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April 2024 Issue 81



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The parish council heard of the brilliant work of an amazing young man, Ryan Hulance, who is collecting aluminium cans for "WE CAN" to help with food poverty.

Ryan (aged 11) and his family started collecting aluminium drink cans in order to recycle and use the money they receive to buy food for local food banks. This has been highly successful, with countless businesses and locals helping with collection points and bins all over the Solihull area.

See page 22 for how you can help
and for more Castle Bromwich Parish news

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the **ColeshillPost**

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.

Advertising in our publications

In order to deliver The Post free to our readers we rely on advertising revenue from local companies.

We work with you to create the most appropriate package for your business, after all it's in our interest to make each advert work and keep everybody happy.

We can design professional artwork if needed and offer sound advice based on years of knowledge.

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Getting in touch

Sales:
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General inquires:
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WHY CHOOSE HYPER-LOCAL?

People prefer to buy locally and they trust local print media above all else.

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Helping Your Child with Worry and Anxiety

Just like adults, it is normal for children to feel worried and anxious sometimes. But if you notice that your child feels overwhelmed by their worries and it is affecting their wellbeing and daily lives, there are ways we can offer support.

- **Talk About It:** It can be difficult for children to talk about their feelings. Support your child to know it's ok to share their worries. Make talking about feelings part of the daily routine, check-in at dinner time or the car journey home from school.
- **Listen and Offer Reassurance:** It can be really difficult to see your children struggling with their feelings. Discuss your child's concerns openly rather than saying 'there is nothing to worry about'. Listen and take time to understand why your child is feeling worried and anxious.
- **Riding the Emotion Wave:** Emotions are like waves; wave then gets bigger and bigger, before they peak and fade away. Talk with your child about how they experience their emotion wave. There are lots of ways to ride through emotions for example, breathing exercises, relaxation distractions and doing activities they enjoy, spending time outside, playing games, having a chat with someone. Make a self-soothing box that includes

something to smell, touch, listen to, photos and memories, activities, positive affirmation; anything that makes them feel calm and relaxed. Talk about ways you can support your child and then check-in to see what has worked.

- **Notice the Anxious Thoughts:** Anxiety can feel like an internal bully, sharing upsetting thoughts that something bad will happen. Encourage your child to notice the anxiety bully and spent time together thinking about the reasons why we don't have to believe everything the anxiety bully tells us.
- **Make a Worry Box:** Some children can find it helpful to write down their worries and post them inside their worry box. Remind your child that thoughts can be written down and we don't have to carry them around. You can then sit together and talk through the worries, identifying those worries your child can let float away and those they need support with.
- **Professional Support:** It is important to seek support if you are worried about your child's emotional wellbeing. Make an appointment with your GP or contact YoungMinds free parents' helpline for advice on 0808 802 5544. You can contact the Purple House Clinic, a mental health service that offers support to children, adolescents and adults on 0121 820 7851.



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Monday 15th April

Colehill Community Centre

7.30pm

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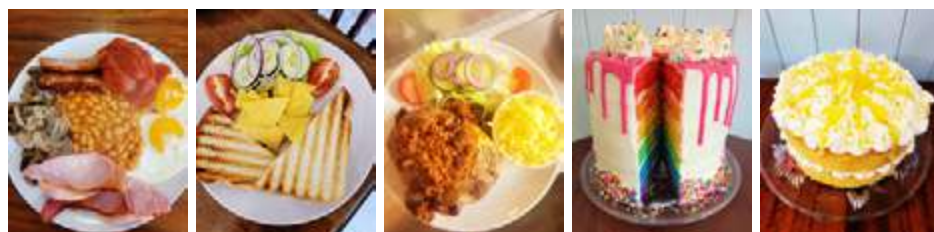
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Julie_heenan@yahoo.co.uk

Coleshill residents welcome launch of ‘The Big Save’

On Saturday 9 March, residents of Coleshill enjoyed the second ‘The Big Save’ roadshow organised by Warwickshire Climate Alliance. The roadshow gave local residents tips on saving energy, reducing food waste, recycling, and offered a pop-up repair café to fix residents’ broken items for free.

The roadshows are funded by Warwickshire County Council’s Green Shoots Community Climate Change Fund and four more events are planned, with the next one due to be held in Atherstone in September 2024.

Hazel Underwood, Committee Member from Warwickshire Climate Alliance, said: “It was great to engage with local residents in Coleshill and the feedback we received from people who attended the event was all extremely positive. We’d like to thank Town Councillor Sheena Wynn for coming along to support the event and for showing such a keen interest in what we are trying to achieve. We’re already planning our next event in Atherstone so that we can help even more Warwickshire residents and full details will be announced soon.”

Steve Currie, who helped host the repair café at the event, said: “Repairing broken items instead of sending them to landfill is a great way of saving money. There was a lot of interest in this aspect of the event from local residents

and local groups, so it is clear that residents would like to see this happen on a regular basis. There are regular repair cafes in other towns across Warwickshire, and it would be fantastic to see one open here in Coleshill too.”

If you’d be interested in helping set up a regular repair café in Coleshill, please email info@warwickshireclimatealliance.org.

The Big Save also offered residents cycle and scooter security marking, a seed swap, a children’s toy swap, and a basic bike maintenance course in conjunction with Warwickshire Cycle Buddies.

Members of Twin Rivers WI also supported the event with two imaginative upcycling craft activities and helping to serve the free refreshments.

Keep up to date with the latest Big Save news and other events organised by Warwickshire Climate Alliance online: <https://warwickshireclimatealliance.org/>

You can also follow WCA on social media:

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/WarwickshireClimateAlliance>

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Imagine this...

You've made a Will, stating that, in the event of your death, you intend for your spouse to inherit everything, including your share of the family home. But what if your spouse needs care in later life? Your spouse may be expected to pay for their care themselves... but care fees are getting more and more expensive every year, costing anywhere between £26,000 and £52,000. How can they afford to pay for their care fees and leave some money as inheritance for your children?

This is an upsetting scenario... and unfortunately, it could happen to any of us without the right protection.

The sad truth is that around 200,000 family homes are sold every year to pay for care fees. Estates are drastically reduced- sometimes to nothing at all- to pay for care, leaving beneficiaries with little to no inheritance. The lower limit for care fee means testing is currently set at £14,250. However, your loved ones' inheritance could be even less than this simply because the home and other assets were not protected in the right way.

Don't leave your home open to any risks.

All of this can be avoided- with careful planning and professional advice, you can protect your home and savings so that your children can benefit as much as possible. Putting yourself in control means you'll prevent government authorities and other parties getting their hands on your assets.



For Couples

If you jointly own your home, we can protect your property with one of our powerful Protection Wills. These wills provide your partner/spouse with a right to continue to occupy the property and buy a replacement property if

necessary. The capital share you have in the property will also be protected. The property is also safeguarded from local authority means testing.

The ideal scenario is that half the property is protected from loss, and the other half is disregarded by local authorities. What this means for inheritance is that at least half of the property's shares will be passed down to your children.

This plan of action is applicable even if you have a mortgage!

Future stress and heartache for your family and beneficiaries can be avoided, but you must act sooner rather than later. If you fall ill and require permanent care, or if you unfortunately lose mental capacity for any reason, it will be too late to protect your home and assets.

Act now!

Sadly, many people put off planning for the future until its too late, leaving children and loved ones devastated to realise that the situation could have been easily avoided. The sooner planning is put into effect, the more effectively we can help you ensure that your assets go to those you love ... not those you don't!

Do you have Savings?

While the family home is usually the most valuable asset, we can also help you to protect your savings. Speak to us today to find out the best way to protect your assets.

Protect your Home and your Savings from unnecessary, avoidable losses. Accord can help ensure your loved ones benefit as much as possible from your estate.

Act today and protect those you love

If you want to be certain that your assets will pass down your loved ones or children you'll need more than a basic Will.

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Hello from your local Slimming World groups



I have some great news for the early birds amongst you! We are delighted to announce that we will be adding a 7.30am Saturday morning session to the Three Trees Community Centre Group in Chelmsley Wood with consultant Michael. This new time will be available from Saturday 6th April and is in addition to the existing 9am session. Everybody is welcome – new, existing and visiting members. If you've been considering joining Slimming World make today the day to say yes!

As always, I've included a yummy recipe for you to try.

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

The Power of saying yes!

It's a simple, free and joyful new habit that could change your life for the better and help make your weight loss dreams a reality. Start now, and watch the magic happen...



There's one little word that has the ability to transform the way we feel about the world, and ourselves: yes. Imagine someone's inviting you to try something new that will support your weight loss. Out loud, say 'yes', then 'no'. Notice how when you say 'yes', you naturally want to smile. And when you say 'no', the muscles in your face lower.

'Yes' feels good, so why do we sometimes say 'no' to things we know will help us make our lives better? 'We can be creatures of habit,' says psychologist and author Dr Linda Papadopoulos, 'but we could become creatures of change. We're tempted to stay in our comfort zones, even when it actually feels uncomfortable, telling ourselves anything is better than the unknown.'

It's true that new experiences and fresh ideas can seem scary, even if somebody else is telling us how great they feel. But saying 'no' can automatically mean closing the door on our best possible life.

It's not about being reckless, or turning into a people-pleaser who constantly agrees to the demands of others. Instead, the secret is to remain true to ourselves and say 'yes' to all the good stuff – enjoyable, positive changes that will contribute towards the life we want to lead.

When we do this, magic starts to happen in all areas of our lives, and yes, that includes weight loss!

'Think about saying "yes" to going for a stroll to clear your head, or choosing a healthy snack over a less healthy one,' says Dr Linda Papadopoulos. 'You can already imagine the feeling of success at the end of the day.'

Being able to say 'yes' is one of the reasons Food Optimising works for everyone – there's so much choice, there are always Free Foods to enjoy, and with Healthy Extras and Syns, too, nothing is off the menu. Diets inevitably mean saying 'no', and that's why those restrictive plans can cause us to rebel and revert to old eating patterns. Instead, when you're enjoying the ride, you won't want to get off the train!

And when you get into the 'yes' habit, it can transform all areas of your life, helping you believe in your abilities and giving you a confidence boost. It could also help you to meet new people and form lasting friendships – there are so many possibilities.

4 ways to say 'yes' to weight loss success

It's a tiny word that does big things. A 'yes' will always give you more than a 'no'...

Yes! to a healthy future

You deserve to have the greatest possible life, and embracing healthy opportunities every day is a step in that direction. When that feels frightening, it can be down to our instinct to maintain the status quo.

'When we make a big change, the cost is felt immediately, while the benefits seem far away,' says Dr Papadopoulos. 'That's why your first thought might be, "I'm depriving myself by not having a bar of chocolate" rather than "If I choose to snack on fruit more often, in a few weeks I'll feel happier wearing my jeans" or "In a few months I'll be able to run upstairs without feeling out of breath". It helps to focus on the benefits first, so they seem closer.'

Check out what's fuelling your motivation. Is it wanting to run around with your kids or grandkids? Determination to wear an outfit

without hiding from the camera? If there's a picture that inspires you, stick it on your fridge door as a constant reminder of the real benefits of healthy choices.

Try this

Whenever you've chosen not to buy sweets or a takeaway, pop the money into a jar instead. Your reward will be seeing your savings grow, while your weight goes down, and the fuller that jar gets, the more motivated you'll feel. A double whammy of wins!

Yes! to delicious food

'Diets don't work. Healthy lifestyle changes do,' says Dr Papadopoulos. If we feel there is 'forbidden fruit' (or rather, 'forbidden fries'), it will be all we can think about.

With Food Optimising you can have your chicken and Slimming World chips, with a third of a plate of your favourite Speed Food salad or veg, and still have your Syns for condiments, a pudding or a glass of wine. And that takes guilt off the table.

'If you want a biscuit, you can have it and enjoy it,' says Dr Papadopoulos. And if you know comfort eating is an issue for you, asking yourself why you want it right now can help you delve further into your own patterns of behaviour. 'Is it a quick fix? A way of making yourself feel better?' says Dr Papadopoulos.

She explains that knowing the feelings behind the choices you're making, without self-judgement, keeps you fully in charge, and makes it easier to take positive steps to weight loss. 'Saying "yes" to non-emotional eating, reframing the way you "treat" yourself, and eating with greater purpose will set you on the path to success.'

Try this

Create an environment where you can always say 'yes' by keeping your fridge and cupboards stocked with Free and low Syn food you love, for example, fresh strawberries dipped in fat-free natural yogurt.

Yes! to a helping hand

When you embrace healthier eating, you forge a new identity that can sometimes get mixed reactions from your nearest and dearest. 'Make sure people know you're in the process of change and will need their encouragement,' Dr Papadopoulos advises. 'This may be challenging for some and if they seem more comfortable with your old patterns, you might have to agree to

disagree.' With time, they'll see how much happier your new lifestyle is making you, and in the meantime other friends will have your back.

'The community aspect of Slimming World is hugely important because, as well as useful tips and tricks, members will share your ups and downs, and honestly tell you: "That happened to me, too". Being on the same journey together is immensely comforting.'

Try this

It may be tempting to avoid weighing in when things haven't gone to plan, but by saying 'no' to help, you're doing yourself a disservice. Inner transformation is a work in progress, not a quick fix, and saying 'yes' to support every week is me-time that can maximise your success.

Yes! to little victories

It's embracing the small things that will make the biggest difference to your weight loss journey, says Dr Papadopoulos. 'Mini milestones can help get you to your big goal. They keep you inspired, and noticing all the small wins reminds you it's about so much more than the scales.'

Saying 'yes' to your overall health will benefit your weight loss, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly. Treating yourself better, trying to prioritise quality sleep, drinking enough water, getting out in nature and looking after your emotional health will support your mood, and complement all the food and activity choices you're making for your weight loss every day. 'Whatever you choose to do for you, completing it will give you a sense of achievement, and that equals more motivation overall,' says Dr Papadopoulos.

Try this

Keeping a 'yes' diary is a great way of logging your daily triumphs. If it feels like time for a fresh start, you could buy yourself a new one to mark the beginning of an exciting new chapter of your life. Practise saying 'yes' as often as you can and you'll see the momentum build in ways you may never have imagined.



Smoky Ratatouille Pasta

Smoked paprika adds instant depth to this simple, prep-free pasta dish

Ready in 35 mins Serves 4 | Syn Free

Ingredients:

- 500g fresh or frozen mixed Mediterranean vegetables (no added oil)
- Low-calorie cooking spray
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 500g passata with garlic
- 400g dried pasta shapes (we chose conchiglie)
- Small pack fresh basil

Method

1. Warm up your oven to 200°C/fan 180°C/gas 6.
2. Put the vegetables in a deep non-stick roasting tin and spray with low-calorie cooking spray, then sprinkle over the paprika and season lightly. Roast for 25 minutes, then pour in the passata and return to the oven for another 5 minutes.
3. At the same time, cook the pasta according to the pack instructions and drain.
4. Take the tin out of the oven and transfer half of the veg to a food processor. Add most of the basil to the food processor and blitz to make a smooth sauce.
5. Combine the pasta, veggies and sauce and check the seasoning. Divide between bowls and scatter over the rest of the basil leaves to serve.





yes you can with Slimming World

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, 7.30am, 9.00am, 3.30 & 5.30pm Jacqui 07814 675180

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 Diane 07432 123206
Kitts Green Evangelical Church, 5.30pm Richard 07733 820994
Shard End Aylesford Hall, 9.00am & 10.30am Donna 07516 726534

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 Jayne 07453 348184

Thursday

Castle Vale St Cuthberts Church, 5.30pm & 7.00pm, 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, 9.00am, 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 Claire 07917867577

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 Jacqui 07814 675180

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A NOT FOR PROFITS CLUB, SPONSORED BY THE NATIONAL LOTTERY INSPIRED FACILITY AWARDS



About Us

Lea Marston Shooting Club, established in 1967, is not just a shooting ground - it's a hub of diverse activities and experiences from Clay Pigeon Shooting and Air Rifle to Archery, Fishing, and Quad Trekking. We offer a wide range of thrilling activities for all ages and interests. Our specialty lies in providing exceptional disciplines and layouts for Clay Shooters, encompassing Olympic Skeet, English Skeet, ABT, DTL, Compak, and a 12-stand English Sporting Layout. Whether you're a seasoned shooter or a novice looking to learn, our teaching area is tailored to help you delve into this exhilarating sport. As a not-for-profit club, we are proud to offer these outstanding facilities and experiences, ensuring that everyone can enjoy the thrill of shooting in a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment.

Our Mission: Empowering all in rural sports and Clay Target Shooting through inclusivity and accessibility.

Our Commitment to Community Engagement

NWBC and our dedicated legal team have diligently pursued a resolution to address noise concerns raised by our local residents over the past few years. In compliance with court directives, we've proposed the construction of sound attenuation bunds and adjusted shooting schedules. We invite all interested parties to our upcoming open evening for further details. Please email us at info@leamarstonshootingclub.com.



Developing Great Shooters: Our Success Stories

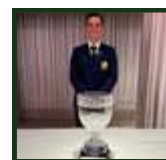
Matt Morgan

In just a decade, Matt's transformation into an accomplished shooter is remarkable. With our support, he achieved 3rd place in the 2024 UK rankings and earned his position in the England Skeet shooting team. Securing the coveted New Cap High Gun trophy in September 2023 during the team's home International event in Jersey. Matt currently works with us as a full-time instructor, sharing his expertise with shooters of all levels, aiming to bring out the best in each individual.



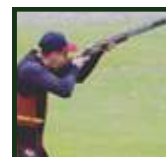
Sonny Bowman

Sonny has trained at our ground for six years, and emerged as a skilled junior shooter with our support. His dedication earned him numerous junior titles. Representing England at the prestigious home international competition in September 2023, alongside Matt. He clinched both the England junior high gun title and the international overall junior high gun award.



Toby Etheridge

Toby joined us as a new shooter around 5 years ago, he developed his skills, by training in Olympic Skeet at our ground. We have supported Toby over the years, he has now joined the British Army's team and travels all over the world competing in Olympic Skeet competitions, to ultimately claim his place in the British Olympic team.



Notable Shooters at Our Facility

Allen Warren

Allen Warren is a revered figure in the shooting industry, boasting a history of major victories and ongoing success. He dedicates his spare time to mentoring fellow community members, having coached the prospective Olympic team, and continuing to guide top shooters who train at our facility. Last year, he won the CPSA Coach of the Year award, further solidifying his commitment to supporting community members on their path to success.



Olympic Pathway at our ground

Allen was chosen to host Olympic pathway shooting training sessions last year and again this year, both held at our ground. The Olympic pathway provides junior shooters with coaching and support to excel in competitions, nurturing their ambitions to succeed and potentially reach the Olympics.



Jack Fairclough

Jack Fairclough, a prominent figure in the shooting world, has honed his skills at our facility, advancing his career. Celebrated for his remarkable achievements, Fairclough has secured numerous championship titles and accolades, showcasing exceptional skill and dedication. His training at our facility has been instrumental in promoting his career and skill development.



Throughout the years, our facility has welcomed a multitude of top shots, renowned shooters, and longstanding members of our local community, some of whom have been with us for over five decades. We proudly offer the thrilling British sport of shooting to enthusiasts near and far, boasting one of the nation's premier shooting facilities.

CURRENT MEMBERS AND REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS: 2616



A NOT FOR PROFITS CLUB, SPONSORED BY THE NATIONAL LOTTERY INSPIRED FACILITY AWARDS

Our Mission: Empowering all in rural sports and Clay Target Shooting through inclusivity and accessibility.

Clay Pigeon Shooting Tuition

Clay pigeon shooting is a popular, growing sport and has been around since the 18th century, which involves shooting down moving clay targets with a shotgun. Our sessions provide tuition on a 1:1 basis and is an ideal activity for any occasion. Whether you are planning a date, family trip, corporate retreat or stag/hen do. – or just for a day out! We have undercover stands and gravelled wheelchair-friendly pathways, ensuring accessibility for all. This is a safe and exciting sport, requiring skill, timing and hand-eye coordination. The achievement of hitting a clay into a million pieces is incredibly rewarding! We provide safety equipment, competition-grade ammunition, guns, and targets.



Archery & Air rifle Tuition

Embark on a safe and thrilling beginner Archery and Air Guns session, where you'll hone your skills with Longbows, Crossbows, Air Rifles, or Air Pistols. Under the guidance of our expert instructor, you'll learn the intricacies of handling each piece of equipment, mastering aiming dynamics and scoring points across disciplines. Our covered 35-metre range offers diverse targets to test your skill and accuracy. Equipment, targets, pellets, and personalised 1:1 tuition are all provided for an unforgettable lesson.



Quad trekking

We are thrilled to announce our 10th year of quad trekking experiences. Our quad trekking experience is a safe and exhilarating trail, navigating around our 7.5 km purpose built track, navigating over humps, bumps, through woodland and wetland. Our trained instructor will teach you how to ride our Polaris 4 x4 Quad Bikes in a safe but exciting way! Minimum age 16 years, helmet is provided and must be worn.



Air rifle Range - with your equipment

Come and use our undercover air rifle range! Bring your own equipment and join us at our undercover air rifle range! With a short 35-metre distance to test your accuracy, it's the perfect spot for shooting enthusiasts. Members can access the range for free during opening hours, while non-members can pay as they go. Don't miss out on the benefits of our growing air rifle club membership—join today!



Shotgun License Holders

As a shotgun license holder, our ground is yours to explore! Delight in a variety of disciplines, from practice layouts to a 12-stand undercover Sporting area, Compak, Skeet, Olympic Skeet, ABT, and DTL. License holders can also supervise non-license holders, ensuring everyone can enjoy the experience.



Membership

Individual Membership is priced at £60 per year, with an initial joining fee of £50 pro-rata from January to January. Upon registration, members receive their exclusive clay credit card for discounted clay purchases, along with a complimentary shooting cap and membership card for the 2024 term. Furthermore, members have complimentary access to our Air Rifle range during regular opening hours. Couples and family memberships are also available with discounted rates!



Our Local Honey production

Erik has been an integral part of our team for 12 years, excelling in various roles from building to target setting and instruction. During lockdown, he embraced beekeeping, starting with 1 hive and 60,000 bees. Now, with over 18 hives and 1.6 million bees, last year's honey harvest exceeded 180 kg, and we anticipate an increase this year with natural meadow planting complementing this. We've planted a variety of plants around the ground to boost honey production, honey is essential in managing allergies caused by local pollens. Register your interest for upcoming bee-keeping experiences and tuition.



Available to purchase on site

Our warm Café

Come and visit our welcoming café, open to both members and non-members alike! Indulge in our assortment of homemade dishes, breakfast options, and sandwiches, perfect for a light breakfast or lunch. Relax by our picturesque fishing lake and soak in the stunning surroundings while you dine.

**Open Alternate Monday's & Sunday's
Open Every Weds, Thur, Fri & Sat**



Luke B

I hadn't been shooting for many years, and the instructor was very friendly and helpful. We did both the clay pigeon shooting and the archery. Great day out.



Elizabeth Howe

Excellent Family Day Spent at Lea Marston Shooting Club. We were all beginners and totally felt at ease with our instructor Matt. Really enjoyable day had by all of us as a party of 7.



Sharon Ingleston

My daughter booked this for her dad. It was excellent. Such a great experience. Ian was our guide and he had such passion and was very informative and made me feel at ease. Thank you so much



David Harrison

I had a brilliant first time shooting experience! Jack is a superb teacher! All the staff are really friendly and the breakfast was lovely too! Can't wait to return!

TO BOOK OR FOR FURTHER DETAILS, PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL US USING THE DETAILS BELOW:

1 MILE OFF J9 M42 | B76 ODA | WWW.LEAMARSTONSHOOTINGCLUB.COM | 01676 540070



TWIN RIVER COLESHILL WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

March 2024 Report

What a busy time it has been for Coleshill's local WI group in the last few weeks. Lots of activities, plans being made, a big night out and a new postbox topper!

Morris Dancing came to Coleshill

The WI enjoyed the presence of the Ansley Village Morris Dancers who came to entertain members and guests on the evening of the 27 February. Everyone knew they were in for a fantastic night the instant the troupe walked into the Town Hall with their bells chinking and dressed in bright colours. Even the people in the other room came and had a look through the side window to see what was going on, noses pressed up against the glass.



What a treat it was to be entertained by Ansley's joyful and loud routines. Amazing outfits and sounds as they bounced up and down the hall bashing sticks together and weaving in unison. The music that came out of the squeeze boxes was fantastic and a nod to the history of this traditional village dance.

It didn't take much persuasion for the guests to join in and not one lady made a show of themselves (no one reportedly left with a black eye from getting hit with a stick). Those who participated certainly got their exercise quota that night!

It was inclusive, fun and educational and Twin Rivers would love to have the Ansley Village Morris Dancers back one day.



Take That Tribute Night

One of the benefits of being a member of the Coleshill WI is joining the 'Out-Out' Group. It is social and a great way to make new friends. This time, the group put their glad rags and dance shoes on to attend a Take That tribute evening hosted by Barston Lakes Restaurant & Bar on the 1 March.

The evening started with a delicious three course meal which, of course, was filled with intellectual dialogue; which admittedly became gradually less intelligent as the drink flowed.

Then came the entertainment: three young men corkscrewed onto the stage and started belting out Take That tunes...really well. There was no need to encourage anyone to dance, everyone was up and moving from the first note sung. Hats off to the organiser of the trip, Trish, who was jiggling for the entire show.

The only regret voiced was by those who had worn heels (sore toes and a blister or two) but "Hey-ho" ...that's the sign of a great night!

Spring Postbox Topper



The ladies from the Craft Group have been working hard on knitting and crocheting their little Easter friends in the guise of chickens, ladybirds and bunnies. There is also a bunch of spring flowers – it's amazing what can be created with wool and a bit of imagination.



On 24 March, those who had a hand in creating the topper gathered at the postbox along with the Town Mayor of Coleshill, Tony Battle. Tony was delighted to 'open' the topper to the public on behalf of Twin Rivers.

If you want to have a look for yourself, head to the bottom of the High Street by the garage. You won't be disappointed; it's so colourful and cheery.

Easter Egg Hunt



Coleshill be aware! Keep your eyes peeled and your ears open! Twin Rivers is doing another one of their treasure hunts! This time it will be a fuzzy friends and easter egg hunt around the High Street and in the shops. Happening soon – community family fun for all and free of charge.

Don't be surprised if you get up early one morning and witness ladies sneaking about the High Street in dark glasses and capes acting highly suspiciously. Don't be concerned and on no account be tempted to report them to the police.

Photos to be shared in a follow-up article soon if this lovely paper's editor will let us.

Twin Rivers Coleshill Women's Institute meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7.30pm at Coleshill Town Hall. Entry is free to members, £5 to non-members. All ladies are welcome. Make new friends, have fun and learn new skills.



Saqib Bhatti MBE, MP for Meriden

April update

Dear Resident,

Earlier this month, the Chancellor delivered his Budget which is always a significant Parliamentary and fiscal event. With it came welcome announcements on increased investment, more jobs, and lower taxes. Inflation is coming down and the UK has the lowest national debt in the G7. The Chancellor announced a six-month extension to the Household Support Fund, a freeze in alcohol duty, and extended the 5p cut in fuel duty. There is additional investment for the West Midlands Combined Authority to support cultural projects in our communities; reform of Child Benefit, additional funding to support research by medical charities into dementia, cancer, and epilepsy; investment to build new Special Educational Needs schools to increase places and provide more choice for parents and an additional £2.5 billion for the NHS this year to focus on reducing waiting times. This is all alongside a further 2 pence reduction in National Insurance. These measures, combined with the Autumn Statement cut will save the average employee £450 a year.

I have been lobbying for funding for better health resources across the constituency. At Solihull Hospital I have secured an Urgent Treatment Centre, which is up and running, a Locality Hub, which was recently

opened, and new surgical suites to be built soon. I led a successful campaign to open a Community Diagnostic Centre, which will provide 116,000 tests, checks and scans easing pressure on GP appointments per year. I will continue to push for more funding for the Solihull borough to better our community.

On the back of a successful campaign by Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, I am pleased to be welcoming the Midlands Rail Hub. The programme will improve rail connectivity and boost economic growth across the Midlands through £1.75 billion of investment from the government in rail infrastructure in the West Midlands. This will expand the capacity of Moor Street Station, taking the pressure off New Street Station, and connecting Moor Street to the Northwest and the Southeast. There is also the potential of a new cross-city line connecting the Camp Hill line to the line out to Castle Bromwich which will improve connectivity for residents into the centre of Birmingham and further. It is great to see the government investing in the region and it is a big vote of confidence in the potential of the West Midlands.

As ever, my office remains open and we are conducting surgery appointments, so do not hesitate to book a slot. My contact details can be found below: saqib.bhatti@parliament.uk 0121 711 7029



CASTLE BROMWICH PARISH COUNCIL

VACANCY: SUMMER RELIEF PARK WARDEN (EVENINGS AND WEEKENDS)

Castle Bromwich Parish Council is looking for a Summer Relief Park Warden. Duties include; being the friendly and approachable face of the Council, securing the facilities, 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 mainly evenings (from 4pm), weekends and bank holidays.

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

Pay: SCP 2 £11.62 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 Monday 15th April 2024



UK BREAKS



By Coach from Solihull

Reader travel

TORQUAY CRUISE
& Devon Steam



Departing Mon 8 Jul '24

Enjoy the sights of the beautiful English Riviera and the welcome of Torquay, on this great-value break that features a packed itinerary of excursions, a delightful heritage railway journey, a scenic cruise on the River Exe and much more!

Your break includes

- ✓ Return coach travel **from Solihull & Sutton Coldfield**
- ✓ 4 nights at the 2-star Trecarn Hotel, Torquay with dinner & breakfast
- ✓ Entertainment every evening
- ✓ Heritage train journey on the South Devon Railway
- ✓ Cruise on the River Exe
- ✓ Free time in Exmouth
- ✓ Excursions to Buckfast Abbey & Buckfast Butterfly Farm and Dartmoor Otter Sanctuary

Optional excursion to Teignmouth (£8pp)

5 Days by Coach *only* £359

Single Supplement £70

ISLE OF WIGHT
'Royals & Rails'



Departing Mon 15 Jul '24

On this fantastic break we enjoy the island's natural beauty as well as a nostalgic journey on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway and a visit to fascinating Osborne House. The Isle of Wight is the perfect place to enjoy a relaxing few days away.

Your break includes

- ✓ Return coach travel & ferry crossings **from Solihull**
- ✓ 4 nights at the Medehamstede Hotel, Shanklin with dinner & breakfast
- ✓ Heritage train journey on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway
- ✓ Excursions to Osborne House, Cowes & Ryde

Optional Island Highlights Tour (£13pp)

5 Days by Coach *only* £399

Single Supplement £50

SCARBOROUGH
& North Yorkshire Moors Railway



Departing Mon 29 Jul '24

Scarborough provides the perfect base for this exciting five-day holiday as we explore the highlights of Yorkshire's iconic coast. We include excursions to Whitby, Bridlington and charming Filey, as well as the highlight of the break, a leisurely journey on the heritage North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Your break includes

- ✓ Return coach travel **from Solihull & Sutton Coldfield**
- ✓ 4 nights at the Delmont Hotel, Scarborough with dinner & breakfast
- ✓ Heritage train journey on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway
- ✓ Excursions to Whitby, Bridlington & Filey

Optional excursion to York (£13pp)

5 Days by Coach *only* £399

Single Supplement £75

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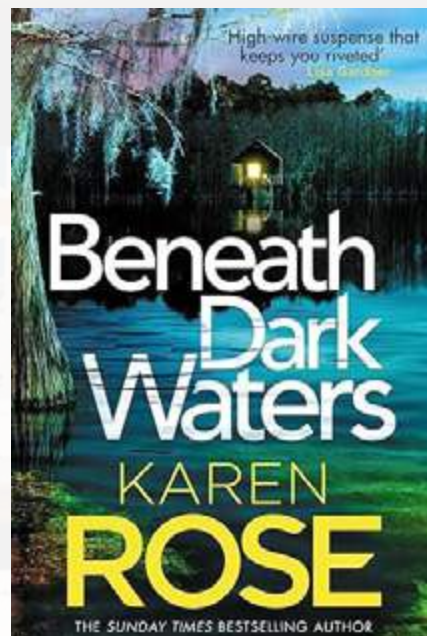
Castle Bromwich Library Book Club

Beneath dark waters by Karen Rose

Assistant District Attorney Kaj Cordozo's life is thrown upside down when two masked men attempt to kidnap his son, Elijah. Given the high-profile case Kaj is working on, he's not about to take any more risks. When Val Sorensen of Burke Broussard Private Investigation Agency is assigned as Elijah's bodyguard, she realises she also has a very personal connection to the gang thought to be behind the attempted kidnap - a run in with Sixth Day cost her brother his life. As Kaj and Val work together to prevent a second kidnap attempt, they uncover a trail of violence and deception leading back to brothers Aaron and Corey Gates.

Fast paced, intense and atmospheric with a brilliantly unpredictable storyline. This book will keep you on the edge of your seat from start to finish. A very good read!

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member



The second chance year by Melissa Wiesner

Sadie Thatcher's life has fallen apart in spectacular fashion. In one fell swoop, she managed to lose her job, her apartment, and her boyfriend. So when a fortune teller offers her one wish, Sadie jumps at the chance to redo her awful year. Deep down, she doesn't believe magic will fix her life, but taking a leap of faith, Sadie makes her wish, opens her eyes, and nothing has changed. And then, in perhaps her dumbest move yet, she kisses her brother's best friend, Jacob. When Sadie wakes up the next morning, she's in her former apartment with her former boyfriend, and her former boss is expecting her at work. Checking the date, she realizes it's January 1 of last year. As Sadie navigates her second-chance year, she begins to see the red flags she missed in her relationship and in her career. Plus, she keeps running into Jacob, and she can't stop thinking about their kiss - the one he has no idea ever happened.

This book is a fun quick read, but real emotional rollercoaster and I was drawn in straight away. I really enjoyed it and would definitely recommend it.

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member

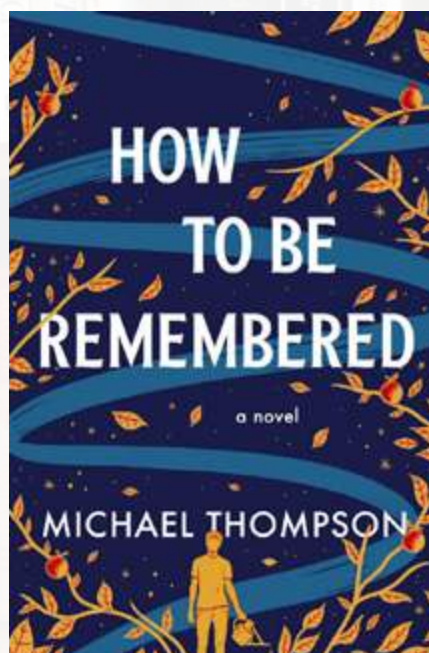


How to be remembered by Micheal Thompson

On an ordinary night in an ordinary year, Tommy Llewellyn's doting parents wake in a home without toys and nappies, without photos of their baby scattered about, and without any idea that the small child asleep in his crib is theirs. That's because Tommy is a boy destined to never be remembered. On the same day every year, everyone around him forgets he exists, and he grows up enduring his own universal Reset. That is until something extraordinary happens: Tommy Llewellyn falls in love. Determined to finally carve out a life for himself and land the girl of his dreams, Tommy sets out on a mission to finally trick the Reset and be remembered. But legacies aren't so easily won, and Tommy must figure out what's more important - the things we leave behind or the people we bring along with us.

This is a unique and intriguing story that keeps you turning the pages. It's a stunning debut novel which I thoroughly enjoyed.

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member



Everything I Have by Tammy Robinson

When Sam and Ellie unexpectedly meet again after a decade apart, their reunion crackles with unresolved emotions. Once inseparable childhood best friends, a painful argument severed their bond, leaving Sam consumed by lingering anger and Ellie desperate for understanding. Determined to guide Sam through his grief, Ellie pours her heart onto paper and through shared memories, dreams, and regrets, they rekindle a connection that refuses to be silenced. The only catch is - he has no idea the anonymous letters are coming from her. And as their real-life encounters intensify, the line between friendship and love blurs, leaving Ellie caught between the secret allure of her anonymous letters and the desire for complete honesty with Sam.

Beautifully written and captivating with well-developed characters. This is a fun, feel good novel that will warm your heart. I could not put it down - I laughed, I cried, I loved it!

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member





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

April update

Welcome to April in Castle Bromwich, temperatures are starting to rise at last and the extra hour of daylight is making itself felt.

Road Safety.

The Parkfield drive/ Flecknoe Close area New Pedestrian Crossing request has moved on further.

SMBC officers are Pleased to confirm that the Stage 1 pedestrian crossing assessment has been conducted.

As a result of this assessment, it has been confirmed there is sufficient space and potential demand for some form of crossing facility to be explored further.

This location will now be placed on the Local Network Improvement Plan waiting list, to be assessed and prioritised in early 2025, in time for setting the council's priorities for the funding that will be available in the 2025/26 financial year.

Our local schools are running a Safer parking campaign aimed at improving road safety for pupils and parents around the immediate area of the schools.

Water Orton Road traffic scheme update.

The Head of Highways and infrastructure for SMBC has visited us at Arden hall to present the proposed scheme for this work during the March Parish council meeting, we will continue to update residents as this progresses.

Our recent councillor surgery was very busy with amongst other key issues, a request for a petition to reinstate the local route of No 96 bus as some residents find it difficult to reach our main shops using two buses with unpredictable arrival times.

Improving our environment

There has been a fantastic response from residents requesting tree planting in grass verges across the area, by the time that you read this article a meeting will have been held to review plans for these as part of the Solihull's green Canopy strategy.

This complements the work that is going on to address the damage to our grass verges caused by the two wheels up parking and some delivery vehicles.

The SMBC Report it website for highway concerns and much more.

This is proving effective for residents for registering concerns with SMBC, please do send me details of any promised remedial work that becomes overdue and we will follow it up for you.

Regular Councillor Surgery at Castle Bromwich Library.

My next monthly surgery is scheduled for Monday the 8th April and takes place at the Library at 14:00, no appointment is required, please email, or call me if anything urgent comes up in the meantime.

Our councillor emails are martin.mccarthy@solihull.gov.uk
alan.feeney@solihull.gov.uk and leslie.kaye@solihull.gov.uk

Do you enjoy singing? - Come and join us!



Castle Bromwich Singers are an established singing group who meet every Tuesday evening. We are currently looking for new men and women to come and join our group.

We meet at the Baptist Church, Timberley Lane, B34 7HU 7.30pm. Our shows feature a wide variety of music and through these we raise money for local charities. We also sing out in the community.

Castle Bromwich Singers invite you to come along and try the benefits of singing in a group. It will boost your social life, your mood and overall wellbeing. You will feel the physical benefits too, as singing increases your energy levels, and, when you perform as part of a group you will overcome nerves and build confidence in your own abilities. Come and join us and find friendship, support and fulfilment in our vocal group. You are welcome anytime and we look forward to meeting you.



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About Us

Established in the Black Country in 1909, the Hickton family have been serving the community through four generations.

The business currently in its 3rd and 4th generation of ownership, identified the need for a new modern independent funeral director to serve the Birmingham and Solihull areas.

Many of the long established funeral homes in the local area have been sold to much larger corporations over the past 15 years and have no family members left involved in the business. W.H. Painter, for example, are owned by Funeral Partners, a large nationwide corporate company.

We are the only family owned funeral director in the area now.

With our family ownership we feel in a position to give a much more caring service when called upon, compared to large corporate companies. We also feel we can be much more cost effective in comparison to the corporate funeral homes.

The Basic Funeral Package £1400.00*

Including - Professional services, transfer from place of death, care of loved one, hearse, simple coffin, funeral director, bearers.

The Traditional Clent Funeral Package £2350.00*

Including - Professional services, transfer of your loved one from place of death, preparation and viewing of loved one in a traditional coffin, care of loved one, hearse, one limousine, funeral director & bearers. 4ft floral coffin spray, 40 order of service booklets, ashes scatter tube, donations box and 6 bereavement support sessions.

*cost excludes cremation, burial, doctors or minister's fees. All costs are correct up until April 2021

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FASHION BLOG 2024



Transitioning from Winter to Spring Fashion

As the days get longer and milder, it's almost time to say goodbye to winter wear and welcome light knits and vibrant spring colours. The promise of spring is just around the corner, bringing with it dreams of sunshine and outdoor dining experiences.

Glitzy Bits Boutique and Liliann Styled by Ryan are both brimming with new spring/summer collections, signalling the arrival of warmer days.

At Liliann styled by Ryan, we are thrilled to introduce new brands like Orientique and Tirelli from Australia, featuring unique styling in organic cotton. Another exciting addition is Foil, a brand favoured by Jane McDonald on her cruising shows. For something truly exceptional, explore Frank Lyman, a Canadian brand offering a range from casual to formal attire, perfect for races, weddings, or special occasions.

Glitzy Bits has now received the latest collection of Malissa J Collection, a long-standing favourite known for its high-quality fabrics and flattering styles for all body types.

Both boutiques offer an array of summer footwear, including Lunar sandals known for comfort and style at Glitzy Bits, and Ravel's chic wedges. Liliann features Caprice shoes with premium leather uppers for a comfortable walking experience. So, from workwear essentials to summer sandals and heels, we've got all your fashion needs covered.

Style wise we are seeing lots of wide legged trousers coming through either in your classic navy, white and black or in fabulous patterns with some amazing colour prints!

Zesty colours and a feel for retro- it's all happening in both boutiques.

We have everything covered from a casual capsule wardrobe for your summer vacation to a dress for the races or that special occasion such as a wedding or christening.

So if you want to enjoy a fun shopping experience, with an honest, friendly approach in a relaxed environment then call on Glitzy Bits Boutique or Liliann Styled by Ryan where you will be assured a friendly welcome.

www.glitzybits.online

www.liliann.co.uk

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Warwickshire

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Ryan

Glitzy Bits Fashion Show

The Glitzy Bits Fashion Show took place at the Cameo Suite in the Coleshill Hotel on Sunday, March 24th, 2024. The event celebrated the launch of the new Spring/Summer Malissa J Collection. Showcased by our fabulous models, we presented the stunning new collection designed to cater to every style and body shape. Re-enforcing once again, that we have clothes and accessories for women who are unapologetically fabulous.

In line with our commitment to the community, Glitzy Bits contributed £300 towards the Mayor of Coleshill's charitable initiatives this year. Mayor, Tony Battle is focusing on supporting small community groups like the warm room and the new playgroup at Coleshill Town Hall, which offer free resources to the local community.

If you would like to browse the collection, why not take a look at the Glitzy Bits website here > www.glitzybits.online



The Story of Castle Bromwich Parish Church (pt8)

By David L Adams

Speaking to folk on the history of our church over the years, I have found the way in which it totally conceals its age can be a source of both fascination or irritation – of course to me it is certainly the former!

At the end of the previous article my sketch showed the church at what might be described its medieval “zenith” – when, as is the case with many English village churches – its history could be read in its walls.

The original stone chapel from 1175 had become the chancel to the “New” half-timbered nave. Its Norman stonework had possibly been updated with Early English window tracery, enlarged to improve lighting conditions and with the added nave increasing the worshipping space catering for the increased population of the area.

We also know that at some time a western tower or steeple was added – we know this because its removal was specified as part of the contract for building that which now exists on the church.

The frustrating part of all of this is not knowing the true dates of the building of any of these early features.

I shall deal with the great remodelling of 1726-31 in due time but firstly I would like to describe the Medieval church which we lost to that work.

The first difference we may notice from our present building is that of the entrance, for which there is a very basic reason – until relatively recently this was a family chapel and not a parish church.

The time of which I am writing was one of great change, the Feudal System was breaking down after the effect of the Black Death, an “English Identity” was growing in the Roman Catholic church and the ruling families were losing their French associations.

Although the Castle Bromwich Hall that we know was not commenced until 1599, it is likely that there was a Manor House in a similar location – to the south of the church – and I think that the main door was on that side for ease of access - for the family!

The conjectural interior sketches of the Medieval church by the Victorian architect, C.E. Bateman – he who rediscovered the hidden ancient timbers – show a single Western gable entrance. His exterior drawings also do not show the Western tower which replaced the earlier bellcote, but of course we do not know for certain when that was added.

It is my contention that, as built, the timber nave always had the main door to the south to suit the Hall.

We also think that there was a lesser, priests’ entrance in the south wall of the Chancel. This was shown in the Beighton Prospect drawn in 1726 and published in Dugdale’s “Houses of Warwickshire”

The interior was open to the rafters in the nave and its lean-to side aisles – probably in the chancel too.

There was no seating in the body of the church although there would have been benches at the sidewalls for the aged and infirm.

This month’s sketch shows my impression of the junction of the nave with the arch formed in the gable of the old chapel where there would have been a rood screen.

The definition of the Rood was Christ’s crucifix at high level at the entrance to the holiest part of the church. Now hidden in the roof space on the bottom member of the existing truss against the chancel stonework there remains a plaster pediment with traces of paint. This was above the crucifix.

We could assume that this would have been as it was when Henry VIII came to the throne in 1509, when England still appeared to be firmly Roman Catholic.



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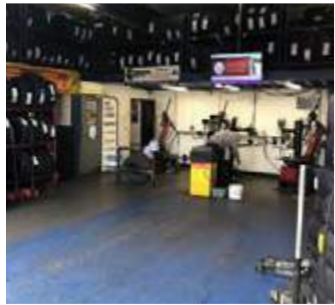
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News from St Clement of Alexandria Green Lane, Castle Bromwich (known locally as St Clements Church)



'I am with you always, even unto the end of the world – Matthew 28:20'

The Church grounds come to life in Spring, even the hedges that have been dormant during winter start to come to life and our wonderful display of daffodils, together with snowdrops and crocus remind us all of the ever changing seasons and those lighter nights and glorious sunny days still to come. The garden at the front of the Church was created by Beryl Ticquet who was the wife of the first Vicar of St Clements as a Garden of Memory and every year during the summer months without fail a bright red rose pokes its head up through the hedge. Was it planted by Beryl? We think it probably was. Last year we planted "Forget Me Nots" in the garden, which symbolises true love and respect, with its pale blue flower that dies back in winter, but re-sprouts in spring and although a small flower it has a powerful message for us all. Our gardener Rob cut the lawns at the front of the Church for the first time at the end of February, which really does make you feel that those warmer days are on the way, with the clocks going forward as we "jump into Spring" we know those dark, cold days of winter are behind us.

It's important to remember that our Vicar The Revd Fiona Harrison-Smith is also the Rector of St Mary and St Margaret Church Castle Bromwich and that St Clements' Church Service times on a Sunday are either 9.45 am for a Praise Service which takes place on the first and third Sunday of each month and 11am for a Holy Communion Service which takes place every second and fourth Sunday of every month. Wednesday Holy Communion at St Clements is always at 10am. You will find the times of our Services on our noticeboards and on our Facebook Page which also gives the times for our Groups. If you would like more information, please do not hesitate to give us a ring.

As in previous years St Clements will be supporting the Marie Curie Daffodil Appeal during March 2024, which this amazing organisation starts on Sunday 3rd March with a day of Reflection for those that we have lost especially during those difficult days of the pandemic. It feels like a lifetime away, to think back to the 20th March 2020 and the start of lock-down and those days before the first vaccinations were available. As a Church we have come a long way, when learning how to live stream services each Sunday, being told we could open for private prayer and slowly and gradually getting back to being able to welcome everyone into Church for a face-to-face service even if we had to sit at "arms length" from each other and exit through the rear of the Church.

We hoped for better days and slowly life has returned to normal!! Perhaps not exactly as it was before the pandemic, as a lot of people still work from home, but nevertheless we don't have to wear a mask and can now go shopping without having to stand 2m apart.

However, one important message still remains "wash your hands" regularly, use sanitiser and just stay at home if feeling unwell. Hope is a very powerful word, a feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen as with the pandemic for it to be over and we could once again meet up with friends and family.

Many members of St Clements not only organise and run our groups, they also during the week give their time by volunteering either as governors of local schools, giving their time in charity shops, the foodbank or as in Janet Smith's case, is also a Brownie Leader with 4th Castle Bromwich Brownies, and goes in twice a week to Castle Bromwich Junior School to listen to pupils in year 5 read. Reading is so important, it opens the door to a world in which your imagination can take you on a

journey of discovery.

Anne of Green Gables was written by the Canadian author Lucy Maud Montgomery in 1908, written for all ages and is a classic that is still in print today. The children who visited St Clements were able to learn that the Bible is in fact not a book but a Library of 66 books. 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament. When the Vicar gave the children the opportunity to ask questions, they did not hesitate, quickly lining up and then asking some really searching questions. Their visit is already in the Church diary for 2025 when we will once again welcome the children from our local Junior School back into Church.

One of the groups that St Clements' runs is the Twenty21 Group that is held every other Tuesday from 2pm to 4pm. It is not only a place to come for a chat, enjoy a tea or coffee, meet up with friends and make new ones, but there is also a selection of books to choose from, so if you like reading you can choose from detective stories to romance to take home and just indulge your love of reading. Being able to share books and recommend those that you have enjoyed is a very good "talking point". Oh and if reading is not for you, we have a selection of games from snakes and ladders to ludo. Of course if you like knitting etc you can bring it with you. Everyone is welcome, whether you have been before or will be coming for the first time there will be someone to greet you and talk to.

On Saturday May 18th is our Annual Summer Quiz with fish and chips supper, from Cola's fish saloon on the Chester Road (which we have already provisionally booked). Our own resident Quiz Masters! Anne and Linda will be setting the questions so we had better get our "thinking caps" on ready for May.

St Clements' Summer Fayre will take place on Saturday 13th July 2024 and we hope for a beautiful warm sunny day. 2023

was a complete "wash-out" and although we had to go inside it turned out to be a really good day. Still, in anticipation of a beautiful day when we can be outside and enjoy the outside space.

Our thanks go to Ann and Ian Wright who were in charge of our annual Beetle Drive and to those that made those amazing puds. Getting a "six" to start is easier said than done and for a game that is a classic British party game from the 1950's (which you can still buy) getting a six means you can start and draw the body, then you have to draw and build a beetle, it really is a dash to the finish. Then the puds, so much choice it's hard to know what to have. A good afternoon of fun and laughter when we really do make our own entertainment.

Our Forget Me Not Memory Café will start on Thursday 11th of April and not 1st April as printed previously, when we will be holding two café's per month on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month from 1pm to 2.30 pm. If you are a Carer on your own or you bring someone with memory loss and like to sit and chat over a tea or coffee then do come along. There will be cake to sample and support if needed.

You can contact us by:

Phone: 0121 274 7120

Church Website:

www.stclementschurchcb.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stclementschurchcastlebromwich

Email: office@stclementschurchcb.co.uk



Castle Bromwich Parish Council News



Easter Break

The daffodils are among the many spring bulbs to appear first, indicating spring is on its way along with the lighter evenings. The Arden Hall Park closing hours will change from Sunday, March 31st, 2024, 6:00 p.m. The opening time of 8:30 a.m. will stay the same.

Over the Easter bank holidays, the park will remain open, but parts of Arden Hall will be closed. The Parish Council and Arden Hall staff would like to wish everyone a Happy Easter.

Volunteers Needed

Our annual Party in the Park on Saturday, July 20th, is in its first stage of preparation for the craft stalls, food village, Bouncy Castles, and children's games area. What we do need to make the day flow with ease are volunteers. Under the guidance of the Community and Leisure Officer, we need help with multiple tasks, such as

- Welcoming our community on this fabulous Fun Packed day
- Help to hang banners and bunting
- Helping line up our 30+ stall holders
- Cheering the infants with their egg and spoon/sack races
- Handing the winning medals out to children and adults
- Directing residents around the park
- Hours needed between 9:30am - 5pm

If you can only spare a few hours this will help us. Please contact Janine on leisure@castlebromwichpc.gov.uk

2024 TABLE TOP DATES for your Diary

The tables are £10 each (6ft x 2ft), CASH ONLY. Monies must be paid to secure your place before the event. WE CAN NOT RESERVE TABLES WITHOUT PAYMENT. Please call the Arden Hall office at 0121 747-7150. Due to our staff working in and around the hall, the phone cannot always be answered promptly. Please leave a telephone message and staff will get back to you as soon as they can, or alternatively email Arden Hall at ardenhall@castlebromwichpc.gov.uk.

Table Top events are held on Saturdays with free admission to the public and are open between 10:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

April 6th	September 7th
May 4th	October 5th
June 1st	November 2nd
July 6th	

There are NO table top sales in August

We need your Aluminium Cans

The parish council heard of the brilliant work of an amazing young man, Ryan Hulance, who is collecting aluminium cans for "WE CAN" to help with food poverty.

Ryan (aged 11) and his family started collecting aluminium drink cans in order to recycle and use the money they receive to buy food for local food banks. This has been highly successful, with countless businesses and locals helping with collection points and bins all over the Solihull area.

On Saturday, March 23, the Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr Pauline Allen, met Ryan to receive the Arden Hall "WE CAN" wheelee bin. Our licenced bars, which carry aluminium cans of pop, will be collected after each event and added to the Blue Wheelie bin. Please fill the bin with your empty drink cans and help us support the community and local food bank. The bin will be situated at the rear of Arden Hall and will clearly have the logo on "We CAN".



Please support Ryan in this excellent venture.

Dates for your Diary

- Coffee Mornings in our Spencer Lounge every Thursday between 10:00am and 12 noon. Tea and a variety of ground coffee are £2. A great way to meet new friends, have a natter and play a spot of Bingo.
- Boxing Amateur Show "O'Dells Community Pride" from Bromford. 30th March Boxing commences at 1:00pm Adults £20 - Under 12 £12. Tickets 07907 266 487
- The band "The 3 Sixties 5th April 2024 - Tickets £15:00 A tribute to the sounds of the sixties - Tickets -0121 270 5886 Doors Open at 6:30pm
- Table Top 6th April with free admission to the public and are open between 10:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
- Party in the Park - Arden Hall Playing Fields - Saturday 20th July 2024 12pm - 5pm

If you have any suggestions of events you would like to see at Arden Hall, please email Janine on leisure@castlebromwichpc.gov.uk

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.

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

Youth Council

Our Youth Council at the Halloween craft fair, got into character with their costumes. They made cakes and organised games for the children. They are in the process of organising their stall in the annual "Party in the Park" which will take place on Saturday 20th July 2024. Castle Bromwich (CBYC) is a group of local young people aged between 11 and 19 who represent young people's views and work towards improving things for young people in the borough.

Members of the group work with the Community & Leisure Officer, Parish Council and outside youth officers. They meet on a Tuesday evening between 5pm -6pm every two months.

All members get involved in:

- Finding out and representing the views of young people.
- Working with and influencing decision makers.
- Running youth lead projects and campaigns.
- Helping with events at Arden Hall.

The Youth Council consists of a core committee, which includes a Chair, Vice Chair, Community & Leisure Officer, Chairman of the Parish Council and other outside youth workers/teachers.

Being a Youth Councillor is an important role and requires commitment and dedication but along the way you will:

- Have the opportunity to have your voice heard and help make a positive change.
- Acquire new skills through experiences and training.
- Meet lots of different people and make new friends.
- Add to your CV for school/college/university/employment.

If you're interested in becoming a member of Castle Bromwich Youth Council, we need your interest via email at leisure@castlebromwichpc.gov.uk

The next Youth Council meeting is on 7th May.

We will then contact you and send you consent forms to be completed by your parent or carer.

For more information, contact the Parish Council on: Telephone: 0121 747 6503

Email: leisure@castlebromwichpc.gov.uk



Castle Bromwich
Hall Gardens

News from Castle Bromwich Historic Gardens



Proud-Pied April

as Shakespeare would have it.. “when dress’d in all his trim, Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing”

April is definitely the beginning of joyous times in this little bit of 18th century countryside daffodils, tulips, milder air and more blue skies..we hope

It’s amazing how much Spring changes day by day. Nature is shouting out.. in many shades of green. The noise of traffic fades against the birdsong, the heron, woodpeckers and buzzards fill the air and the bluetits are nesting in the cctv mast...

An ideal time to visit the Historic Gardens.

Don’t forget the Courtyard Café is open whenever we’re open. Grab a coffee in a recyclable cup and go off a wandering..

Egg Hunts



With Easter so early the Egg Hunts are on from Sat 23rd March right through to Sunday April 7th

Pop in any day during that time (normal entry fees apply) to run self-guided hunts every day during the holidays.

Follow our spiky friends Horace and Hettie Hedgehog to

spot the hidden clues around the Gardens, theyre invite people to seek them all among the woodland, hedge and lawns... hop, skip and jump your way to Spring and a reward choccy egg.

Living History

Don’t miss an extra treat over Easter weekend - Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st March– the living history English civil war re-enactors Colonel John Pickering and his Regiment of Foote who will take up residence in the Gardens. Displays, drills and demonstrations will happen throughout the weekend as this 17th century re-enactment group make camp in the grounds.



Wander among the Parliamentary troops and their followers as they prepare for battle at Curdworth Bridge, near Water Orton. Get into conversation with those who cooked the meals and sewed the cloth...

Let your imagination float back 300 years through the sound and smell of muskets and camp fire smoke...

Usual entry fees apply (all entry and donations go towards supporting the independent charity that run the Gardens)

Advolly Richmond launches her new book in the Gardens



Garden historian, Advolly Richmond, presenter on the popular BBC TV's Gardener's World, unravels the surprising histories of 60 flowers that shape our gardens on Saturday 20th April, with the launch and book signing of her new book A Short History of Flowers

Advolly, until recently a Trustee for Castle Bromwich Gardens Trust, will be sharing some of the fascinating and strange stories behind the flowers that have become so familiar to our back gardens. After the talk Advolly will be available to sign books which will also be available in the Gardens' shop

A Short History of Flowers - the book



Have you ever wondered where your favourite garden flowers came from? Where their names are derived from? Or why some cultivars go in and out of favour? Every flower we grow has a story, and in this book the author takes you on a tour of the most intriguing, surprising and enriching ones.

Tales of exploration, everlasting love and bravery bring these beautiful flowers to life. The author has dug down to uncover the royalty, scholars, pioneers and a smuggler or two that have all played a part in discovering and cultivating some of our favourite species. From the lavish and exotic bougainvillea, found by an 18th century female botanist in disguise, to the humble but majestic snowdrop casting a spell and causing a frenzy.

Advolly brings alive the people who introduced and cultivated some of our favourite plants and shares the juicy tales that made some flowers so well known.

A Short History of Flowers is packed with remarkable stories of exploration, heartbreak, fashion and ambition all brought to life with intricate artworks from botanical illustrator and Royal Horticultural Society Gold Medal Award winner, Sarah Jane Humphrey. This beautiful book is the perfect gift for every plant and garden lover.

Grow Your Own

Drawing in the Gardens

Also on the day visitors to the Gardens on this day may also come across botanical artists (From Birmingham Society of Botanical Artists) sketching the season's flowers... they're happy to be asked questions and they'll encourage you to pick up a pencil and take a line for a walk there and then too..



Tickets for the Talk and launch are available from the Gardens Website in advance

Birds of Prey encounters



Despite the growth in traffic hereabouts we are very pleased to be seeing more and more birds in the Gardens and Parkland. The work of the Trust and the many volunteers in keeping the gardens and restoring wild habitats has played a major, positive, part in preserving and increasing the biodiversity from critters in the soil to plant varieties that feed the birds and mammals.

Over Christmas and into the new year our Owl workshops were exceedingly popular. Visitors were thrilled to find out about and get close to these beautiful creatures at the top of the wild food chain. We are so pleased to welcome back the falconer Dan Mercer in April for two more sessions- in the daytime this time and with other Birds of Prey.

There are workshops on Saturday 27th April and Sunday 28th (prebookable on our website). Sunday afternoon 28th will also have a 'drop in' Garden and Birds walk around the Gardens suitable for all ages .

Get Started Growing in April

Have you thought about growing a few vegetables by your back door instead of spending money on annual plants?

Yes that can be just as beautiful , but theyre also so much tastier – what better than a few salad leaves plucked just a few minutes ago. Theres fresh!

A no hassle series of workshops to help you feel confident growing veg and fruit starts in March Wednesday, 20 March 10:30am – 12:30pm More detail son the web or at the Gardens

Laura Docker took on her first allotment plot in April 2021, and now has a large double plot in Coleshill, where she grows a variety of vegetables and flowers. In 2021, Laura won “Best Newcomer” at the North Warwickshire Allotment Federation awards, and in 2023 was awarded “Best Allotment” by Coleshill Town Council. In each edition, Laura will share her knowledge and tips for anyone considering joining the growing ‘grow your own’ community.

You can follow Laura’s allotment diary on Instagram, @lottieonthehill



With the cost of living at the forefront of many families’ minds, and the seemingly ever-increasing prices of food in our supermarkets, many people are finding themselves more drawn to the ‘grow your own’ movement. As well as saving money and providing the possibility of home-grown food year-round, the time spent outdoors is great for our physical and mental well-being.

If you are contemplating taking on an allotment, it is important to consider the amount of ‘free time’ you have available to commit to a plot. The early set-up process is time consuming and incredibly hard work. Well intended offers of help from friends and family may seem in abundance early on, but in reality, many will find themselves too busy to ever set foot on your plot! Perhaps, then, start small? A few pots or a couple of small beds in your garden can provide tomatoes, peas, and even potatoes. Once you’ve spent the first growing season on a small scale, you may find you are quite happy with the space you already have available to you. Or, like me, you may realise you need a plot to grow all of the varieties you want to!

The next point to consider is what you want to grow. My biggest tip is to grow what you eat! A summer patty pan squash may look and sound appealing – but will you actually eat them? Think about the fruit and vegetables you would normally add to your weekly shopping list, and decide if these are items you’d like to try growing yourself. In our house, we love garlic, potatoes, chillies, peppers, sweetcorn and onions, and so these are the items I dedicate the most space to on my plot. I love peas, my partner isn’t as bothered, and so I grow enough to snack on whilst at the plot and freeze any which make it home with me.

You may be lucky enough to grow a glut of vegetables, and this can cause issues. Do you have space to store excess potatoes? Do you have freezer space for diced courgettes? However much you may love courgettes, limit yourself to two plants at most or you won’t be able to give them away quickly enough! For me, learning to sterilise jars for keeping homemade sauces and preserved vegetables was a daunting experience. Later in the season, I’ll share some hints and tips for keeping your home well-stocked of your favourite vegetables all year round.

If you do decide to take on an allotment, be prepared to wait. Most sites will have a waiting list, but whilst you wait for the lucky day your number is called, you can always make a start on planning and considering the above points, so that you can hit the ground running! If or when you do take on an allotment plot, take a couple of weeks to think about how to lay it out so that you can make the most of your space. Some plots are fairly large, but others may only be a half plot. Do you live close enough not to need a shed, or will you need somewhere to store your tools? A spot to hide from the rain is always a bonus, so keep a lookout for freebies and cheap sheds, polytunnels and greenhouses on places like Facebook Marketplace.

I am lucky enough to have a shed, polytunnel and a greenhouse, and I always spend the start of the year planning how to get the most out of my plot.

The growing community in Coleshill is a friendly space to join, and I have never come across a plot-holder who isn’t willing to share tips and advice, and even seeds or extra plants!

Things to grow this month:

- If you have space on a warm windowsill, sow some chilli, pepper, and tomato seeds into modular trays using coir coins or seed compost.
- Once the risk of frost has passed, try growing your own potatoes – if you don’t have a garden bed to plant them in, a large pot or bag for life (with drainage holes) will do! Simply put a thick layer of compost in the bottom, then two or three potatoes (those ones growing ‘arms’ at the back of the kitchen cupboard will do the job!) and fill the pot or bag to the top with compost. Water in well, then be sure not to let the soil dry out too much. New potatoes will take around 12 weeks, larger ones up to 18 weeks, but you can have a rummage around and see if any feel large enough from the 12 week mark.
- Salad leaves can be sown as needed through out the year and can be picked from the plant as required.
- Peas can we down from late February until June, but April is one of the best months to do it! They can be grown in pots, but they prefer well-drained soil and not to be kept in soaking compost.
- Carrots are best sown directly into fine soil in the ground – mix in sand and remove stones to avoid ‘forking’.

If you are interested in becoming an allotment holder, check out <https://coleshilltowncouncil.gov.uk/council-documents/allotments> for more information.

Coleshill Country Market

Over the last couple of years Coleshill High Street has changed. Unfortunately, many shops have closed, these helped encourage people to visit our town. However, the good news is, there is a trusted and reliable event that is here to stay, and that's the Friday market in the Parish Rooms, well known and loved as Coleshill Country Market.

Many people will remember the Market when it was run by The W. I., (the Women's Institute) and was situated in the Market Hall on Church Hill, that was more than 50 years ago! It is now governed by Country Markets Ltd, a non profit making organisation. Every producer is a member and each member donates 10per cent of their profit to Coleshill Country Market.

Every item that is carefully produced by our loyal members, has to meet with the very stringent guidelines laid down in the official Country Markets Handbook. This ensures our customers that whatever item they buy, it will be top quality.

We are well known for our delicious cakes and savories, freshly baked every week by a team of loyal cooks. However, to make sure we can keep up with demand, we are always looking for more bakers. Do you enjoy baking? Would you like to make your hobby or creative interest profitable? Pop in to find out how.

You can find Coleshill Country Market in The Parish Rooms every Friday morning from 8am until 12 noon, everyone is welcome. If you haven't visited us before, call in for a browse around, find out what we do and how the Market works.

We're a friendly group, we love to chat and are proud to show off all of our amazing produce, AND we hope you will visit us soon.

For more information, if you would like to join our bakers, please contact : Sue Lappin, 07939 090452 or for general information

Janet Reilly 01675 462122



From left to right Margaret Stallard, Deanna Baker, Margaret Burrell, Christine Jones



From left to right, Jane Hewitt, Sue Lappin, Martin Cross

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Castle Bromwich & District u3a group

The End of February we had a crime writer come to talk to us. Colin Wade told us about his journey as a writer and we all found it a very interesting and informative talk.

We meet on the last Wednesday of the month at Arden Hall B36 9PB at 1.30pm. Do come and join us.

Helen Abbott
Speaker Secretary




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Pet Page

Dogs in Yellow



Do you know what it means if a dog is wearing Yellow? It means that the dog needs SPACE.

National Dogs in Yellow Day #DogsInYellow

On the 20th of March, we celebrate National Dogs in Yellow Day, #DogsInYellow, a day dedicated to raising awareness about anxiety in dogs and promoting the colour yellow as a signal for dogs needing space. The National Dogs in Yellow Day is a powerful initiative born out of empathy and understanding for anxious dogs. These dogs, symbolised by wearing the colour yellow, need SPACE. The more people understand this, the better we can create a world that respects their needs.

Why does a dog wear Yellow?

A dog might be wearing yellow for several reasons. It could be reactive, fearful, elderly, or recovering from an accident, illness, or operation. They might also be in training or have a history of trauma. Each dog has its own story, and understanding their needs is crucial. The last thing they need is to be approached or jumped on by other dogs who want to play.

Sarah Jones, who runs My Anxious Dog, is behind the national day.

Here is Sarah's story: 'I have a dog called Bella. She was attacked by another dog when she was a puppy, and this is where her fear of dogs started; it left her terrified. She would react to other dogs if they came too close, either growling or lunging, because she was scared. It prompted pitiful looks from passers-by as if you were stupid to own a vicious or aggressive dog. It felt so infuriating to watch people tut and drag their

dogs away once they managed to grab their collars! People don't realise what some of these anxious dogs have been through. So, I wanted to find a way for our #dogsinyellow to be understood. We will reach more unknowing dog owners through compassionate awareness-raising and spread the understanding far and wide.

All our #dogsinyellow want and need is space, and the world feels much less frightening.'

Why the colour Yellow?

Yellow was chosen for its visibility and universal recognition as a cautionary colour. It's easily noticeable in various lighting conditions and stands out against different backgrounds. Yellow is commonly associated with caution and warning signs, making it a natural choice to signal that a dog requires space and should not be approached. Yellow is also a vibrant and warm colour that reflects the love, dedication and bond you share with your dog.

My Anxious Dog Website

Sarah sells a variety of yellow items on her website, My Anxious Dog. Here is the link; <https://myanxiousdog.co.uk>

Use the discount code
INSIGHTHOUNDS to get 10% off.

IF YOU'RE IN OUR YELLOW ARMY, LET'S GET OUR DOGS IN YELLOW TRENDING. Post a photo or lots of your gorgeous anxious dog, and don't forget the hashtag #dogsinyellow. This hashtag helps us track the movement and spread awareness about the importance of giving anxious dogs space.

Together, we can make a difference for anxious dogs everywhere.



Ward End Cat Rescue

We are a small, home-based rescue, run solely by volunteers.

Here is just one of our cats who is nearly ready for adoption. Please note circumstances at the rescue can change daily so please feel free to email us for more details of cats available, just send us a contact number, address and who lives in your household.

Marcey is a lovely, gentle cat who will hopefully be ready to find her forever home very soon. Marcey came to us as her owner died. Since then Marcey has had to undergo various operations & treatment at the vets, she has had so many problems with her mouth which seem never ending for the poor girl.



Fundraising afternoon tea anyone, we need to pre-book so please contact the email below for more details, thank you.

DON'T BE LATE FOR A VERY IMPORTANT DATE!
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We Invite you all to join us for a special

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4pm to 6pm
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A £5 pp deposit* is required at the time of booking and please advise of any special dietary requirements also.
*Full balance due by the 13th of April

Our famous knitted Super Mice will be on sale on the day plus a fantastic raffle of prizes and lots of sale goodies to buy!

All proceeds go to our rescued cats & kittens.
Ward End Cat Rescue Official

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.

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Birmingham Dogs Home - Forever homes



Blue Breed: Collie **Gender:** Male (N)

Meet Blue, a charming one-year-old Collie with a heart as big as his boundless energy.

Blue is a lovely boy with a unique set of needs. He has captured our hearts with his intelligence, playfulness, and loyalty. However, Blue requires a special kind of home and a family that understands his unique collie traits.

Blue arrived into our centre as a stray, who has clearly had a rocky start to life. Blue needs someone who understands his breed and can provide the guidance and structure he craves.

Blue is a sweet boy once he gets to know you, but initial meetings, especially with new people (particularly men), can be a bit intimidating for him. Potential adopters must be happy to commit to multiple introductions at our centre to help build trust and create a strong bond.

Blue has started muzzle training for vet visits whilst in our care. Patience and positive reinforcement will be key to ensuring he feels comfortable and secure during such occasions. Blue would benefit from continued socialization with the vet and exposure to new people in a controlled environment to help him gain confidence.

Due to Blue's temperament and initial uncertainty around new people, we are seeking an adult-only home to ensure a stress-free environment for him. Blue will also need to be the only dog in the household as he is known to be vocal with other dogs.

Blue's heart is won through playtime and tasty treats. His new family should be prepared to shower him with affection, positive reinforcement, and engaging activities. Whilst in our care it has been observed that Blue has a natural instinct to herd cars, so a secure environment and lead control are essential during walks.

Blue already knows basic commands such as sits, gives paw, responds to his name, and has a reliable recall. His intelligence and eagerness to please make him a joy to train.

If you feel you can offer Blue the right home with plenty of exercise and stimulation. Please read below on how to apply.

If you are interested in adopting, please contact the centre on 0121 643 5211 to enquire.

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Interiors & Decorating



PLATINUM
INTERIOR DECORATING

Platinum April Update

Painting and decorating is more than just applying colours to a surface; it is an intricate process that requires careful planning and preparation. Whether you're embarking on a home improvement project or pursuing a career in interior design, understanding the importance of preparation and employing effective methods can make all the difference in achieving professional-quality results. In this article, we delve into the significance of preparation and explore various methods to ensure success in painting and decorating projects.

Importance of Preparation:

Preparation lays the foundation for a successful painting and decorating project. It not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of the final outcome but also ensures durability and longevity. Here's why preparation is crucial:

- 1. Surface Integrity:** Proper preparation involves inspecting and repairing any surface imperfections such as cracks, holes, or uneven textures. Addressing these issues before painting ensures a smooth and uniform surface, preventing paint from flaking or peeling prematurely.
- 2. Adhesion:** Adequate surface preparation promotes better adhesion of paint or wallpaper, minimising the risk of blistering or bubbling. This is particularly important in high-moisture areas such as kitchens and bathrooms where poor adhesion can lead to mould and mildew growth.
- 3. Finish Quality:** The quality of the finished product largely depends on the preparation process. Smooth surfaces free of blemishes result in professional-looking paint jobs, while properly prepared walls provide an ideal canvas for achieving desired colours and textures.
- 4. Longevity:** Investing time and effort in preparation pays off in the long run by extending the lifespan of your paint or wallpaper. A well-prepared surface is less prone to damage from everyday wear and tear, ensuring that your decor maintains its beauty for years to come.

Methods of Preparation:

Now that we understand the importance of preparation, let's explore some effective methods to prepare surfaces for painting and decorating:

- 1. Cleaning and Degreasing:**
 - Start by thoroughly cleaning the surface to remove dust, dirt, and grease using a mild detergent and water solution.
 - For stubborn stains or grease buildup, consider using a specialised cleaner or degreaser to ensure optimal adhesion of paint or wallpaper.
- 2. Sanding and Smoothing:**
 - Use sandpaper or a sanding block to smooth rough surfaces and remove imperfections such as bumps, rough edges, or old paint drips. If you have a large amount of work to do it might be worth considering a power sander. We use a power sander and dust extractor set up but this can be a very expensive outlay if you're not a professional doing it day in day out.
 - Pay close attention to areas with existing paint or varnish, as proper sanding promotes better adhesion and helps achieve a flawless finish.
- 3. Patching and Repairing:**
 - Fill in any cracks, holes, or dents with a high-quality powder or ready mixed filler.
 - After the filler has dried, sand the patched areas until smooth, blending them seamlessly with the surrounding surface.+

4. Priming:

- Where necessary apply a coat of primer to the prepared surface to seal and protect it, enhance adhesion, and ensure uniform coverage of the topcoat. This is generally areas of bare wood or plaster or if there is a significant change in colour. The type of primer to use will require some research including checking the information provided for the finish paint you are using.

5. Taping and Masking:

- Use masking tape to mask off areas that you don't want to paint, such as trim, windows, and door frames unless you are confident in your ability to cut into these areas.
- Ensure that the tape is properly adhered and sealed to prevent paint bleed-through, resulting in crisp, clean lines. A low tack masking tape will reduce the risk of paint peeling off when you remove it.

6. Choosing the Right Tools and Materials:

- Invest in high-quality brushes, rollers, and applicators suitable for the type of paint or wallpaper you'll be using.
- Consider the surface texture and size of the area to be painted when selecting the appropriate tools for the job.

7. Test Samples:

- Before committing to a full-scale painting or wallpapering project, test samples of paint or wallpaper in small, inconspicuous areas to ensure colour accuracy and compatibility with the existing decor.

Preparation is the cornerstone of successful painting and decorating projects. By taking the time to properly prepare surfaces and employing effective methods, you can achieve professional-quality results that enhance the beauty and longevity of your decor. Whether you're a DIY enthusiast or a seasoned professional, embracing the art of preparation will elevate your painting and decorating endeavours to new heights of excellence.



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Do's and Don'ts for looking after your feet



When you get pain in your feet it can be tempting to try and solve the problem yourself. However, the products that you can buy over the counter can be harmful and damaging and make your issue worse.

You should avoid callus removal blades. It is extremely easy to take too much hard skin off which can make your feet sore. It is also easy to cause cuts and as these removal blades are not sterile can easily lead to infections. Instead, you should see one of our Podiatrists who are all highly skilled at removing hard skin safely and comfortably with sterile blades.

Hard skin removing peel off masks can be tempting for dry, hard skin. However, these work by chemical exfoliation so contain acids. These can be harmful for your skin and can cause damage that can make your feet sore and painful. Instead, you should see one of our Podiatrists who can remove the hard skin safely and give

you expert advice on how to hydrate the dry skin.

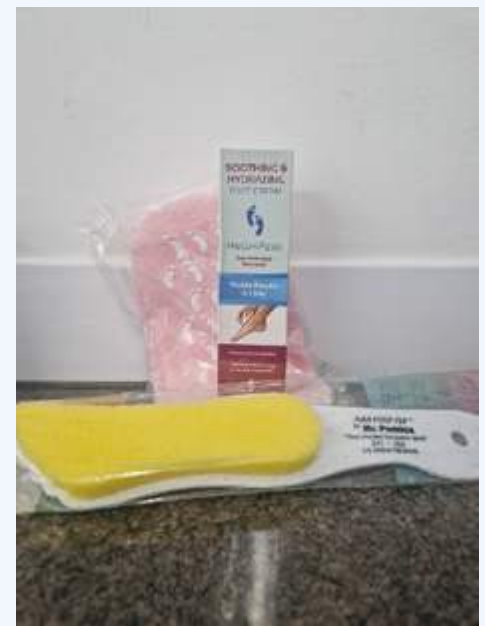
Corn plasters contain strong acids which are designed to breakdown the corn allowing it to "drop out". However, these rarely work and instead can often breakdown the healthy skin surrounding the corn making this very painful and sore and potentially leading to an infection whilst the corn remains. Instead, you should see one of our Podiatrists who can remove the corn safely and give you expert advice on how to prevent it from coming back.

Over the counter verruca treatments contain strong acids which are designed to break down the viral tissue in order to create a response from your immune system. These can be harmful if not used in a controlled way as the acids can breakdown both the viral and healthy skin. Also, verrucae are commonly misdiagnosed so by applying these over-the-counter treatments you may cause damage and pain. Instead, you should visit

a Podiatrist who can correctly diagnose the verrucae and create a treatment plan which is appropriate and safe for you.

These products can be particularly harmful if you have diabetes. Diabetes can affect circulation and sensation which in turn can slow down wound healing. Therefore, any breakdowns caused by these products may take longer to heal and may cause infections.

Our starter packs are a great way of maintaining your feet at home in between your appointments. Included is a foot file which should be used gently twice weekly before a bath or a shower, our Help4feet foot cream which should be applied to tops and bottoms of feet (but not in between the toes) daily and a pair of gel moisturising socks which helps with hydration. You can purchase these directly from our clinic.



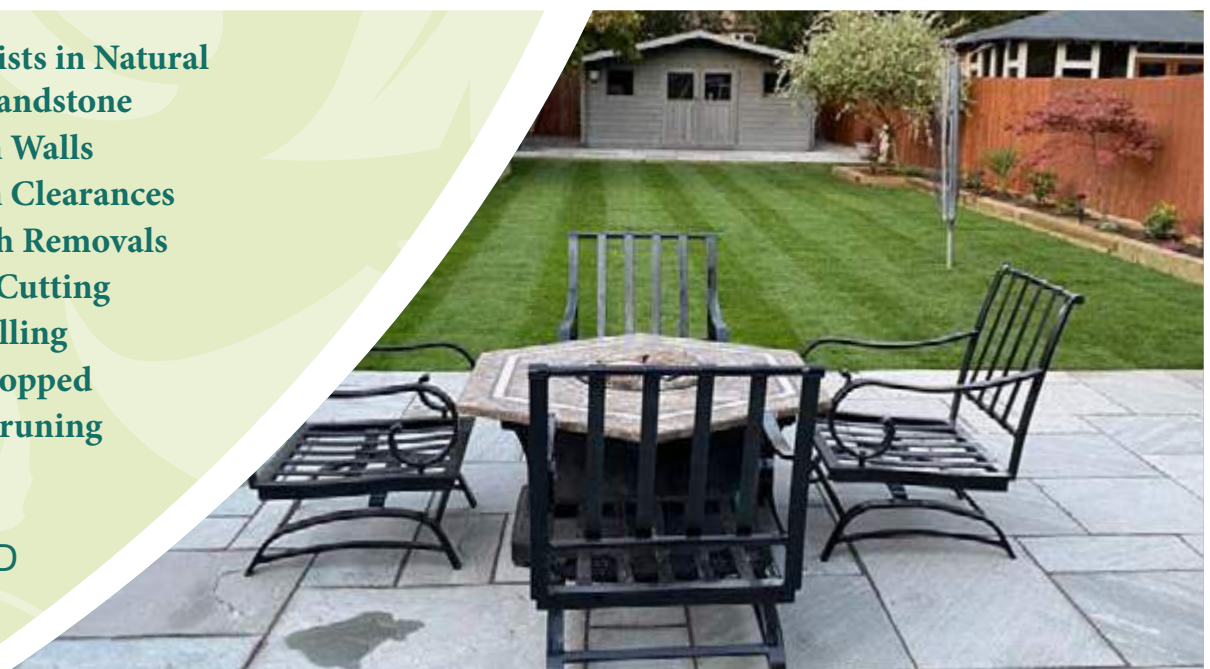
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Evans Derry Partner Secures Solo Channel Swim Slot



Partner, Head of Family Department, Karen Beevers has successfully secured a sought after slot for a solo Channel Swim in September 2026.

The 21 mile Channel Swim from England to France is considered to be one of the great achievements of ultra-Marathon swimming, both physically and mentally, and as a result, swimmers from all over the world look to secure limited spaces during the annual swimming season.

Karen has always been a keen swimmer, swimming with Kenilworth Masters Swimming Club and involved in age-group Coaching at a local Swimming Club.

Having successfully completed swims of Lake Bled, Lake Conniston & The Thames Marathon, Karen stepped up to complete a successful solo swim of Lake Windermere, 10.5 miles in August 2023, raising funds for charity along the way, and each time increasing the distance of the swims.

On the back of the Windermere swim, Karen found a confidence and motivation to strive to go further on her next journey, feeling the Channel Swim was now a viable challenge.

When the email landed, offering the slot, Karen describes feeling equal excitement and trepidation.

“I know without doubt this will be the hardest challenge of my life. So many factors to prepare for both physically and equally importantly, mentally. From night swimming, jelly fish and acclimatising to water temperatures without the wetsuit, there are massive challenges ahead. But, with the right team around me, I know am capable of ensuring that I am in the best place to endeavour to achieve this.”

In the months and years of hard work ahead, Karen is looking to raise funds for two charities close to heart.

Firstly, Parkinson’s UK. Karen’s Father was diagnosed with Parkinson’s 6 years ago, and since has faced possibly the biggest challenge of his life, fighting to slow the restrictions on his ability to move freely.

“So, when times get tough, I know it will inspire me just to keep moving for Dad, and to raise monies for a charity that has given him so much practical support on a day by day basis.”

Secondly, The Brain Tumour Charity. A close friend of the family, Charles Ludford was a beautiful soul who was diagnosed with a brain tumour in May 2019,

aged 11 years of age. On the verge of lockdown, he tragically passed away in February 2020. His courage and determination in how he handled all aspects of his illness remain inspiration to us all that knew him, day by day to #BemoreCharles in all life’s challenges.

In addition, Karen’s close friend and former professional colleague, Jo Cook has continued to live with the tragic loss of her Husband in October 2015, aged 48 years of age, within 8 months of diagnosis.

“When the email landed offering me the place, it struck me Charles would’ve just reached his 18th birthday. Undoubtedly, I will need copious amounts of #BemoreCharles throughout this challenge, and raising monies for this cause along the journey seems an apt way to mark this milestone, as well as trying to bring an end to the suffering of those whose lives are blighted by this dreadful disease.”

Karen is keen for both charities to equally benefit, so far as possible.

Just giving links are as follows:-

Parkinsons

https://www.justgiving.com/page/karen-mee-1711052402960?utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=page%2Fkaren-mee-1711052402960&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=pfp-email

The Brain Tumour Charity

https://www.justgiving.com/page/karen-mee-1711054840738?utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=page%2Fkaren-mee-1711054840738&utm_source=email&utm_campaign=pfp-email

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Local Sports



Coleshill Town F.C.

A SEASON TO REMEMBER

Little old Coleshill Town gained promotion to Level 4 in the Non League pyramid system back in 2018, the highest level the club has played at in their 139 year history and over the last few years have established themselves as a force to be reckoned with at this level.

This was mainly due to a team formed by Manager Cameron Stuart. Stuart led the club to the Play Offs last season, just one game away from another promotion and at the start of this season Coleshill were one of the favourites to go one step further. But just NINE games into the season and Stuart decided it was time to move on. It didn't help that it was to rivals Sutton Coldfield Town and that several players left with him but heh that's football, lets get a new guy in! Step forward Dave Stringer who started well with a win over Rugby Town but three defeats later and he was OFF! Where do we go from here? Goalkeeper and Club Legend, with over 450 appearances,

Paul Hathaway thought he was the man to take the club forward. Twenty games later, Ten defeats, and the Colemen were slipping further down the League table and the possibility of relegation became closer.

Chairman Paul Billing had to make a massive decision and released Hathaway from his duties and brought in Craig Nicholls as the 4th Manager of a torrid season for Coleshill Town. So far the Colemen have used almost 60 players as all managers brought in their own men, and the team is unrecognisable from the first day of the season, but a win over local rivals Boldmere St Michaels last week, and the teams below losing, it looks like Coleshill are almost safe from the threat of dropping down the non league system, one more win should do it.

Nicholls has been in charge for just Seven games and has brought in players with experience from the Leagues above. He has steadied the ship and is hoping to end the season on a high. It has been a season like no other and after such a difficult time it would be nice if the people of Coleshill could show their appreciation for the football

club that represents their town of Coleshill and increase the attendance at the last two Home games, Hinckley on 6th April and Anstey Nomads on 20th April.

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Monday 1st April

Away to Bedworth United.

Saturday 6th April

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Saturday 13th April

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Saturday 20th April

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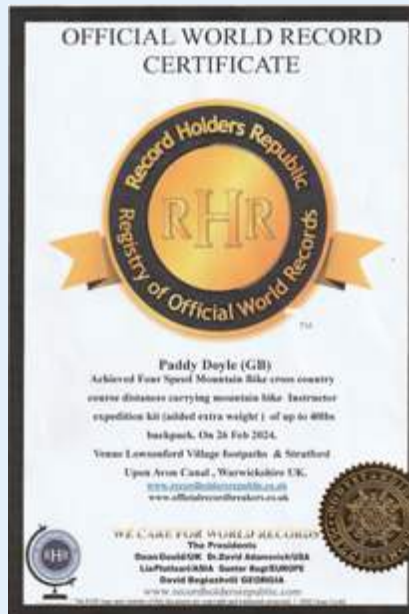
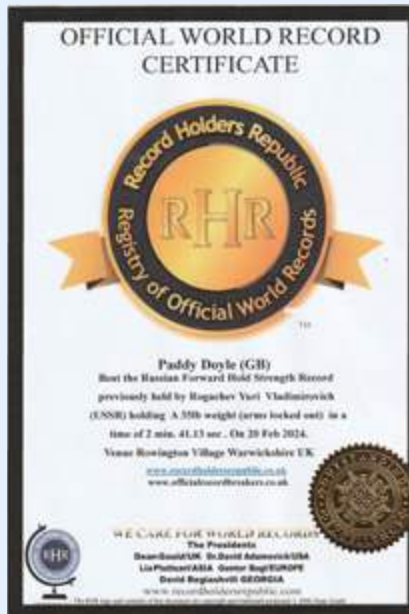
A short break to recover from his injuries definitely recharged Paddy Doyle, to achieve an outdoor strength attempt and cross country endurance run/walk challenge at Rowington Warwickshire. Doyle attempted to beat Russian endurance athlete Rogachev Yuri Vladimirovich strength "forward hold" record, locking out both arms holding a 35lb weight, the Russians time was 45.01 seconds set in Moscow on 3 December 2023. But multi Guinness World Record Holder Paddy Doyle surpassed it setting a new benchmark of 2 min. 41.13 sec. After a five minute break he then focused on the 6 km cross country run / walk carrying 35 lb backpack, completing the waterlogged, muddy course and inclines over the Heart of England footpath Rowington Village Warwickshire in a time of 1 hr. 08 min. 59 sec.



"It was hard going due to the waterlogged cross country course, however it was also great to beat the Russian Forward Hold Strength Record, I was mentally prepared from the start, which helped me to get two good results on the day."

Six days later he then pushed himself further setting four more low technical mountain bike cross country course challenges carrying 40 lbs of mountain bike Instructor expedition kit (added extra weight) over Lawsonford village footpaths and Stratford upon Avon Canal Warwickshire. The results were. 3.5 km - 19 min. 21.38 sec, 4 km - 24 min. 22.32 sec, 7 km - 33 min. 44 sec, 7.5km - 37 min. 42 sec. The weather conditions were windy, cold, muddy with steep inclines including lifting bike of stiles and gates.

"it's been a hard six days physically and mentally but achieving my 845 career fitness endurance challenges and World Records covering ten different disciplines was brilliant to reach especially in wintery conditions."



Water Orton Bowling Club

The new Crown green bowling season for Water Orton is nearly upon us, it will be starting in early April, the Bowls club have been preparing throughout the winter months getting ready for the new season to start.

During the winter volunteers from the club meet each fortnight to conduct winter maintenance, this includes trimming hedges, jet washing walkways, repainting the decking, clubhouse and benches around the green.

The local leagues have been holding their AGMs to discuss rule changes, divisions and cup competitions also getting ready for the new season ahead.

Below is a list of all the days and times of matches each week.

Day	Start Time	League
Monday	13:30	Erdington District Over 55's
Tuesday	19:00	East B'ham
Wednesday	11:00	East B'ham over 60's
Wednesday	19:00	Erdington District
Thursday	19:00	Sutton Benevolent
Friday	11:00	Friendly O55's
Saturday	11:30 and 15:00	Warwickshire county parks

All are welcome to come and watch the games, there is ample seating around the green and refreshments can be purchased from the clubhouse.

If you fancy coming along and would like to have a go, contact:-
Club captain - Paul Johnson (paul.wobc@gmail.com)

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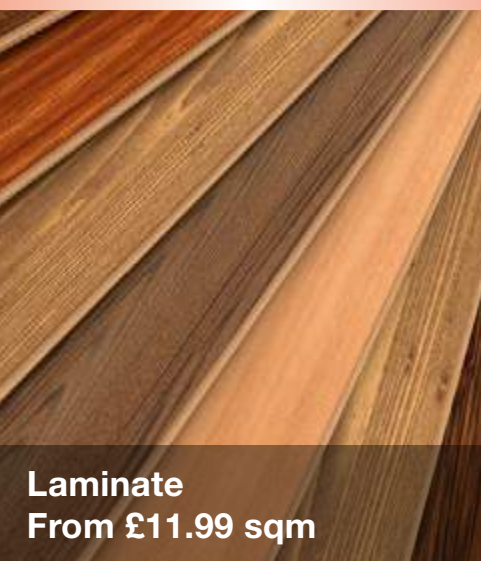
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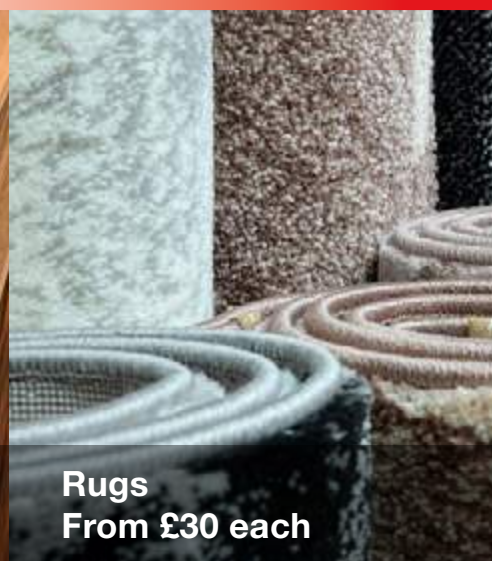
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