

# THE Coleshill & Castle Brom POST



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May 2025 Issue 133



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## MAGICAL BOOK HUNT BRINGS EASTER JOY TO COLESHILL FAMILIES

Over 500 books found and gifted during an Easter 'look for a book' event by The Little Book Fairy.

Coleshill, 19th April 2025 – More than 500 children's books were discovered and taken home by local families during the 'Look for a Book' Easter event, held along Coleshill High Street and organised by Independent Usborne Partner The Little Book Fairy (Grace O'Malley).

**Full Story Page 4**



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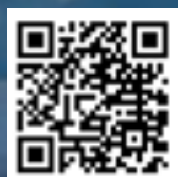




**THE Coleshill & Castle Brom POST**

The Post Newspaper Group is an independent hyper-local tabloid newspaper publisher distributing 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.



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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.

By choosing to advertise with us you are also showing your support for the community and the customers you hope to serve.

## Getting in touch

**Sales:**

[editor.postgroup@outlook.com](mailto:editor.postgroup@outlook.com)  
**07805 430191**

**General enquires:**

[serena.postgroup@outlook.com](mailto:serena.postgroup@outlook.com)

## WHY CHOOSE HYPER-LOCAL?

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

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Help to increase footfall on the High Street and boost attendance at local events.

Give groups, clubs and organisations space to promote themselves and let local people know exactly what is available on their doorstep.



## THE Coleshill & Castle Brom POST

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Chelmsley Wood  
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**Also available online on our website and facebook pages.**





## Water Orton Library and Community centre

A great afternoon was had by all at Water Orton Library and community Centre on Saturday 29 March 2025. The volunteers put on an amazing Mother's Day afternoon tea to raise much needed funds to help towards the escalating costs of keeping the library open for the community. They had some great prizes donated for a raffle and

in total the sum of £818.00 was raised from the afternoon tea and raffle monies.

We would like to say thank you to everyone that supported the event which made it such a huge success. Please add Water Orton Library and community Centre Facebook page to keep up to date with future fundraising events.



## COLESHILL & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB

**Monday 19th May**

**A talk by ROGER UMPLEBY -  
"USEFULL, BEAUTIFULL, BUT UNLOVED,  
AN ALTERNATIVE LOOK AT WEEDS."**

Coleshill Community Centre, 2 Temple Way,  
corner of Station Road, Coleshill, B46 1HH

7.45pm

**Members £4**

**Non Members £6 all welcome.**

Refreshments will be available and included in the entry fee.

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# BBC

## GARDENERS

## WORLD LIVE SHOW

## TICKETS WINNERS



**Stephen and Jane Edwards**  
from Water Orton

**Tony and Jane Roberts**  
from Water Orton

**Sue Baker**  
from Castle Bromwich.



# Millions of Injured Victims not Accessing Justice

**How can it be if the number of injuries suffered as a result of an accident have increased, that at the same time claims for personal injury have reduced?**

This is the worrying picture behind statistics provided by the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers (APIL). Their research has found as many as 1 in 5 people injured as a result of an accident did not go on to approach a Solicitor or claim compensation.

**Consider the following scenario.....**

You are at work one day but you end up in hospital because someone you work with lost control of a fork-lift truck they were driving and collided into you. You were

rushed to hospital where you are admitted for scans and treatment. They find you have a fractured spine and a broken leg. You are placed in a full back brace so you can't move in case you cause more damage to your spine.

You can't work, you have bills to pay and potentially dependents to provide for. But your employer says you will only receive sick pay for a few weeks which is a small fraction of your usual wages. After that, you get nothing. How will you cope?

You might look to make a personal injury claim however that isn't always the case

The stress involved in seeking compensation, not knowing how a Solicitor could help and the cost of

making a claim were all highlighted as key concerns for people.

"This is a really worrying trend and we must do all we can to stop this increasing gap in people getting access to justice," says Julie Bennett, personal injury specialist and Partner at Evans Derry Solicitors. "People need to feel they can approach a Solicitor to have their questions answered without fear of having to pay a hefty legal bill. We always offer free initial consultations so people can ask questions so they can make an informed decision as to how they want to proceed. In almost every scenario, there is either insurance already in place or a trade union to cover legal fees. If these aren't

available, "no win, no fee" agreements can be offered."

"Most importantly, people need to know they have options available to them and that they can take action to limit the consequences of accidents."

If you have had an accident and would like further information or advice please contact:- [juliebennett@evansderry.com](mailto:juliebennett@evansderry.com)

**Julie Bennett is a member of the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers and Partner working in personal injury law since 2002. Evans Derry have offices at Coleshill, Marston Green and Atherstone. See [www.evansderry.com](http://www.evansderry.com)**



## Magical Book Hunt Brings Easter Joy to Coleshill Families

**Over 500 books found and gifted during an Easter 'look for a book' event by The Little Book Fairy.**

Coleshill, 19th April 2025 – More than 500 children's books were discovered and taken home by local families during the 'Look for a Book' Easter event, held along Coleshill High Street and organised by Independent Usborne Partner The Little Book Fairy (Grace O'Malley).

The event invited children to explore the high street in search of hidden books, each one free to keep. It was a fun, family-friendly way to encourage reading for pleasure and bring the community

together during the Easter weekend.

All books were generously sponsored by local shops, businesses, and kind-hearted individuals, helping make the magic possible. The initiative aimed to support literacy, boost confidence, and give children the joy of owning their very own book.

**QUOTE: "S.L.E Dance & Fitness were so proud to be a sponsor for the Easter 'look for a book' event in Coleshill, organised by The Little Book Fairy. It's an event that sparks joy and encourages reading in the community. My dance pupils absolutely loved the last one in January - so we were excited to join in the fun this Easter!"**

**QUOTE: "It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces and excited children discovering books hidden in the most unexpected places," said Grace, The Little Book Fairy. "I'm incredibly grateful to the sponsors who helped make this event a huge success."**

**QUOTE: "I found mine behind a flower pot! I'm going to read it before bed," said Lily, age 6.**

**QUOTE: "This is the best Easter ever!"** added Alfie, age 8, clutching his new book with a huge grin.

The event is part of a growing series of community-led book hunts and projects, organised throughout the year by The Little Book Fairy, with a focus on promoting access to books and celebrating the power of stories.

**For more information or to support future events, contact:**

Grace O'Malley

The Little Book Fairy

[iamthelittlebookfairy@gmail.com](mailto:iamthelittlebookfairy@gmail.com)

@the\_littlebookfairy

<https://usborne.com/gb/partner/thelittlebookfairy>





## TWO WARM HUB'S

Community Centre  
(Tue only) 10 to 1  
and at

Town Hall Tue to  
Thu 10 to 1

Come in for a chat  
and activities if you  
wish.

Free refreshments.

## INFORMATION

Help and support for any issues or  
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Signposting to many groups, partner  
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Hours. Mon to Fri 10:00 to 13:00

[www.coleshillhub.org.uk](http://www.coleshillhub.org.uk)

[coleshillcommunityhub@gmail.com](mailto:coleshillcommunityhub@gmail.com)

## GROUPS

Parkinson's Cafe  
Memory Cafes  
(Coleshill/  
Water Orton)  
Young at Heart  
Stitch sewing Club

## SIGNPOSTING to

Carers Trust  
CAB (Citizens  
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MIND  
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Wellbeing

## GROUPS

Walking Group  
Keep Fit & Natter  
Walking Sports  
Art & Crafts  
U3A  
Parent & Toddlers





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

## May update

Welcome to early summer in Castle Bromwich, our gardens are well in bloom but watch out for a late frost in the first two weeks of the month. Although there are no local Elections this year there is a great deal going on: -

### **The Castle Bromwich village Plan.**

Following last month's meeting attended by over 80 residents a follow up steering group meeting has been held, and actions are now being taken to constitute an independent local organisation to raise funds and drive production of the plan forward.

### **Vandalism and ASB.**

The Chestnut drive bus shelter appears to be a magnet for vandals with costly repairs eating into scarce funds for providing Bus services.

Should we be replacing the current shelter with something simpler and more robust if it suffers further damage? what do you think?

### **Tent town !!,**

The Tents and associated individuals near the Bradford Arms are being dealt with by SMBC officers and associated organisations.

### **Improving our Bus services.**

Following your complaints, I have been campaigning with the Transport Authority for much needed improvements in the Bus arrival data displayed at bus stops and online, we are at last gaining traction on this issue.

A major part of the issue is cancelled bus departures which users may be familiar with as the 'ghost buses' or cancelled buses that have manifested themselves rather late as thirty to forty minutes delays in promised bus arrivals.

QR code Data squares will now appear at bus stops, scanning these will give real time information on buses to your stop. With online and stop Displays giving better information

This is intended to make services more dependable and increase bus use and service viability.

I look forward to testing this out.

### **Road Safety.**

Local Speed-watch is now functioning, and on one occasion 11 offences were recorded on Water Orton Road, speeds of up to 41 MPH have been recorded and letters have been sent to the Vehicle owners.

This has recently started up, we need volunteers who care about deterring speeding in our area. If you are interested do, please get in contact and join a group, training is given.

### **Regular Councillor Surgery at Castle Bromwich Library.**

The next monthly surgery is scheduled for Monday the 12th of May 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



## Coleshill Drama Group new production

Coleshill Drama Group presents a new production of David Pemberton's mystery thriller "Death by Detective". Directed by Alexandra Liggins, the play, which is subtitled "Corpsed by a Copper", giving an enticing clue to the nature of the play, will be staged at Coleshill Town Hall on Thursday 22nd, Friday 23rd and Saturday 24th May at 7.30pm with a matinee at 2pm on Saturday 24th May. Come prepared to be intrigued by this play, which has many comedy moments instigated by the unusual means of detection carried out by

Inspector Bucket and his associate, Brush.

Tickets are now available, priced £12 (under 16 years £10), from the usual outlets Coleshill Library, Gascoignes of Coleshill Ltd, online at <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/coleshilldrama>

via the QR code on posters and flyers or telephone Sue Wallace 01675 462674.

Coleshill Drama Group offers its usual hospitality with free car parking opposite the Town Hall, a licensed bar and tea/coffee available during the interval.

Come along and support your local arts from a Group which has been entertaining the Coleshill and district communities for over 90 years.

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# Water Orton CARNIVAL



**Saturday 21st June**

Floats at the Village Green from around 10.45 am. The procession then makes its way around the village arriving at Carnival Field at around 12.45 pm.

## ATTRACTIONS INCLUDE:

- LIVE BANDS AND SINGERS ON STAGE • OVER 40 STALLS WITH PLENTY TO EAT AND DRINK
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 at [info@waterortoncarnival.co.uk](mailto:info@waterortoncarnival.co.uk)  
 for more details.

## ADMISSION BY PROGRAMME ONLY

These are available in advance for £3 (£4 on the day)

One Adult Programme admits two children FREE. OAPs in advance £2.50, (£3 on the day)

Programmes will be available from Water Orton Fish Bar, The Dog Inn, The Village Cantonese, The Link, The Library,  
 Old Salts Rugby Club, Lavish Look, O'Connors, The Gardener's Rest & Orchard Nurseries.



## What an achievement!

A team of children from Shustoke C of E Primary School recently took part in a dodgeball final against a number of North Warwickshire Primary Schools! The children all showed immense skill, teamwork, and determination. They played 15 games in total and won 13 of them. The other two games resulted in a draw. We were immensely proud of the team who demonstrated hard work, commitment and were a credit to our school.



A group of Year 5 and 6 children from Shustoke C of E Primary School took part in the Warwickshire Netball Tournament at Polesworth School recently, competing against 8 other primary schools. It was a perfect sunny afternoon, and the children all demonstrated an abundance of sportsmanship and team spirit throughout each game. They celebrated their wins graciously and played well against some excellent teams! Although they did not win the competition overall, we were extremely proud of their efforts and how they represented our school.



### Visiting Artist – Darrell Wakelam

At Shustoke C of E Primary School We have been extremely fortunate to work with the artist Darrell Wakelam for a second time. All of the children in school attended an assembly workshop, and then the members of our Worship Council worked on an incredible piece of artwork utilising the ideas provided by Darrell. The piece involved using recycled cardboard, masking tape and paint. The children worked hard as a team which clearly shows, as the finished piece of work is truly amazing! It depicts 'Life in all its fullness' which is part of our school vision. The artwork is proudly on display in our school.



## SPUD CLUB



Cll. Steve Stuart, Carol Truman, Sue Toller, Paula.

**Spud Club, hosted by Water Orton Methodist Church, just goes from strength to strength, inspired and led by Cll. Steve Stuart and supported by an amazing team of volunteers.**

Its success in providing a welcoming hub for delicious nourishing food and company is undeniable and great to witness. There are so many touching stories to relate, such as Matt who brought his elderly widowed dad, much

disappointed that he had to miss a week. The future of the Club is dependent on grants and on donations of visitors. These do not consistently cover costs so, for an already much loved event, sustainability is a concern. In March, Paula, Manageress of The Dog Inn, Marsh Lane, presented Steve with a donation of £300.00 from her and Manager husband Jaimie, towards the running of the Club. Huge thanks to this generous couple.

## Coleshill Fire Station - Car Wash

**Every year Coleshill Fire Station put on a car wash for The Fire Fighters Charity.**

Last year they raised £700 and this year they beat that raising £918.42. This year they washed 80+ cars, 13 car seats checked of which 7 was incorrectly fitted and altered and numerous safe and well visits booked. The team want to thank everyone involved: Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service, Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership and all those that popped by and made donations.





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## Protect your Home

**Is your home your most valuable asset? Have you worked hard your whole life to pay for and maintain it?**

For most people, the answer to both of those questions will be a **resounding yes**. So with that said, **why have so many people still not safeguarded their home the RIGHT way?**

**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 it's 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.

**Accord Legal Services Ltd will help you every step of the way.**

For more information please contact....

**Paul Palmer**

**0845 055 9415 or email;**

**paul.palmer@accordwills.co.uk**



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

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

**Searching for answers to the big questions of life?**

**Are you hungry for more of God?**

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

**All are welcome to join us**



**Sunday 5pm**  
**Victory Hall**  
**76 Chester Rd**  
**Castle Bromwich**  
**B36 9BU**

Car parking available at The Men's Club next door.

X12 bus stop close by

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

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

For more details see our website on: [www.mcflifechurch.com](http://www.mcflifechurch.com)





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We were recently obtained a successful resolution to our client's employment tribunal matter for sexual harassment. At the time of our instruction, our client had already issued her claim and the matter was close to the final hearing. In breach of the

Tribunal's Order, she had not served her evidence, and the employer was confident the matter could be struck out for non-compliance.

We worked tirelessly with our client to collate and present her evidence. We effectively wrote to her employer highlighting the weaknesses in their case and proposing an offer to settle the matter. Due to our correspondence, the employer agreed to pay £9,000 to our client and the hearing was no longer required.

Currently, we are defending a solar panel installation company accused of causing a leak to the customer's roof. We are also instructed in a dispute with our client's motor insurer and we are acting for the Claimant in a further sexual harassment matter in the Employment Tribunal.

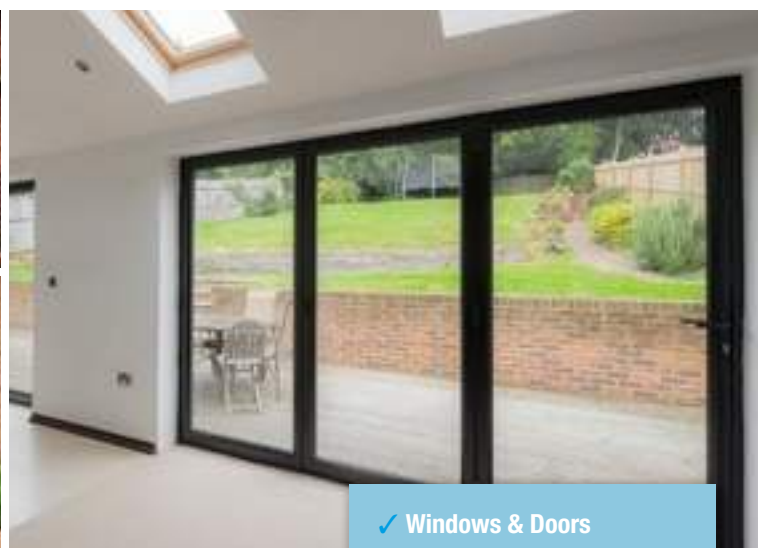
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# Still time to ding dong merrily on high

**With Bell Sunday coming on 18 May, Coleshill parish church ringers are ready to celebrate it with a well maintained set of ten bells.**

You can learn how to handle a bell. It takes a while to learn to ring, so join our friendly team now to start free lessons and ding dong merrily on high for Christmas events.

In the bell image, the vertical wooden posts bolted to the bell headstocks keep the bells safely upright and ready to be rung. The bells in the picture are “down.” Each stay is machined to a particular size - four in the set of stays fits bell 4, and so on.

Stays break occasionally and are replaceable - the one left foreground is an original from when the bells were augmented from eight to ten in the mid 1970s. It finally cracked after decades of sometimes over-enthusiastic pulling of the bell rope.

Bellringers have their own hymns. Unchanging God - number 496 in the Hymns Ancient and Modern hymnal - sounds like bells ringing.

It's not to be confused with Sweet Hour of Prayer, number 496 in the Methodist hymnal, the words of which were written by blind preacher William Walford in Coleshill.



**Balfour Beatty VINCI** Working in partnership with **HS2**

## Closure of B4114 Birmingham Road, Coleshill

### The work we will be completing

As part of the ongoing preparations for the HS2 railway construction, we will be carrying out essential construction works to return the B4114 Birmingham Road to its original realignment. In order to complete this work safely, we will install a four-week closure of B4114 Birmingham Road from Monday 28 April to Sunday 25 May 2025. A diversion route will be in place and access for pedestrians, residents and businesses will be maintained throughout the closure.



### HS2 Helpdesk

If you would like to find out more about HS2, what it means for the local area and have your questions answered by HS2 and BBV team you can contact us on the below details:

**08081 434 434**

**hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk**

### Community Projects

BBV and our supply chain partners can give back through volunteering time, providing resources and capacity, through the transfer of knowledge and skills.

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Castle Bromwich  
Hall Gardens

# May the 4th... be with us, will you be?

**One particular date in May has become, for those who are fans of Star Wars film series and the sayings of Yoda, a bit of a national day.**

This year we're rather mixing up the traditions associated with the month of May and invite visitors to a wild and wonderful Morris into May Day on Sunday May 4th



The heritage fruit orchards will be full of blossoms ready for your picnics, the stars of our fabulous Wassail – Beorma Morris and The Green Man – will dance and tell stories to lead our May Celebrations and chase away the last of winter.

All activities, drop-in crafts and entertainments are free extras with your normal entry fee

Delights during the day will include a falconry display, making of May Crown crafts, live music and folk tunes around the Gardens, garden tours... and there's even a chance to be crowned the May Monarch.

Want a chance to be crowned the May Monarch?

Come dressed in white !!

No need to book. More information on our website and at the Gardens

## **'Cast ne'r a clout till May is out'**

It's never clear whether this old saying is about May blossom – hawthorn – or the month of May.

Either way, the unpredictability of the weather seems to continue into this modern age, so we have got used to 'layering up' our clothing to deal with four seasons in a day.

For our hardworking Gardeners, this month brings further perils. The longer days really have warmed up the earth so all the plants put on a real growth spurt. But then, so do the weeds!... Aargh.

We may have thirty and more volunteer gardeners but even they can't keep up with all the new 'plants in the wrong place'.

Here at the Historic Gardens we pride ourselves as champions working with, not against the natural world and the environment – so in one sense 'weeds' should be welcomed as food for bees and insects... On the other hand we are also guardians of the early 18th century style of these historic spaces. Way back then, the attitude was more about

'conquering' and 'controlling' nature so plants were kept in rows, isolated from each other.

The beauty and bounty of May is a great month for our visitors, but spare a thought for the poor Gardeners toiling away balancing the needs of history with the rampant fecundity of 'the wild'

## **Other activities in the Gardens in May**

Please do check the signage at the Gardens and on our website so you don't miss out on some wonderful activities during the month



There's another foraging and feasting session, more garden tours, a celebration of Urban Trees, more Heritage Brick volunteering sessions and of course lots of wonderful activities during the Whitsun half term:

Look out for HapaZome creative workshop, making a birdfeeder session and a new really exciting 'Kids Falconry Experience' with our partner, Mercer Falconry.



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# Castle Bromwich Library Book Club

## **The long way home by Fanny Blake**

Isla is in her 60s, close to retirement and longing for a time when her life will become her own. So when her mother dies, leaving her nothing but a mysterious picture, she sets about on a road trip to try to uncover the truth behind the painting - and about her past. But, right at the last minute, she is forced to take her 14-year-old grand-daughter with her, and neither is particularly thrilled about the idea. Together the pair will uncover shattering truths about the past, and their journey will take them through the UK, and back in time to Paris in the 1950s, where the story really all began.

*This book has everything I love - wonderful locations, believable characters, secrets, love, loss and a good family mystery to solve. It is such a good read and hugely enjoyable!*

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member



## **The missing girl by Jenny Quintana**

When Anna Flores' adored older sister goes missing as a teenager, Anna copes by disappearing too, just as soon as she can: running as far away from her family as possible and eventually building a life for herself abroad. 30 years later, the death of her mother finally forces Anna to return home. Tasked with sorting through her mother's possessions, she begins to confront not just her mother's death, but also the huge hole Gabriella's disappearance left in her life - and finds herself asking a question she's not allowed herself to ask for years: what really happened to her sister? With that question comes the revelation that her biggest fear isn't discovering the worst; it's never knowing the answer. But is it too late for Anna to uncover the truth about Gabriella's disappearance?.

*This is a story about family, friendship, secrets, kidnapping, and murder. It is part psychological thriller and part family drama and is beautifully put together which keeps you turning pages and guessing from start to finish.*

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member

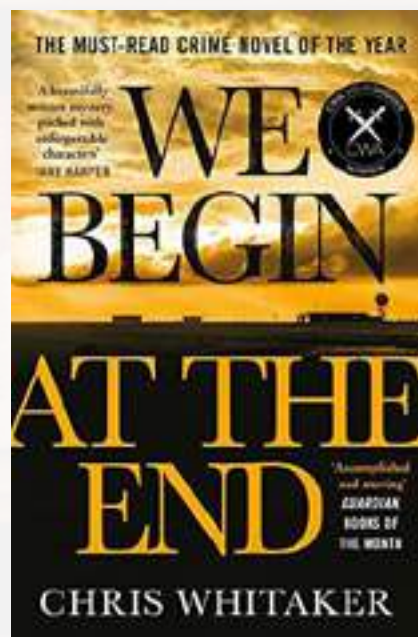


## **This beautiful life by Katie Marsh**

Abi Cooper is living her happy ending. She's in remission and is ready to make the most of her second chance. But during Abi's illness her family has fallen apart. Her husband John has made decisions that are about to come back to haunt him, while her teenage son Seb is battling with a secret of his own. Set to the songs on Abi's survival playlist, 'This Beautiful Life' is the moving and uplifting story of what happens as Abi tries to put her family back together - and of why life, and love, are worth fighting for.

*This is a real roller coaster of a story. You will be smiling one minute and crying the next! Katie Marsh deals with themes that can impact on any of us with grace, conviction and stunning realism. Very emotional, sad and funny. Highly recommended.*

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member



## **Homecoming by Kate Morton**

A novel that spans generations, 'Homecoming' asks what we would do for those we love, and how we protect the lies we tell. It explores the power of motherhood, the corrosive effects of tightly held secrets, and the healing nature of truth.

*What a great book! It is a wonderful, tangled web of secrets, rumours, lies, deceptions, and betrayals which all slowly unravel to shocking effect. A captivating and eerie tale that totally sweeps you up. Highly recommended!*

Review by Castle Bromwich Library member







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Angels Healthcare - Care with Kindness, Support with Heart.

## Warwickshire secures £1.3m grant to boost neighbourhood policing with 18 new posts



**More police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) will be joining Safer Neighbourhood Teams across Warwickshire following a £1.3 million grant from the Home Office.**

The neighbourhood policing grant, designed to rebuild the vital connection between the police and the public to enhance trust and confidence, will enable eight additional police officers to be deployed within neighbourhood teams and 10 more PCSOs to be recruited for Warwickshire Police. An additional four Special Constable volunteers will also be supported, and the grant will also help to pay for recruitment and associated costs.

The announcement has been welcomed by Philip Seccombe, Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire, who called the funding “a significant boost to efforts to

strengthen neighbourhood policing across the county.”

He said: “The visibility of policing is consistently raised by the public as a top priority, along with the importance of Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) to local communities. Through my ‘A Safer Warwickshire for All’ plan, I have made a clear commitment to enhance neighbourhood policing, recognising that our SNTs are essential to building public trust and confidence, tackling local priorities, and ensuring people feel safe where they live.

“This funding will allow us to put more officers and PCSOs on the streets where they are most needed, enhancing Warwickshire Police’s ability to address issues such as anti-social behaviour, retail crime and deal with community safety concerns in both urban and rural parts of the county. It will also provide greater opportunities for meaningful engagement with residents, enabling local teams to respond more effectively to the concerns that matter most to them.”

The funding forms parts of the Government’s Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, which aims to ensure every community gets the visible, proactive policing it deserves and makes £200 million available to police forces nationally in 2025/26 to support the increase of neighbourhood officers in years to come.

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# Interiors & Decorating



## Platinum April Update

### The Colours of the Year 2025: A UK Paint Industry Round-Up

Each year, leading paint manufacturers unveil their Colour of the Year, a flagship tone that captures current design trends and cultural moods. For 2025, UK-based brands have embraced rich natural hues, uplifting tones, and versatile neutrals—each reflecting a collective shift toward comfort, sustainability, and creative expression in interior design. Let's explore the choices from some of the UK's top paint producers.

#### Dulux – True Joy™

Dulux's Colour of the Year 2025, True Joy™, is a bright and bold yellow that exudes optimism and energy. The brand describes it as a shade that promotes positivity and revitalises living spaces—an embodiment of the dopamine décor trend, where uplifting colours are used to enhance well-being. This zesty yellow reflects the growing desire for homes that feel cheerful and life-affirming, especially after years of neutrals dominating design palettes. Dulux encourages using True Joy™ in any room to create a sense of playfulness and light-hearted sophistication, even in small doses like accent walls or accessories.

#### Little Greene – Mochi

At the more subtle end of the spectrum, Little Greene introduces Mochi, a warm caramel-toned neutral inspired by natural plaster. It offers a calm, earthy foundation that blends beautifully with both

contemporary and traditional aesthetics. Described as versatile and understated, Mochi is ideal for creating serene home offices or relaxed living spaces. According to Little Greene, it works harmoniously with deeper browns or bright whites to zone rooms or highlight architectural details. It's a clever pick for those seeking a timeless neutral with depth and warmth.

#### Graham & Brown – Elderton

Taking cues directly from nature, Graham & Brown's 2025 choice is Elderton, a rich, earthy brown named after the elder tree. It's designed to ground interiors and reconnect us with the natural world. This colour has a chameleon-like quality—it can feel luxurious and dramatic or warm and welcoming depending on the lighting and room it's used in. The company pairs Elderton with its wallpaper of the year, "Rivington Folly", featuring ancient trees and moody, woodland-inspired tones for a deeply immersive design experience. It's a great choice for biophilic interiors or heritage-inspired spaces.

#### Farrow & Ball – A Collection of Nature-Inspired Shades

Rather than selecting a single Colour of the Year, Farrow & Ball has released a palette of 12 new shades for 2025 that reflect the evolving trends in British interiors. Among the standout shades:

- Marmelo: A comforting burnt orange named after the quince fruit. It brings a nostalgic, breakfast-table warmth that pairs beautifully with rustic woods and terracotta.

- Douter: A smoky grey-green inspired by traditional candle snuffers—perfect for moody living rooms or cosy reading nooks.
- Reduced Green: A dark, almost brownish green that adds depth and elegance.
- Dibber: A lighter, mossy green named after the gardening tool, ideal for connecting interiors with the outdoors.
- Scallop and Kakelugn: Pastel pink and baby blue shades offering a soft, serene touch for bedrooms and bathrooms.

This nature-inspired collection embraces the continued popularity of biophilic design, where interiors mimic the calming effects of nature through organic colours and textures.

#### Crown Paints – “Dreamy Retreat” Palette

While Crown Paints hasn't announced a singular Colour of the Year, they've leaned into a broader palette approach with “Dreamy Retreat” as a central theme. This features muted blues, soft lilacs, and gentle pinks that evoke tranquillity and escapism. These choices reflect a growing desire for homes to serve as safe, restorative spaces in an increasingly overstimulated world. Crown suggests layering these tones for a more cocooned, personal feel—especially effective in bedrooms or quiet nooks.

#### Emerging Trends and Common Themes

- A few recurring trends link these choices:
1. Nature-Inspired Tones – Earthy browns

(Elderton), leafy greens (Dibber, Reduced Green), and soft plaster hues (Mochi) highlight the continued love affair with organic, grounding colours.

2. Emotional Uplift – Dulux's True Joy™ and Farrow & Ball's Marmelo show a move toward colours that spark joy and create vibrant, expressive spaces.
3. Softer Neutrals – Paint brands are increasingly opting for warm, adaptable neutrals like Mochi that work well with a range of interiors.
4. Personalised Interiors – These colours aren't just trends—they're tools for storytelling. Whether through nostalgic references (like Marmelo's breakfast inspiration) or soothing palettes (as with Crown's Dreamy Retreat), 2025's colours reflect a desire to make interiors feel personal and meaningful.

#### Final Thoughts

In 2025, UK paint manufacturers are championing a rich and thoughtful mix of colours that prioritise wellness, individuality, and a strong connection to the natural world. Whether you're looking to uplift your mood with sunny yellows, ground your space with warm browns, or introduce a little calm with soft blues and greens, there's a Colour of the Year to suit every taste and home.

For homeowners, decorators, and designers alike, this year's selections are a celebration of both comfort and creativity—an invitation to use colour not just as decoration, but as a form of self-expression and sanctuary.

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# The ‘Local’ elections are on, with polling day on the 1st May 2025

Remember you will need photo ID to vote if you are not registered for postal voting. Details of what is acceptable can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/how-to-vote/photo-id-youll-need>

Martin Watson and Dave Humphreys, representing the Conservative Party, are delighted to be standing for re-election as your County Councillors for the Coleshill North & Water Orton and the Coleshill South & Arley divisions

**Martin and Dave really hope they can count on your vote in May!**



**Martin Watson – Conservative Candidate re-standing to be your County Councillor for Coleshill North & Water Orton division, which includes Curdworth, Lea Marston, Marston & Wishaw**

I always try to run my campaigns based on the positive things I have accomplished on behalf of the residents I am privileged to represent. Unfortunately, not everyone adopts this approach, and I am aware of some recent comments aimed at me ‘either forgetting or actively ignoring’ one of my villages, that I am ‘expecting to lose to Reform’ and that I do ‘not live in the ward’. To be clear on these, firstly I want the best outcome for all the areas I am elected to represent. Secondly, I wouldn’t stand if I expected to lose and whilst you can never predict the outcome of elections I am hopefully to be re-elected and thirdly, I do indeed live in the ward that I am standing in, moving to the area approximately 11 years ago, with my home address as a matter of record on the voting form.

Living in Marston (part of the Lea Marston parish) with my family, I am impacted by the same local issues that affect all of you. HS2, traffic congestion, flooding to name few all have the same impact on me that it has on you, which means I am passionate about our local communities, wanting to ensure local issues remain prominent at the County Council.



If re-elected I intend to continue to ensure they not only receive the attention and focus they deserve but are dealt with in a timely and transparent manner. I am committed to protecting and maintaining our way of life.

In a previous article earlier this year I reflected on the achievements over the last 4 years and how working with County & Borough colleagues and Town & Parish Councils I am proud of what we have achieved that improve all our daily lives. I have an impressive attendance record at all Town and Parish meetings and attend as often as possible.



The Green Man Crossroads (working with Cllr Dave Humphreys) is a particular triumph, and I have had great feedback about not only the way it has made the junction much safer for road users and pedestrians alike, but also improved traffic congestion at peak times.

I am also particularly pleased about the Air Quality monitors I obtained funding for in Water Orton following concerns about dust and air quality and following a spike in respiratory issues reported by residents. I had 5 monitors installed, which are now collecting data that will hopefully allow us to identify the cause of the issues.

If you are interested you can look at the locations and the data being collected from these monitors at the following link, <https://airly.org/map/en/#52.516314,-1.728211,1118484>. From here you can click on each of the monitors and see the current data.

I do accept though that there is always more to do and if re-elected I commit to:

- Protecting our local Green Belt from development pressures
- Continue holding HS2 to account and ensuring residents issues are heard
- Continue to campaign for the cleanliness & condition of our roads
- Reducing HGV, speeding & road safety issues in all our communities

And finally, I just wanted to reiterate that over the last 4 years I have managed to support numerous worthy causes in our local area, allocating £30,000 via my County Councillor grants to organisations such as:

Beeline Community Transport	Coleshill Community Hub
Coleshill Forget-me-Not Memory Cafe	Coleshill Guild of Bellringers
Coleshill Parkinson's Cafe (CPC)	Coleshill Partnership
Coleshill Town Council	Coleshill Town Ladies Football Club
Coleshill Town Under 14s Football Club	Coleshill Warm Hub Community Centre
Communithea Café, Lea Marston	Curdworth Parish Council
Father Hudson's Society	Lea Marston Parish Council
Local Vocals	North Warwickshire Area Committee of Parish Councils
Old Saltleians RFC Warm Hub	Parenting Project
Perkisound CIO	Scamps Playgroup
SOS Silence of Suicide	St Edward's PTFA
St Peter and St Paul's Church, Water Orton	The Link
The Whitacre's, Lea Marston, and Shustoke Youth Group	Warwickshire Vision Support (Warwickshire Association for the Blind)
Water Orton & District Tennis Club	Water Orton Cricket & Bowling Clubs
Water Orton In Bloom	Water Orton Library & Community Centre
Water Orton Parent Teacher Association (PTA)	Water Orton Parish Council
Water Orton Speedwatch	Young at Heart Group



**Dave Humphreys – Conservative Candidate re-standing to be your County Councillor for Coleshill South & Arley division, which includes Astley, Corley, Fillongley and Shustoke**

I am honoured to represent the residents of Coleshill South, Arley, Astley, Fillongley and Shustoke and if re-elected will continue to be available and focused on the diverse status of this Division, made up of towns like Coleshill to farming areas like Fillongley and Corley to hamlets such as Maxstoke and Packington. Every one of these communities have their own unique issues, let’s not forget this division is almost 30% of the total land mass of North Warwickshire and enshrines the Green Belt.

Reflecting on some of my major achievements over the past 4 years, I am proud to have delivered the projects below:



- The Green Man Crossroads and Church Hill traffic light control and traffic safety management working with Martin, but only after securing circa £840k investment.
- Implementation of Controlled Parking Enforcement (CPE) in Coleshill High Street, necessary to ensure churn through the High Street to improve local shop stability.

- Woodlands School Packington Lane, a special needs education school, had serious traffic and safety concerns as 200+ children require individual vehicle collection, up to 4hrs of chaos daily, now controlled through organised traffic management (£18K investment).
- Arley School, installation of traffic and parking control bollards to ensure safer to school journeys (£15k investment).
- Supported Fillongley Flood Group monitoring system (£5k investment)
- Fillongley crossroads several accident reduction signage scheme (£48K investment).
- Castle Drive to Wall Avenue footpath and street lighting upgrade for safer commuting to school and town centre, (£40K investment).
- Woodend Lane remodelling of corner installation of tactile drop kerb to assist with disabled access into the village and ensure ability to use footpaths (£9K investment).



Like Martin I do accept though that there is always more to do and if re-elected I commit to:

- Ensure Seven Trent honour their commitment to bring forward sewerage upgrade in Coleshill High Street to enable resurfacing and pavement improvements, as we all know a well-kept and good quality High Street is a must for sustainability
- Ensure that I continue to be available to my residents to address their diverse needs

I have also allocated monies from my County Councillor grants to organisations such as those below. But the list is numerous, and events range from £350 to £1500 assistance, with £9k being allocated over the last 12 months:

- Queens Jubilee
- Ascension of the King events
- Warm Hubs very important now heating allowance scrapped
- Weekly Coffee and Cake inclusion meetings at majority of village halls





# Pet Page

## The Animal Poison Line – A Lifesaving Number to Know

Earlier this spring, Insight Hounds hosted a free Canine First Aid Workshop in partnership with the brilliant team from Fivelands Vets, raising funds for Daybreaks Trust, a much-loved greyhound rehoming charity. The workshop was a chance for dog families to build a bit more confidence around the 'what ifs' – from handling minor injuries to checking vital signs and knowing when (and how) to act in an emergency.

One topic that sparked a lot of interest on the day was the Animal Poison Line – a service that many hadn't heard of, but one that could prove truly vital if your dog ever eats something they shouldn't.

### What is the Animal Poison Line?

The Animal Poison Line (APL) is a dedicated 24-hour helpline run by veterinary toxicology specialists. If your dog eats something potentially harmful – such as chocolate, raisins, human painkillers, or certain garden plants – you can phone for fast, expert advice. It's the same service many vets rely on when they need immediate toxicology support, but the good news is that it's now also available for pet families to call directly. You don't need a referral, and you don't need to wait to speak to your vet first.

And it's not just for dogs – the Animal Poison Line also offers advice for cats, with guidance tailored to their needs too.

### How does it work?

When you call, you'll be asked for a few key details:

- What your pet ate – if you have the packaging or can describe it, even better
- How much they ate, and roughly when
- Your pet's breed, weight, and age

The team will then assess the risk and let you know whether your pet needs to see a vet straight away, what signs to keep an eye on, and what your next steps should be. It takes the uncertainty out of what can be a really stressful moment.

The number to save is: 01202 509 000  
 Calls cost between £35–£45 (one-off fee).

More info: [www.animalpoisonline.co.uk](http://www.animalpoisonline.co.uk)

### Why might it be helpful?

Sometimes, it's hard to know what's genuinely dangerous. One dog might

snatch a chocolate muffin, another might chew a houseplant – and in that moment, it can be difficult to tell whether to panic, call the vet, or wait and see.

That's where the Poison Line can help. It gives you clear, professional advice at any time of day or night, so you're not left guessing. Even if it turns out to be nothing serious, that peace of mind can be invaluable.

### Hopefully you'll never need it...

...but it's a number worth having saved in your phone. I hope it's something you'll never have to use – but it can be so helpful to have it there, just in case.



## Birmingham Dogs Home – Forever homes



### Cola

**Breed:** Lurcher **Gender:** Male (N)

Meet Cola, a loving lurcher looking for a fresh start. Cola is a sweet and affectionate lurcher who is searching for a home where he can truly settle. This charming boy has found himself back at our centre through no fault of his own, and we're hoping to find him the perfect match.

Cola is a real people lover and adores cuddles. He's motivated by human interaction and thrives on attention, often rolling over for belly rubs at

any opportunity! He knows his basic commands, including sit, give paw, lie down, and stay when asked, although distractions can sometimes get the better of him.

Out on walks, Cola is generally well mannered on the lead. He may pull when he sees other dogs up close, but from a distance, he remains. Cola is currently working on desensitization to help him feel more comfortable around them.

Cola's ideal home would be one where he isn't left alone for long periods, as he has shown signs of separation anxiety in the past. He will need patient owners who can help build his confidence when home alone. He has also previously lived with a young child and was a little envious of their attention, so we feel he would do best suited to a home with children aged 8 and over.

When it comes to treats, Cola can be a little picky, he much prefers meaty treats! He also loves a good squeaky toy, which often leads to a case of the zoomies, showing off his playful and fun loving nature.

If you are interested in adopting, please contact the centre on 0121 643 5211 to enquire. [www.birminghamdogshome.org.uk](http://www.birminghamdogshome.org.uk)

## Ward End Cat Rescue

We are a small but incredibly busy home based rescue, run solely by volunteers. We are continually overrun with cats needing our help. We have lots of cats in the rescue but many of them are not ready for their forever homes as yet for various reasons including needing veterinary treatment such as neutering, ongoing health issues or being semi feral. If you are interested in rehoming a cat or want more information please email us with a contact number, address and who lives in your household. We can then contact you and inform you of any cats that may be suitable.



After being dumped outside our vets with bruises and dried up milk from having

numerous kittens **Pattie** is now safe with us. After being neutered and some TLC Pattie is now ready for the wonderful forever home she deserves. For more information please email us.



Poor **Josh** came to us with a very nasty painful abscess on his face. He is improving each day and has now been neutered too. Hopefully Josh will be ready for adoption very soon.

### Feral Cats

If any of our supporters own land or a farm with suitable outbuildings for feral cats to live we would love to hear from you please.

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](mailto:wardendcatrescueofficial@outlook.com)



# Big News!

Save the date, this is your invite to attend the grand opening of our new unit.

To celebrate we will be offering 10% off everything to all customers & the first 50 customers will receive a goody bag of our best selling treats

**WHEN:** Saturday 3rd May 2025

**TIME:** 10-4pm

**WHERE:** Unit 5, Mullensgrove Farm, Kingsbury Rd, Curdworth, B76 0DF

Please bring your dogs to see us

In preparation for the move the current shop be closed on the Thursday 1st & Friday 2nd of May to move everything over to the new unit - please note we will be open Wednesday 30th April as normal!

We are so excited to show you, a lot of hard work has gone into the planning of our new shop. Charlie & Co just got a hell of a lot bigger!



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**SATURDAY**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2025**

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## Happy Fungal Infection

## Awareness Month!

**You may not be aware but May marks Fungal Infection Awareness Month! Fungal infections can affect the skin and the nails and are extremely common.**

A fungal infection of the skin is called "Athlete's Foot". It is most associated with itchiness (particularly in between the 4th and 5th toes), white rubbery skin (particularly in between the 4th and 5th toes), redness around the borders of the foot. You may even get small pustules appear. Athletes foot is very common. We have fungi living on our skin every day, but our skins natural pH (chemical balance) is what stops us having repeated infection. When this delicate balance is altered, we can get a fungal infection. Lots of things can cause this disruption in the chemical balance including high sugar levels, temperature, stress, and medication. Inside our footwear it is dark, warm, and sweaty and this provides the perfect environment for fungi to thrive. There are lots of different treatment options available for athletes' foot but it's important that you treat your shoes and socks too. We recommend washing your socks on 60 degrees or by using Halo sports cleanser along with your normal detergent. You can purchase this sports cleanser by scanning the QR code.

We also recommend making use of our Klenz machine for your shoes.

Our Klenz machine will kill off any fungi or bacteria that may be in your shoes and can help prevent re-infection.



As mentioned, fungi live on our skin all the time. When our nail becomes damaged from trauma, incorrect nail cutting, poorly fitting shoes or socks etc, the fungi living on our skin can invade the nail causing it to become discoloured, crumbly, or thickened.



We usually diagnose a fungal nail infection based on its clinical presentation however our diafactory tests will confirm the presence of fungus in the nail in 5 minutes for an additional fee. This can be extremely beneficial in helping us to determine which treatment option is best for you. To celebrate fungal awareness month, you can have £5 off our diafactory tests in the month of May. A fungal nail infection can be stubborn but there are many treatment options available. Our team of Podiatrists can discuss these with you to help determine which one is most suitable for you. As well as treating your nails we also recommend treating your skin for athletes' foot as the infection can easily transfer from skin to nail.

If you think you may have a fungal infection and want to know what treatment is more suited to you, then you can give us a call on 0121 749 6313 and book in to see one of our HCPC registered Podiatrists.



## North East Birmingham and Castle Bromwich super slimmers throw slimmed-out-of clothes for charity



**Slimming World members in the north East Birmingham area have raised over £30,000 for Cancer Research UK by donating the clothes they've slimmed out of to the charity's shops.**

The Big Slimming World Clothes Throw with Cancer Research UK is an annual event that takes place in Slimming World groups across the UK. It sees members donating good quality clothes, shoes, and accessories that no longer fit – and they're confident they will never need again.

The Slimming World groups, who meet weekly at Coleshill, Castle Bromwich, Kinghurst, Shard End, Castle Vale, Tile Cross, Kitts Green, Water Orton and Chelmsley Wood collected 1301 bags to help support life-saving research.

Slimming World Team developer Maddy Wootton, who

supports the consultants and their groups, says I am so proud of how the consultants and their members came together to support the charity, as well as to celebrate how far they've come on their own weight loss journeys.

She said: "It's always a pleasure to see the excitement in group when The Big Slimming World Clothes Throw comes around. When you're losing weight, it can be easy to focus on the number on the scales without realising how many non-scale victories are happening in the background, like our changing dress sizes and body shapes.

"This event celebrates those victories as it is all about members donating their old wardrobe while raising money for an important cause. It makes me so happy to see the confidence in my members as they commit to donating their larger clothes knowing they will never need them again, because they've made healthy changes they can maintain for life!"

As well as raising funds for Cancer Research UK, the Big Slimming World Clothes Throw raises awareness of how maintaining a healthy weight reduces the risk of 13 different types of cancer. Overweight and obesity is the second biggest preventable cause of cancer in the UK - causing more than one in 20 cancer cases.

Maddy said: "Being overweight doesn't necessarily mean that a person will develop cancer, but we know that losing weight and maintaining a healthy weight can help prevent a number of health conditions, including some

types of cancer. We proud to host The Big Slimming World Clothes Throw at ours Slimming World group to help Cancer Research UK continue its vital work."

Over the years, Slimming World has raised more than £25 million for Cancer Research UK through a variety of campaigns including The Big Slimming World Clothes Throw and supporting the charity's Race for Life event series.



Last year, Slimming World members, Consultants and head office staff raised £2.9m for Cancer Research UK through The Big Slimming World Clothes Throw and are aiming to make this year even bigger and better.

**For more information visit [www.slimmingworld.co.uk](http://www.slimmingworld.co.uk) or call 0344 897 8000.**

# Slimming World

feel *real* good

### Monday

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

**Yardley** St Edburghas Church Hall, 7.30 & 9.00am Jacqui 07814 675180

### Tuesday

**Shard End** Aylesford Hall, 9.00 & 10.30am Claire 07917867577

**Kingshurst** Seeds Of Hope, St Barnabas CH, 5.00 & 6.30pm Diane 07432 123206

**Tile Cross** Mackadown Sports & Social Club, 4.00 & 5.30pm Nataley 07939 949136

**Coleshill** The Catholic Church (sacred Heart & St Teresa) 3.30pm, 5.00pm & 6.30pm Jacqui 07814 675180

### Wednesday

**Castle Brom** Arden Hall, 9.00 & 10.30am Diane 07432 123206

**Castle Brom** St Clements Church, 3.00, 4.30 & 6.00pm Nataley 07939 949136

**Marston Green** The Parish Hall, 4.00 & 5.30pm Donna 07516 726534

**Water Orton** The Link, 3.30, 5.30 & 7.00pm Jayne 07453 348184

### Thursday

**Smiths Wood** SJB Centre, 9.00am, 5.00 & 6.30pm Nataley 07939 949136

**Castle Vale** St Cuthberts Church, 5.30pm Diane 07432 123206

**Chelmsley Wood** The Fordbridge Centre (by Asda), 5.30pm Jacquie 07957133435

### Friday

**Sheldon** St Thomas More Church, 9.00am Claire 07917867577

**Chelmsley Wood** The Family Tree, 9.00am Jayne 07453 348184

### Saturday

**Chelmsley Wood** Three Trees Community Centre, 7.30 & 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 Donna 07516726534

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



Sir Ken Dodd was known for his one-liners: "My act is very educational. I heard a man leaving the other night, saying: 'Well, that taught me a lesson.'" On approaching his 80th birthday: "Age doesn't matter, unless you are a cheese." **Proverbs 17:22 says: "Laughter is like taking good medicine."** Every day you need to take your medicine. Find something that makes you laugh. See the humour in life. Put a smile on. Gosh, how true this is—coming together to enjoy each other's company, being able to laugh at silly jokes; the sound of children laughing is like a beautiful summer's day! What a gift life is in all its forms. St Clements, through our groups, café and events, invites all those in our community—of whatever age and ability—to come and enjoy the company of others. And although many times we have had hurdles to jump, our door is and will remain open. We do a "mean" bacon or sausage sandwich in our café, all cooked to order!

## As a reminder, our services are:

- 1st and 3rd Sunday of the Month – 9.45am – Praise Service
- 2nd, 4th and 5th Sunday of the Month – 11.00am – Holy Communion
- 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the Month – 10.00am – Holy Communion in the chapel

**Exciting News!** We're delighted to announce a brand-new Children's Group at St Clement's, taking place during our Sunday morning worship on the second Sunday of each month at 11.00am.

Children join the main service with their adult and head off to their special group

after the first hymn. There, they'll enjoy Bible stories, prayers, crafts, games, and lots of fun! Everyone returns to church in time for Communion, making it a shared and joyful experience for all.

## Next groups:

- April 13th – 11.00am – Palm Sunday
- May 11th – 11.00am – Eastertide
- June 8th – 11.00am – Pentecost
- July 13th – 11.00am – Communion

## More details on our Website:

<https://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/7248/service-and-events/events/1170635/>

Pentecost is a Christian holiday which takes place on the 49th day after Easter Day. It commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles of Jesus while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks, as described in the Acts of the Apostles.

St Clement's will once again be welcoming the children from Year 2, Smiths Wood Primary Academy, on Wednesday 14th and Thursday 15th May. This is an annual visit and one that the church really looks forward to; however young children do not hold back with their questions! Let's hope the weather is kind and the sun shines for their walk to church.

On 8 May 2025, we're marking the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE Day), when the nation will unite to remember the end of the Second World War in Europe. Around the country, events will be taking place to pay tribute to those involved in that conflict, as well as reminding us to pray and work for peace

in our communities and in the world. St Clement's will be remembering VE Day by including special prayers for peace during our Sunday service on 11th May at 11.00am. Everyone is welcome to join us, either in person or by praying for peace.

Thursday 8th May, from 12.30 to 2.30pm St Clements invites you to come and enjoy soup and a roll as we support Troop Aid, for a donation of £3. British troops are in 22 countries worldwide, and the objective of Troop Aid is to supply the 'basic essentials' to service casualties of the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force injured either whilst in training or at war, serving their country. If you want to know more about their work, please go to their website: <https://troopaid.info/> for more information on what they do.

Fundraising is an essential part of what we do at St Clements. Whether for charities such as our Lent Project supporting the local food bank, Marie Curie, Macmillan, and this year Troop Aid, we also have to raise funds to keep our building watertight. Unfortunately, as a building erected at the end of the 50s, beginning of the 60s, like many others it is now showing its age. For church services and all those that come and use our building—our café, groups and events—the building has to comply with all legislation, safeguarding and be kept in good repair, which sometimes is a challenge. You may have seen work being carried out to part of the roof and we are grateful that we were able to secure funding for this. The church building now has an alarm system, and again we had to fundraise for this to be installed, which, in today's world—

although we have CCTV—had become a necessity.

Our next event is the annual Quiz with a fish and chip supper on 17th May, starting at 4.00pm, at a cost of £8. Our thanks go to Anne and Linda, who once again will be our "Quiz Masters" for this event. Tickets will be available nearer the date.

Look out for details of our Summer Garden Party with a 40s theme on 7th June, starting at 2.00pm, at a cost of £6.50. We also hope the weather is kind to us!

**Please Note:** This year, St Clements will not be holding a Summer Fayre.

Many people have hidden talents and we want to express our grateful thanks to those who supported our Marie Curie Appeal, making crochet knitted daffodils for the appeal which went really well. Also, to those visiting the church, you may have seen the display in the foyer for Marie Curie, which was the work of the 4th Castle Bromwich Brownies, who meet at St Clements every Monday evening during term time. Our thanks go to the Brownies and their Leaders, as we received so many lovely comments—thank you!

**For more information please get in touch in all the usual ways:**

**Phone:** 0121 274 7120

**Church Website:**

[www.stclementschurchcb.co.uk](http://www.stclementschurchcb.co.uk)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/stclementschurchcastlebromwich](https://www.facebook.com/stclementschurchcastlebromwich)

**Email:** [office@stclementschurchcb.co.uk](mailto:office@stclementschurchcb.co.uk)





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**Contact our Manager Shelley**

☎ 01675 434559 or 07341 730122

✉ shelleyperryman@fatherhudsons.org.uk

🌐 <https://stjosephscarehome.co.uk/>



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## St Mary and St Margaret Church

Castle Bromwich

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#### Whats On This May

**Wednesday Drop In**  
**14<sup>th</sup> May 10.00 - 11.30am**  
**Community Hall**

Join us for a cuppa and a chat - everyone is welcome!

**Soup & a Roll Lunch**  
**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May**  
**12.00 - 1.30pm**  
**Community Hall**

Join us for our monthly Soup & a Roll Lunch for a £1 donation, on every 2nd Wednesday of the month following our Family Service and Wednesday Drop In

**Mothers Union Friendship Afternoon**  
**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> May - 1.30- 3pm**  
**Community Hall**

Join us for an afternoon of fellowship & fun with a cuppa, a piece of cake & a chat!  
 All are welcome to join us - we would love to see you!

**Morning Prayer**  
**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May**  
**9.30 - 10.15am Community Hall**  
 Join Revd Fiona for reflection & prayer

#### Family Activities



**Cafe Worship**  
**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May**  
**11am Community Hall**  
 Join us for informal, all age worship which runs alongside our main Sunday Worship with refreshments, songs, activities and crafts. Everyone is welcome!

#### Upcoming Services

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May**

11am All Age Communion & Holy Baptism  
 Youth Worship (Community Hall)

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May**

9.30am Parish Communion & Messy Worship for families

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May**

9.30am Family Communion

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May**

11am Eucharist (Church) and Cafe Worship (Hall)

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> May**

9.30am Parish Communion & Messy Worship for families



**Official Church FB Page**  
[facebook.com/stmaryandstmargarechurch](https://facebook.com/stmaryandstmargarechurch)

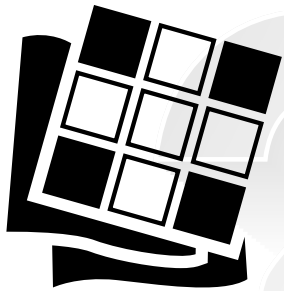
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Or visit our website  
[www.stmaryandstmargaret.co.uk](http://www.stmaryandstmargaret.co.uk)





# Puzzle Page

## ACROSS

- 1 Group of nations
- 5 Small
- 8 Curtsey's
- 12 Elegant
- 13 Break out of egg
- 15 Wading bird
- 16 African nation
- 17 Western state
- 18 What you do for the judge
- 19 Treat with contempt
- 21 Stair
- 22 Kangaroo bear
- 24 Car speed
- 25 Kimono sash
- 28 Wing
- 30 Metric weight unit
- 33 Cloth hat that is fastened with ribbons
- 35 Scientist's office
- 37 France & Germany river
- 38 Epoch
- 39 Admit (2 wds.)
- 42 Killed in action
- 43 Mail
- 44 Milk maker
- 45 Looms
- 46 Bard's before
- 48 Ruby
- 50 Distress call
- 51 Fall mo.

- 52 More often than weekly
- 54 Cuts off "in the bud"
- 57 Holler
- 60 Secure
- 61 Crick
- 64 Electron, for example
- 66 Negative (prefix)
- 67 Pallid
- 68 Canal
- 69 Fossile fuel
- 70 Scriptural your
- 71 Structure used by a bird to lay eggs and rear young

## DOWN

- 1 Tempo
- 2 Soil
- 3 Capital of Norway
- 4 Newly hatched bird
- 5 Swaying walk
- 6 Airport abbr.
- 7 Resound
- 8 Act or fact of being born
- 9 Off-Broadway award
- 10 Bunch of hay
- 11 Compass point
- 13 Hello
- 14 Santa's laugh
- 20 Divided nation
- 21 Observe secretly
- 23 Accepted

- 25 Heavy-set
- 26 Hole maker
- 27 Sappy
- 29 Rule
- 30 Forces
- 31 El Qahira
- 32 Lawn plant
- 34 Tender loving care
- 36 Whit
- 40 Record
- 41 Stately
- 47 Large vehicle
- 49 Boggy
- 51 Fourth month of the year
- 53 Asian country
- 54 Taboo
- 55 Small particle
- 56 Quarrel
- 58 Decoy
- 59 Superman's Ms. Lane
- 60 McDonald's "Big \_\_\_"
- 61 Compass point
- 62 Tree
- 63 Possessive pronoun
- 65 Tulle

1	2	3	4			5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14		15		
16					17						18		
	19			20					21				
			22				23		24				
25	26	27				28		29			30	31	32
33					34		35		36		37		
38				39		40				41		42	
43					44				45				
46				47		48		49			50		
			51				52				53		
	54	55				56				57		58	59
60					61		62		63		64		65
66					67						68		
69						70					71		

By Jimmy and Evelyn Johnson - www.qets.com

## Word Search

E A P S D R S S A R G I D  
T Y L F U A R B O R H N B  
A A N E O O M A T H O T U  
R P R N U O I P T M A A T  
E S P I U I L C A E R U T  
N I T H E B O I A E F R E  
E Y O S U S D S L G T U R  
V H L N I N T B G E A S F  
V E I U R E A R Y T H S L  
N H R S R D O I N T G Y Y  
I Z P J D W T F R K D Y K  
A D A I S Y Y A Y T T A N  
R N B V K W E A T H E R H

Find the words in the grid. When you are done, the unused letters in the grid will spell out a hidden message. Pick them out from left to right, top line to bottom line. Words can go horizontally, vertically and diagonally in all eight directions.

April  
Arbor  
Aries  
Biddable  
Bunny  
Butterfly  
Daisy

Damp  
Diamond  
Earth  
Easter  
Fool  
Grass  
Grow

Natty  
Rain  
Sagacious  
Sunshine  
Taurus  
Venerate  
Weather



# West Midlands funeral director takes the helm at UK's leading trade body

**Ross Hickton, Managing Director of Cradley Heath-headquartered Hickton Family Funeral Directors, has been elected President of SAIF, the UK's largest trade association for independent funeral businesses and their suppliers.**

Ross, whose business has cared for bereaved people in the Black Country since 1909, is passionate about promoting the benefits offered by traditional funeral directing firms in an age where no-frills send-offs being heavily marketed by online providers.

Replacing outgoing SAIF President Declan Maguire, Ross formally took on the role at SAIF's AGM weekend in Glasgow on April 4-6 and will serve for one year. Whitley Bay funeral director Gary Staker was elected SAIF First Vice President and Paul Sillett, of Bury, became Second Vice President. The event attracted hundreds of funeral directors from across the UK.

Ross has pledged to focus on three themes during his Presidency: direct cremation, regulation and future-proofing family-run funeral companies. He says these are the biggest challenges facing SAIF members today - but they also present opportunities to innovate and modernise.

"On direct cremation, I want to see some standardisation across our membership and a real effort to educate the public about what an unattended funeral means in terms of grief journeys and family conflicts. Like many independent funeral directors, we offer direct cremation but our trained staff are there to ensure families understand exactly what it entails. I'm concerned that this guidance and advice isn't available with predominantly online providers and this is something I'm keen to address," he said, adding:

"In terms of regulation, we'll be looking at working with the Government to support members' journeys to achieving compliance and consistently high standards. In becoming a regulated profession, funeral directors will have a golden opportunity to strengthen public trust and secure their future.

"Finally, and on the topic of the future, during the coming year I'll be pushing for more partnerships with innovative suppliers, initiatives to help family-run funeral firms remain in private hands and to make education more accessible."

SAIF CEO Terry Tennens said Ross' Presidency represented a continuation of the association's modernisation trend in recent years.

"Our outgoing President, Declan Maguire, is a trailblazer for digital technology adoption in the funeral sector and has really set SAIF's tone and direction towards innovation. So, to have Ross follow up with a strong focus on the future, direct cremation and regulation, SAIF will cement its position as the voice of modern independent funeral businesses.

"I'm very excited about working with Ross over the coming year, as we tackle the challenges facing our members and give thanks to Declan for his tireless service to our profession."

SAIF (the National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors) now has around 1,000 funeral director members who collectively operate over 2,000 funeral homes.

Hickton Family Funeral Directors was founded by Joe Hickton, a carpenter, builder and one-time mayor of Rowley Regis. The business now has seven funeral home branches across the West Midlands and Worcestershire, along with a thriving stone masonry business based in Dudley. Ross will be supported by his brother and sister, who are also heavily involved with the business, while he is President.

Ross' charity of choice for his Presidential year is Prostate Cancer UK, a cause close to the heart of the family after they lost their dad, and third generation of the funeral business, Trevor Hickton, to cancer in September 2024.



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## Hickton Family Funeral Directors

Trevor E.W. Hickton Ltd



### 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 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

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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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# 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](mailto: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](mailto: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	July 6th	November 2nd
May 4th	September 7th	
June 1st	October 5th	

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" wheelie 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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

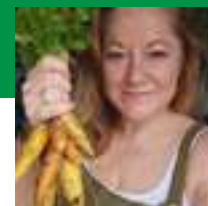
Email: [leisure@castlebromwichpc.gov.uk](mailto:leisure@castlebromwichpc.gov.uk)





# Community Growing

Laura took on her first allotment plot in April 2021, and now has a large double plot in Coleshill, Warwickshire, where she grows a variety of vegetables and flowers. In 2024, Laura won the "Biodiversity" award at the North Warwickshire Allotment Federation awards for the work she has done on encouraging wildlife on her allotment and awarded "Best Allotment" by Coleshill Town Council in 2023. You can follow Laura's allotment diary on Instagram, @lottieonthehill.



## Mental Health May \*

### \*Trigger warning

**I used to think I was a strong and resilient person who could just handle bumps in life with a "shit happens" attitude.**

I sat and held my 19 year old nephew's hand as he took his last breath before donating his organs to charity in June 2012. I held my mum's hand 2 years later as she went to sleep for the final time. I was strong. I was sad and mourning, but I was "okay." Mum died in June 2014.

In August 2023, I finally reached the "anger" stage of my grief. Because the world I was living in kept taking things from me in 2023. First, my dear friend Brooklyn. Then Ash's great aunty Pat. Then a dear neighbour. My baby. My 11 year old foster niece of seven years passed suddenly in her sleep. My feline companion of 14 years, Barney, slipped over the rainbow bridge as I held him tightly.

I was angry. Furious, in fact. But I didn't realise right away that it was actually my mum that I was angry with. How could she have left me to face all of this alone? How was she not there to hold me and tell me it would be okay? How was she not there to celebrate my 40th birthday in spite of all this terrible loss?

In the end, I just wanted to be with her. I snapped. After realising that I wasn't able to face all bloody option, I took some pills to help me fall asleep and be with her for a while. I went to the hospital, and my whole body was twitching as my nervous system tried to deal with the number of pills I'd taken. Thankfully, I didn't do myself any long-term damage. And even more thankfully, I woke up.

I took 6 weeks from work, then had a 2 month window of a phased return to work. The fact that my workplace and manager were so supportive was amazing to me. It meant that I wasn't anxious about going back and that I was able to take it one day at a time.

It's taken a long time, and a dose of Sertraline daily (and a course of talking therapy and gardening and art therapy) but I finally feel like myself again. My smiles aren't forced. I enjoy socialising again. Most importantly, I enjoy my plot again. Because there was a period of time that I would just come and sit at the allotment and not do anything because I didn't have the energy to try. And that was okay too. Because sometimes just being at the allotment, listening to the birds and soaking up the fresh air and beauty of my surroundings was just the medicine I needed.

Having a space to grow and nurture literally saved my life. It continues to help me to heal and recover, and to support me when I have those inevitable

wobbles. The gardening community has been so supportive, and I've been so lucky to find a bunch of wonderful, like-minded friends who check in and make me smile. It took a lot for me to speak up and ask for help. I'm so glad that I found the strength to do it.

Don't be ashamed. I'm not ashamed or embarrassed about what happened to me I'm grateful that all these things were available to help me. I'm grateful that I was able to say "yes" and accept the help I was offered and that I am here today. Not always thriving, but very much surviving. Some days are great days and yes, I do thrive. Some days I just pat myself on the back for getting out of bed.

Since sharing publicly about my own experience, I've had others reach out to me. What I always say to them is to ask for help. Speak to your GP. A trusted friend or colleague. Tell someone that you are struggling. Don't suffer in silence. It takes a lot of courage to speak up. But you are so much stronger than you think.



# FLOWERS

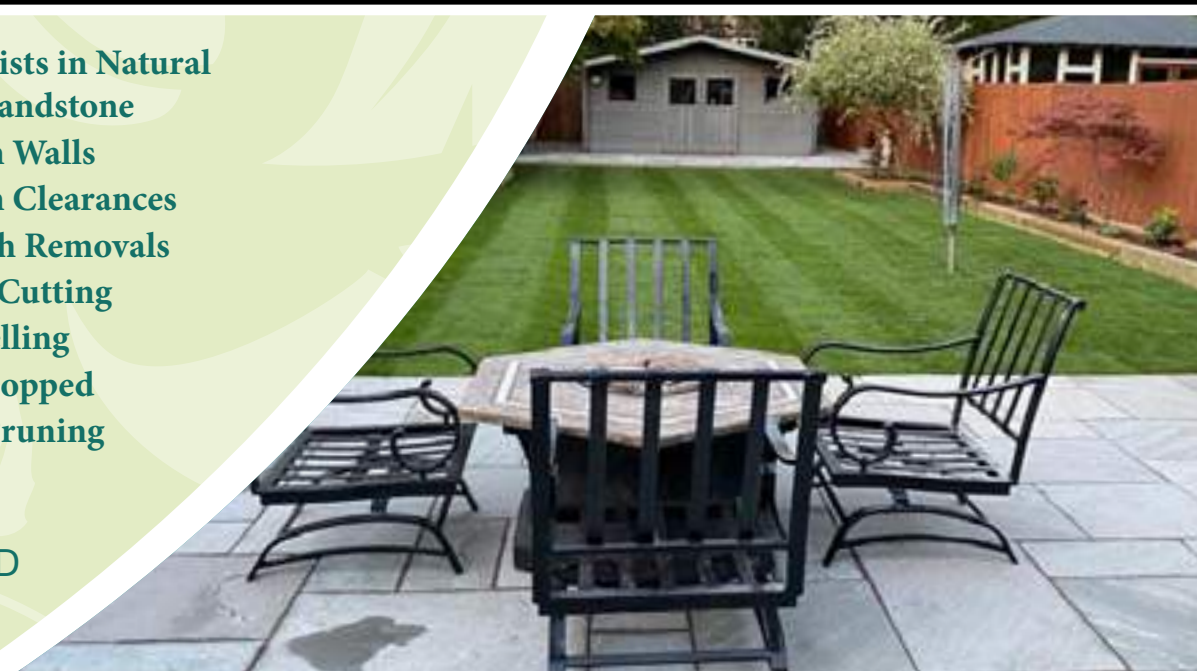
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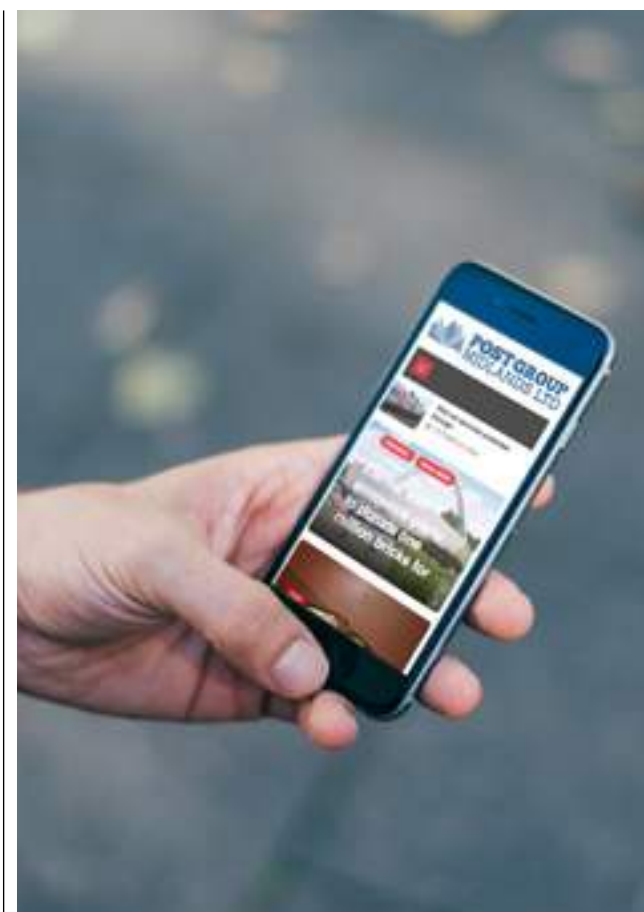
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 There's life in the old dog yet! So the saying goes. Of course, we're not talking about dogs here though I don't fancy much being compared to a dog. But, it's meant well, and I guess it's a compliment really – if you don't think about the dog part. It suggests that even we are old, we are still capable of doing things and looking after ourselves. It may even mean that someone is able to perform tasks or activities that may otherwise be unsuitable or not possible for their age.

Are you that person? Would you like to be that person? I know I would. I feel that if you really try you can make some serious progress into being that 'old dog'. Looking after ourselves is our responsibility and it can ensure that we are able to live as full a life as possible unless God has other plans for us over which we have no control. Even if you take one small thing that you incorporate into your daily routine and then another, when you're ready, you will see the benefits. I will always remember this advice as given by the much-missed Michael Mosley in his podcast 'Just one Thing'. Give it a listen if you can – it's a real gem.

## Exercise

Not an all-out gym-based exercise session or a marathon run. All you need to do is stay active making sure you are moving around as much as possible. Had a heavy meal? Then move. Don't sit on the sofa in one place after you've eaten. Get up and

walk around the room, go up the stairs, take a walk in the garden or just gently do some on the spot walking. It doesn't have to be strenuous. As long as you are not letting that food just sit in one place in your stomach. Ease it along on its rightful journey. I've done it. Sat in one place I mean. It feels uncomfortable and I know I should get up and move around but I have been unwilling to do it as the desire to leave the sofa has left me. Consequence? Heartburn and problems sleeping.

Simple, gentle and stress-free movements and actions might seem as though they are not doing any good. However, your body will thank you for it. You will feel better in every way.

This is so important. It might not always be possible with the British weather but, when you can, get out there. Sit in the garden. Pull out a few weeds or plant some seeds. Gardening is therapeutic and can aid in your mental well-being. Walk barefoot on the grass – ground yourself. Take a walk in nature – in a local park or around your neighbourhood. Connect with the earth and experience nature with all your senses – sight, smell, sound, touch and maybe even taste. The Mind website says that ‘spending time in green space or bringing nature into your everyday life can benefit your mental health. It can benefit your physical wellbeing too’.

Yes, get your hands covered in soil and don't be afraid. Believe it or not, this can have a significant positive impact on your gut health. In my opinion, there is too much emphasis put on keeping children clean and away from dirt and soil. We have grown up believing that dirt and germs should be feared. But soil is good for the

immune system. It strengthens it. Plus, a fearless attitude towards soil will also do wonders for your gut health. According to [tinyhealth.com](http://tinyhealth.com) 'in individuals living in urban environments, the microbial gut diversity is lower compared to individuals living in rural environments. This is thought to be linked to the decreased interaction with soil, as well as other environmental factors'.

So don't worry if you get dirt under your fingernails whilst gardening. Don't fret if it ends up on your face or in your hair. Think of all the good this is doing for your immune system and gut diversity. Of course, there is a time for cleanliness too and hand washing will continue to play a vital role in getting rid of harmful germs and bacteria.

Getting a good night's sleep matters and it is important that you get enough hours to benefit both your mental and physical health. While you sleep your body works to repair itself and carry out vital functions like clearing out waste and releasing hormones. You will recognise how you feel when you haven't slept well – mostly tired and unable to focus. A full and uninterrupted nights sleep will help to improve your memory, creativity and brain function. So, a good night's sleep can help you to feel more relaxed and able to cope better with the day. Don't feel guilty about having a lie-in. Just remember, it's what your body needs to feel the best it can.

Studies suggest that loneliness can lead to poor mental health and feelings of anxiety and depression. This is difficult. Not everyone is lucky enough to have people – be it family or friends – around them in their later years. Loneliness can affect

anyone at any time and it's not something that everyone feels confident about enough to be able to tackle it. However, it is extremely important to make connections with other people for the sake of your well-being. The NHS website says that 'if loneliness is very severe or lasts a long time, it might increase the risk of some physical conditions such as dementia and mental health conditions such as stress, anxiety, low mood or depression'.

Baby steps are perfectly ok. If face-to-face seems daunting – call someone. Even a message that's sent and then answered can uplift you. Can you stay in touch with your neighbours? Do they have a neighbourhood watch group that you can join? Are there any local activities or groups that you might be interested in joining? Very often, the local library will have details of these. Try something, anything to make contact with other people. Even if it's just going for a walk to the shops and connecting with staff or other customers. I am sure most people will be happy to say hello.

These are just a few of the things that you could try and incorporate into your daily routine. Of course, it goes without saying that food plays a fundamental role in how we feel. Food is the ultimate medicine, and I will never stop going on about how important a well-balanced and varied diet is for your body – especially your gut microbiome. Plant diversity, saying no to anything that's ultra-processed, cutting out a high intake of sugar and salt, avoiding fried foods, and avoiding snacking are guaranteed to making you feel a whole lot healthier.

Start small to see big rewards. Happy  
Easter everyone!



**Solution:**

**Solution:**

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38	E	R	A			39	A	L		40	L	O	W	I	N		42	K	I	A		
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69	C	O	A	L					70	T	H	Y						71	N	E	S	T

A 10x10 word search grid. The grid contains the following letters:

E	A	P	S	D	R	S	S	A	R	G	I	D
T	Y	L	F	U	A	R	B	O	R	H	N	B
A	A	N	E	O	O	M	A	T	H	O	T	U
R	P	R	N	U	O	I	P	T	M	A	A	T
E	S	P	I	U	I	L	C	A	E	R	U	T
N	I	T	H	E	B	O	I	A	E	F	R	E
E	Y	O	S	U	S	D	S	L	G	T	U	R
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A	D	A	I	S	Y	Y	A	Y	T	T	A	N
R	N	B	V	K	W	E	A	T	H	E	R	H

Highlighted words (blue outlines):

- EARTH (Row 1, Col 5 to Row 2, Col 12)
- TYPHOON (Row 2, Col 1 to Row 3, Col 12)
- RAIN (Row 3, Col 1 to Row 4, Col 4)
- SPRING (Row 4, Col 1 to Row 5, Col 6)
- NITROGEN (Row 5, Col 1 to Row 6, Col 12)
- VEIL (Row 6, Col 1 to Row 7, Col 4)
- NURSERY (Row 7, Col 1 to Row 8, Col 12)
- IZARD (Row 8, Col 1 to Row 9, Col 4)
- ADAM (Row 9, Col 1 to Row 10, Col 4)
- RAINBOW (Row 10, Col 1 to Row 11, Col 12)

Circled words (red outlines):

- SPIDER (Row 1, Col 10 to Row 2, Col 1)
- ARBOR (Row 2, Col 5 to Row 3, Col 2)
- HARBOR (Row 3, Col 5 to Row 4, Col 2)
- THOT (Row 3, Col 8 to Row 4, Col 5)
- UTOPIA (Row 4, Col 5 to Row 5, Col 2)
- TACT (Row 4, Col 8 to Row 5, Col 5)
- CAER (Row 5, Col 8 to Row 6, Col 5)
- FRET (Row 6, Col 10 to Row 7, Col 7)
- SLIGHT (Row 7, Col 7 to Row 8, Col 4)
- REAR (Row 8, Col 5 to Row 9, Col 2)
- YOUTH (Row 8, Col 8 to Row 9, Col 5)
- SLEIGH (Row 9, Col 5 to Row 10, Col 2)
- DOING (Row 9, Col 5 to Row 10, Col 8)
- GYFT (Row 9, Col 10 to Row 10, Col 7)
- YAK (Row 10, Col 10 to Row 11, Col 7)

## APRIL HATH PUT A SPIRIT OF YOUTH IN EVERY THING



# Local Sports

## One To Go For the 950th



Martial Arts Full contact 4th dan black belt Instructor Paddy Doyle completed more emphatic physical endurance feats within six days, at Yarningale Common South Warwickshire and Pooley Park mountain bike trails North Warwickshire. Setting twelve new course challenge records finishing just within the cut off times.

Doyle secured the following results carrying 44lb backpack: 11km 1 hr. 08 min. 44 sec, 11.5km 1 hr. 14 min. 58 sec, 12km 1 hr. 20 min. 33 sec, 12.5km 1 hr. 26 min. 08 sec, 13 km 1 hr. 31 min. 40 sec, 13.5km 1 hr. 35 min. 35 sec, 14 km 1 hr. 40 min. 26 sec, 14.5 km 1 hr. 44 min. 50 sec.

our days later four mountain bike distances were attempted carrying 30 lbs of mountain bike instructor expedition kit over steep declines reaching the finish lines with seconds to spare in the following times: 11.5km 53 min. 35 sec, 12km 59 min. 21 sec, 12.5km 1 hr. 05 min. 09 sec, 13 km 1 hr. 09 min. 44 sec.

*"I have not had a break since January pushing myself from the backpack speed marching, mountain biking and weight carrying events surprisingly I feel very strong and look forward to the career 950th near the end of May."*

Current official total of combined endurance fitness challenges and World Records stands at 949 documented feats.



*Pic credits David Hastings (Rugby Warwickshire)*

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# Coleshill Town F.C.

## Honouring Mr. Alan Beckett: A True Pillar of Colleshill Football



**10th April Alan received a High Sheriff of Warwickshire Award for his contribution to Colleshill Town.**

Below is part of the nomination that was put forward for him:

As a member of the Board at Colleshill Town he has given hours to ensuring that the history of the Club is correctly documented, that the ground is tidy, he has put his DIY skills to the test over the years to bring the ground up to FA standards, he has made sure match reports and live updates are published correctly and deadlines are met, he has done the hospitality on match days and has brought in an initiative encouraging local kids to be mascots on match days.

Alan is currently the Colleshill Town Junior

Section Chairman and despite being 70 years old, puts his heart and soul into this venture. He is the conduit between the Club and the Junior Section.

Alan has always envisioned Colleshill Town having a thriving Junior Section to match the success of the first team. In the past there have been a few youth teams associated with the Club but there has been no Junior Section, as a whole. In the last five years Alan has single handedly brought this to fruition. We currently have 7 Junior teams that compete in the Central Warwickshire Youth Football League from U8s to U14s, meaning each week over 70 children get to play grassroots football for the Club. His vision was for those children to go all the way up to adulthood and one day even have some of them playing for the Colleshill Town first team. He has also created a highly successful weekly mini soccer session that consistently sees 40+ kids attending each week. He can still be seen training our future budding football stars on a Monday night!

In a bid to spend more time with his wife, Alan has announced that this football season will be his last as Chairman as he wants to take a step back and enjoy his retirement. He will stand down in May 2025. He will be greatly missed.

## The 2024/25 Northern Premier League is drawing to a close

At the time of writing this article Colleshill have just one League game to play, Away at Lye Town on Easter Monday. Lye have already been relegated and Colleshill will finish in a very respectable 8th, or 9th position, but the highlight of their season is still to come, the Walsall Senior Cup Final, at the Bescot Stadium, Walsall FC, on Tuesday 13th May, against Darlestone Town who look like finishing ONE place above Colleshill, and as the sides drew both of the games against each other this season 2-2, it's going to be a very close cracker.

We are hoping to have several players at the game that won the W.S.C. back in 1983, what a picture that will be, the two CTFC teams who have won the W.S.C. 42 years apart, together for one night only!

We are still trying to track down a few from that side, so if you recognise any of the names below, and have more information, please forward their details to Alan Beckett 07791740976. Many thanks.

Colin Holder - Manager, Bob Dyer - Captain, Andy Foote - goalscorer, Brian Jordan - goalscorer and Danny Williamson

**Coleshill's League record this season with ONE game to play.**

**Played 39 Won 16 Drawn 8 Lost 15 Goals For 59 Goals Against 53 Points 56 Position 9th.**

## Water Orton & District Tennis Club



**Well here we are ready for the new Summer Season which has now started. If anyone would like details on membership, adult tennis groups, junior/youth coaching groups or Cardio Fitness Tennis, then please e-mail or text me on the details listed below.**

We have spaces available for adults and children and everyone is made to feel welcome. If you would like to visit our club and have a look round then please drop by whenever you can. We have fully qualified L.T.A. Coaches at our club. We have Men's Summer League Teams, Ladies Summer League, Spring League Teams and an Adult Mixed Doubles Team. take part in local inter-club tournaments which we send teams of our junior and youth players. We have an on-line members booking system so if you want one or two hours tennis playing as a family or as a pair you can book on line then turn up and play without any interruptions. All our members get the code to the car park gate, your own key into the tennis courts and the code into the clubroom so you just turn up and enjoy a game. Please get in touch if you want any more details or just call in and see us, you will be very welcome.

Please contact Paul Messenger Club Chairman.

Text 07538 601246 or e-mail: paul.messenger82@hotmail.co.uk

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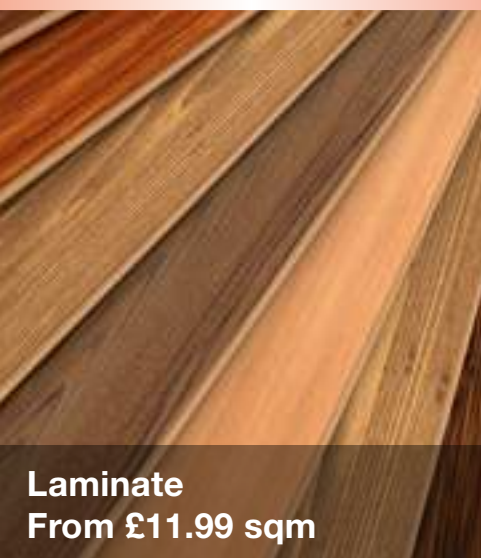
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