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April 2023 Issue 70



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KINGFISHER FOOD BANK BECOMES NORTH SOLIHULL FOOD BANK AS IT GAINS CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

This Trussell Trust franchised food bank has been supporting the communities of North Solihull and East Birmingham since 2012, helping people out of food poverty.

It is hoped this new status will further consolidate the presence of this important charity which continues to be run only by volunteers.

Full story page 10



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the **CastleBromPost**

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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The Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III Celebration - Childrens Party (aged 3-13) Coleshill Town Hall Sunday May 7th 2023

- Kids Entertainment
- Music and songs
- Party Games
- Food drink & Jelly
- Free commemorative gift
- Fancy Dress welcome
- Face Painting
- Lots of Surprises

- Fun Day out
- For families residing in
Coleshill and surrounding
villages.
- Book early
- 11am - 3pm

There will be an adults waiting cafe in the Court Room at the Town Hall for Parents where refreshments will be provided.

PLEASE NOTE
Bookings will be on a First come First served basis and once limit reached there is nothing we can do so please book early. An email to below address will generate an acceptance email and you will be sent further details

**SUNDAY
MAY 7TH**

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100th Blood Donation

By Jeff Shrimpton

I gave my 100th blood donation today at Arden Hall, Castle Bromwich.

I took some photos to record my achievement, but was aware that the number of donors is never enough to supply blood required for NHS.

So I thought an article in your paper might spur a few more people to consider donation to supply a life supporting gift.



Castle Bromwich Singers

present



Saturday April 22nd

Castle Bromwich Baptist Church
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Greg on 07951 562 907

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Price £6.00 (£4.00 for under 16's)

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Castle Bromwich
Hall Gardens

April News from Castle Bromwich Historic Gardens



With Easter falling early this year the school holidays start right at the beginning of the month, so from Saturday 1st of April until Sunday 16th the Gardens will be open EVERYDAY of the week... No fooling, honest.

Our staff and volunteers will be working hard to make sure there is lots to do .. or nothing if you just want to come, sit on a bench and breathe in the fresh April air.

Who knows whether there will be 'April showers' or bright skies..Although the stretch tent shelter in the Gardens will be up, it's still probably advisable to keep that extra layer of clothing on.

As the old saying goes 'Cast ne'er a clout, till May is out". Did you decipher that one? 'clout' - clothes, 'cast ne'er' - never cast/throw off. So it advises you to keep your winter clothes on until 'May is out'... There is some controversy about what this might mean. Does it refer to the month of May? Or does it mean 'May blossom', the flowers on hawthorn bushes? Supposedly the hawthorn blossoms will start blooming when the weather is warmer and the days are longer... ooh and that might coincide with the beginning of the month of May too. Such sayings echo down the ages from parents and wise elders... but they're always a bit approximate. Let's see what happens in the month of April this year.



Our favourite friendly Park Keeper, Percy will have a brand new trail to explore in the Gardens. This time it's based on the story 'One Springy Day'. As always the trail itself is free to visit and revisit and is full of stories and activities to do around the Gardens. Ideal for younger children.

There will also be additional bookable sessions with Percy over the Easter holidays , with crafts, stories and more things to do. See the link to the website to book below.

Over the Easter break there are more treats **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) (£3 for children)

On Easter weekend itself the trails continue and the Gardens will also be full of men and women in armour, long skirts making lots of noise ... yes it's those rebellious Parliamentarians 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/>)

On the flowers theme we have three practical workshops too in April. You can try your hand a weaving a garden obelisk in willow (21st April), making Spring Wreaths on 2nd April and in advance of our Wedding Showcase , Claire Bond the florist will be running a Floral Installations and Styling Workshop on the 14th

Tying the knot

The Gardens have been host to many couples who want to celebrate, or renew, their wedding vows and, since 2022, we have also become the first venue in Solihull to have a license for open air weddings - so couples can literally tie the knot anywhere in the Gardens - so many beautiful places to choose from.. So we are extra happy this year to have a Wedding Showcase in the Gardens so prospective couples can see just how beautiful an outdoor, garden wedding can be Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th April . Two (!) stretch tents will be especially decorated, there will be flowers, hair, makeup food and amazing celebrants onsite over the weekend too. Tickets to attend are free, but must be booked in advance - see our website.



Sushi sushi!....join us under the apple trees 30th April & May 1st

Our two heritage apple and pear orchards are our pride and joy, and like so many cultures across the world we wait with eagerness to see the delicate white and pink blossoms slowly unfurl.



We love the Japanese tradition of Hanami... when the frothy pink plum blossoms appear you will find families all over Japan reuniting and sharing picnics under the blossom. This custom really suits the Gardens 'vibe', for the last few years we've had our own 'English Hanami'

We are so pleased this year to be able to welcome back our good friend Yumi, the chef from Mount Fuji restaurant in the centre of Birmingham.



She will be cooking up her marvellous varieties of Sushi, Japanese curries and Beef Donburi for us to add to our picnics.

As everything is made fresh and to order - all food bookings must be made in advance ... again please see our website.

What a way to celebrate May Day!.. Join us - with or without Japanese food for picnics on Sunday April 30 and Monday May 1st

A Good Story



This local picture may not be familiar to most of the Coleshill Post readers. It shows the newly constructed access road which runs from Coleshill Manor to the site of Emerge Surf and the Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer. This particular vantage point is where the public footpath crosses to go into a strip of woodland known as the Catmore.

Residents in the Coleshill area had an opportunity to hear about the Eternal Wall project in autumn 2019. Speaking in Coleshill Town Hall, Richard Gamble presented the vision of a national landmark for the glory of God. He outlined how the potential site came to Coleshill. The artist's impression illustrates the infinity loop design. The wall will comprise of a million virtual bricks, each brick carrying the story of an answered prayer. More details can be found on their website. In 2019, the project had the land but no planning permission. That was granted a year later. The story of the project was broadcast on BBC Radio 4's series The Untold in November 2022. BBC journalist, Becca Bryers, who followed the project since 2016, created an authentic portrayal of the journey through recordings and interviews with Richard and the team. You can listen to it now on BBC Sounds

The team at the Eternal Wall have given us a quick update on progress regarding the project:

'We are pleased to share with you that we are preparing the land for construction on the site. Work on the road was completed at the end of last month, and in June we will be holding a private event to gather



Christian leaders from across the UK to pray and bless the land. The Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer is expected to open in 2026.'

If you are able to access the website or facebook for the Eternal Wall, you will find some of the stories about situations where people have prayed. The team have been collecting stories across the nation, from individuals and communities. Many of us are interested in other people's stories; although we may not agree with their conclusions. Do you have a story of an answered prayer? The team would love to hear from you!

However, I want to close with, 'The Greatest Story ever Told'. You may recognise it as a 1965 classic film, but God became a Jewish baby boy, in an occupied land. About the age of 30, he began to preach that people should get their lives right with God. He demonstrated power and authority to drive out demons, to heal the sick, perform miracles and forgive sins. But his mission was ultimately not to be a preacher or healer, but to give his life as a ransom- a ransom for those who would want to be free. The gospel narratives focus on the story of his final days in Jerusalem, his arrest and trial then crucifixion and resurrection. This is the story retold by many around the world, especially at Easter. Perhaps Easter is a good time to read it afresh and consider his story and your story.



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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

How can I protect against care fees depleting my estate?

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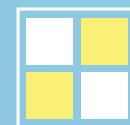
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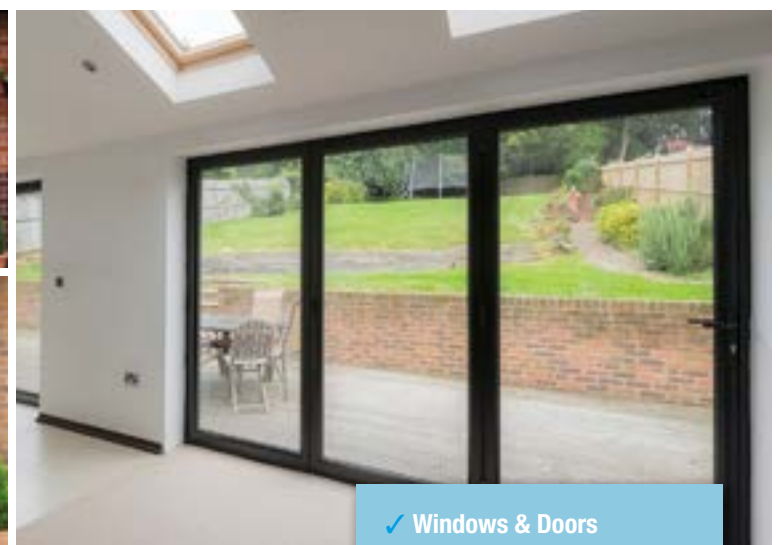
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Saqib Bhatti MBE, MP for Meriden

February Update

This month, the Chancellor outlined his plans for the economy in the Spring Budget. Chancellor announced his Budget for Growth. Despite enormous global challenges, the difficult decisions the Chancellor has taken to restore stability means that we have avoided recession and growth is forecast to return.

A big political priority of mine is affordable childcare. This is why I am pleased to see support for childcare at the heart of the budget. The Government are introducing 30 free hours of childcare per week for children from 9 months to 4 years, worth £6,500 per year per child from 2025. This will deliver the biggest shake-up in childcare provision since 2017, helping more people juggle childcare and work.

Working parents of 2-year-olds can access 15 hours per week from April 2024 and from September 2024 all

working parents of children aged 9 months to 3 years old can access 15 hours per week. And then from September 2025, all working parents of children aged 9 months to 3 years old can access 30 hours of free childcare per week.

The Government is also extending energy support by capping the Energy Price Guarantee at £2,500 this Spring, until July 2023. With energy bills set to fall from July, extending the Energy Price Guarantee will bridge the gap.

Turning to local matters, Transport for West Midlands and the West Midlands Rail Executive have announced they are going to explore the feasibility and business cases for five new railway stations across the region, including a Castle Bromwich train station. This follows on from a previous shortlist of fifteen, with the five being identified as those with the strongest case for development. Once complete the business cases can be used to secure further Government funding to design and build the new stations, with the Castle Bromwich train station

providing greater capacity into central Birmingham and improving connectivity across the borough.

And finally, following on from the Government's successful £2 bus fare cap scheme, I am pleased to say the Department of Transport has extended the cap until 30 June 2023. Bus routes that are included in the £2 bus fare cap include the 71, 94, 96, X12, and X13. The Government has the ambition to deliver sustained, cheaper bus fares through their national bus strategy, and this will go a long way to delivering on this.

As ever, my office remains open as usual and we are conducting surgery appointments, so do not hesitate to book a slot. My contact details are below:

saqib.bhatti@parliament.uk

0121 711 7029



**Cllr Martin McCarthy,
Castle Bromwich Ward (Solihull MBC)**

April Update

Spring is beginning to make its presence felt and our gardens and open spaces are breaking out a little colour, and grass will be being cut.

Love Solihull held a talking rubbish Litter picking event at Lanchester Park during March, this was supported by myself, Parks Officers and 22 volunteers, these came to us from right across Solihull and included our own Castle Bromwich litter pickers and park friends group members from other Solihull parks, this event was arranged by love Solihull and SMBC.

It was good to meet the park's friends group members from several of Solihull's fine Green Flag parks, if anyone would like to raise an equivalent friends group here for our Castle Bromwich parks please get in touch.

Some 40 Bags were collected, One 40L container of waste oil and Some fly tipped articles were also removed leaving the park looking much better than it has been for quite some time.

Some New trees have been planted to increase the living canopy of the park, these are both larger specimens and whips intended to spread Bosworth wood a little further and improve our local environment.

I am appalled by the number of Nitrous Oxide gas canisters littering our open spaces, these are depressing evidence of the mis use of this dangerous gas, when misused it is harmful to the health of our young people and releases a greenhouse gas contributing to global warming. I would like to encourage the producers of these Gas cylinders to add a fully detailed pictorial health warning on the side of these cylinders and to take steps to prevent these products from getting into the wrong hands. This appears to be a luxury that mankind cannot really afford!

HS2 works continue to develop across the borough and surrounding areas, I have met with the contractors and shared our concerns about the traffic restrictions on Water Orton Road near the Tunnel excavation works, these have caused problems for Park Hall students at drop off times, HS2 have promised to keep these to a minimum and advise Park Hall staff of these prior to any further action affecting traffic flow.

There will be SMBC councillor local elections held on Thursday 4th May and those going to vote in person at the polling station will now need to show Photo ID. More information can be found on the electoral commission web site www.electoralcommission.org.uk/voter

My regular councillor surgery is at the Library on the 3rd April at 14:00 no appointment is required.

For anything more urgent please email me at martin.mccarthy@solihull.gov.uk or call.

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North Solihull Food Bank

Kingfisher Food Bank becomes North Solihull Food Bank as it gains Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

This Trussell Trust franchised food bank has been supporting the communities of North Solihull and East Birmingham since 2012, helping people out of food poverty.

It is hoped this new status will further consolidate the presence of this important charity which continues to be run only by volunteers.

The food bank has seen an unprecedented rise in the number of clients over the last year and continues to rely on donations alone. Sadly, it is becoming an increasing struggle to meet demand and the food bank is having to purchase food in order to supply essential items to those in need.

The food bank is experiencing other difficulties at this time as it outgrows the premises used

to offer the service. Attempts to secure suitable venues with good access for clients and sufficient storage for food parcels have been unsuccessful but searching continues.

If anyone can advise of any available premises in or around the North Solihull / East Birmingham, wishes to volunteer or most important, donate food, it would be great to be contacted on 07902 030134



Pirate's Pantry **Recipe of the month**

Korean Duck Rice

Back to Korea this month for a dish that is ridiculously easy and very tasty.

Despite duck being a rich choice of meat, this one is a light and bright tasting meal. Squeezing the lime over the final dish brings it to life and really makes it 'zing'!

즐기세요/ jeulgiseyo (Please Enjoy)

Ingredients:

Serves 4

- Two duck legs

Glaze

- 5 tablespoons dark soy sauce
- juice of one lime
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons rice wine
- 2 tablespoons garlic paste
- 1 teaspoon puréed ginger
- pinch black pepper

Method

Score the duck legs through the skin so the flesh is visible, turn the duck through 60° and repeat. This process allows for the fat to evenly drain from the skin resulting in tender, juicy duck that is not greasy in any way.

Place both legs in a roasting dish and into a preheated oven 180°/160° fan/ Gas mark 4. Return to the duck in an hour.

Glaze

Combine all the ingredients thoroughly, ensuring the sugar is fully dissolved.

Dipping sauce

Combine all the ingredients thoroughly. Taste to ensure you have the right level of heat for your palate. Place in fridge ready for service.

After an hour, remove the duck from the oven. Coat the duck in the glaze and return to the oven for 15 minutes.

Boil the rice until just tender, drain and set to one side to allow it to let off steam.

Dipping Sauce

- 3 tablespoons of the glaze
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- Juice of one lime
- Generous dash of Tabasco Sauce
- Rice
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 300g short grain rice
- 4 sliced spring onions
- 1/2 chopped red chilli
- 1/2 chopped green chilli

Take the duck out of the oven again and apply a second coat of glaze. Return to the oven for another 15 minutes.

Remove the duck from the oven for a final time, place it on a plate to rest for 10 minutes.

Place a tablespoon of sesame oil in a pan, place over a high heat. Add the chillies and spring onions and stir for 15 seconds before adding your rice. Stir thoroughly until the onions and chillies are evenly distributed. Take off the heat ready to plate up.

Here's the good part. Either with a pair of forks or a sharp knife remove the duck meat from the bones. Shred or chop into small pieces.

To bring the dish together all you need do is place the rice in a bowl, sprinkle the chopped duck over the top, garnish and serve with the dipping sauce and a wedge of lime.

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



Annual Presentation Evening on 17th March 2023 for the 165 (Castle Bromwich) Sqn Royal Air Force Cadets



An amazing night at Arden Hall, Castle Bromwich, 17th March 2023. All thanks to Royal Air Force 165 Squadron Cadet presentation of awards by the Officers, retired Officers and Castle Bromwich Parish Councillors as below.

The RAF Air Cadets of 165 (Castle Bromwich) have their H.Q at Castle Vale, Birmingham. They were formed after the famous 165 air squadron of the 2nd World War.

The present Officer commanding is Flt.Lt. Alan Tillman and is assisted by Air Cadet Officers and ranks (retired and volunteers to train both girls and boys to appreciate the good values of today's society. They have parade and training nights on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 7.30 pm and 9.30 pm. They attend many special occasions, including the annual

Birmingham and Castle Bromwich parades (including Remembrance service) They compete in area sports days and visit local air bases including Cosford for flight training. The Annual presentation night is to celebrate the cadets, achievements and for parents and guests to see them presented with their certificates.

Officer Flt Lt Alan Tillman RAFAC presented the evening with awards handed out to the cadets by:-

Councillor John MacDonald – Castle Bromwich Parish Council – attending with Daughter Sharon

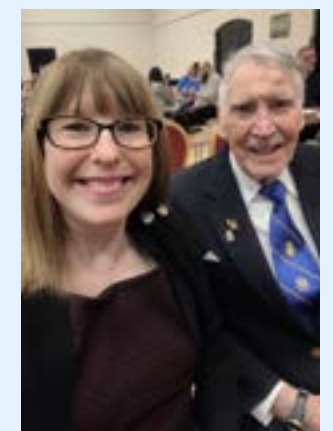
Councillor Pauline Allen – Castle Bromwich Parish Council

Sqn Ldr Robert Foster RAFAC

Sqn Ldr Pablo Mason RAF (Retired)

A very satisfying evening all round.

Councillor John MacDonald



Gardening tips

By Kenneth Cole, Orchard Nurseries

Plant of the month

Dicentra spectabilis – Commonly called 'Bleeding Heart'

This attractive hardy Perennial is easy to grow, and has arching branches with pendulous pink and white heart shaped flowers. It is one of the first perennials to flower every year, often as early as March.

There is a white flowered form too, called *Dicentra Alba*, which is not quite as vigorous as *spectabilis*.

It can be left undisturbed in the flower border and will form an attractive clump. Both forms are readily available in most good garden centres and nurseries (we have plenty!), they would tolerate light shade but prefer a moist soil.

A good size plant in a 4l pot for example, should cost less than £10, and last in the border for 10 years. Excellent value for money!

Now's the time to prune your Bush roses, nothing could be easier!

- using a sharp pair of secateurs or loppers, first cut the branches down to 6-9" (15-22.5cm) of the ground.
- next cut out any dead wood, any very thin branches or any that are crossing
- finally open up the centre of your Bush leaving a cup shape frame work.

All cuts should be made just above an outward facing new shoot. After removing any weeds give the Bush a good handful of rose fertiliser around each Bush.



To keep your roses healthy during the growing season, they should be sprayed with a combined insecticide/ fungicide every month.

We have a range of 'Delbard roses' this year, grown for their amazing scent and disease resistance.

A second feed should be applied once the first flush of flowers have faded and been dead headed.

Hola, Barcelona!

Coleshill's world-beating Nouveau Theatre School gave the church an opportunity to try some of the benefits of its reordering.

Moving previously static pews for a free show gave the school a big space to dance in ahead of a return visit to Barcelona this month for the world dance championships. They were overall winners of The Worlds

Best Dance School at the Barcelona Dance Awards 2018 and 2017.

Pews face forward for services, but can be moved to any configuration for events like the show and exhibitions.

Judging by whoops and applause everyone enjoyed themselves. A raffle raised £111 for the school. Donations for tea, cake and squash served from the modern kitchen facilities raised £100 for the church.



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- Polyanthus and bellis, for spring colour in pots and baskets.
- Beautiful selection of potted Alliums, including pink purple and white, most **£5.99**
- New season roses, including Delbard roses - highly scented and disease resistant, **£9.99/£12.50**
- New season fruit and ornamental trees
- Gorgeous Camellias and Rhododendrons in bud
- New season Acers and Magnolias
- Seed potatoes, onion sets and vegetable seedlings
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£35 for 2 people

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

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Orchard Nurseries, Birmingham Road, Water Orton B46 1TG

Tel: 0121 749 7266 / 07450102855

Julie_heenan@yahoo.co.uk

Heart of England Singers join with Chandos Choir to form a 'Super' choir to perform Vivacious Vivaldi


**SOLIHULL
CHANDOS
CHOIR**

**Heart of
England
Singers**

Vivacious VIVALDI

Saturday 13th May, 7.30pm
Shirley Methodist Church

Heart of England Singers
and Chandos Choir
join forces to perform
great choral works by
Antonio Vivaldi and
his Czech contemporary
Jan Dismas Zelenka

Beauchamp Sinfonietta

Darren Hogg (Organ)

**Conducted by
Leon James**

Tickets £15 (includes programme) under 18s free

Reserve online at solihullchandoschoir.org or call:
01564 779 962 (Chandos) or 07853 841 619 (Heart of England)

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Leon James

In a unique cooperation between two renowned Midland Choirs, the Heart of England Singers and Chandos Choir join forces to perform great choral works by Antonio Vivaldi and his Czech contemporary, Jan Dismas Zelenka, to be staged at Shirley Methodist Church, 257 Stratford Road, Shirley, B90 3AL on Saturday 13th. May from 7.30pm.

The choirs will be conducted by their joint musical director Leon James along with Beauchamp Sinfonia, Darren Hogg on organ and guest soloists. Pieces to be performed include Vivaldi's much loved Magnificat followed by Beatus Vir (based on Psalm 111 - The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of Wisdom) and the haunting Domine ad Adiuandum me Festina where the two choirs will sing in antiphony.

For those less familiar with Zelenka, the choir is performing his work Misere ZWV 57.

Jan Dismas Zelenka (16 October 1679 – 23 December 1745), was a Czech composer and musician of the Baroque period. His music is admired for its harmonic inventiveness and mastery of counterpoint.

Zelenka was raised in Central Bohemia, educated in Prague and Vienna, and spent his professional life in Dresden. The greatest success during his career was the performance of the extensive composition 'Sub olea pacis et palma virtutis' in the presence of the Emperor Charles VI, shortly after his coronation as king of Bohemia in 1723.

This will be an uplifting and stirring celebration of another King Charles, our own King shortly after his coronation.

There is adequate free parking to the rear of Shirley Methodist Church and across the road behind the Shirley station car park.

Under 18's will be free and adults will be charged at £15 per ticket.

Tickets can be ordered from Stephen Record stephentrecord@gmail.com or message 07853841619 with your details. You can private message us on our Facebook page or they can be purchased on the door, where we offer a cashless facility.



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

Precision Micro opens Apprenticeship Scheme to new applicants

Fort Dunlop-based engineering firm, Precision Micro, is launching its apprenticeship drive for 2023. The firm plans to welcome a brand-new cohort of 16-21-year-olds into its Apprenticeship Scheme this year, kickstarting careers in the engineering industry.

During the four-year placement, apprentices will have the opportunity to experience every department within Precision Micro, learning the key skills required to produce precision-etched metal components. Successful applicants will begin their apprenticeships in September, while working towards a Level 3 in Engineering with Birmingham Metropolitan College - James Watt Campus.

A proud Birmingham business, Precision Micro is management-owned and produces millions of high-quality precision etched components every year for the automotive, aerospace, medical and energy sectors. The company also has a long history of investing in its people, with its Director and Co-owner, Mick Taylor, himself starting out as an apprentice three decades ago.

Mick Taylor, Director at Precision Micro, said: "We've been investing heavily in our business in recent years, with millions of pounds put into expanding and upgrading our facility and equipment, so it's a really exciting time to be joining Precision Micro. Last year, four apprentices joined us and they're all flourishing within their roles, learning lots about our business and the industries which we support, as well as contributing to the high levels of quality we pride ourselves on."

Since 2019, Precision Micro has invested more than £5million in upgrading its facility, significantly increasing capacity and underpinning its growth strategy, with plans to invest a further £1.4million in 2023. This year, the company is targeting 20% growth and believes investing in apprentices will be key to achieving its ambitions and sustaining performance for years to come.

During National Careers Week (6th - 11th March), Mason Thompson - a first-year apprentice at Precision Micro - paid a visit to his former secondary school, sharing his experience and advice with youngsters.

Sarah Dullea, Careers Advisor at Plantsbrook School in Sutton Coldfield, said: "It was lovely to have Mason and his colleagues pay us a visit for National Careers Week and take part in our Careers Fair. As our students approach the end of their time at school, it's fantastic for them to hear from somebody who has been in their position so recently and made a really positive step into the world of engineering through an apprenticeship with a well established local firm."

Precision Micro's Apprenticeship Scheme is open to 16-21-year-olds and applicants are encouraged to register their interest at www.precisionmicro.com/apprenticeships.



APPRENTICES WANTED

Career opportunities for 16-21-year-olds at world-leading, Castle Bromwich-based specialist engineering company.

At Precision Micro, we produce precision-etched components used in life-saving surgery, military jets, F1 cars, surveillance drones and more. Our grassroots apprenticeship program has played a significant role in our success. As we continue to expand, we are looking for 10 talented individuals to join our Fort Dunlop-based team this September.

Scan to apply!

Scan the QR code to apply or email hr@precisionmicro.com for details





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PODIATRY**

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www.walshpodiatry.co.uk

Injection Therapy

Steroid Injections



Did you know that Podiatrists in the UK can administer steroid injections? With the relevant training, Podiatrists can indeed administer steroid injections and at Walsh Podiatry this is part of our injection therapy techniques.

A steroid injection is given to reduce inflammation in the specific area that is affected e.g. in a joint or in soft tissue. Our podiatrists can inject the steroid directly into the area, in the foot, ankle or knee. Sometimes a local anaesthetic is injected at the same time to reduce with pain.

Most people notice an improvement within 1-2 days, but this can vary and it can last anywhere from a few weeks to several months. Also, if you have had a steroid injection in the past that has been unsuccessful, it doesn't necessarily mean a second injection won't be successful.

If you have diabetes, high blood pressure, liver, kidney, or heart failure, are on warfarin, are breastfeeding or could be pregnant, then you

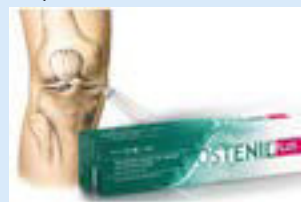
may not be suitable. You should speak to one of our podiatrists who will discuss this with you.

What types of conditions is a steroid injection useful for?

- Heel Pain
- Neuroma
- Toe Joint pain (1st toe Joint)
- Ankle Pain
- Knee Pain

Why not book in for a consultation to discuss this or a biomechanical assessment to see if any of the pains are associated with the way you walk first and then discuss the possibility of a steroid injection at the same time.

Ostenil Injections (Hyaluronic acid)



Another similar treatment we provide here at Walsh Podiatry is "Ostenil" which is predominantly used to treat osteoarthritis. Osteoarthritis is caused by wear and tear in our synovial joints (knees, hips, ankles, big toe joints). The most important component of synovial fluid is hyaluronic acid, which is constantly broken down and reproduced in our lifetime. However, with osteoarthritis, this balance is disturbed, and the breakdown occurs more quickly than it is produced. This causes the synovial fluid to become watery, so

it stops working properly, thus wear and tear occurs on the cartilage.



Ostenil is a solution containing hyaluronic acid. It is injected directly into the space in the joint that contains the synovial fluid and works by restoring the normal balance between the breakdown and production of hyaluronic acid.

This can help with Knee osteo Arthritis, ankle joint and big toe arthritis.

Again it is often best to have a Biomechanical assessment first to determine if any of the pains are associated with your gait however you could simply book for a consultation to see if you are suitable for this injection.

Please call us for more information or go online at www.walshpodiatry.co.uk

Walsh Podiatry
0121 749 6313

329 Chester Road, Castle Bromwich, Birmingham B36 0JG



COLESHILL & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

Monday 16th April

**Our Guest Speaker will be
DEWI JONES**

**who will be discussing all things to
do with grass cutting and lawn care.**

**At Coleshill United Church,
opposite the Red Lion**

7.30pm

Members - £3.50

Non Members - £5

Refreshments Included

All visitors will be made welcome.

**For more information contact Meda on
07549037477**



MCF - LIFE CHURCH Making Christ First

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



Castle Bromwich Parish Council

March News

On Saturday, March 4th, the Spencer Hall welcomed Evah Morgan who performed many motown and classic hits by the Temptations, Martha Reeves, and Diana Ross and The Supremes. The dance floor was full throughout the evening with many showing their northern soul dance moves. Evah was cheered on to do more than one encore to finished a fabulous night. The feedback and comments on tripadvisor were positive and many have booked for the next tribute shows which are:

Peaky Blinders May 6th, Rat Pack July 8th, Greatest Showman Theatre show Sept 16th, George Michael Nov 25th and Abba Dec 2nd.

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

Peaky Blinders are coming to Arden Hall

On Saturday, May 6th, Arden Hall will be placed under "New Management" BY THE ORDER OF THE PEAKY BLINDERS. Step back in time and through the secret door of the Garrison Tavern, (Spencer Lounge) into the murky underworld of the Peaky Blinders. With two just-for-fun gambling dens where you can have a flutter on the Gee Gees or throw the dice on the casino tables.

The hall will be transformed by a tall, handsome man in a dusty black coat with a red right hand; our Tom Shelby lookalike will be waiting for selfies.

Exchange your Shillings for casino chips for a flutter on top-quality full-size Peaky Blinders themed tables; chips and cards add to the occasion; we even supply Shelby 10 Shilling Notes. Personality croupiers, in matching waistcoats and bow ties, situated in the backroom snug of the Garrison will handle your bets on the tables and with the horse racing in the Windsor room. The guest with the highest winnings receives a bottle of bubbly with our compliments, and other prizes will be available too.

Not everyone wants to gamble; so music and dancing will fill the Spencer Hall, and our licensed bars will be open for a Peaky lager or two.

For Peaky Blinders fans, this is a night not to be missed, so grab your friends, flat caps, and don your finest threads for a night of fun.

Dress Code: Peaky Blinder Attire (Not Compulsory) Due to licensing, only Shelby shilling notes will be used in all our gambling dens.

(Over 18's Event)

Our Next Table Top

Saturday 1st April 10:00am - 12:30pm
Tables are still available for hire. Hot drinks, tea, hot chocolate and Italian espresso bean coffee will be available in the Spencer Bar.

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 **

MAKE A CHANGE BECOME A COUNCILLOR

- Are you passionate about your community?
- Do you want to help make a long-lasting change?
- Do you have innovative ideas for the council?
- Do you have concerns about a specific issue and want to do something about it?

If this is you, then we need you at Castle Bromwich Parish Council. We need people from all backgrounds and experiences who reflect their community to put themselves forward for election. Make a change and become a councillor.

What do local councils and councillors do?

Parish councils and councillors make a massive difference to local people's quality of life. They are the first tier of governance and are the first point of contact for anyone concerned with a community issue. They are also passionate about their communities and seek to make a change to help improve their residents' lives.

Local councils run numerous services, depending on the size of the council. Many of them you will see day-to-day, but some are less known. These include setting up community groups, organising facilities for sports, recreation, and social events, making decisions on local planning applications, looking at traffic schemes to address congestion, parking, speeding, etc., establishing youth projects, and managing open spaces.

Councillors are elected to represent the local community, so you must either live or work in the council area. Becoming a councillor is a rewarding experience as you will be able to make a change in your community to help improve residents' lives. A councillor's role can include developing strategies and plans for the area, helping with problems and ideas, representing the community, working with other local community groups, decision making and reviewing decisions and talking to the community about their needs and what the council is doing.

How to become a councillor

A Parish Council can only be as helpful, connected and energetic as the people elected to run them, so we need councillors capable, enthusiastic and engaged to reflect their communities. You can find out more about becoming a councillor on The Electoral Commission and Local Government Association website. There are three ways that you can become a councillor; standing for election, filling a vacant seat after an election (co-opted) or filling a casual vacancy.

We have vacancies right now, with elections in May 2023.

For more information, contact Castle Bromwich Parish Council 0121 747 6503 or counciloffice@castlebromwichpc.gov.uk or go onto YouTube to see the #makeachange video

Party in the Park is back...

On Sunday May 7th, Arden Hall Playing Fields will be hosting a fun-packed community day for all the family to celebrate the Coronation. Many stall holders will be joining us this year, showcasing crafts, pastries, waffles, beauty products and much more. Activities for the children include bouncy castles, and, on request, the old-style children's games of egg and spoon, a sack race, and tug of war just for the grown ups.

Join us on May 7th from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Remember to bring your picnics and deckchairs to have a great family day out free of charge.



Castle Bromwich Parish Council

VACANCY:

HANDY PERSON / SUMMER RELIEF PARK WARDEN

Castle Bromwich Parish Council is looking for a Summer Relief Park Warden. Duties include; being the friendly and approachable face of the Council, maintenance jobs in the park and buildings, gardening and litter picking. This is an outdoor role including physical work.

Fixed-term variable-hour contract but we expect you will be required for between 15 - 40 hours per week during the summer period. Shifts will be according to rota including evenings, weekends and bank holidays.

Mainly based at Arden Hall Playing Fields but also at other green space areas within the Parish.

Pay: SCP 2 £10.62 per hour.

Please contact Rachel for more information or an application pack on admin@castlebromwichpc.gov.uk or 0121 747 6503.

Closing Date for applications: noon Friday 14th April 2023



Scott Bevan History Column

Castle Vale

I think most of us are already fully aware of the estates history as the Castle Bromwich aerodrome. In a postwar Birmingham however, with an ever increasing population and with one third of housing within the city deemed unfit for habitation, a solution was essential to solving the escalating housing crisis within the city. Castle Vale was designed and built as a remedy to alleviate this housing shortage. But what of the areas history before it became an airfield? Although Castle Bromwich and Castle Vale are now two entirely separate areas operating under two different councils, the history of both areas is very much a shared history. In the next two editions of the Castle Bromwich Post, I shall attempt to shed some light on the history of the area that we now know as Castle Vale, long before it became the aerodrome & housing estate that we know today.

Up until 10 years ago it was the place that I called home. I was born there, grew up there and went to school there. Of course the estate that we see today is a far cry from the estate that I remember as a child. Gone are the high rise tower blocks, many of the maisonettes, much of the 'Fort' playing fields and come to think of it, many of the open spaces that as a child, I'd play football with my friends. But I suppose it's just another phase of the ever changing use of the land many of us know and love. So what about the history of Castle Vale? What is known of its development throughout the ages? I think that every local resident is well aware of its history as the Castle Bromwich aerodrome. The names of the roads, the

statues and memorials and for those of us who are old enough to remember, some of the buildings that used to stand as a reminder to its past use as an airfield (I'm just old enough to remember the aircraft hangars at the top end of the estate before they were demolished). But what if we venture past the 20th century? What is known of Castle Vale in earlier times?

Well, the land that we now know as Castle Vale was once known as 'Berwood'. The name 'Berwood' is thought to have derived from two separate Saxon words meaning 'the woods'. The first word being 'Bearu' and then centuries later with that word being no longer in use, another Saxon word was added, this time the word 'Wudu'. The area became known as 'BearuWudu' which over time is thought to have transitioned into the name 'Berwood'.

It's probably also useful to point out here that Castle Vale has ancient and well defined borders existing on at least three sides of the estate. The first being the route that we now know as the Chester Road. This was originally an ancient track way that the ancient Britons used to navigate through the forest and which then forded the River Tame roughly where the M6 motorway flyover is now. This ancient fording point is also the main reason why the motte and Bailey castle was built atop of 'pimple hill' around the mid 12th century, to keep an eye on all those who crossed the river, be they friend or foe. When the hill was excavated during the building of the collector road, evidence was found to suggest that the hill was used as a lookout long before the medieval period and was almost certainly used as a vantage point by the early Britons thousands of years before. For even as far back as then, the hill held a strategic high point above a natural fording point of the

River Tame. Which bring us nicely on to the River Tame, the second ancient and natural boundary of Castle Vale. The third ancient boundary is the Kingsbury Road. The Kingsbury Road follows the line of an ancient track way used by the Saxons to travel from their home in Mercia to fight on the Welsh border. With the area being densely wooded and with the River Tame being much wider at the time, the area would've been extremely swampy and somewhat uninhabitable, but not entirely.

If you've ever looked at an old OS map of Castle Vale, you may have noticed both Berwood Hall Farm marked on it and also the remains of a moat. It is thought that the moat once surrounded a monastic grange and farmstead first recorded during the time of King Henry II who reigned between the years 1154 and 1189. It's said that the land was granted to the Canons of Leicester by Sir Hugh de Arden of Curdworth. By the eighth year of King Henry III's reign (around 1223 to 1224) it's said that two priests were serving in the 'Chapel of the Blessed Mary at Berwood Hall', but by the beginning of King Henry VI's reign in 1422, that chapel no longer existed. By the time of the dissolution of the monasteries during the reign of King Henry VIII, the property reverted back to the crown. Eventually it was sold to Sir Thomas Arden of Park Hall for £272 and 10 shillings. The farm house that is still visible on the OS maps is believed to have been a 17th century property built just outside the moat of the original grange and farmstead.



Berwood Hall Farm and the remains of the original moat marked on a nineteenth century OS map. These are in the vicinity of where Avro Way and Javelin Avenue are now just off Farnborough Road

But what happened to all of the trees that once covered the land on which Castle Vale now stands? Well there is indeed a story behind their disappearance which I shall endeavour cover in next months edition.



Castle Vale before the housing estate was built. The Chester Road and the Kingsbury Road boundaries clearly visible. The railway track running along the line of the River Tame



Castle Bromwich u3a were entertained by Alan with songs, poetry and film clips. It was lovely to see so many people there and lots of new visitors were welcomed to the meeting.

The next meeting is the AGM on 29th March which will include a presentation from some of the interest groups. All welcome. Doors open at 1.30pm at Arden Hall, B36 9PB.

St Mary & St Margaret The Parish Church of Castle Bromwich



On Saturday 31st December 2022, a light went out in our world.

Bill Dargue was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2019, Bill being Bill he didn't moan or grumble, but met the challenge and was determined to not lose this battle, but sadly he did. As the man who has done so much for our parish church, it is fitting that we dedicate this month's article to the man himself 'Our Bill'.

Bill was an incredible man, born in Southport on 29th August 1947 and went to King George Grammar School. He moved to Birmingham in 1965, trained to be a teacher at St Peter's College, Saltley and September 1968 started his teaching career at Shirestone School, Tile Cross. That same month, he went for a drink at The North Star Pub in Stechford and met 18 year old Joan. The following March they married and, in Joan's words, spent the next 53 years happily married and were blessed with children Emily, John & Sam. He was an incredibly proud father and loved his children and Joan with an infinite amount of devotion. Bill and Joan both lived in Stechford and, as time moved on, Bill gained more experience, was promoted to deputy head teacher and at the age of 30 embraced this position at Heathmount School, Balsall Heath. They then moved to Castle Bromwich and found a welcome at the parish church, St Mary & St Margaret.

One of Bill's many talents was playing the guitar, he was a gifted man and throughout his life used his talent to bring a smile and a memory to everyone who heard him. This was especially felt when he organised the first week long summer school at St Mary & St Margaret school during the summer holiday of 1979, following on from

this he was a leader at the church Sunday school and, later helped to run New Light, a follow on support group for teenagers who had a faith. No matter where Bill went his guitar was by his side and folk have regaled many a tune and concert enjoyed with Bill's wonderful talent for music and entertainment.

In 1982 Bill started bell ringing and enjoyed this ministry immensely, becoming tower captain in 1996 and an elected member of the Bellingers Guild in 1998. He was an expert at guiding and educating people about the bell tower, he would welcome local schools, groups and the general public showing them around the Church and Bell tower especially during every Heritage weekend in September, educating people about "The Church Within A Church". Of course it wasn't boring at all because 'Our Bill' was one of the most engaging people you could ever wish to meet. Alongside the bell ringing team, he would partake in a drop of the finest that The Remembrance Club had available every Wednesday evening, Bill was a sociable person and loved being with people and people loved being with him.



He studied history and completed an Open University BA and then studied part-time for an MA in West Midlands local history at Birmingham University with Carl Chinn. Another incredible talent that Bill had was for writing and his book "History of Birmingham" was published. He also

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About Us

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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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wrote two primary school assembly books, published by Oxford University Press.

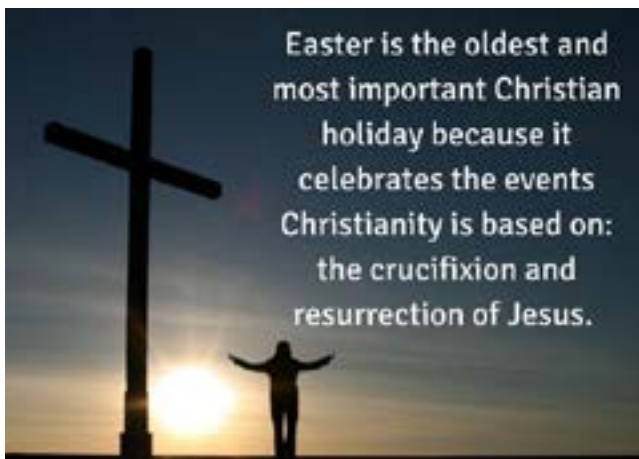
In 2013, a restoration project was started as the six bells at St Mary & St Margaret Church were in need of some TLC. Bill was instrumental in this project and the bellringers charity was set up, Bill was dedicated to raising the £100k needed to have the 6 bells taken down, recast, restored and returned to their home with two additional bells. In 2020, Bill joined the Heritage Restoration Committee and was a key volunteer for the restoration and

development of the parish church, another project Bill was very passionate about. This will take some years to accomplish, sadly Bill will not witness it's completion.

The last event that Bill took great pleasure in, was a 'Sing along with Bill' in October 2022. Unfortunately, soon after this event his health started to fail. Bill was blessed to be able to be at home, surrounded by his family and all the love they have for him.

So to finish, thank you Bill for everything. May you rest in peace, and rise in glory.

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



Lent is the period of 40 days which comes before Easter in the Christian calendar. Beginning on Ash Wednesday, Lent is a season of reflection and preparation before the celebrations of Easter. By observing the 40 days of Lent, Christians replicate Jesus Christ's sacrifice and withdrawal into the desert for 40 days.

Easter is considered a "moveable feast" and can fall anywhere between March 22 and April 25," according to The Old Farmer's Almanac. Easter falls on Sunday, April 9, 2023, which is considerably earlier than in 2022 which fell on the 17th April.

So why do we celebrate Easter with eggs? even if they are mostly of the chocolate variety now. Eggs represent new life and rebirth, and it's thought that this ancient custom became a part of Easter celebrations which we still have and enjoy today. In the medieval period, eating eggs was forbidden during Lent (the 40 days before Easter) so on Easter Sunday, tucking into an egg was a real treat!

Maundy Thursday: St Clements will be joining St Mary and St Margaret Church, Castle Bromwich at 7.30 pm for their Maundy Service.

Good Friday Service: 1 - 2pm. This day marks the end of Lent and Holy Week and comes between Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Easter Sunday: Sunrise Service at 8 am followed by the Easter Breakfast. Holy Communion is at 10 am and will be celebrated by The Revd Michael Maclachlan.

John Harrigan wrote "Happiness held is the seed, happiness shared is the flower" and how true this is. Whatever and wherever we find ourselves in our lives it is important to share experiences and during the pandemic St Clements' WhatsApp Group was formed by Jenny Sills. Whether it is celebrating birthdays, keeping in touch with those that are ill, asking for prayers for an individual or family or reaching out in times of loss, this group has flourished and continues to keep in touch. Shared experiences are part of who and what we are and make us stronger, remember to ask and how are you today? Keeping in touch can be a life-line for those that feel lonely and to know that someone does care really does make a difference.

When you are young time seems to drag, waiting for a promised summer holiday or another exciting event, but as you get older time seems to go so quickly, are there really 24 hours in a day? Photographs play an important part in our lives, to remember special events and cherish people we have known and loved.



This picture was presented to the Church by the parents of Elizabeth Colley and Ian Cartwright, the first girl & boy to be Baptised at St Clements Church by The Reverend Cyril Ticquet on June 9th 1968 and who was the first Vicar of St Clements.

On Sunday 5th March 2023 St Clements was pleased to welcome Esme Cavill with her parents, family and friends for Baptism when she was welcomed into the family of God.

Although many years separate these two Baptisms it is reassuring that through Jesus Christ we are welcomed to join the family of God.

The Crafternoon Group have had a busy time decorating bonnets in time for the "Parade of the Bonnets" at the Easter Afternoon Tea on 1st April and there will be a prize for the best bonnet - an Easter Egg perhaps! This is a group that has grown with many people making new friends and catching up with "old" ones over a refreshing cup of tea and being able to learn a new skill. Although it must be admitted, knitting seems to be the skill that most enjoy, nearly as much as a chat.

St Clements is once again supporting Marie Curie by selling daffodils, which are a symbol of this amazing organization and who care for people and their families, at a time in their lives when they are most needed. So who was Marie Curie? Born on the 7th November 1867 she was a Polish-French physicist and chemist who conducted pioneering research on radioactivity and was the first woman to win the Nobel Prize not once but twice.

The transformation into a brand new Oasis Café area is near completion and in the coming weeks/months we will share our vision for the future and what it means to St Clements as a Church within the community of Castle Bromwich and Smiths Wood. A new menu and a much smaller café area, as the Church itself remains very much in situ, the Café will still be a place of welcome and where you will be able to rest those tired feet.

If you feel you would like any further information about any of our up and coming Services or Groups then please do get in touch, which is easier than you think.

If you feel you would like any further information about any of our up and coming Services or Groups then please do get in touch, which is easier than you think.

Phone: 0121 748 5550

Church Website: stclementschurchcb.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stclementschurchcastlebromwich

Email: office@stclementschurchcb.co.uk

Our National Flag

By Roger Hateley

The most noticeable visual symbol of any nation is or should be its national flag it is a powerful and significant show of identity and belonging to the country it represents. One of the most recognisable of the worlds flags is the red, white and blue Union Flag of Britain.

Our Union Flag is unique in as much that it has been and still is a feature of many other nation's flags, this indicates the history and the legacy left by the pride in and importance of the old British Empire. Canada, Hong Kong and South Africa are some of the nations that have dispensed with the emblem of their former colonial rulers it is however displayed on some of Canada's state flags. The likes of Australia and New Zealand have chosen, though sometimes controversially, to retain the symbol of their association with our country within their flag. Our flag is still found within that of Fiji, despite its independence. Strangely there is a state flag within the U.S.A. that displays the Union Flag in its design, that being the state of Hawaii. The city flag of Baton Rouge, Louisiana also has the Union Flag incorporated in it along with symbols of other old colonial powers, France and Spain. Taunton, Massachusetts also has it in its city flag,.....I could go on,..... but I will not. Suffice to say that many countries, states and cities throughout the world are proud to fly the flag of Britain in conjunction with their own flag.

How did our flag come about? Briefly it happened like this, in 1606 James VI of Scotland ascended to the throne of England bringing together the two countries in a new realm he styled "the Kingdom of Great Britain". This flag incorporated the red cross of St. George and the White cross of St. Andrew. Wales was not represented on the flag and still isn't, as it was annexed by King Edward I in 1282 and was included into England. Likewise, Ireland had existed as a personal union with England since 1542, Henry VIII was created King of Ireland, and was not represented on the original flag. Following the Act of Union in 1801, which merged the Kingdom of Ireland with the Kingdom of Great Britain, to make "the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland" the red cross of St. Patrick was added to the flag. This saint's cross is separated with a white surround of varying thickness this signifies the order of the unions and as you will read later is very important.

That then is a very brief history of the Union Flag, or is it a Union Jack? It can be either, Yes it can. Most people will insist it is Flag, I indeed used to, some say a Jack is a small Union Flag attached to a jack staff on board a ship and not the same as a Flag being hoisted by rope up a pole. Some Buckingham Palace historians will tell you that it is a Jack, in reference to James VI who in 1606 established the flag by Royal decree. The Flag Institute, probably the highest authority to be found in the flag world has a chief vexillologist, (vexillology – the scientific study of the history, symbolism and usage of flags), who states that we can call our national flag the Union Flag or the Union Jack. In 2008 Andrew Rosindell MP sponsored a 10-minute rule bill in parliament, the Union Flag Bill, this was to affirm the make-up, the use and the name of our national flag, this bill endorses the use of the two names, flag or jack, choose either.

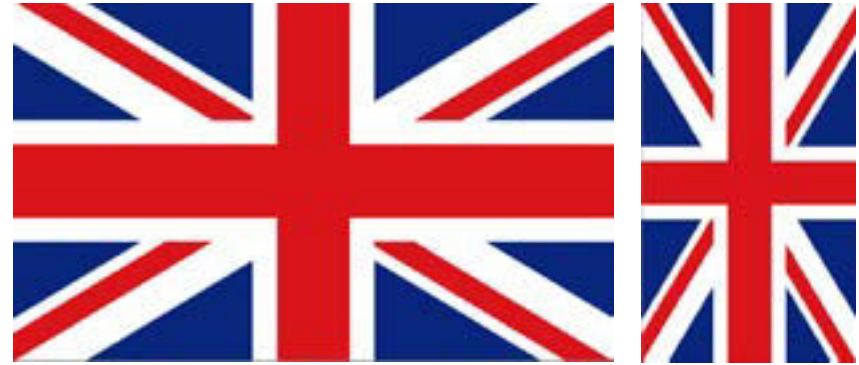
That then is our national flag, loved and displayed proudly by many throughout the world. Held high by winning athletes, draped over railings by adoring crowds, flown from buildings and in gardens at national events, worn on clothing, stuck on our cars, carried on marches and seen adorning house and shop windows. It is great to see this show of patriotism, or is it? Probably more than 50% of the general public don't have a clue which way up the national flag should be, most of them achieve it purely by chance, this is a national disgrace.

Remember the white surrounds of the red diagonal cross having various thickness, this is all you need to know, my apologies to those readers that do know. When the flag is flown horizontally from a flagpole it should have the broad diagonal white stripe upper most and nearest to the pole. When the flag is displayed without a pole it should have the broad white diagonal stripe upper most on the left-hand side, the same as on a pole. If the flag is to be displayed vertically, with or without a pole, it is simply turned clockwise through 90 degrees, the broad white stripe will then be on the right-hand side of the upper most red diagonal. Obviously if it's on a pole or hung and seen from the other side it is reversed.



These two depictions of the flag are correct. Deliberately flying the flag upside down is considered "lese Majeste," (i.e. insult the monarchy) and in theory only, it is considered a crime in the UK and the Commonwealth by some people. However, like many others I do find it very annoying.

The two depictions below are displayed upside down. The difference in the thickness of the white diagonal stripe and its correct position can be clearly seen. It has been flown and displayed upside down by many, the B.N.P. of all people, The BBC, some national newspapers and in front of Nigel Farage on his desk in the EU parliament. I did email Farage's public relations department on this one and in their reply they apologised and fobbed the error off onto some obscure foreign EU minion, a pathetic excuse.



Flying the flag upside down is also considered to be a sign of distress for the persons in its immediate vicinity or in a building or vessel displaying it so. If you should see it flown upside down please do not go all guns blazing to perform a gallant rescue, you will only see the misinformed enjoying themselves in complete ignorance of the fact that they are insulting their country.

We are going to see many displays of patriotism this year with the coronation of King Charles III. It will be a happy and welcoming sight to see our National Flag proudly displayed all around the country, but if you, or your family and friends are flying flags please make sure that they are doing it correctly.

So now you know and I truly hope that if you see your national flag the Union Jack/Flag flown upside down that you politely point out the error to those responsible. To those of you who know how to display our flag correctly I apologise. I have found everyone I've pointed out this error to, to be extremely thankful and apologetic.

One other thing, why is the colour of our flag changed by some people? We see it in an all-over blue hue, pink and I've seen it in shades of green. It is red, white, and blue, leave it alone. As for writing on it..... don't get me started on that one !

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Interiors & Decorating

Decorating tips



PLATINUM
INTERIOR DECORATING

Having had a bit of a break we're back in time for Spring whenever it eventually arrives. As is tradition at this time of year a lot of people will be thinking about a refresh in their homes so we thought we'd look at the various paint manufacturers colours of the year.

We'll start with Dulux who have gone with 'Wild Wonder' which they describe as having been inspired by the natural world. It is essentially a very earthy green with a gold undertone which has a very calming influence on a room. It is also worth noting that it is what's known as a 'metameric colour' This means that different types of lighting can fundamentally change the appearance of the shade giving you subtle changes as the light changes throughout the day. This is a great way to add more interest by using one colour but on a practical level make sure that if you get a sample you view it at different times of the day and on different walls to make sure you can see the effect of different types of light on it. The best way to do this is to paint the sample on a piece of lining paper and place it in different parts of the room.

Benjamin Moore are one of our favourite brands and they have opted for an altogether more vibrant colour called 'Raspberry Blush'. This is a vibrant shade of coral that evokes sunsets and a sense of optimism. It's a very warm colour that will make a home feel cosy. We'd advise maybe allowing an extra coat or using a base coat of light grey with this kind of colour to achieve the full depth. Sometimes the extra pigments required for these vibrant shades mean that the paint doesn't cover as effectively.

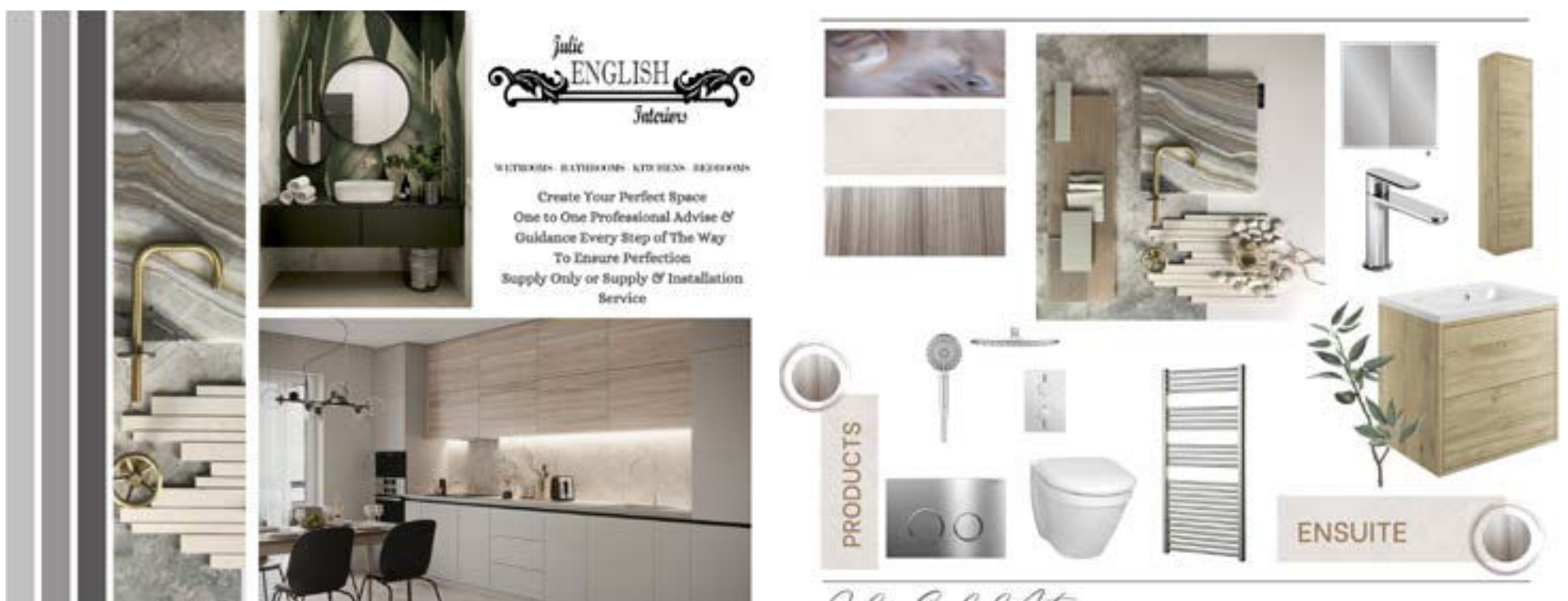
Rather than pick a colour of the year Crown have opted to offer a range of colour 'insights' called 'Joy', 'Abstract Simplicity', and 'Breathe'. 'Joy' is a mix of bold and uplifting shades. 'Abstract Simplicity' is all about tranquility consisting of more muted tones of green, stone and creams. 'Breathe' is inspired by architectural materials that use the effect of light to provide interest.

Pantone's colour of the year is 'Viva Magenta'. Pantone colour number 18-1750 is a powerful and animated red which much like Benjamin Moore's 'Raspberry Blush' provides a real sense of optimism. It is inspired by the red of cochineal, a precious natural dye described as one of the strongest and brightest the world has known.

In contrast Colourtrend have focussed on soft powder blue shades reminiscent of the sky. These types of blue can create a warm feeling in a room when paired with sunny whites or light golds or can cool a room down with neutral whites and darker blues. Colourtrend also predict earthy pinky-browns as being a trend for this year. These shades will add a flair of colour to a room without being overwhelming.

Farrow and Ball haven't named a colour of the year but have added 11 new colours to their collection. It's the first time in four years that they've added to their colour card opting for shades inspired by moments of joy, comfort and refreshment. These colours appear to reflect the mood across the various manufacturers we've already looked at ranging from subtle neutral shades to a very vibrant red. Fans of Farrow and Ball won't be disappointed with names such as 'Bamboozle', 'Whirlybird' and 'Beverly' providing no obvious clue as to what the colour actually is. Another thing you can be sure of with F&B is the consistency of the match of the colour to the colour card. Having been for a tour of their factory we can attest to their quality assurance processes in terms of ensuring the exact colour is what leaves the factory. If you are using Farrow and Ball make sure you seek advice from the supplier regarding their primers, some other colours really benefit from using the appropriate primer beforehand.

All of the above colours and palettes can be viewed on the various companies websites along with ideas and examples of how to use them and what colours to pair them with. These are often a useful tool if you are struggling for inspiration or ideas, even just as a starting point. Hopefully this will help you to get started on your own decorating projects in time for the Spring.



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Property News

The past and the future



**By Colin Lewis,
House & Home**

Back in 1984 when I first moved to Coleshill me and my fiancé, later to be my wife, bought a three bedroom terraced house for the princely sum of £24,000. It was a fairly straight forward procedure, we saved a deposit of £1200, and borrowed the rest from the Halifax Building Society. In those days I was earning £10,000 a year, working for a magazine, and the building society would allow you to borrow 3 times your salary, so I was pretty much in the ball park regarding my borrowing ability.

Fast forward 39 years and things are a little different. According to the ONS the average UK salary is £31,447 per annum. I understand dear reader that a lot of people are earning far less than this! But taking these figures, that means you can borrow £94,341 to buy the same property. But we have a problem, that three bedroom terraced house I bought in 1984 is now worth £275,000. So in reality you need to be earning £87,000 per annum, and that's after you have found the deposit of £13,750. You are now having to borrow 8 and a half times your salary to buy the same house!

Many people my age will remember the crippling interest rate rises of the late 1980's when rates rose to 17%. I was bringing home £500 a month and my mortgage payment was £700 per month! Hard times indeed. So imagine if that happened again? Interest rates have for a long time been historically low but we are now seeing a change to all that and rates are beginning to rise on a monthly basis.

I have been selling properties in Coleshill for 35 years and have seen a few 'boom and bust' periods which have resulted in devastation for a lot of property owners. In the worse periods we have had house keys pushed through our door followed by a call from a building society asking us to sell it. These were hard times but I'm afraid it works on a repeating cycle, and we are long over due another episode.

When I was a young Estate Agent my boss always used to say "Young Colin, houses are for nesting in and not investing in". He was a wise chap but his words, in a capitalist world, are far outdated. Not his fault of course as our generation saw that there was money to be made from investing in property, why wouldn't you want to invest for the future, something to hand over to your children perhaps? But there lies the problem, we are now selling over priced properties to our children and saddling them with mortgage payments they can't afford. Who are the winners, the lenders of course, the more you borrow the more money they make!

So what about the future? House prices will, undoubtedly, increase with, albeit, a few hiccups on the way but how we borrow money to fund them will need to change. You may find that in the end you will never own the property you live in but will be granted a life time mortgage which will never be paid off but transferred to the next person when you come to sell. In a way it will be like renting your property, although in a different name? If you thought that the three bedroom semi opposite you was never worth £350,000 then hold on to your hat, you may be in for a surprise!



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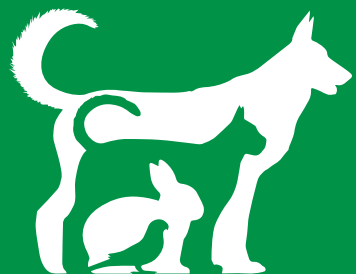
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Pet Page



Spring is starting to spring

Spring is on its way finally – the sun is out a little more and the days are getting warmer. Longer days so dark walks will be behind us soon, just that thought makes you feel better. With the warmer weather it's exciting to start getting out and about to places, visiting old favourites and exploring new ones. As the weather gets warmer your packing list for trips out changes, you now need to be thinking about taking the following useful items with you;

- Travel bed for if you stop in a café for refreshments.
- Water bottle
- Treats
- Poo bags
- Towel

Insight Hounds top recommendations for places to visit with your dogs are;

Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens, we are a big fan - £5 entry - cafe, dogs on leads, historic garden. A great day out for all.

<https://www.castlebromwichhallgardens.org.uk>

Whitacre Hall Tea Room and Country Walk - £1 per adult, great cakes and longer field and woodland walks

<https://whitacrehall.co.uk>

There are lots of organised breed walks that start back up too, Greyhound Walks, Sighthound Walks, check out breed groups on Facebook to stay update on what's happening.

A number of Springtime flowers can be toxic to dogs, and you will need to be careful if you have a nibbler or a digger as both the flowers themselves and often the bulbs too can cause an upset stomach (or worse) for your dog. Lilies, daffodils, tulips and buttercups are just a few of the beautiful blooms that you need to be mindful of.



Ward End Cat Rescue A Small Rescue with a Big Heart

Ward End Cat Rescue is a small, independent, home based cat rescue based in the Ward End area of Birmingham. We take in unwanted, neglected or abused cats and give them the care they need to bring them back to health and help them learn to trust people again, offering a safe place to recuperate while we try and find suitable loving forever homes. We specialise in older, more hard-to-home cats and have many cats that are resident at the rescue due to the fact that they are not appropriate for re-homing either because they are semi feral or their health is so poor and their vet treatment is too expensive to expect someone to take that on. There are always exceptions to this when very special homes come along that are willing to take this challenge on.

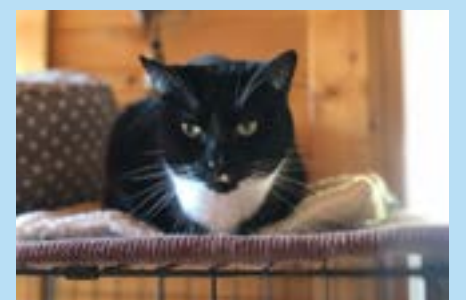
Throughout the year we attempt to funds in various ways: doing raffles, selling items, attending fêtes with our fabulous tombolas and much more. Our famous hand-made catnip WECR Super mice (which are immensely popular with our furry friends) are always available to purchase and can also be posted if needed. If you can offer us a space at a fayre or can help with fundraising in any way at all please email us at wardendcatrescueofficial@outlook.com or contact Suzy Wootton Wearing and you can join our small but brilliant team of fundraisers.

Ward End Cat Rescue is run voluntarily by Tony (with a few helpers), he is completely dedicated and works tirelessly to ensure that every cat that comes into his care is given the love and attention they need to thrive. We believe that every cat deserves a second chance, no matter how old or how

difficult to home they may be.

If you're looking to adopt a cat, or if you'd like to support the work of Ward End Cat Rescue, please visit our facebook page WARD END CAT RESCUE OFFICIAL or email us on wardendcatrescueofficial@outlook.com. Thank you

These beauties are resident at the rescue, meet Dorothy, Lola and the fabulous Charlie



Email: wardendcatrescueofficial@outlook.com

Facebook: Ward End Cat Rescue Official

www.wardendcatrescue.org

CRUFTS TICKET WINNERS

- Matthew Emson
 - Diana Riley
 - Rita Carter
 - Jackie Beebee
 - Steve Gough
- All won a pair of tickets.



Happydograw is in Castle Bromwich!



When you choose to feed your dog raw pet food, you're providing them with a biologically-appropriate diet. A raw diet is the natural choice for all dogs, no matter what size they are! Miniature Poodles? Yes! American Bully? Definitely! All dogs benefit from a diet that's rich in quality protein and low in carbohydrates and sugars. Highly processed pet foods cannot provide the same nutrition a raw meat diet can for your pet. HappyDog supply a great selection of Raw dog foods and Natural treats.


As carnivores, dogs' bodies are built to absorb energy and nutrition from eating a combination of meat-based protein and fat. Feeding your dogs, a safely handled, quality-controlled raw food allows you to feel confident that your pet is getting the nutrition they need to thrive.


Feeding your dog raw pet food can go beyond the dog bowl. Happydog also offers a selection of Raw Meaty Bones, raw fish etc for your dog to enjoy. Knuckle Bones for example are great for cleaning your dog's teeth and providing mental stimulation, while chicken necks or other meaty bones can be given as meal substitutions and treats.

Happydog provides a huge selection of Natural Dog treats, including Hairy Rabbit feet the perfect natural wormer, pigs and cows ears, chicken feet, pizzle sticks, boars legs, hooves and a whole lot more! Natural treats contribute towards stronger immunity, better digestion, healthier skin and coats, fewer allergies, dental and oral support, the perfect addition to your raw food. There are many benefits to feeding your dog a raw food diet, from naturally cleaner teeth to less poop to scoop. Pets can also experience a reduction or elimination of various health issues, such as food allergies or food sensitivities. Some of the benefits can be seen within days of transitioning while others require a bit more time to take effect.

Happydog is conveniently placed on Timberley Lane Castle Bromwich opposite Iceland, and is open 7 days a week for your convenience. We are also on Facebook and Instagram, FB Happydog, IG happydograwuk. Come and look and make Happydog your Raw Food and Natural treat choice!


Meet Tiana





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Scan me



Breed: Cane Corso Gender: Female (F)

I'm available

- Age: 2 years 0 months
- Can live with other dogs: No
- Can live with cats: No
- Child suitability: 16 years+

A Little About Me:
Hello, I am Tiana, I am a big loveable girl, who enjoys following my nose and checking out new areas.

My Carers Notes:
Tiana is a beautiful, big girl who just needs a little time and patience. Although she's shy at first, if you give her space you'll soon see her affectionate side come out. She loves pottering around our paddocks and following her nose. It seems that Tiana does not know what toys are currently, but would love an understanding family who can give her the time and patience she needs, and hopefully they will see a very rewarding side of Tiana. Tiana isn't the most confident with other dogs so will be looking to be the only dog in the home, we do feel she would strongly benefit from socialisation on walks.

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Hello from your local Slimming World groups



I see so many success stories in group and hear so many from the consultants in my team that they share with pride. We all feel privileged to be part of our members journeys. Being a Slimming World Consultant is such a special role. Seeing a member have the courage to walk through our door ready to make changes is amazing. For us knowing that what we're going to introduce them to inside our new member pack, can not only give them the answers they've been looking for but can also literally change their lives forever. On the front of our Slimming World pack it says 'Something wonderful is about to happen' Inside that pack one of the books contains our Food Optimising plan, guaranteed weight loss! That information along with the group where our unique Image Therapy support takes place, where were able to bring that pack to life and empower our members to make the changes to achieve weight loss goals.

This month we want to share with you Simon's story and how he found Slimming World initially through his work for the NHS, getting started with a free 12 week slimming referral and knowing that at last he'd finally found what he'd been looking for. Hope you enjoy it.

Wishing you a happy and healthy month ahead... Toni x (07971 686 698)

Simon's Story



I've been overweight most of my adult life, not that it affected my health or work but enough to have mostly always been on some kind of 'diet' trying all of the usual methods like calorie counting as well as other weight loss organisations and the 'quick fixes' out there like shakes etc. Always the same old cycle moving from one 'diet' to another, losing weight then putting it straight back on again. I've always been a positive person so I was lucky that I didn't have the mental health problems I know can really affect people, although I did have feelings of guilt that I should lose weight.

I was active, in fact I've always been active, my job as an ambulance driver meant I maintained a certain level of fitness. I enjoyed running as a hobby too. My weight didn't affect my work, health wise I was ok although I did have raised cholesterol, signs were there and I knew that I needed to make changes and the changes needed to be to my food choices for me to lose weight. You can't outrun a bad diet.

The final straw for me came when I was getting ready for work one day. Putting on my uniform belt I found that it would no longer reach to tuck into the belt loop. I knew then that it was time to make changes. Looking into options I found out that Slimming World work together with the NHS so through work I was able to get a free 12 week referral to a group to get the support I needed. I'm not sure how many people are aware that health professionals are able to 'prescribe' a 12 week referral for patients? Weight loss, even just 10%, of starting weight has so many health benefits, lowering cholesterol, reducing blood pressure and many more.

Going along to my local group I must admit that I felt very nervous. Especially as a man entering a largely female group, but I needn't have worried because right from day one I have found the group to be fantastic and very supportive.

Slimming World's food optimising plan means I can eat so many of the foods I like and although no food is banned, it's all about moderation and I've learned to replace some of the 'bad' things with more of the 'good' things. Still enjoying my

favourite meals I've just found healthier ways to shop, cook and eat. I love food and have always said that my favourite meal is what's on my plate. The difference is that what I eat now are just healthier versions of old favourites. Normal meals like steak and chips, spaghetti bolognaise, currys, roast dinners, and lasagne to name just a few are all possible with just small healthy changes which you learn how to do in group. No hunger too as many many foods are unlimited! I still go out for meals occasionally too as Slimming World gives you that freedom but mainly I like to enjoy healthy food at home.

Both my daughters are Slimming World members so we've mutually inspired each other along the way. It's a real family affair. My girls always buy me clothes for my birthday and this year it really hit home when I was gifted trousers with a 32" waist and tops in a size small (previously a large) and they fitted perfectly. I suddenly realised that the last time I was that size was about 40 years ago! From my starting weight of 14stone 11lb I've now lost a total of 2 stone 5lb to reach my new healthy weight of 11st 10lb.

Although my work colleagues were sceptical at first when they knew I'd joined Slimming World, my success has inspired others to join which is great news. That's why I'm sharing my story, to let others who are not happy with their weight know that help is out there. If I can do it you can too. You just have to have the courage to walk through the door. Not only happier and healthier, I'm definitely fitter now too. Although I've always enjoyed my running I'm now able to go further and faster since losing weight and I'm proud to be achieving my fastest ever times. That's what's inspired my new goal, to run the great north run in under 2 hours. I can honestly say I feel FANTASTIC, it's not just the weight loss, I'm so happy that I've broken that old cycle by changing my eating habits and I do feel very confident that I will be able to maintain this new weight. Like Slimming World's maintenance plan says....

Slim for Life . Food Optimising is very different to anything else I've ever tried because it's a lifestyle change, It addresses both the food and the psychology of change and I know I've got the support of my group, my consultant Diane and Slimming World to keep going. For anyone thinking of making a change I'd say do it!, don't put it off. Look on the Slimming World website for local groups, or give one of the consultants a call or even enquire about a referral to see if you're eligible.



Social business networking event

April 17th – 6pm til 8.30pm

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New Consultant: Richard at Castle Vale on Thursdays

Monday

Castle Brom - The Baptist Church, 5.30 & 7.00pm Claire - 07917867577

Tile Cross - St Peters Church, 4.00 & 5.30pm 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, 5.00 & 6.30pm from 28th March
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, 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 07957133435

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

New
Consultants

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Hunters Chicken Lasagne

If you love a cheesy, tangy plate of Hunter's chicken, you have to try this pasta version – it's amazing!

Ready in 1 hr 30 mins Serves 6 | 2 Syns per serving

Ingredients:

- Low-calorie cooking spray
- 1 onion, finely sliced
- 2 red peppers, deseeded and finely sliced
- 1kg skinless and boneless chicken thighs, visible fat removed, roughly chopped
- 6 smoked back bacon rashers, visible fat removed, roughly chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- 690g jar passata
- 1 chicken stock cube
- Half small pack fresh chives, finely snipped, reserving some to serve
- 200g plain quark
- 9-12 dried lasagne sheets
- 6 level tbsp barbecue sauce
- 75g reduced-fat mozzarella, cut into small pieces
- Mixed salad leaves dressed with balsamic vinegar, to serve

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas 6.
2. Spray a large, deep, non-stick frying pan with low-calorie cooking spray and place over a medium heat. Fry the onion and peppers for 5 minutes or until softened, stirring frequently. Add the chicken and bacon, increase the heat to medium-high and stir-fry for 2-3 minutes or until the chicken has browned a little. Add the garlic and smoked paprika with a splash of water, and cook until fragrant.
3. Add the passata and half a jarful of water, and stir well. Crumble in the stock cube, bring everything to a gentle simmer and cook for 20 minutes, or until the sauce has reduced by about a third. Season to taste and stir through the chives.
4. Spread one-third of the chicken and sauce mixture over the base of a large baking dish. Add a few spoonfuls of quark and top with a layer of lasagne sheets, breaking them up if necessary to cover all of the sauce. Repeat twice, leaving some sauce to cover the final layer of lasagne sheets. Spread the remaining sauce over the top, then evenly dollop over the barbecue sauce and scatter with the mozzarella.



5. Cover the lasagne with foil, then bake for 30 minutes. Discard the foil and bake for a further 10-15 minutes, or until the mozzarella is golden. Remove from the oven and leave to stand for 5 minutes. Scatter over the reserved chives, divide the lasagne between 6 plates and serve with the salad.

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We Ramble On and On

Did you know that Castle Bromwich has its own Walking Group? We are part of a national charity, the Ramblers, and we organise over 60 walks each year. Some are short local walks and others are up to 8 miles in length in places of interest all over the Midlands. Twice a year we venture further afield, usually to the coast for a long weekend, to experience a different terrain, get to know each other better and above all have fun.

Walking is a terrific way to experience the great outdoors. It will help you improve your physical fitness and is good for your mental health too. It's so much more fun than going to the gym and is much cheaper! Walking with a group is stress free because our experienced Walk Leaders will guide you along safe and interesting routes. You will learn a lot about our local towns and countryside. We pride ourselves on being a welcoming and friendly bunch and organise a number of social functions each year.

If you would like to share in the fun, just join us on one of our local walks. You can try out up to three walks before deciding whether to join the Ramblers. New members of all ages and from all backgrounds will be made most welcome.

Further details about the Group can be found on our website – www.castlebromwichramblers.org.uk, or by calling David on 788 0650 or Teresa on 07976 435569



In February, we hosted the A.G.M. of the Warwickshire Ramblers. Over 90 walkers, from clubs all over the county, met at The Remembrance Club in Castle Bromwich. After the business meeting was over, Claire Watkins, Ramblers Regional Officer, outlined the work the Ramblers are doing to preserve and improve hundreds of thousands of miles of well-loved paths, tracks and trails so that everyone can enjoy walking in green spaces. Our guests were treated to a hearty carvery lunch and afterwards many of them joined either a short walk focusing on Castle Bromwich and its history, or a longer walk along the Cole Valley. Some couldn't resist taking a little extra exercise.



Our holidays are always the highlight of the rambling year. Last September, 16 members, spanning three generations, spent a weekend in Torquay. Sadly, our first walk had to be cancelled due to torrential rain but on Day 2 the weather improved and we walked the coastal path from Paignton to Brixham. It was quite a vigorous walk, climbing up and down and being rewarded with lovely views, as well as passing through woods and visiting coves. We returned to Torquay in a more relaxing way – taking the ferry across the bay. In the evenings, our hotel provided us with entertainment and the opportunity to twinkle our toes on the dance floor.



On Saturday evening we all dressed as Goths and received a round of applause from other guests as we entered the dining room for dinner. Sunday saw us visit the impressive Buckfast Abbey, from where we walked to the characterful little town of Buckfastleigh via a burnt down church, where we were told of spooky goings on that inspired Conan Doyle to write The Hound of the Baskervilles. We are looking

forward to our next holiday at Weymouth at the end of April. In January, one of our most experienced Walk Leaders invited a group of friends from our rambling club to join him on a week-long walking holiday based in Paphos, Cyprus. For most of us this was a new and exciting experience. The January weather was ideal for walking and we completed a variety of coastal and inland walks on this volcanic island with such a wealth of historic features. During the summer months we offer weekly Wednesday evening walks of about 4 miles, always ending at a pub where we can relax with a drink and a chat. Our Wednesday walks begin on 10th May. So, don't be shy – Give us a try.



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Water Orton Speedwatch

By Judith Cleaver

Water Orton Speedwatch was in operation again this month and managed to collect details of 16 speeding motorists along the Birmingham road, by Mytton road.

This is one of the Police risk assessed areas we can do in Water Orton.

If anyone is interested in participating with our group please contact Judith Cleaver 07973 620056. Don't complain about speeders help us do something about it. Thank you.




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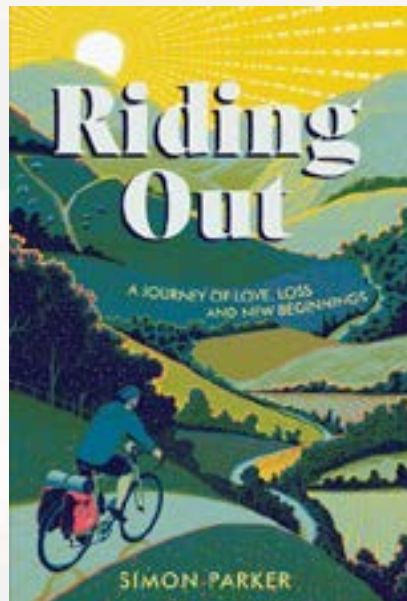
Castle Bromwich Library Book Club

Riding Out by Simon Parker

In March 2020, as Britain went into lockdown, Simon Parker's life fell apart. With an anxiety disorder starting to rear its head, he turned to two trusted therapies: travel and exercise. On his epic, poignant and ultimately hopeful adventure around Britain, Simon learns that life's sharpest corners are best navigated at the pace of a bicycle.

This is an account of an epic journey full of emotion, thrills, and physical effort. It has brutal honesty, warmth, and humour. An absorbing and life affirming read. Highly recommended.

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member

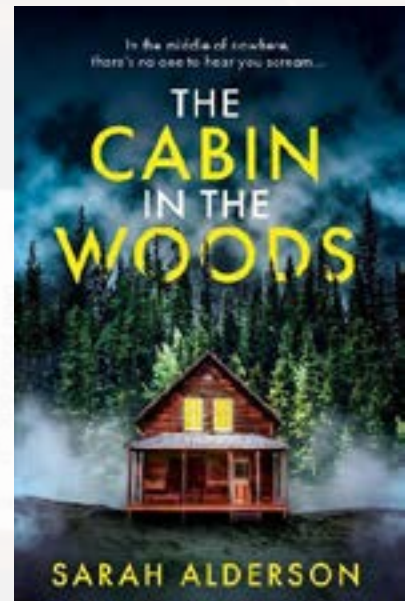


The cabin in the woods by Sarah Alderson

In a cabin in a wood, a woman by the window stood. Glancing out, she thought she heard footsteps, whistling, something stirred. Hiding here, she fears the night, for what's done in the dark will come to light. She must run fast to escape her lie. Or she'll be the next to die.

This book is a chilling thrill-ride which will keep you on the edge of your seat right to the very end. I loved all the twists and turns and read it in one sitting - brilliant!

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member



Believing in Tomorrow by Rita Bradshaw

Molly McKenzie is only eleven years old when her abusive father beats her to within an inch of her life. Escaping from the hovel she calls home, Molly is found by kind fisher folk, sick and near death. With them she experiences the love of a family for the first time and, even though life is hard, she is content. Time passes and Molly's looking ahead to future with the boy she loves, but then a terrible tragedy rips her life apart. Once again she's cast adrift in an uncaring world, but Molly is made of stern stuff and is determined to survive. In the male-dominated society of the early 1900s, Molly has to fight prejudice and hatred, and rejection comes from all sides. Can she hold fast and become the woman she is destined to be?

You will not be able to put this book down. Really well written with strong characters. A lovely story and a great read.

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member



Flamingo by Rachel Elliott

In the garden, there were three flamingos. Not real flamingos, but real emblems, real gateways to a time when life was impossibly good. They were mascots, symbols of hope. Something for a boy to confide in. First, there were the flamingos. And then there were two families. Sherry and Leslie and their daughters, Rae and Pauline - and Eve and her son Daniel. Sherry loves her husband, Leslie. She also loves Eve. It couldn't have been a happier summer. But then Eve left and everything went grey. Now Daniel is all grown-up and broken. And when he turns up at Sherry's door, it's almost as if they've all come home again. But there's still one missing. Where is Eve? And what, exactly, is her story?

This is a gem of a book. Love, friendship, homelessness - it has it all. Wonderfully written and full of hope, gratitude, and warmth. A truly beautiful book.

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member



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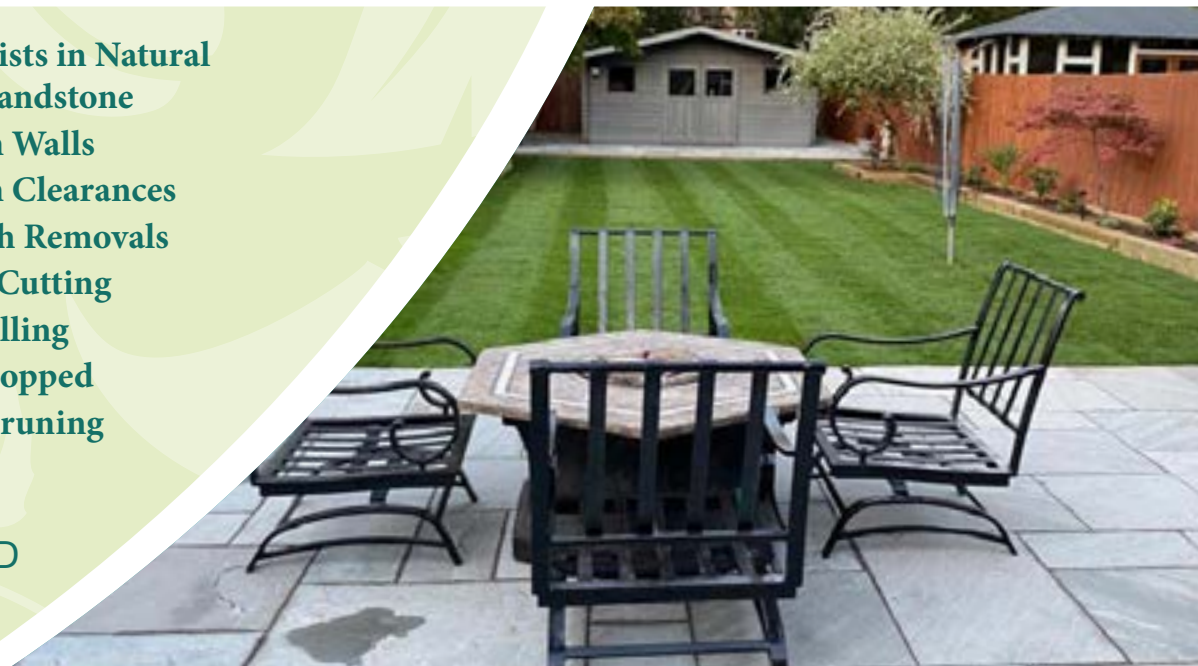
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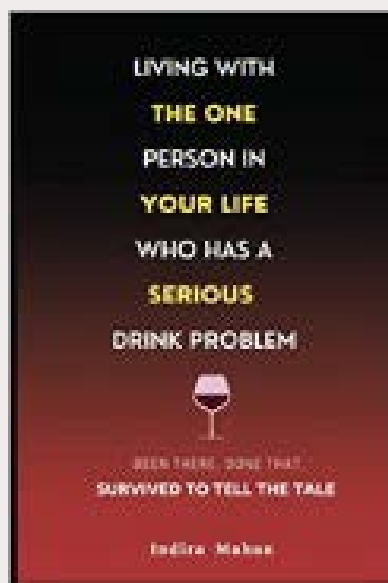
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Living with the one person in your life who has a serious drink problem



By Indira Mahun

I had to write this book. It's been a constant struggle trying to keep my thoughts encased in my head all these years. I have written this book so that I can share my own personal experience with others who are going through the same pain and anguish.

Living with someone who has an addiction is something that can only be understood by the person who is living that life or by others who are in the same place. Let me tell you that it takes over your whole life and you cease to think about anything else.

My husband was an alcoholic and I lived with this battle for most of my married life. In the process, I lost sight of everything that mattered. I didn't have the guidance I needed to help me. I know I don't have all the answers but I have the experience. I know what it is like.

Do you know what to do?

Do you know how to behave?

Do you know that you matter?

When was the last time you put yourself first?

Do you want to be in control or be controlled?

This was me - never knowing what to do or how to turn the situation round to put myself in control. I learnt the hard way. I can tell you how and why. Take it from me - been there, done that, and survived to tell the tale.

This book gives you an insight into my life and provides advice on how to deal with the situations that arise from living with an alcoholic. If you want to purchase a copy, you can find it on Amazon by following this link <https://amzn.eu/d/4FjJaD3>.

Thank you for all your support.

Homeward Bound

By Indira Mahun

I am back from my incredible and unforgettable time in India. The purpose of my trip was to take my son there (not under duress I must stress) so that he was able to get married. He did and he is back – minus his wife. This is another part of the journey that the couple must take so that they can finally reunite. For those who are puzzled by our decision to travel all the way to India for a wedding, let me enlighten you.

Indians get married just the same as everyone else in other cultures and societies. However, there is one subtle difference. It used to be a major difference but things have changed somewhat over the years. The difference is that other parties have often, though not in all cases, arranged the marriage. Yes, arranged marriages do still exist though they are not as common as they once were. This has been made easier by the many online dating sites that have sprung up. Not only this but many people have also set up agencies to register the details of boys and girls so that parents can find a suitable match.

Traditionally, the first time that the bride and groom would have exchanged words would have been on their wedding day. Nowadays, an arranged marriage works rather differently. The couple will be introduced to each other and have the opportunity to talk and get to know one another. They also have the option to walk away if things don't work out.

For me, it wasn't really a choice I could have made on my own. My own marriage was one hundred percent an arranged arrangement. I married someone I didn't know at all. Not once had I met him before I sat next to him in the registry office. Back then this was pretty much accepted as the norm. It turned out, luckily, that we were compatible and fell in love after we were wed. These days, and rightly so, the couple are allowed to go out and fall in love before they marry. 'Allowed' may sound like a strange word to use in this context but that is how it is. Even now there are some Asian parents who will not allow their daughters (sons tend to have more freedom) to date before marriage. It's rare though and things have moved on.

My son and his wife had total freedom. An introduction had been made by a family member and the rest is history. Even though she was in India, they texted, chatted online, facetedimed, and finally met. The conversations had been going on for about 6 months when it was decided that the wedding should take place. This is not to say that there were no nerves involved. There were. They were both extremely anxious before their first meet. The saving grace was that they had got to know each other beforehand.

The wedding was like a dream in more ways than one. It all happened so quickly that I wondered if it had happened at all. From shopping to engagement ceremony to wedding – we literally felt like we were in a movie scene looking at ourselves going through the motions. It wasn't anything like a big fat Indian wedding. All my family and relatives are in the UK so we had to gather up the few we could find in Delhi. Everyone joked that we could include the band members as our numbered guests. Even though we missed our family, it was still so amazing and perfect. The colours, the smells, the weather, the food, the ambience, and the sincerity of the people, touched me. My son, who had not been to India since he was about eighteen, was overwhelmed by it all.

Now we are back home. Home from home. Worlds apart in so many ways. I feel that I have left a part of me behind as I struggle to come to terms with my life here. I love India. It's where some of my heart is. The rest remains solidly lodged in the UK. Coming back to snow and rain and freezing cold has had a huge impact on my overall state of being. I absolutely revelled in the sunshine whilst enjoying fabulous and mouth-watering home cooked food. We were waited on and treated like we were so important and I have never before been made to feel so loved by people that I had only just met. Now, I stand here in my kitchen. I don't want a ham sandwich or a bowl of pasta. I want those bursting with flavour Indian delights and delicacies. I long for the sunshine as I stare out of the rain splattered window. I curse the weather as the snow has captured my freedom and rendered me helpless to get my car moving. I want to be unrestricted and not tied to the day-in and day-out commitment to work. I want to hear the laughter of people who are content with very little and see the joy on the faces of those that smile because I want to take a photo with them.

Want. Want. Want. This isn't me. I am never so discontented. I am always grateful for what I have. Don't get me wrong, I am still grateful. God has been kind and has always listened to me. It's a phase that will pass. Once I settle back into my job and the day-to-day routine of daily life, I am sure it will all be fine. Come to think of it, isn't it the same with most people when they get back from a holiday filled with sunshine, food, and happiness? This feeling is real and has earned the name of post-vacation blues.

Let's hope the sun makes an appearance soon and the weather is kinder to us all. It has not been an easy winter what with the massive increase in fuel and energy bills. A bit of warmth and sunshine can't come quick enough to chase away those blues.

Local Sports



Water Orton & District Tennis Club

With the new season almost ready to begin the excitement, especially with our younger members, is starting to build up now.

Our Youth coaching groups start back on Monday 17th April along with our Adult Beginners later that night. Our Saturday Junior groups begin back on 22nd April. All parents will be notified very soon as to the group times and we are really looking forward to having you all back with us.

We still have a few spaces for our Ladies Night on a Thursday evening, in what is a very friendly and helpful group, very welcoming with all newcomers. Ladies' night starts at 6.00pm and runs through until about 8.30pm so just come and go at a time that suits you. We also have a few spaces in our Adult Improvers Section on a Tuesday evening from 5.30pm until around 8.30pm. So, if you can play a bit and enjoy meeting new people, come along on either evening you will be very welcome. Both these adult tennis nights will start back up once the clocks change in March.

If you would like any further information, please contact our club Secretary Paul, on the numbers listed below. You will not be disappointed with what we have to offer, for a very reasonable Annual Membership fee. The first three visits just use them as "taster" sessions to see what you think then make a decision from there.

We look forward to hopefully seeing you soon.

Endurance Athlete Doyle Achieves his Career 751 Sporting Feat

Paddy Doyle has been re-charging by doing plenty of winter training which paid off, Doyle completed a 10.5 mile cross country speed march carrying 60lb back pack over the Grand Union Canal, Shrewley and Hatton villages South Warwickshire. Finishing in 2 hr. 19 min. 59 sec.

This increases his career documented physical fitness challenges and World Records to 751 achievements covering nine different sporting disciplines.

Doyle commented "Although the footpaths were muddy and ankle high in some parts I was determined to maintain my pace, getting to the support team who were waiting at various check points to film and take action photos which is needed for evidence for the World Record Holders Associations."

If all goes well the former Paratrooper and ex RAF Reservist is aiming to achieve another fitness endurance challenge / course record in April.



Castle Bromwich Youth Section presents Youth Team Training 2023



B36 9ES

"Rear of Arden Hall"

Every Friday
from 14th April

Mini Spitfires
Ages 4-7
5.30-6.30pm

Spitfires
Ages 8-11
6.30-7.30pm

Ages 12-15
6.30-7.30

Girls
&
Boys

£5 per session
Free t-shirt for every
returning child



castlebromwichyouthsection
leebrookeswinners

Contact LeeBrookesWinners

Tel: 07702167862

Email: leebrookeswinners@gmail.com



CASTLE BROMWICH CRICKET & SPORTS CLUB – 2023 UPDATE

As Castle Bromwich prepare for the 70th cricket season in April they can look back at some outstanding achievements in 2022. For the first time in the club's history they achieved 1st XI promotion & league cup double that was achieved against the odds by a real team effort. Obviously the standout performances were those of the Cornwall captain Paul Smith with over 1400 runs, 44 wickets & 37 catches but there was great support from all the other home-grown players.

Especially pleasing was the potential shown by the teenagers, Connor Pettitt, Liam Sedgley, Evan Waugh & Amaan Mahmood. They all benefitted by receiving one to one coaching over the summer in a WCB funding programme, this dramatically aided their cricket development so that they played key roles in 1st XI games. The 2nd XI was assisted by some club veterans turning out whenever possible and it is the club's firm intention to re-establish a 3rd XI as soon as possible.

Sunday cricket is played within the Local League set-up with very competitive games which at times has meant ex Test & County players being seen at CBCC. The Club continue to host the Warwickshire Disability County team on 3 Sundays in the summer when they play other Counties – this is awe inspiring and if anyone has the chance to watch they will be amazed at the quality on display.

The Junior section is very well organised by Lee Brookes and offers excellent cricket coaching from 8-18 with a wide pathway towards competitive junior & adult cricket. Details opposite regarding 2023 Spring/Summer coaching sessions.

The off field social element continues to be very popular and a new Pool section has been formed within a competitive Midlands league.

The Club are very grateful for all the dedicated volunteers who enable the members to enjoy good sport within a supportive community environment. Also very supportive is the Castle Bromwich Parish Council which in 1953 first formed the Cricket Club for the benefit of CB residents and the wider community.



Coleshill Town F.C.

Coleshill Town Football Club Juniors

CTFC are looking at starting new teams to grow their developing Junior Section.

For the 22/23 season we had Six teams but we have capacity for more for the 23/24 season. The age group we are particularly interested in is the youngest that the FA allow and that's under 7's. That's current school Year One going into Year Two in September, under 7 years old on 31st August this year. We also need a parent or volunteer to be coach/manager, assistance will be given to gain the necessary qualifications.

If you have a child interested in joining a club looking into the future then please contact the number below.

Alan Beckett
 07791740976

Coleshill Town FC match reports

All Northern Premier League Midland Division games

Saturday 25th February

Coleshill Town 2 v 1 Hinckley LRFC
 Coleshill had their worst 45 minutes of the season at Hinckley. Leading 1-0 at half time they were thrashed 4-1. But in this game Town got to the half way mark at 2-0 thanks to Amarvir Sandhu and Chris Lait. The second half was more even but Coleshill kept their composure to record another three points.

Saturday 4th March

Coleshill Town 1 v 1 Chasetown
 Every game against Chasetown is tough, tough, tough but then add giving them a gift of a goal after only 5 minutes and it gets tougher. Chasetown wasted some good chances but Coleshill slowly got into the game and deservedly got an equaliser as a Kai Tonge effort just crossed the line. A hard fought but deserved point.

Saturday 18th March

Daventry Town 0 v 4 Coleshill Town
 Daventry were still in shock as the Manager and all the players walked out after a cut in the playing budget. Coleshill were too good for the scratch side that the home team put out. Daventry's goalkeeper had a great game as he single handedly kept Coleshill at bay including saving a penalty but the Coleman still cruised to victory with goals from Amarvir Sandu, Alex Tomkinson and a Kai Tonge double.

Saturday 25th March

Coleshill Town 2 v 0 Yaxley (Peterborough)
 Not the best performance of the season against bottom of the table Yaxley, but a wins a win and it takes Coleshill closer to a play off place. Coleshill's job was made easier as Yaxley had a player sent off on 21 minutes. Kai Tonge scored from a penalty in the first half after Alex Tomkinson went down in the box, and Tomkinson scored the second himself 15 minutes from the end.

Pitching in Northern Premier League Midland Division Season 2022/2023 CTFC Fixture List

Saturday 1st April

Away to Halesowen Town

Saturday 8th April

Away to Spalding United

Monday 10th April

Home to Bedworth United

Saturday 15th April

Home to Boldmere St Michaels

Saturday 22nd April

Away to Shepshed Dynamo.

LAST GAME OF THE SEASON!

All Fixtures are League and 3pm kick off unless stated.



1887
Nether Whitacre Cricket Club
 along with
Lee Brookes Winners
 present
Youth Team Training

£5 Per Session

Girls & Boys

Every Thursday
From 20th April
Ages 4-13yrs 5.30-6.30pm

For more info contact Lee Brookes Winners
 Tel: 07702 167862
 Email: leebrookeswinners@gmail.com

Lee Brookes Winners
Nether Whitacre Cricket Club



1887
Nether Whitacre Cricket Club

Looking for a local sports club for you and your family to join?

Look no further than Nether Whitacre Cricket Club for an all inclusive community to develop and maximise your sporting potential. With over 100 current active members, male & female, young and old of all abilities and welcoming to many more. Coaching is available in partnership with Lee Brookes Winners throughout Winter and Summer via Dynamo's and All Stars schemes, with pathway opportunities into district and county setups.

For further information, please get in touch with the club via the details below or see locations and dates below and come down...kettle is always on!!

Tel: Steve Rawlings 07714 675592 / Lee Brookes 07702 167862
 Facebook: Nether-Whitacre Cricket-Club
 Twitter: NWhitacreCC
 Instagram: netherwhitacrecc

Winter Training every Thursday
 @ Kingsbury Leisure Centre B78 2LF
 17:00-17:45 Juniors 17:45-19:00 Seniors
 Until end of March

Summer Training @ Nether Whitacre Cricket Club B46 2HL
 Dates and times TBC

Walk On

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OPENING TIMES

Mon - Fri 9:00am - 5:30pm
Saturday 10:00am - 4:00pm
Sunday CLOSED

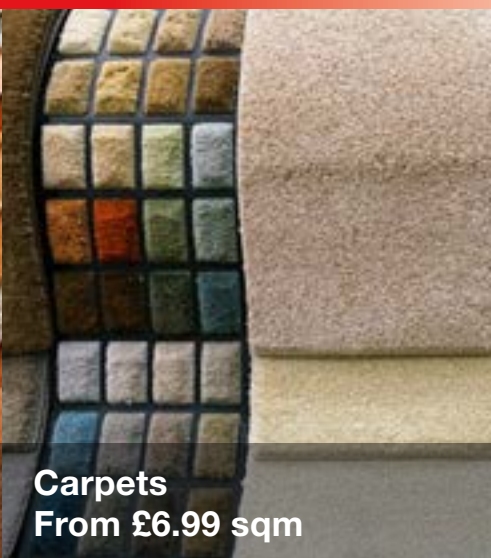
TEL: 0121 770 9680



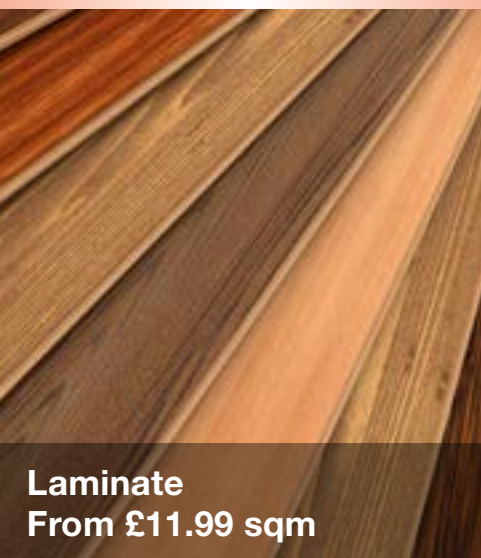
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