greets', ideal for friendly dogs usually happen between 11am and 1pm.

It's all kicking off in April...

Make sure your diaries are clear for a April there is so much going on.

Easter Egg Trails - a self-guided trail of clues around the Gardens - kick off on Saturday 1st April and continue EVERY DAY until Sunday 16th. Each ending with a sweet treat (a crème egg or alternative).



Percy the Park Keeper is back in April too, with a new story trail too .. this time the Gardens trail and bookable adventures are based on the story **One Springy Day** Boing boing!

We're being invaded... again!



Colonel John Pickering and his

Regiment of Foote are camping out again on Easter Weekend - Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th.

Colonel Pickering's troop come fresh from laying siege to Coleshill Manor (so they tell us!!) as part of one of the first skirmishes of the English Civil War in 1642.



Pop along anytime over the weekend to explore the living history camp, talk to soldiers and their retinue, take in the smell of cooking over the open fires, watch their regular musket drills and maybe even try on a helmet or two.. (For more about the newly discovered remains of Coleshill Hall see here <https://www.hs2.org.uk/building-hs2/archaeology/coleshill/>).

Our inspiring creative sessions for the under fives return later in April

B'opera - First Songs in the Orchard - beautiful music for

tiny ears (April 20th) and making nature inspired art and craft with Nature Makers (April 21st).

There's a bookable Floristry workshop on Friday 14th April and over the weekend of 15th and 16th April the Garden Tent will be dressed for a Weddings Showcase. Did you know you can get married in the Gardens? Under a tree, on the lawn or even in our beautiful Orangery and Music Room?



It will be a treat to see whether or not you are planning an outdoor wedding or reception. Pop along. Booking is online.

For more information about all the events and activities, visit the website or pop into the Gardens when we are open (Wednesdays to Sundays 10.30 -3.30pm).

Castle Bromwich Historic Gardens - Gardener's Tips for March

We'll see if Spring really has sprung and warmer days are beginning this month. What is certain is that as our Earth, on its 900 tilt, rotates and circles around the sun our days will get longer this season. Warmth or not it's those shorter nights which stimulate the plants to start growing.

Among the colourful beauties of Spring the daffodils are perhaps the cheeriest. Lining hedgerows and roadsides both native varieties and 'garden escapes' can be seen in abundance.

For those with 'daffs' and narcissi in your gardens here's a tip. Once the daffodils have started to fade, remove the developing seed heads - pinch or cut off the heads: the plant will then put all its energy into replenishing itself rather than trying to reproduce.

Don't cut off any leaves or tie them into bunches. Tidiness is much overrated in Gardens these days, so even though the leaves may look a little untidy, they are doing an important job in helping the bulb underground to gain valuable reserves to help with flowering next year.

It is a good month for planting shallots and onions. If the

weather turns slightly warmer you may be able to start to plant early potatoes at the end of the month. You can check the temperature of the soil by using the back of your hand or by noticing the germination of weed seeds. If weeds are germinating then the soil must be getting warmer so hoe them off and start to plant the harder salads such as radish and beetroot.

As the weather warms up, you can start to reseed any grass areas that show signs of wear, gently scuff the surface you wish to seed and if there are hollows or dips you can add compost to the seed to even out the surface. You may find you need to mow the lawn, wait for the ground to dry out a little and raise your mower blades for the first cut, you don't want to stress your turf at this time of year by giving it a short cut.

Birds are nesting now and starting to have families. It's a good idea to remove peanuts from feeders now as they can choke baby birds. If you want to feed the birds then swap the peanuts for mealworms. They are a good choice as they are packed full of protein.

March 8th is International Women's Day; a chance to

celebrate the millions of women over history and across the world whose greenfingers have, and still do, keep their families fed by cultivating fruit and vegetables.

At the Historic Gardens here in Castle Bromwich the current excellent gardeners team is led by two women probably for the first time in its 350 year long history. While the practical gardening was generally open only to men, it was the aristocratic women of the Hall who we can thank for much of the development of the Gardens.

Correspondence between Lady Mary Bridgeman 1641-1713 and her cousin William Winde shows how they planned and created the parterres around the house and discussed the plants for the 'wilderness', an orchard, and grove and walks as well as for the Garden buildings.

This is the shape of the Gardens we keep now.

We must also celebrate a much later woman, Lady Ida Bridgeman, the last family occupant of the hall (1915 - 1936) who while not restoring the 18th century design, helped keep its shape true by replanting areas. Shrubs and trees at the time, left to grow tall and fat the gardens were attained a much more 'Edwardian' and wooded feel.

A Song for Flo

Water Orton resident, Andy Townshend, has written, performed and recorded “A Song for Flo” to support a local young child who is battling a rare and particularly nasty cancer. The song is now available on you-tube, i-tunes, amazon and all other major download platforms and donations to the cause can be made via Go Fund Me.



Flo was a confident, carefree 5 year old during the summer of 2021 when she became unwell. She loves the planet and is passionate about doing her thing for climate change. Her hero is Greta Thunberg! She is a happy girl, with bundles of energy, who loves to spend time at the family allotment and she likes to have fun with her Brownies Unit!

After very many trips to medical professionals and a multitude of tests she was eventually diagnosed with Stage 4 High Risk Neuroblastoma shortly after her sixth birthday. This is a little known and relatively rare cancer who many people have never even heard of and since the diagnosis Flo’s amazing parents (Hannah and Edd) have been caring for her whilst also raising the profile of the disease.

Neuroblastoma is a cancer that develops in nerve cells. It mostly affects babies and children up to the age of five. Neuroblastoma tumours most often occur in one of the adrenal glands, in the abdomen. First symptoms are loss of appetite, tiredness and pain in the bones, it accounts for around 6% of childhood cancers and affects less than 100 children per year in Great Britain. Treatment for the condition is gruelling involving surgery, high-dose chemotherapy, radiotherapy, immunotherapy, stem cell rescue and more, and Flo has followed this path during the past eighteen months.

Following the diagnosis Flo’s family and a wide circle of friends set about a whole range of fundraising activities to support her on her journey, to cover the cost of additional treatments and her ongoing care. Any surplus monies will be donated to

the various care wards and many wonderful charities who have been helping her.

Andy was determined to play his part and got thinking about how he could help, when he struck upon an idea. Having always been passionate about music but purely as a listener, he enrolled on a singer-songwriter course a few years ago and has now become an accomplished performer. Hence the idea for “A Song for Flo”.

Working closely with several associates, Andy produced a wonderful song all about little Flo. The next step was to create a film to run alongside the music. He was aided in this endeavour by film producer Tom Woolley, which involved several really

enjoyable and fun trips out with Flo and her family to record lots of content.

Andy commented ‘I had written the song but on its own it did not seem to bring to life the energy, positivity and joy of Flo. By making the video it seemed like a great way to capture what an amazing person she really is, for people to see’.

The end result is a brilliant performance for all to enjoy and also to encourage more donations to this really worthwhile cause. We urge you to listen and watch at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNNhq9fvWIk> and hopefully to then donate via <https://www.gofundme.com/f/fundraising-for-flo>



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Care Fees... who pays?

If you need long term care in the future, your assets will be assessed to determine whether or not you will be entitled to funded care.

If it is decided you are not eligible, you will have to fund your care- either in part or in full- yourself.

You are deemed to be able to meet the cost of care if you hold over £22,000 (in Wales) or over £23,250 (in England). If you own a property this may or may not be included in the assessment depending on individual circumstances; if you are a sole owner occupier, your property will be taken into consideration.

What if I have placed my assets into Trust?

If you have already transferred assets into a life time trust, such as our Family Home Protection Trust or the Estate Protection Trust, then the value of those assets should not be included in your financial assessment.

With the cost of residential care rising to an average of £45,000 per year (in some parts of the country exceeding £60,000 per year), and with around half of Britain's 440,000 care home residents funding their own care home fees, it is now more important than ever to plan ahead for the future.

Paying for care fees

The are 3 options for funding:

1. Continuing care from the NHS dependant on physical or mental health need
2. You fund your own care
3. Local Authority funds your care
If your health needs are not assessed as at a level to require NHS funding, then you will be means tested to determine your ability to pay. The local authority will consider both the capital you own and the income you receive to determine if they should fund your care.

What types of capital are means tested?

Examples of the types of capital that can be included are as follows:

- The family home
- Cash in the bank
- Stocks and shares
- Land

Some capital may be disregarded permanently or temporarily. Such as:

- Investment bonds which are linked to life assurance
- Capital held in certain types of trust
- Personal possessions

If the financial assessment determines that you have capital over the sum of £23,250 (England) or £22,000 (Wales) then you will be required to meet the full costs of your fees. Once your assets are depleted to this level, the Local Authority will contribute to the costs of your fees.

What income will be considered?

As well as your assets, the local authority will also look at any income you receive, such as:

- Most benefits
- Trust income
- Private/Occupational pension

You'll be expected to fund £1 of income for each £250 of capital that you hold between £14,250 and £23,250 (England only)

Some income is disregarded temporarily or permanently:

- 50% of an occupational pension if the resident is paying that to their spouse/ civil partner
- £10 per week of a war widow's, war widower's or war disablement pension
- War widow's special payments

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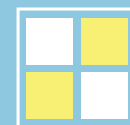
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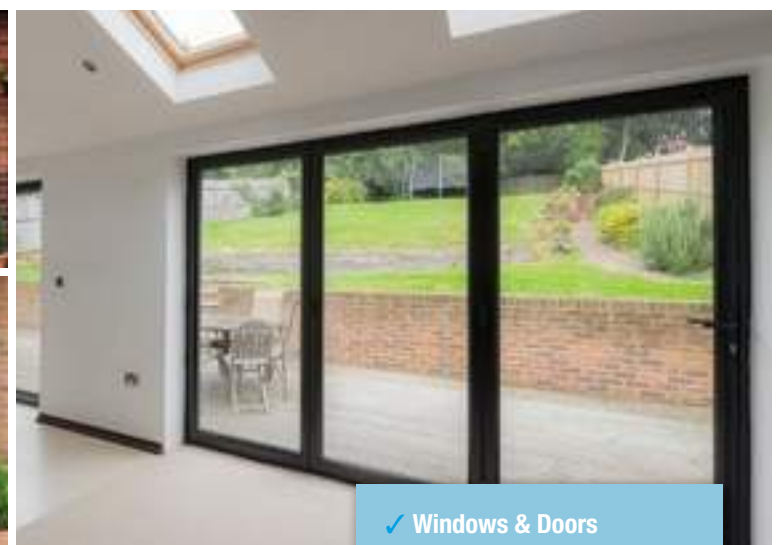
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£3 million of Government and industry funding electrifies West Midlands' chargepoint plans

- Drivers in the West Midlands to benefit from £3 million of support to continue the expansion of electric vehicle charging
- Today's funding supports growth of the charging network across England, adding a further 227 chargepoints and helping to level up the country's charging infrastructure
- The West Midlands Combined authority is one of 16 local authorities, who will benefit from funding to support electric vehicle chargepoint rollout.



West Midlands drivers will benefit from an £3 million in Government and industry funding for increasing electric vehicle (EV) chargepoints.

Today's (21 February) announcement by Transport Minister Jesse Norman will install up to a further 227 chargepoints in the short term, while working to support the West Midlands Combined Authority to deliver many more in the long term.

The funding will expand the current Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Pilot, boost the existing On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) and help councils, like the West Midlands Combined Authority secure dedicated resource to develop in-house expertise and capability to coordinate chargepoint plans and work with private operators – delivering a more comprehensive and reliable network of chargepoints for drivers.

Technology and Decarbonisation Transport Minister, Jesse Norman said:

“The Government is giving local authorities across England additional help today to energise their chargepoint roll-out plans.

“Today's commitment will lead to thousands of new chargers being installed, and plans for tens of thousands extra in due course, so that more people than ever can make the transition to using EVs”.

Today's announcement is part of a total £56 million in government and industry funding to increase electric vehicle chargepoints across the country.

Part of this includes the £8 million LEVI

Capability Fund which will equip local authorities with the skills and ambition to scale up their plans when it comes to their charging strategy.

The funding will help the West Midlands Combined Authority work in tandem with private business, and chargepoint operators will drive the sustainable growth of local networks, building and utilising their collective knowledge and expertise to deliver the most ambitious chargepoints plans for their area.

Today also sees the Government bringing forward a further £7 million funding for the existing On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme, bringing the total funding this year to £37 million. 3,000 chargepoints have already been installed under ORCS with a further 10,000 in the pipeline.

Several additional funding schemes are already open and available to help install chargepoints for electric vehicles with government support, including the Workplace Charging Scheme, Landlord grant and the Private/Rental grant.

The Government has already spent over £2 billion to support the move to zero emission vehicles, helping drive forward the decarbonisation of the UK's entire transport system

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*cost excludes cremation, burial, doctors or minister's fees.

All costs are correct up until April 2021

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Church Ukraine appeal raises £535

Ukrainians Alona and Marta Kuzmina, and Linda with her daughters Mary and Gracie, and grandmother Tetiana are pictured at a Coleshill parish church coffee morning and books and toys sale which raised a magnificent £535 for UNICEF's Ukraine appeal.

All of them are from Kyiv and now live at Coleshill Manor, which has been redeveloped to re-home refugees.

The manor is managed as shared accommodation with supportive living, to help them integrate into the local community, with schools admissions, and to find work to help support their families here and in the Ukraine.

UNICEF is a multilateral child-rights organisation established by the UN with 70 years of field-tested expertise. It works in some of the world's toughest places, reaching the furthest from help, the most disadvantaged and the most at risk.

UNICEF says 4.5 million children and women in Ukraine have been able to access primary health care.

Over 3.5 million people have been provided with access to safe drinking water and over 965,000 people have received critical water, sanitation and hygiene supplies.

UNICEF-supported mental health and psychosocial support interventions have reached over 2.2 million children and care-givers.





The Shabby Attic

The shabby Attic is now buying precious metal, we will take a look at anything you bring in and give you a fair and honest opinion and hopefully a cash offer on the spot!

If you have any unwanted High End Watches like Rolex etc. Gold/silver or pieces of jewellery then why not see if you can turn them into cash.

- We will also buy your broken or damaged Jewellery too -

You could be sitting on a fortune - you never know?

80 High Street, Coleshill B46 3AH Tel.07528964681



All mothers will receive a free dessert when booking a meal on Mothers Day.



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Gardener's Tips for March 2023

We'll see if Spring really has sprung and warmer days are beginning this month. What is certain is that as our Earth, on its 900 tilt, rotates and circles around the sun our days will get longer this season. Warmth or not it's those shorter nights which stimulate the plants to start growing.

Among the colourful beauties of Spring the daffodils are perhaps the cheeriest. Lining hedgerows and roadsides both native varieties and 'garden escapes' can be seen in abundance.

For those with 'daffs' and narcissi in your gardens here's a tip. Once the daffodils have started to fade, remove the developing seed heads – pinch or cut off the heads: the plant will then put all its energy into replenishing itself rather than trying to reproduce.

Don't cut off any leaves or tie them into bunches. Tidiness is much overrated in Gardens these days, so even though the leaves may look a little untidy, they are doing an important job in helping the bulb underground to gain valuable reserves to help with flowering next year.

It is a good month for planting shallots and onions. If the weather turns slightly warmer you may be able to start to plant early potatoes at the end of the month. You can check the temperature of the soil by using the back of your hand or by noticing the germination of weed seeds. If weeds are germinating then the soil must be getting warmer so hoe them off and start to plant the harder salads such as radish and beetroot.

As the weather warms up, you can start to reseed any grass areas that show signs of wear, gently scuff the surface you wish to seed and if there are hollows or dips you can add compost to the seed to even out the surface. You may find you need to mow the lawn, wait for the ground to dry out a little and raise your mower blades for the first cut, you don't want to stress your turf at this time of year by giving it a short cut.

Birds are nesting now and starting to have families. It's a good idea to remove peanuts from feeders now as they can choke baby birds. If you want to feed the birds then swap the peanuts for mealworms. They are a good choice as they are packed full of protein.

March 8th is International Women's Day; a chance to celebrate the millions of women over history and across the world whose greenfingers have, and still do, keep their families fed by cultivating fruit and vegetables.

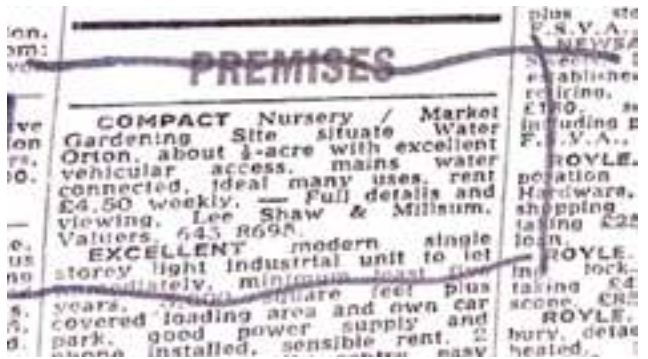
At the Historic Gardens here in Castle Bromwich the current excellent gardeners team is led by two women probably for the first time in its 350 year long history. While the practical gardening was generally open only to men, it was the aristocratic women of the Hall who we can thank for much of the development of the Gardens.

Correspondence between Lady Mary Bridgeman 1641-1713 and her cousin William Winde shows how they planned and created the parterres around the house and discussed the plants for the 'wilderness', an orchard, and grove and walks as well as for the Garden buildings.

This is the shape of the Gardens we keep now.

We must also celebrate a much later woman, Lady Ida Bridgeman, the last family occupant of the hall (1915-1936) who while not restoring the 18th century design, helped keep its shape true by replanting areas. Shrubs and trees at the time, left to grow tall and fat the gardens attained a much more 'edwardian' and wooded feel.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS ORCHARD NURSERIES EST 1973



After taking redundancy from fishers in 1972, Orchard Nurseries founder, Ken Cole saw this advert for the Vicarage Lane site. He opened for business in February 1973.

There was one greenhouse, a couple of sheds, and a tap! In due course two further greenhouses were added, a poly tunnel and paving. In 1986 following 18 break-ins, Ken made the sad decision to close down, but after tracing the thieves ourselves and supplying details to the police, decided to carry on and look for alternate premises. In 1990 we were offered the present site, it was literally a blank canvas - a house and a field!

Work then began to move and re-erect the three cedar greenhouses and the existing stock, we were initially only allowed to sell what we grew. Raised beds were created, we swapped an old van to a caravan to use for tea breaks and storage. Planning was granted to sell more items, and in 2003 our first keder building was erected (the current

entrance/ exit) This went on to be extended to the side and rear, and a brick shop front was added in 2008. 2010 saw the farm shop open which later in 2019 had a change of use to become The Gardeners Rest Tearoom, which was further improved in 2021, and now has a front courtyard seating area and 24 indoor seats serving freshly home made cakes, freshly made sandwiches and toasties, cooked breakfasts, omelettes and more.

2017/2018 saw our old cedar greenhouses taken down, they were around 40+ years old and replaced with two modern keder buildings. 2019 and covid brought new challenges as we went in to lockdown, how do we proceed?

We had spring plant seedings arriving, using the power of social media, I placed an offer on our Facebook page and received six orders by telephone which I delivered on my way home. Within a short space of time, the phone was ringing non stop with orders for delivery.

This... continued when we were allowed to re-open, with reported queues of traffic down the road.

All the hard work enabled us to block pave the car park and later refurbish our planted area with our 50th Birthday in mind.

We came a long way in 50 years and have plans for future improvements.

A big thank you to all our customers past and present, we look forward to the next 50 years!



ORCHARD NURSERIES

1973 - 2023

Celebrating 50 years in Water Orton

It may only be early spring but we have a lot to offer!!

- Wide selection of spring flowering bulbs **£1.99** a pot or 3 for **£5.00**
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- Beautiful selection of potted Alliums, including pink purple and white, most **£5.99**
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- New season fruit and ornamental trees
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- New season Acers and Magnolias
- Seed potatoes and onion sets
- Colourful selection of summer flowering bulbs **£3.99**
- New range of quality Melcourt peat free compost.



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The GARDENERS REST TEAROOM
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Treat Mom to our delicious Afternoon Tea
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£35 for 2 people

Or add on a 20cl bottle of prosecco **£40 for 2 people.**
Booking and deposit required. Call to book 0121 749 7266

Come and enjoy our freshly cooked breakfast, Vegan and vegetarian options, hot and cold sandwiches, toasties, jackets, cream teas and of course homemade cakes - takeaway options available

Afternoon tea, prebooking required for up to 25 people

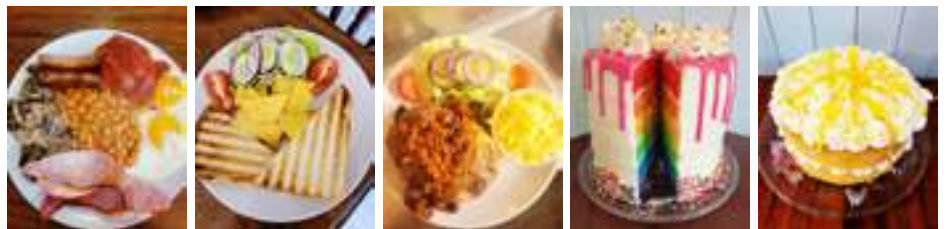
Whole cakes by preorder

Traybakes and brownies also available to order

Check out our Facebook page for more details

Booking welcome, message us or call

Open currently Tuesdays 9.30 - 2pm
Wednesday/Thursday/Friday/Saturday 9.30 - 3pm



Orchard Nurseries, Birmingham Road, Water Orton B46 1TG
Tel: 0121 749 7266 / 07450102855
Julie_heenan@yahoo.co.uk



Preparing for the workplace

Local and national employers have been teaming up with Year 11 students from The Coleshill School as part of the school's 'Practice Interview Day'.

Year 11 students 'dressed to impress' in smart business wear for their interview. The companies including: Sertec, NHS, Maersk, Woods Hardwix, CIPP, Balfour Beatty Vinchi, Coventry University (IT), Boden Group, CBRE, Father Hudsons Care, Taylor Root, West Atlantic Airways and Julie English Interiors conducted the interviews which students had prepared for by completing formal application forms. The 20 minute interviews were conducted just like 'the real thing' with structured questions about themselves including their predicted grades, outside interests and work experience.

For most of the students it was their first interview and a really important and valuable learning experience for

them. Feedback from the potential employers was really positive, including:

- "Very polite and driven group of students, the school should be very proud of them"
- "A really well run and relevant event"
- Very enjoyable, students were very impressive"

Eileen Bishop, Careers Lead for the school commented "We are truly committed to equipping our students with the skills they will need to ensure a bright future awaits them. Our students really benefit from taking part in the interviews, especially with such a crucial life changing time ahead. They took feedback and considered this to support them with their future endeavours. We would like to thank all the companies and their representatives for taking part and we look forward to welcoming them back to school in the future.



Hazelnut spreads the word



Open the Book (OtB) offers primary school children an opportunity to hear key Bible stories told by a team of Christians from local churches, who present the stories during assemblies or acts of collective worship. Each presentation takes around 10–15 minutes and can be incorporated into a wider school assembly, or can stand alone.

Children enjoy it, often clamouring for a role. When pharaoh relented after several plagues, pupils at Coleshill CofE primary school made crossing the Red Sea (old blue duvet covers dividing the hall in two, actually) a doddle. Children either side grabbed some cloth and pulled, then threw the sea back as the pursuing Egyptian army got halfway across the hall. Cue laughter.

Pictured is the team which told the story of Moses in the bullrushes. Top left is The Squirrel With No Name which has been making unscripted appearances lately. Rather than OtB members having a hand in it, the children were asked to give it a name.



The first out of the hat? Meet Hazelnut.

Amazing how time flies, isn't it? One week you're a baby in a basket floating peacefully on an Egyptian river, the next you're a grown up Moses pleading with a pharaoh to let my people go.

But that's life as an Open The Book team member.

Crufts 2023



2022 Best in Show Credit Anna Szabo

Crufts, the world's greatest celebration of dogs run by The Kennel Club, is returning once again from the 9 – 12 March where thousands of wagging tails will take over the NEC in Birmingham for four action-packed days.

This year, over 23,000 dogs of all shapes and sizes have entered into the variety of competitions that take place on the famous green carpet. Visitors can explore 25 acres of the NEC to see the impressive leaping and weaving of agility, cheer on the fast-paced flyball, be mesmerised by the impressive Heelwork to Music routines and much more.

More than 200 breeds will be taking to the rings in a hope to make it to the prestigious Best in Show final on the Sunday evening. From the familiar family favourite, the Labrador Retriever, which this year had the largest entry with 537, to the much lesser-known Vulnerable Breeds, such as the Otterhound.

Show-goers have the opportunity to follow the Best in Show journey beginning with the Gundog group on Thursday 9 March, Working and Pastoral groups on Friday 10 March, Terrier and Hound groups on Saturday 11 March and Utility and Toy groups on the final day, Sunday 12 March.

This year, to mark the 150th anniversary of the organisers of Crufts, there is a special Kennel Club 150th Anniversary Celebration Stakes. Taking place on Thursday, ten dogs who have earned Best in Show in all-breed Championship shows earlier in 2022, will be vying for this unique title in the main arena.

The event will also be showcasing some very special four-legged friends through the family-favourite crossbreed competition, Scruffts, and the prestigious Hero Dog Award, with the winner, decided by public vote, announced in the main arena on Sunday 12 March.

For those passionate about becoming a dog owner themselves, there will be over 200 breeds represented in the Discover Dogs area, where current and prospective owners can meet and greet the dogs and learn more from breed experts on how to best take care of any four-legged friends.

Elsewhere, over 300 shopping stands and information booths offer an opportunity to learn more about other Kennel Club activities, including work that is done into canine health. Kennel Club Breed Rescue organisations will be showcasing their hard work and successes in rehoming breed rescue dogs on The Kennel Club stand, where visitors can find out about rescue dogs looking for their forever home.

Vanessa McAlpine, Events Executive at The Kennel Club, which organises Crufts, said: "We are so excited Crufts is coming around again! This year is particularly special for The Kennel Club as we celebrate our 150th anniversary.

"The four-days are always action-packed and the energy keeps building in the anticipation of the Sunday evening where The Kennel Club Hero Dog Award winner is announced and the prestigious Best in Show trophy is awarded. It truly is the greatest celebration of dogs."

More information on what to expect from this year's event and tickets are available at crufts.org.uk.



Agility at Crufts 2022 Credit Yulia Titovets



Scruffts 2022 winner Credit flick.digital



Hero Dog winner 2022 Credit flick.digital



Hero Dog 2022 Finalists Credit Flick.digital

Ticket Competition

We have five pairs of tickets to give away to our lucky readers, to enter the competition answer the following question:

Which breed was the first to win Best in Show at Crufts in 1928?

- A) Labrador Retriever (wrong)
- B) Cocker Spaniel (Wrong)
- C) Greyhound (Correct)

Email answers to editor.postgroup@outlook.com by Sunday 5 March.

Terms & Conditions: Each ticket is valid for any one day of Crufts between 9th and 12th March 2023. This ticket does not include access to Best in Show or any separately ticketed events. Please note that unfortunately no dogs other than those that have been invited by The Kennel Club and/or Assistance Dogs are permitted into the show.



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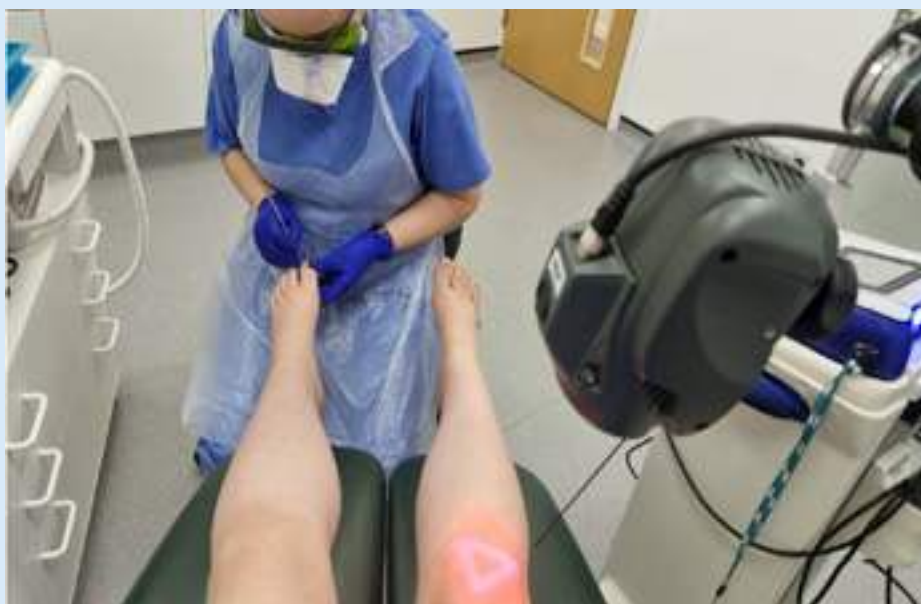
Spring into action- Feet First!

As the Spring approaches and the weather begins to change, we often find ourselves becoming more active. This increased activity can sometimes lead to aches, pains and niggles in our feet, ankles, knees and hips. You may not be aware but our laser machine is able to improve this pain, aid with tissue repair and get you active again without having to rely solely on pain relief medications.

Our laser machine works in two different ways. The first is by slowly down the message of pain from the area to the brain reducing the amount of pain that you feel. Secondly, this helps to open and widen the blood vessels. This encourages blood flow rich in oxygen and nutrients to the area. These are crucial for tissue repair and healing so aid in speeding up the recovery of the areas that are painful. The widening of the blood vessels will also allow waste products and inflammatory cells to be flushed out of the area allowing for tissue repair.

Laser is completely pain free so you can sit back and relax while we complete the treatment. The only thing we need is to be able to have direct access to the area that is painful so this may mean wearing loose fitting clothes or taking some items off. You will also need to wear some very fashionable goggles to protect your eyes from your laser! You can see these in the picture below.

Depending on the area that is painful we can sometimes treat an area with laser at the same time as completing your routine treatment. You can see our Podiatrist Sam doing this in the picture below.



If you feel laser is something you may benefit from to get you active again, then you can call us on 0121 749 6313 to book in for a laser appointment with one of our Podiatrists who can advise you if you are suitable.

READ OUR PAPERS ON THE GO

www.postgroupmidlands.com



**POST GROUP
MIDLANDS LTD**



To GOD be the GLORY for ever and ever. AMEN.

We are an Assemblies of God (AOG) Pentecostal Church who meet every Sunday for praise and worship, and to spend a time of intimacy with God.

Searching for answers to the big questions of life?

Are you hungry for more of God?

Or simply curious to know how we "do church"?

All are welcome to join us



**Sunday 10.30am
Victory Hall
76 Chester Rd
Castle Bromwich
B36 9BU**



**Sunday 6.00 pm
Coleshill Town Hall
High Street
Coleshill B46 3BG**

We have various Bible study and prayer groups during the week as well as a Craft Club at Victory Hall.

Or join us at **The Filling Station at Knowle Village Hall**, St John's Close Knowle B93 0NH on the first Monday of each month for a joint worship meeting with various church denominations around the area.

For more details see our website on: www.mclifechurch.com

News from St Clement of Alexandria Green Lane, Castle Bromwich (known locally as St Clements Church)



Albert Einstein famously noted, "I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious."

Being curious means you have a strong desire to learn and know something new and different. Curiosity is more than just asking questions. It is having the will to seek out the answers and look for the solutions.

St Clements' Bible Study Group is held every other Monday from 10.30 to 11.45am in the Church, and is run by Ann Kew. Together the group are looking at the Psalms and what they can tell us, so if you feel you would like to join this Group, then a date for your diary is the 13th March. Please do give us a ring if you want any further information.

Update from the allotment - Jenny Watts

As we move into a new growing year, we are completing some winter jobs. We are in the process of tidying up the allotment, including weeding the beds and covering them with cardboard as this helps to suppress the weeds. Some beds are always left unweeded as at this time of year, there will be beneficial insects hibernating in them.

We are also putting a new shed up as our current shed is very small, so hopefully the bigger shed will be somewhere to relax in between the work! We have recently pruned the apple tree and greenhouse grapevine. It is important to do this in winter, unlike cherry and plum trees which need pruning in the summer. This is because apples and grapevines need to be pruned when they are dormant so as not to harm the plants. Pruning helps them to produce more fruit in the new season. We harvested the brussels sprouts and parsnips which were very tasty. The crops we currently have growing include garlic, which needs a spell of very cold weather to form the cloves, chard, and kale.

We are looking forward to the new growing season and are hoping this year won't be quite as hot and dry as last year, as this poses challenges with the constant watering needed!

Camellias burst into flower in February, just as the rest of the garden is starting to wake up. You can choose from red, white, pink and cream flowers in a variety of shapes and petal formations. Whatever the weather throws at this very robust shrub it never fails to brighten even the dullest of days.



Lent

This year St Clements' Lent project will be supporting Ricky Sandiford (Hope on Smith Wood) with an Easter Egg collection which will be given to Castlewood School in Jenson Avenue, Lanchester Way, Smith Wood.

Lent began on February 22nd this year and is a period of 40 days during which Christians remember the events leading up to and including the death of Jesus Christ, whose life and teachings are the foundation of Christianity. The 40 day period is called Lent after an old English word meaning 'lengthen'. This is because of the time of year when it happens, as this is when the days start to get longer, as we approach Summer. It is a time of reflection and of asking for forgiveness, and when Christians prepare to celebrate Jesus' resurrection at the feast of Easter, which comes at the very end of Lent.

During the last 12 months St Clements has put on many events which this year started in February with our annual Beetle Drive. Roll the dice for a 6 which if you didn't get, you couldn't even get started. Plenty of Puds were on offer so which to choose was the question.

Sunday 19th March is Mothering Sunday which takes place on the fourth Sunday of every Lent. It's the official time of year to give mums and those that take care of us a day off from doing all the jobs that they do everyday. 4th Castle Bromwich Brownies will be taking part in our service, reading their own prayers and giving out the traditional flowers at the end of the service.

1st April is Afternoon Tea with an Easter theme, when there will be an Easter Bonnet Parade and going on previous afternoon teas, this will certainly be a lively event. All details of our services and events are on our Facebook page or if you want more information give us a ring.

Our usual groups continue to be very successful and run throughout the year. All are run by volunteers from the Church and we welcome those from the community who enjoy a chat, cuppa and a cake. All children groups are run by Jo and Ricky Sandiford at Hope on Smith Wood Church, which is supported by St Clements Church.

As in previous years, St Clements will once again be welcoming Castle Bromwich Junior School children into Church. However, when you read this, the children will have paid their annual visit on 14th and 16th February prior to half term. What a joyous occasion this always is and one which St Clements is very pleased to be able to make an annual event.

"Sometimes it takes only one act of kindness and caring to change a person's life"

Jackie Chan

You can find more information about our Services and events below...

Phone: 0121 748 5550

Church Website: stclementschurchcb.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stclementschurchcastlebromwich

Email: office@stclementschurchcb.co.uk



Castle Bromwich Parish Council



February's News

On Saturday, February 11, a full house in Spencer Hall welcomed a Night of Comedy, featuring some fantastic talent with headline acts.



Ryan is a regular MC/host at comedy clubs all over the UK, from Penzance to Inverness, and a Chelmsley Wood local.

He warmed up the crowd in seconds. Standing at 6 feet 5 inches, Ryan certainly has a big stage presence and took no prisoners!



The last act Danny Posthill is a comedy impressionist, and his versatile act caters to all walks of life with unbeatable stand-up and a string of impressions, such as Alan Carr, Michael McIntyre, Sarah Millican, President Donald Trump stands alongside all the other topical political characters of today. In 2015, he reached the Britain's Got Talent's grand final Arden Hall welcomed them all and will be inviting them back very soon.

Soul & Motown

We are pleased to host a Soul and Motown Night on Saturday, March 4, 2023. This will be a top-class evening filled with the memorable sounds of soul and Motown. Throughout the night, Evah Morgan will perform a full range of all the classic hits, including those by The Temptations, Martha Reeves, and Diana Ross and The Supremes. The show will also contain songs from Sister Act, Northern Soul, Tamla, and 70s disco music.

So, what are you waiting for? Grab your friends and be prepared to dance the evening away.

Tickets - £10. Please call Anthony on 0121 270 5886 or visit <https://tributenightpromotions.co.uk/> and buy tickets online.

Our Next Table Top

Saturday 4th March 10:00am – 12:30pm Tables are still available for hire. Hot drinks will be available

FASHION SHOW is BACK.....



Sunday 2nd April 2023 at 7pm

Arden Hall's Front Office is now selling tickets for £6.00 per person.

There will be a raffle on the night for £25 off clothing, and the licensed bar will be open, which will include hot drinks.



The SOS team is based in the East Midlands, and over the past 30 years, has built strong relationships with excellent suppliers who buy directly from manufacturers of your favourite high street brands. On the Fashion Show evening, 11 large rails of carefully selected garments are brought in, with models using the Arden Hall catwalk to showcase differing garments. The clothing follows the seasons and is selected to suit all age groups, all sizes, and all occasions. All their clothing is brand new.

The SOS team works with major high-street retailers, and when they order stock by the thousands, the factories never make up the exact number, but always overproduce. It's these wonderful "overmakes" that form part of the SOS stock.

The savings to be made are impressive, with prices 30% to 50% off the in-store RRP as standard and even greater reductions on selected items. All clothing is new, with sizes 6 to 30.

**Marks & Spencer ** Dorothy Perkins ** Wallis ** Dash
 ** River Island ** New Look ** Planet ** Next ** Asos
 ** Windsmoor ** Miss Selfridge ** Topshop
 Evans ** Oasis ** Phase Eight ** Monsoon ****



SHARE A STORY

contact:

serena.postgroup@outlook.com

Castle Bromwich Lions

Following the devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria Lions Clubs throughout the world have been donating to support the victims. Castle Bromwich and District Lions have been doing their part and are making a significant contribution. This money will be channelled through Lions Club International and go directly to Lions in the area working to alleviate some of the terrible suffering. By doing it this way we know that every penny sent will go wherever it is most needed. If any of you reading this report would like to make a donation to LCI disaster fund can do this via our Castle Bromwich Facebook page.

On the home front I have a couple of dates for your diary. On the 31st March we hold the first of our twice yearly Quiz. Again this will be at the Family Tree Club with Ken and Rhoda, our Quizmasters. Once more our thanks to them for providing their services totally

free of charge. Our last Quiz was over subscribed so please if you want to come get in early and book with Steve on 07754950290. Tickets are £10 which include a fish and chip supper.

The second date to remember is our old folks night which is at Kingshurst Labour Club on Thursday 20th April. This is a free night out to all pensioners in the district with food and entertainment by Linda Williams a wonderful singer. Phone Phil on 07969621256 for details and a ticket. Finally a reminder that we continue to support Around Again, the social supermarket in Chelmsley Wood and St Basils in Kingshurst. St Basils offers help and accommodation to homeless young women often with young children. They are often short of basics particularly for youngsters. If you feel you can help with donations please phone Steve on 07754956290. We can collect.

All the very best to everyone
Terry Higgs



Cllr Martin McCarthy,
Castle Bromwich Ward (Solihull MBC)
March Update

With Shrove Tuesday now well behind us the days are getting longer and hopefully a little warmer, we should be seeing a little spring colour on our grass verges and open spaces.

We continue to push for more attention to our parks and open spaces with Councillor Allan Feeney publicly Questioning the SMBC Cabinet member responsible for Parks and open spaces at the recent Main SMBC council meeting, this was particularly about badly needed improvement work to Lanchester park.

Progress continues to be made to put the ongoing maintenance of St Mary and St Margaret's church Graveyard on a more formal basis, with help from SMBC, recent SMBC Graffiti removal has improved the appearance of the place.

Castle Bromwich Historic Gardens are looking for a much needed new Chairman of Trustees, this could be an interesting volunteer role that would suit someone with time on their hands and some experience of running a Charity or museum.

Details including a person specification for the role can be found on the trust's website, please feel free to contact me directly if you would like any further information.

There will be changes to the way we vote at the polling stations for this year's local elections on Thursday 4th May.

This involves the requirement to show photo identification before receiving a ballot paper.

The postal voting process will not be affected by this.

Details of how to apply for a postal vote are available on the Solihull MBC web site or contact myself or Alan Feeney if you would like an application form.

We have worked with local residents to get a new Zebra crossing on Water Orton Road, this scheme will now be approved and will make this area much safer for pedestrians and help moderate driver behaviour on this busy road.

We would like to thank everyone that responded to our recent residents survey. Some illuminating insights were gained from the results, these are driving changes in our priorities and will give us a better steer on what Castle Bromwich residents want to see change here going forward.

As HS2 work continues and the number of vehicle movements increase, please report any HS2 contractor vehicles that are using the non approved routes through the area and we will take these up with HS2 management.

The next councillor surgery is scheduled for 14:00 on Monday 3rd April, I will be available to meet residents outside the Library at this time to address any concerns that you may have.

You may contact me at martin.mccarthy@solihull.gov.uk or call me directly for any more urgent items.

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email: editor.postgroup@outlook.com

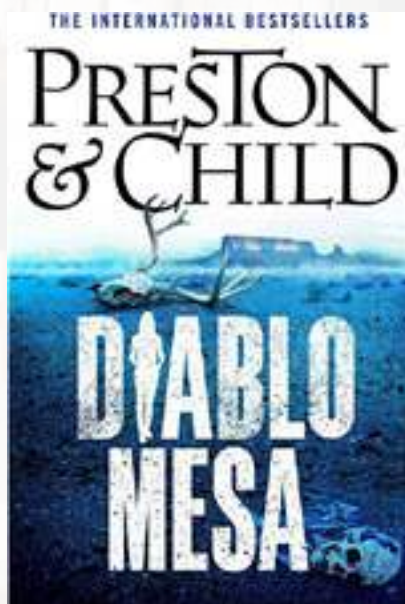
Castle Bromwich Library Book Club

Diablo Mesa by Douglas J. Preston & Lincoln Child

Forced to leave her post at the Santa Fe Archaeological Institute, Nora Kelly is left without a job and without any prospects. So when billionaire Lucas Tappan invites her to lead his excavation of the infamous Roswell landing site, she has no choice but to make a decision that could destroy her reputation. Armed with a healthy dose of scepticism, Nora reluctantly agrees to visit the site. When the preliminary scans of the area reveal a suspected Native American burial site, Nora takes a closer look. But this is no indigenous burial site. It's a crime scene, and a recent one at that. Nora uncovers two dead bodies, one with a bullet hole in its skull. Dead bodies mean this has become a case for the FBI, and Nora knows just the person to investigate - Special Agent Corrie Swanson. As Corrie and Nora dig deeper into the mystery, they will uncover more questions than answers.

I love the writing of this duo. They know how to write great plots, characters and action. A page turner from the very beginning.

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member



The Summer Fair by Heidi Swain

Beth loves her job working in a care home, looking after its elderly residents, but she doesn't love the cramped and dirty house-share she currently lives in. So, when she gets the opportunity to move to Nightingale Square, sharing a house with the lovely Eli, she jumps at the chance. The community at Nightingale Square welcomes Beth with open arms, and when she needs help to organise a fundraiser for the care home they rally round. Then she discovers The Arches, a local creative arts centre, has closed and the venture to replace it needs their help too - but this opens old wounds and past secrets for Beth. Music was always an important part of her life, but now she has closed the door on all that. Will her friends at the care home and the people of Nightingale Square help her find a way to learn to love it once more?

This is the fourth book in the series but it can easily be read on its own. Beautifully written and fantastic characters. I loved this book and would definitely recommend it.

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member

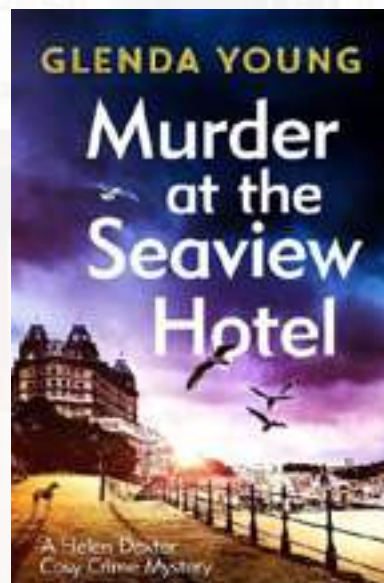


Murder at the Seaview Hotel by Glenda Young

In the charming Yorkshire seaside town of Scarborough, a murder is nothing to sing about. After the death of her husband Tom, Helen Dexter is contemplating her future as the now-sole proprietor of the Seaview Hotel. There's an offer from a hotel chain developer to consider, but also booking from a group of twelve Elvis impersonators, a singing troupe called Twelvis. Tom loved Elvis and for Helen this is a sign that she should stay. But the series of mysterious events which follow, suggests that the developer is not going to give up easily. Then, shortly after Twelvis arrive, one of the group disappears. His body is found floating in a lake, with his blue suede shoes missing. Could the two be connected? With the reputation of the Seaview on the line, Helen isn't going to wait for the murderer to strike again.

Wonderful characters, beautiful setting and an excellent story. A fun book which I thoroughly enjoyed reading and I would highly recommend.

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member

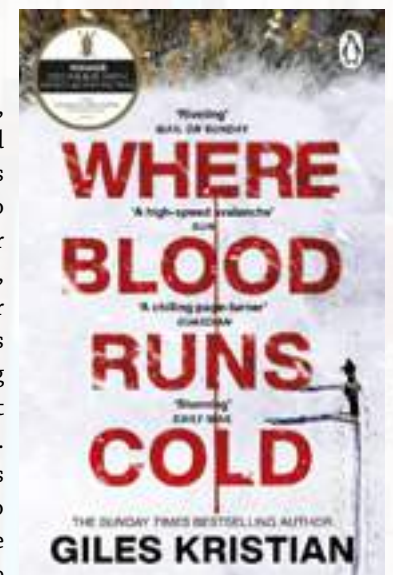


Where blood runs cold by Giles Kristian

Erik Amdahl and his spirited daughter, Sofia, have embarked on a long-promised cross-country ski trip deep into Norway's arctic circle. For Erik, it's the chance to bond properly with his remaining daughter following a tragic accident. For Sofia, it's the proof she needs that her father does care. Then, far from home in this snowbound wilderness, with night falling and the mercury plummeting, an accident sends them in search of help - and shelter. Nearby is the home of a couple - members of Norway's indigenous Sami people - who they've met before, and who welcome them in. Erik is relieved. He believes the worst is over. He thinks that Sofia is now safe. He could not be more wrong. He and Sofia are not the old couple's only visitors that night - and soon he and Sofia will be running for their lives - and beneath the swirling light show of the Northern Lights, a desperate fight ensues.

Fast paced. Thrilling. Tense. Gripping. Dark and deadly. A real page turner - completely hooked to the last page

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member



Emergency appeal launched to help vulnerable children in Syria



Mary's Meals is helping communities affected by this week's devastating earthquakes

Mary's Meals has launched an emergency appeal to deliver much-needed food aid to children in Syria, following two earthquakes on Monday, 6 February.

The international charity has been working in the city of Aleppo since 2017. With its local partner Dorcas, it usually serves nutritious meals to children at school – many of whom are experiencing trauma caused by more than a decade of civil war.

Daniel Adams, executive director of Mary's Meals, says: "The updates we are receiving from our partner on the ground are simply heart-breaking. After more than a decade of civil war, Syria has been plunged into this new crisis. Many people have lost their loved ones and their homes, and they have very little access to food and shelter. They now face yet another a fight for survival.

"Conditions in and around Aleppo are very difficult – roads are damaged, and our partner organisation has seen heavy damage to its buildings. Despite these challenges, we are already reaching many children with essential food supplies."

Mary's Meals serves school meals in some of the world's poorest countries. The promise of food attracts hungry children into the classroom, giving them the energy to learn and hope for a better future.

In addition to this important work, the charity has a track record of providing effective, expert support through emergencies – including delivering food aid to thousands of people affected by Ebola in Liberia and supporting communities impacted by the earthquake in Haiti in 2021.

Daniel continues: "With our partner, we are working around the clock to feed hungry children in Aleppo. But there's so much more we can do to help the communities that have been devastated by these earthquakes – and we stand ready to expand our emergency response as funds allow.

"Time and time again, we have seen people across the UK give generously to help those facing desperate and frightening situations. I urge you to give what you can today – no donation is too small – so that we can bring hope to the people of Aleppo."

To find out more about the Mary's Meals Syria Earthquake Appeal, please visit marysmeals.org.uk/campaigns/syria

Contact Information

Scott Paterson

07954219826

scott.paterson@marysmeals.org

£2 bus fare cap to be extended and bus services protected with new funding

- **Bus fare cap to be extended for three months, backed by up to £75 million to help passengers save money and Get Around for £2**
- **Government also confirms up to £80 million to continue support for critical bus services around England**
- **Lifeline funding takes total to more than £2 billion since March 2020**

Millions of passengers across England will benefit from £155 million Government support to cap bus fares at £2, maintain services and ensure people can travel affordably.

The Transport Secretary today (17 February 2023) confirmed £80 million from 1 April to 30 June to protect vital bus services people rely on for work, education, medical appointments and shopping.

The Government has also announced plans to provide up to £75 million so that bus operators can continue to cap single bus fares outside of London at £2 until the end of June, saving passengers money and encouraging more people back on the bus. With the average single local bus ticket costing £2.80, passengers can save almost a third of the ticket price. Bus operators which are continuing the £2 fare cap scheme will be confirmed in due course.

During the pandemic, bus usage dropped as low as 10% of pre-pandemic levels, and the Government has provided unprecedented financial support totaling more than £2 billion since March 2020.

With bus patronage still at around 85-90% of pre-Covid levels, there are a number of ongoing challenges for bus operators. The Government is working closely with the sector on the challenges they face with changing travel patterns since the pandemic and will continue to work on delivering the National Bus Strategy.

The Government's existing £60 million investment to cap single bus fares has already shown early signs of increased bus use, with an independent survey of 1,000 people from passenger watchdog Transport Focus showing 7% of people saying they are using the bus more. During these difficult economic times, these trends already indicate that the Government's support to cap fares is a welcome intervention, helping families, commuters and all passengers to ease with the cost of living.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said:

"I want to make bus travel affordable for all, that's why we're continuing to cap fares at £2 and protecting local routes, ensuring we have a modern and efficient network that's accessible for everyone."

"Getting more people onto reliable and affordable buses will strengthen communities and help grow the economy – connecting people to jobs, driving pensioners to see friends and family, and helping people attend medical appointments or access education."

"I'm determined to ensure that no matter where you live, you have the same opportunities to get around easily and can feel pride in your local area – which is why protecting our local bus services is so important."

Transport Secretary Mark Harper said:

"Travelling by bus remains the most popular option for commuters and families across the country, but the sector is still trying to recover after the end of the pandemic."

"We're providing £155 million to help passengers save money on fares, get more people on the bus and protect vital bus routes – helping with the cost of living and enabling people to get where they need to in an affordable and convenient way."

The recovery grant support comes in addition to Government investment of £3 billion in bus services by 2025, including over £1 billion to improve fares, services and infrastructure.

In 2021, the Government published the National Bus Strategy, and asked all English Local Transport Authorities outside London to publish their Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIPs) setting out local visions for the step-change in bus services that is needed, driven by what passengers and would-be passengers want.

Since then, over £1 billion has been awarded to 34 counties, city regions and unitary authorities to deliver service improvements, bus priority and ambitious fares initiatives. In addition £5.7 billion investment has been provided to eight mayoral combined authorities in England to support integrated, cross-modal transport networks over the next five years through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), including supporting bus infrastructure.

The Friendship Project for Children appoints new Area Coordinator for Nuneaton, Bedworth and North Warwickshire



Hannah Peattie

Hannah Peattie joined the Friendship Project for Children in January 2023 as the new Area Coordinator for the north of the county. Established in 1986, the charity has supported over 1500 children across Warwickshire who have needed some extra support, and continue to fulfil the growing demand for their service.

Hannah brings with her a wealth of experience in supporting families facing a variety of challenges. She has done lots of volunteering work and has 4 children of her

own. She is originally from Eastbourne on the south coast, but she waved goodbye to the seaside and ventured to the Midlands 4 years ago, where she and her family are now settled in Nuneaton.

Hannah says, "I love working with children and families and I know how vital a charity like the Friendship Project is to change lives and give much needed support to those involved."

The Friendship Project supports children who are in need for a variety of reasons. They might be caring for a sick parent or limited to what activities they can do because of a disabled sibling or family member. Having time away from a sometimes-difficult home situation really can boost a child's self-esteem. We match children and young people with volunteers for friendship and fun so that they can enjoy some quality one-to-one time together.

Our volunteers are called 'Older Friends' and they take out their 'Younger Friend' for a couple of hours once a week. Our volunteers tell us that they also enjoy the outings with their Younger Friends, watching their confidence grow and knowing that they are really making a difference to the child's life.

Cheryll Rawbone, chairman at the Friendship Project comments: "We are delighted to have Hannah on board, and bring her enthusiasm to the team. Our referrals, all from social services, are increasing so the strength Hannah will add to the team will allow us to grow our support."

The Friendship Project is an amazing charity and we have a fantastic team of staff and volunteers. We are currently supporting 75 children throughout the whole of Warwickshire but with your help, we could support even more young people.

We are always on the lookout for more volunteers so if you are interested in finding out more, please visit: www.friendshipproject.co.uk @FriendshipProj or call 0845 838 2098

Our volunteers must live in or near Warwickshire, enjoy being with children, be over 18 years old and be a car owner.



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Motoring down memory lane: rare machine arrives at Black Country Living Museum



A 1959 DKR Defiant scooter, manufactured by the now defunct Wolverhampton-based automotive manufacturer DKR, has been acquired by the Museum and is now on display, helping to keep this little-known story of automotive history alive.

Relatively affordable, reliable and convenient to use, scooters became a popular means of transport during the 1950s and 60s. Retailing at £188 1s 3d (approximately £4,488) when new, the DKR Defiant was a Black Country-built machine that aimed to capture a share of this market.

Established in 1957, DKR took its initials from the three founders of the company: Barry Day, Cyril Kieft and Noah Robinson. Many of the scooter parts, including the body panels, were made locally by the Willenhall Motor Radiator Company, with the machine itself assembled in workshops at Pendeford Airport, Wolverhampton.

Powered by a 197cc fan-cooled Villiers two-stroke engine and a four-speed gearbox, the scooter could reach a respectable top cruising speed of around 60mph. The Defiant had a rather unusual styling, with the large front fairing offering good weather protection for the rider. Another unusual design feature was a storage locker, with a drop-down lid that converted into a small picnic tray for meals or drinks on the go.

Commenting on the acquisition, the Museum's Transport Manager, Tim Shields, said: "The DKR Defiant is a rare example of a Black Country-built scooter, of which few survive. This stylish, high quality and well-engineered machine fills an important gap in our collection. Not only were they a user-friendly means of transport, but scooters also came to symbolise Mod culture and youth fashion.

"This is a theme we will be exploring as part of our new development. Our 1940s-60s high street, due to open later this year, will give us the opportunity to share these stories."

Although DKR launched several models of scooter, production ceased in 1966. This was largely due to falling sales and increased competition from foreign manufacturers, such as the Italian-built Vespa and Lambretta, which eventually came to dominate the market throughout Europe.

Visitors will be able to take a look at the DKR Defiant alongside the rest of the Museum's transport collection, which also includes motorcycles by Black Country manufacturers, a 1924 Guy-Morris fire engine and several buses and trolleybuses.

Crafters Corner.

Pop up Easter Cards

Hi Everyone, its Tamsin from The Little Dress Boutique, I hope all the children are settling in at school okay and families are well.

This is a great activity for the kids this easter. Older ones may be okay following the instructions and younger ones will need a little help.

Pop up Easter Cards:

- You will need:
- Paper/card
- Colouring pens/pencils
- Ruler (optional)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Eraser (optional)

1 In portrait position, fold the paper/card in half top to bottom, matching up the corners.

2 Fold in half again , left to right , matching up the corners and you will see the card shape emerge.

3 Open the 'card' and with a ruler (optional) , draw a line down the middle of the inside (along the crease) with the pencil. This is to show the inside of the card and you can use the eraser to rub it out later if you like.

4 Open out the paper/card back to the A4 shape in landscape keeping the drawn line facing up.

5 Fold the paper/card in half , bottom to top

6 Mark a point half way along the drawn line (which is on the inside along the crease).

7 Draw another line that goes roughly a quarter of the way upwards .

8 Cut that line with the scissors

9 Fold into two flaps, one forming a triangle on the right, the other on the left and then pop the flaps back down

10 Turn it over and fold the flaps in the same way, returning to the centre after making the folds

11 Open to A4 size again,

12 Remake the card shape with the inside line on the inside.

13 Lift out the flaps gently and begin too close the card enabling you to add more fold lines to the 'mouth'. When the card is folded, press down to put pressure on the folds.

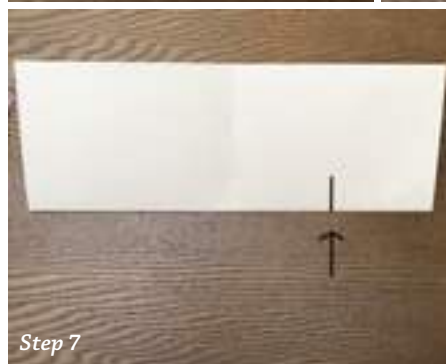
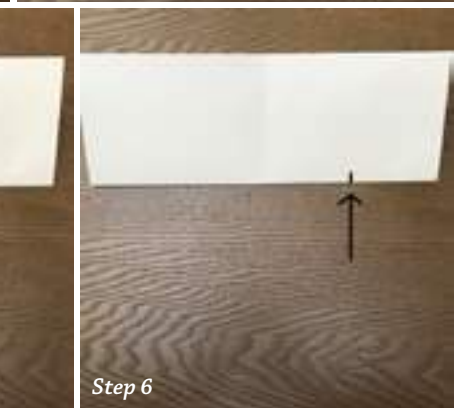
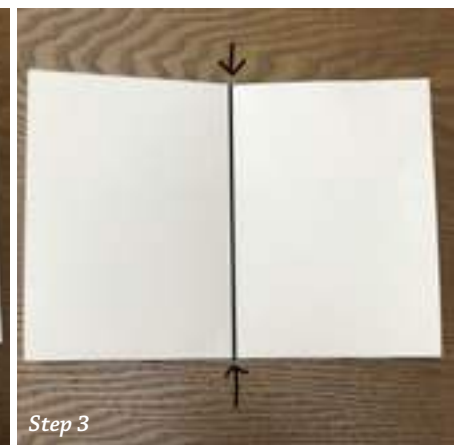
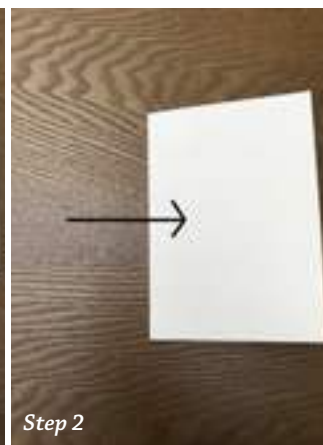
14 Open up the card and your mouth will be in the centre ready for you to draw your picture around it - don't forget to colour in the mouth.

15 You can always cut around the pictures and glue the inside and outside together.

Don't forget to tag the boutique and newspaper on social media if you would like to share your cards.

F a c e b o o k :
@Thelittledressboutiquedesigns
and @postgroupmidlands

Have fun!
lots of love,
Tamsin xx



The Little Dress Boutique



www.thelittledressboutique.co.uk

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New professional framework launched could help boost cancer workforce



A new professional framework has been launched as part of the UK-wide Aspirant Cancer Career and Education Development programme (ACCEND).

Developed by Health Education England in partnership with Skills for Health, the framework provides a common language to support transformational reform in the education, training and career pathways of cancer support workers, nurses and AHP's.

The framework lays out seven levels of practice from supportive, assistive, pre-registration and registration through to enhanced, advanced and consultant, supporting practitioners at all levels of the career pathway to develop the core knowledge, skills and behaviours to care for people affected by cancer.

Speaking about the ACCEND programme

Professor Mark Radford CBE, Chief Nurse, Health Education England said

“Cancer is a complex and significant disease that affects 1 in 2 of us during our lifetimes. As scientific and technological innovations continue to improve our abilities to fight this challenging disease, it can become just as complex to ensure our cancer workforce is prepared for such rapid changes and advancements in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of cancer care.

“The ACCEND programme will support our cancer nurses and AHPs to stay fit for the future with a national framework of education pathways to help our staff to improve and expand their cancer services.

“The competences outline how nurses caring for adults living with and beyond cancer, can enhance their knowledge and skills and if they so wish, advance in a career in cancer nursing. It is aspirant in encouraging nurses to reach their best potential whether they are working in a supportive, assisted, or registered nursing role. It guides the core capabilities needed to nurse for people living with and beyond cancer at any point on their pathway without specifying the type of role required.”

Claire Taylor, Chief Nursing Officer at Macmillan comments:

“The framework comes at a particularly critical time for the UK nursing workforce; as we cope with increased waiting times and cancer backlogs. This framework inspires us to look forward and consider how we can develop ourselves and those around us. This is so important for both our professional development and our profession.

“It should be used alongside other professional frameworks, guidelines and standards published. It is easy to navigate and should be the ‘go to’ for all nurses who support people with cancer. I truly believe that ACCEND has the potential to be transformative in cancer nursing careers.”

The framework has also been endorsed by the Royal College of Nursing and United Kingdom Oncology Nursing Society (UKONS).

UKONS President Mark Foulkes said:

“UKONS would like to express their support for this capability framework specifically, and for the ACCEND programme more broadly. This important publication is the first step in providing all allied health professionals working with, and caring for, people with a cancer diagnosis with a single, clear educational framework.

“The absence of such a structure has been keenly felt and many of us on the UKONS board, UKONS champions and our members have been involved in the ACCEND programme which has this capability framework at its heart.

“Instead of sitting on a shelf, we believe this framework will be used widely and has been devised and structured to link with a wide range of resources which will guide and assist allied health professionals working within oncology from pre-registration through to consultant-level practitioners and strategic leaders.”

Nikki Morris, Chair of the Royal College of Nursing Cancer and Breast Care Forum adds:

“This framework is an essential resource for nurses to be in a position to provide the very best care today whilst also preparing the workforce to provide outstanding care in the future.

Knowledge and skillset lie at the core of providing all aspects of cancer care. This framework provides agreed descriptors, capabilities and career pathways to give uniformity and guidance to individual nurses, organisations and the general public.

“The framework reflects the breadth of the modern cancer team and the requirements at each level of practice. The format is informative and easy to follow.

“We are proud to have been part of the team who have worked on this resource and are delighted at the reception that it has received particularly with those who have needed it the most - nurses.”

To download and view the Aspirant Cancer Career and Education Development (ACCEND) framework: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/cancer-diagnostics/aspirant-cancer-career-education-development-programme/accend-cancer-career-framework>

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Hello from your local Slimming World groups



January and now February have passed so quickly, Valentines, half term school holidays amongst other things. Looking ahead, we have Easter on the horizon probably along with thoughts of spring and even summer holidays ahead. Often the time we want to feel and look our best. If you're thinking about joining a Slimming World group, you might be wondering what to expect when you first walk through those doors. Rest assured that a Slimming World group is the best place to learn more about yourself as a slimmer and achieve the weight loss you'd love. So, this month we thought we'd 'walk' you through what it's like to join us. Read on to discover the wonderful things your group has in store for you.

Wishing you a happy and healthy month ahead...

Toni x (07971 686 698)

Group is where the magic happens!



Where can I find a Slimming World group?

The short answer: everywhere! There are hundreds of Slimming World groups across the UK so you're sure to find one that's held at a time and place to suit you.

You can search out all of our local groups on our website, where you'll also find the contact details for your local Consultant – they'll be happy to chat if you have any questions before you go along.

Once you're a Slimming World member, you can attend any of our groups. So no matter where you are, you'll have access to our unbeatable slimming support.

Can I just turn up to a Slimming World Group?

Absolutely. There's no need to book a place or ring ahead, and you're sure to receive a really warm welcome by your Consultant and the other members.

What happens at my first group session?

We know you might be feeling nervous – lots of our members felt the same before they joined. There's no need to worry, though. Whichever group you choose, you'll be greeted by kind, non-judgemental people who want you to succeed.

During your first half hour, the Consultant will talk you through how our Food Optimising eating plan works and give you your super-charged member pack – it's filled with everything you need to enjoy a fantastic first week.

Then, you'll be invited to take a seat with the other members for the most important part of our group sessions... IMAGE Therapy.

What is IMAGE Therapy?

We know that losing weight isn't always plain sailing. It takes real effort to change the habits of a lifetime, and it's so much easier with the right support. As experts in the psychology of weight loss, we'll help you make those changes and introduce healthy habits in a way that's personalised and sustainable.

We do that in IMAGE Therapy (which stands for Individual Motivation and Group Experience). Each week, the group will share ideas, recipes, experiences and strategies to help you keep your motivation sky-high as you build on your knowledge of Food Optimising and our Body Magic activity programme.

IMAGE Therapy is also where you'll begin to understand yourself as a slimmer and uncover the deeper psychological barriers to your success. Your Consultant has a set of powerful motivational tools to help you overcome any challenge you come across, and your friends in group will be rooting for you every step of the way.

What happens at weigh-in? How often do you get weighed?

To help us give you the very best support to achieve your dream weight, it's important for you to weigh in. Don't worry, your weight will never be announced to the group – only how much you've lost. Your weight is – and always will be – completely confidential.

At the end of your first group session, your Consultant will invite you to privately step on the scales and set your target weight. For each week that follows, you'll weigh in at the same time as the other members in group – it's a fantastic opportunity to chat about your week, swap recipes and ideas and support each other.

Do I have to stay at group every week?

No, but we really hope you do. Image Therapy makes all the difference to your success. We Know that members who attend group regularly lose more weight – and the more group sessions they stay to, the more weight they lose!

"The sense of belonging our members experience within our groups helps to lift them out of the loneliness and isolation they tell us they feel, to shed any burden of guilt and shame they carry as a result of the way they believe they're often treated in society, and to make them feel more valued.

We believe this feeling of being part of something and knowing that others genuinely care about your success is as important as our healthy eating plan when it comes to successful weight loss, as it's what helps to keep members coming back to group to get the support they need on those weeks when their commitment might falter.

As their self-esteem and self-belief grows, which we find happens in our groups within just a few weeks, they feel safe enough to open up and do the deeper thinking needed to break ingrained habits and make changes. What's more, they also have more confidence in their ability to adopt the new healthy, life-changing habits that the group supports them to build, and that makes losing weight easier and more successful in the long run."

How long is a Slimming World group session?

Your first group will last about an hour, so that we can set up your membership and make sure you have everything you need to get started. After that, each group will typically last about 40 minutes – and what an action-packed 40 minutes it is!

Each week your Consultant and friends in group will celebrate every weight loss milestone and activity achievement with awards, crown a slimmer of the week (awarded to the member who's lost the most weight that week), and one lucky member will go home with a hamper full of delicious Free Food. And we've not even mentioned our regular competitions and taster sessions.

How much is it to join Slimming World?

You'll pay a one-off group membership fee of £5 and the weekly group fee is £5.95 (£5.65 Seniors). We're also the only weight loss group to offer a money-back guarantee, so if you don't lose weight during your first four weeks of group membership, we'll give you your money back.

We also have lots of special offers to help you save money – you can find the latest deals on our website or by contacting one of our consultants

Whatever your lifestyle, Slimming World will help you lose weight in a way that works for you. And we promise to get you off to a great slimming start!

*Standard membership fee is £5 and weekly group fee is £5.95. All prices shown are recommended retail prices. At participating groups.



Slimming World taste the *freedom*

Contact your local Slimming World Consultant
and join a warm and friendly group today!

Monday

Castle Brom - The Baptist Church, 5.30 & 7.00pm Claire - 07917867577
Tile Cross - St Peters Church, 5.30 & 7.00pm Nataley 07939 949136
Yardley - St Edburghas Church Hall, 9.00am, 3.30 & 5.30pm Julie 07530 552653

Tuesday

Coleshill - The Catholic Church (sacred Heart & St Teresa)
 3.30pm, 5.00pm & 6.30pm Toni 07971686698
Kingshurst - Seeds Of Hope, St Barnabas CH, 5.30pm & 7.00pm Diane 07432 123206
Kitts Green - Evangelical Church, 5.30pm Becki 07864 872816
Shard End - Aylesford Hall, 9.00am & 10.30am Donna 07516 726534
Hay Mills - Hay Mills CC, 9.30am Amy 07904 242379

Wednesday

Castle Brom - Arden Hall, 9.30am Diane 07432 123206
Castle Brom - St Clements Church, 3.00, 4.30 & 6.00pm Nataley 07939 949136
Marston Green - The Parish Hall, 3.30, 5.30 & 7.00pm Jacqui 07814 675180
Water Orton - The Link, 3.00, 5.30 & 7.00pm Paul 07505708121 New Consultant

Thursday

Castle Vale - St Cuthberts Church, 5.30pm, Richard 07733820994
Chelmsley Wood - The Fordbridge Centre (by Asda), 5.30pm, Jacquie 0795713343 New Consultants
Sheldon - St Thomas More, 4.00, 5.30, 7.00pm, Jayne 07453 348184
Smiths Wood - SJB Centre, 5.00 & 6.30pm Nataley 07939 949136

Friday

Chelmsley Wood - The Family Tree, 9.00am Jayne 07453 348184
Sheldon - St Thomas More Church, 9.00am Jacqui 07814 675180

Saturday

Chelmsley Wood - Three Trees Community Centre, 9.00am Michael 07957 510533
Chelmsley Wood - The Family Tree, 8.30 & 10.00am Jayne 07453 348184
Castle Brom - The Baptist Church, 8.00 & 9.30am to Donna 07516726534
Bordesley Green - St Pauls Church, 9.00am Maria 07974 805252
Sheldon - St Thomas More, 7.30 & 9.00am Theresa 07583092260

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This faff-free fish supper is packed with good things and tastes every bit as fantastic as it looks!
 Ready in 25 mins Serves 4 | Syn Free

Ingredients:

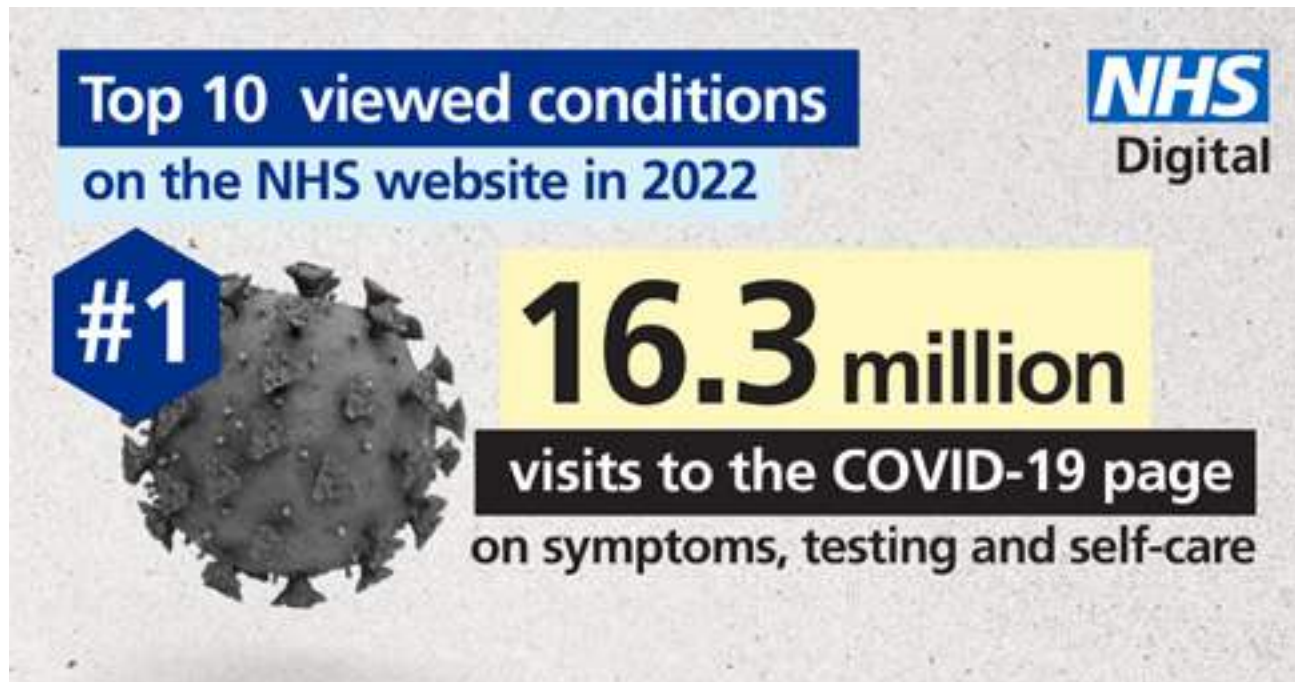
- 500g dried fusilli pasta
- Low-calorie cooking spray
- 4 skinless and boneless salmon fillets, cut into bite-size chunks
- 2 peppers (any colours), deseeded and chopped
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 300g green beans, trimmed and halved
- 100g fat-free natural fromage frais
- 1 large unwaxed lemon, zested and cut into wedges
- Small bag of watercress, a few sprigs reserved, the rest chopped

Method

1. Cook the pasta according to the pack instructions, then drain and return to the pan, reserving 100ml of the pasta cooking water.
2. Meanwhile, spray a wide non-stick frying pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a medium-high heat. Add the salmon chunks and cook for 1-2 minutes or until just cooked, stirring occasionally. Transfer to a plate.
3. Add the peppers, garlic and green beans to the frying pan and cook for 6-8 minutes or until tender and lightly charred, stirring often. Add to the salmon cubes and mix gently.
4. Toss the salmon mixture through the pasta and stir in the fromage frais, lemon zest, chopped watercress and as much of the pasta water as you need to make a good sauce. Season lightly and divide between plates or shallow bowls. Scatter over the reserved watercress sprigs and serve with the lemon wedges for squeezing over.



Scarlet fever among NHS website's top ten most searched for conditions in 2022



Coronavirus, chickenpox and scarlet fever were among the most commonly viewed conditions on the NHS website in 2022.

A 2022 Top Ten list compiled by NHS Digital shows the most popular pages related to Coronavirus, with 16.3 million visits to advice on COVID-19 symptoms, testing and self-care, followed by 4.3 million clicks on long Covid.

High blood pressure was the third most-visited condition, attracting 3.8 million views, while scarlet fever, chickenpox and monkeypox all saw big increases in visits, compared with 2021.

Visits to the chickenpox page more than doubled in 2022 to become the fourth most visited condition, with 3.7 million against 1.7 million in 2021.

Scarlet fever was the seventh most visited page, with 3

million visits in 2022 – seven times the amount of clicks in 2021, when there were 414,000.

There were also 60 times as many visits to the page on monkeypox with 2.1 million in 2022, compared to only 35,000 in 2021.

Visits to the attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) page remained high, increasing from 3.1 million in 2021 to 3.5 million in 2022, making it the fifth most visited condition of the year.

Searches for fever in children were also up in 2022, with 3.4 million visits compared with 2.9 million in 2021, and diarrhoea and vomiting page visits increased from 2.4 million in 2021 to 2.9 million in 2022.

Tonsillitis received 2.8 million hits in 2022 from 2.1 million in 2021, and rashes in babies and children increased to 2.7 million in 2022 from 2.4 million the previous year.

The ten most viewed pages about medical conditions in 2022 were:

1. Coronavirus (16.3 million)
2. Long Covid (4.3 million)
3. High blood pressure (3.8 million)
4. Chickenpox (3.7 million)
5. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (3.5 million)
6. Fever in children (3.4 million)
7. Scarlet fever (3 million)
8. Diarrhoea and vomiting (2.9 million)
9. Tonsillitis (2.8 million)
10. Rashes in babies and children (2.7 million)

Joe Risk, NHS Digital's head of delivery for the NHS website, said:

"Millions of people used the NHS website in 2022 for the latest Covid information or to book a vaccination, as well as for advice on topics ranging from high blood pressure to diarrhoea and vomiting.

"Providing access to the latest medical advice and making it as easy as possible for people to access is our top priority, to ensure we continue to support and improve health across the country."

The NHS website, which is managed by NHS Digital, is the UK's biggest health website with an estimated 2.6 million visits a day in 2022 from people seeking information and advice. It includes over 4,000 pages and provides information about 990 medical conditions.

The most popular page on the NHS website in 2022 was the COVID-19 vaccination booking page, with 60 million visits.

Other health services available on the website include applying for a free UK Global Health Insurance Card for healthcare cover abroad, finding a GP, and a BMI healthy weight calculator.

Transport Secretary statement following RMT rejection of TOCs and Network Rail offers



Transport Secretary Mark Harper said:

"The RMT's rejection of these best and final offers is a kick in the teeth for passengers across the country and the RMT's own members, who having been ordered to take strike action are now being blocked from having a say on their own future. The RMT's leaders should have had the courage to allow their own members to have the chance to vote on their own pay and conditions, rather than making that decision for them behind closed doors.

"It is time for those union leaders to face the reality – our railways are currently not financially sustainable, reform is essential. I have played my part. I met union leaders. The Rail Minister and I facilitated regular meetings between all parties. We guaranteed fair and reasonable offers on pay and reform. It is now clear that no realistic offer is ever going to be good enough for the RMT leadership."

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Water Orton Women

Water Orton Women met up on Thursday 16th February at Water Orton Cricket Club

It was our usual monthly meeting but we were also celebrating our 20th Anniversary.

Everyone had a fab time, there was music, laughter and friendships, great order of the night and with cake and Prosecco it made the evening even more enjoyable.

Our next meeting is 20th April, and we are supporting Mary Ann Evans Hospice.

For more information please contact

chrisjones604@icloud.com (committee member).

Our amazing bunch of team members from left to right:

Sue Arnold

Hazel Way

Chriss Jones

Janine Smith

Gail Whitehead

Carole Truman

Jackie Sperring



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Green maritime tech of the future to become reality thanks to £60m boost

- Companies across the UK to benefit from £60 million funding to supercharge the development of clean maritime solutions
- Transport Secretary in Belfast to see state of the art tech allowing vessels to 'fly' above water, eliminating CO2 emissions and slashing fuel costs by up to 90%
- Part of UK Government plans to back innovative businesses and reach net zero emissions by 2050

The UK's race to decarbonise the maritime sector has been given another vital boost, with £60 million in Government funding distributed to innovative companies nationwide developing futuristic green technology.

For the first time, the UK Government is funding the development of new clean maritime technology across a two-year period. Companies in twelve regions around the UK will benefit from the cash, generating highly skilled jobs across the nation and positioning the UK as a world leader in green solutions.

The Transport Secretary, Mark Harper, visited Artemis Technologies in Belfast on Tuesday 14 February to see some of the tech in action.

Using technologies adapted from the worlds of high-performance yacht racing, motorsports and aerospace, the company is developing vessels that effectively 'fly' above the water surface. The vessels produce zero emissions when foiling and offer energy savings of up to 90% resulting in significantly lower operating and maintenance costs.

Artemis Technologies will now use the funding to help take their invention to the seas on a commercial scale.

Transport Secretary Mark Harper said:

"Our maritime sector imports 95% of goods into the UK and contributes £116 billion to our economy – more than both aviation and rail combined.

"With growing the economy one of the Government's top priorities, we must continue our efforts to ensure the UK remains a pioneer in cutting-edge clean maritime solutions.

"The funding we're awarding today will help to do just that, bringing emission-free concepts to life and fuelling innovation."

The funding comes from the third round of the Government's Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition (CMD3), which focuses on developing a range of clean maritime technologies including hydrogen, ammonia, electric and wind power.

During the two-year investment period, successful companies will be required to demonstrate that their projects will work in the real world, helping them to progress towards becoming an everyday reality.

CEO at Artemis Technologies, Dr Iain Percy OBE, said:

"The clean maritime demonstration competition is key to unlocking those innovations across the region that will transport the UK towards a more sustainable future and we are thrilled that it has once again recognised the integral role Artemis Technologies can play.

"With this latest round of funding, we are emboldened to advance our green technology projects, develop world-leading clean vessels for our seas, and continue on our mission to lead the decarbonisation of maritime."

Other winners include a project led by Collins River

Enterprises Limited to build and test a brand new fully electric ferry on the River Thames between Canary Wharf and Rotherhithe, building on research funded through the first round of the CMD3.

Another project led by AceOn Battery Solar Technology Ltd will develop hydrogen-powered vessels to transfer crew to wind farms off the northeast coast of England from the Port of Blyth.

WingTek are also receiving CMD3 funding to develop and demonstrate two full-sized prototypes of wind-assisted ships with high tech sails, which will reduce the amount of fuel used by the vessels as well as the emissions they produce.

CEO of the UK Chamber of Shipping Sarah Treseder said:

"Congratulations to all the successful bids, which cover a wide range of technologies and aspects of shipping.

"The UK Chamber of Shipping is committed to net zero by 2050. This funding is an important milestone in ensuring we continue to work together to achieve this important target and will help us complete the journey from theory to reality for zero emission shipping."

Today's funding comes from the wider £206 million UK Shipping Office for Reducing Emissions (UK SHORE) scheme, announced in March 2022.

The CMD3 is one of the many initiatives from UK SHORE to fund green technology. Last week the Government launched the Zero Emission Vessels and Infrastructure competition to support projects in the latter stages of development, and the Clean Maritime Research Hub – aimed at the early science and research behind green technology.

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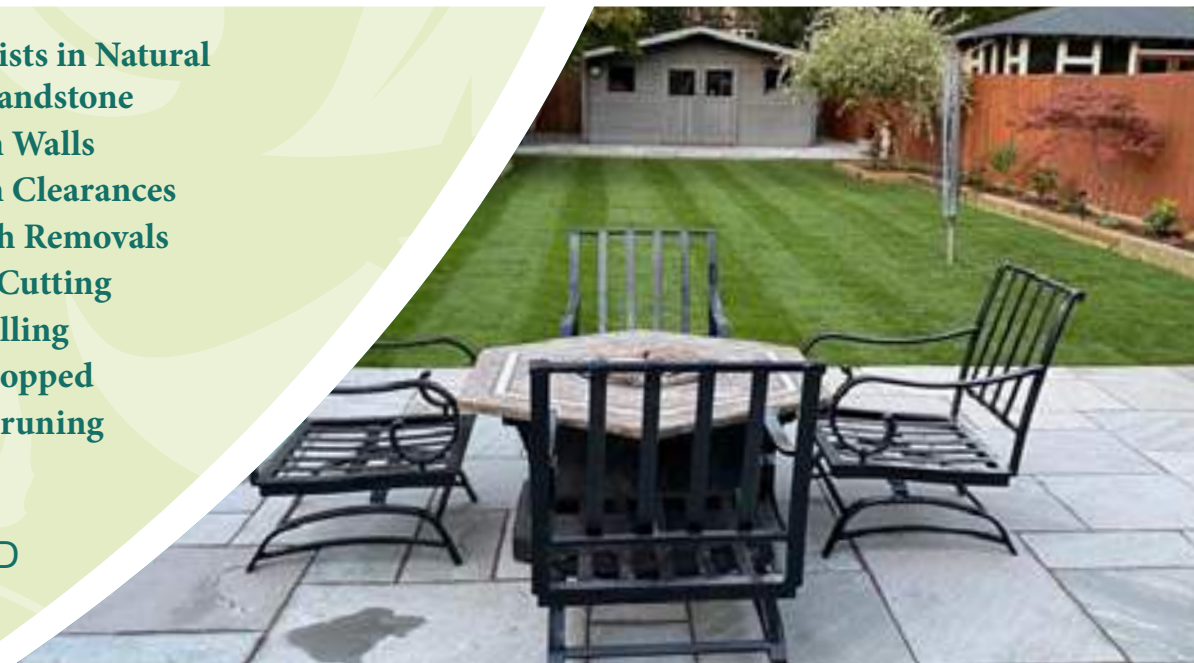
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reception

Diesel is a very lively misunderstood boy, looking for a home to call his own. He is an incredibly sweet boy, with very typical Shepard traits whilst in kennels, such as separation anxiety when left, so would love an owner who can most of his time with. Ideally Diesel will need an active home that can walk with him and provide a good amount of exercise to drain him of pent-up energy and frustration. Diesel loves fetch so good way to burn off a bit of his energy and really form a one to one bond with him. Although Diesel can't live with another dog. We do feel that Diesel could possibly walk with other dogs after he gets over his initial vocal behaviour.

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Local Sports



Old Saltleians RFC

SAPCA Awards (Sports And Play Constructors Association)

Old Saltleians new facility has been awarded the highest accolade at the recent SAPCA 2023 awards event.

Delivered at the Hilton Hotel, St Georges Park the FA's National Football Centre, on Monday 13th Feb, this prestigious award was attended by the O'Brien's project management team, Mick Lee from Old Salts and Peter Harvey for RLF.

The award recognises innovation, expertise and sustainability in the construction of sports and play facilities and their supporting technologies.

Richard Shaw, SAPCA CEO, said: "For eight years now, the annual SAPCA Awards have highlighted, to a wider audience, how the association's members create innovative solutions, deliver complex projects and pioneer industry-leading products and services.

"SAPCA represents the best of the industry, so these awards showcase the best of the best – which means that the winners should be very proud of their work.

"This year's cohort of winners is no exception and shows how SAPCA members lead the way when it comes to innovation and excellence within sports and play construction. It was especially heartening to see so much strength around sustainability, which shows how the industry is leading from the front when it comes to tackling the environmental challenges that the world faces."

<https://sapca.org.uk/news/sapca-awards-2023-winners-announced/>

The winners of the SAPCA Awards 2023 have been revealed, with the six winning entries being chosen by a panel of judges from a short list of 10 finalists.

Among this year's winners were a first of its kind recycling facility and an innovative new product set to transform tennis training.

Now in their eighth year, the awards celebrate the achievements of SAPCA members across the sports and play facility construction industry. The awards ceremony was held as part of the SAPCA Conference and Annual Dinner on 13 February at St George's Park.

Colin Corline, SAPCA Project Manager and a member of the awards judging panel, said: "We received more than 30 entries for this year's awards and, as in previous years, the overall quality of entries was very high.

"It was no easy task to pick the six winners, which is testament to the expertise, innovation and knowledge represented within our members."

The winners of the SAPCA Awards 2023 are:

Project (Large): O'Brien Contractors

New sports facility with six natural turf pitches and clubhouse at Old Saltleians RFC.

Project (Small): Notts Sport

Renovation project to provide two non-filled synthetic turf areas at Shooters Hill College, London.

Product: JB Corrie – Clearplay

Clearplay is a new, game-changing practice wall for tennis which can be installed retrospectively within existing tennis court, or as part of new projects.

Sustainability Award: Sportex

Sportex developed and opened the UK's first 100% closed-loop recycling facility for end-of-life synthetic turf sports fields.

Innovation Award: Envirostik – Aqua-fix

The new Aqua-Fix adhesive enables carpet seam bonds to be made even if the presence of water is excessive.

Export Award: Surf Tech

Record sales year for Surf Tech's export arm, including bumper sales in existing markets and new partners worldwide.

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WATER ORTON CRICKET CLUB

Hello everyone

First let's say a big thank you to our regular supporters at our social presentations. This past autumn and winter your valued support has been fantastic and we really appreciate your regular visits. Below is an update taking us up to the start of the new cricket season.

QUIZ NIGHT SATURDAY 11th MARCH

Teams of 4/5/6 members £2-00 per player

Please come in at 7.30pm to register your team for an 8.00pm start

FOOTBALL NIGHT FRIDAY 24th MARCH

An Aston Villa evening with BRIAN LITTLE accompanied by Special Guest NIGEL SPINK

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Tickets now on sale at the cricket club bar or from Pete Coles 07812 241046 or from the Water Orton Tennis Club via Paul Messenger 07538 601246

THE ROD STEWART EXPERIENCE SATURDAY 1st APRIL

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Tickets now on sale £ 8-00 each Doors open 7.30pm

Watch out for future events throughout the year with Discos, Tribute Nights, Live Bands and Quiz Nights all to be featured in future editions of the Coleshill and Castle Bromwich Posts.

Thank you everyone, we look forward to seeing you soon.



Coleshill Town F.C.

Coleshill Town FC match results

Monday 23rd January

NPL MIDLAND DIVISION

Coleshill Town 0 v 0 Corby Town

A cracking game under the lights at Pack Meadow! It was end to end stuff but both keepers had Man Of The Match performances and somehow kept clean sheets.

Saturday 4th February

NPL MIDLAND DIVISION

Coleshill Town 3 v 1 Loughborough Dynamo

No goals again for an hour but when Loughborough took the lead Coleshill finally woke up and scored three times in the last 15 minutes. Kai Tonge scored on 75 minutes, Chris Lait three minutes later and George Washbourne scored on 90 minutes.

Tuesday 7th February

NPL MIDLAND DIVISION

St Neots Town 2 v 1 Coleshill Town

A long, long journey midweek against a team in the bottom three, then lose to a last minute goal and it's a long way home. The game was heading towards a very boring 0-0 draw until the Saints scored on 71 minutes. Coleshill dug deep to force their way back into the game and Amarvir Sandhu scored with five minutes remaining only to see the home side score the winner in the dying seconds of the game.

Saturday 11th February

NPL MIDLAND DIVISION

Cambridge City 2 v 3 Coleshill Town

Coleshill were comfortable until the final 15 minutes. Kai Tonge scored from the penalty spot then had another penalty saved on the stroke of half time. Amarvir Sandhu doubled the advantage then Tonge scored from a third penalty to make it 3-0. Cambridge threw the kitchen sink at Coleshill and scored twice then hit the bar with the last kick of the game.

Saturday 18th February

NPL MIDLAND DIVISION

Dereham Town 1 v 4 Coleshill Town

Coleshill were quick out of the blocks and were 2-0 up within 15 minutes both goals coming from Kai Tonge. Dereham pulled a goal back before half time but Coleshill were always on top and increased their advantage with goals from Taylor Byrne and Amarvir Sandhu.

COLESHILL TOWN FC EASTER RAFFLE

Drawn Easter Monday at the Home game against Bedworth United.

SATURDAY 25TH MARCH 2023 IS NON LEAGUE DAY!

Come and support your local non league club when the Premier League and Championship sides take a break!

Coleshill Town Football Club are offering a special promotion for all new and existing spectators when they attend our home game against Yaxley on Saturday 25th of March.

Normal price for adults is £10 (which can still be paid) but if you pay £15 per adult on the 25th, it will get you into our next home game against Bedworth United on Monday 10th of April for free!

It's a big local Derby game and a great deal for your Easter Monday football fix!

Ask for the promotion price on the gate and we will do the rest!



Pitching in Northern Premier League Midland Division

Season 2022/2023 CTFC Fixture List

<p>Saturday 25th February Home to Hinckley LR.</p> <p>Saturday 4th March Home to Chasetown.</p> <p>Saturday 11th March Home to Harborough Town.</p> <p>Saturday 18th March Away to Daventry Town.</p>	<p>Saturday 25th March Home to Yaxley. NON LEAGUE DAY!</p> <p>Saturday 1st April Away to Halesowen Town.</p> <p>Saturday 8th April Away to Spalding.</p> <p><i>All Fixtures are League and 3pm kick off unless stated.</i></p>
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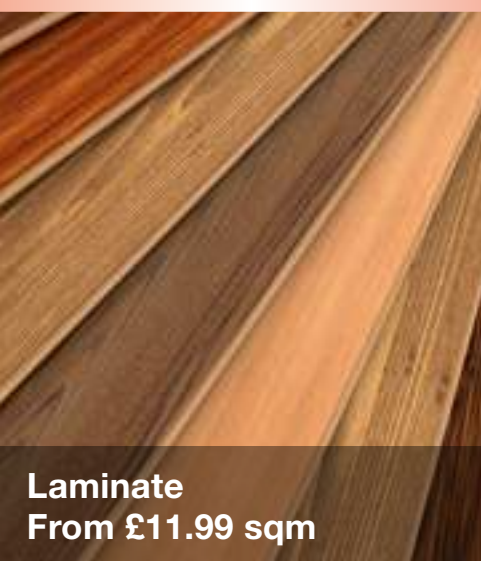
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