SPRING 2026

PARISH NEWS

ISSUE 79

PARISH CHAIR



Cllr Gareth Brunt

I would like to take this opportunity to inform parishioners that, after almost 20 years, the Parish Council has vacated the parish office at Meir Heath and Rough Close Village Hall.

This decision was not taken lightly. However, the demand from the Meir Heath and Rough Close Village Hall Committee for continued use of the office was, in the Parish Council's opinion, financially unjustifiable.

In the interest of responsible financial management and ensuring the best value for our parishioners, the Council has secured a new office at Trade Locally, 209 Grindley Lane.

The new location provides ample parking and is available at approximately a third of the previous cost, representing a significant saving for the Parish.

I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to all the volunteer litter pickers, members of the public, and fellow councillors who have contributed their time and effort to help keep our Parish clean and tidy. Your commitment to the community is greatly appreciated.

Finally, there has been some concern regarding an incident in Meir Heath on 6 March. The police have informed us that this was a one-off incident and have reassured the Council that it has been dealt with appropriately. Residents should feel reassured that there is no ongoing concern related to this matter.

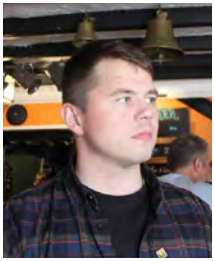
Thank you for your continued support of the Parish Council and our community.

Cllr Gareth Brunt

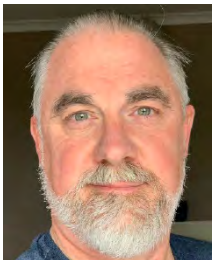
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BLYTHE BRIDGE



Blythe Bridge Camera Club

Records show that the very first meeting of the Blythe Bridge Camera Club took place on 19th October 1950 at the former Blythe Bridge Tennis Club, which was located at the bottom of Grindley Lane.

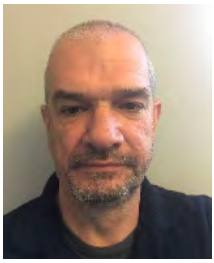
Since those early beginnings, the club has gone from strength to strength and is now proudly celebrating over 75 years of photographic enthusiasm and community spirit.

Today, Blythe Bridge Camera Club meets at Blythe Bridge Village Hall on Monday evenings from April to September, providing a friendly and welcoming environment for anyone with an interest in photography—whether you are a complete beginner or a more experienced photographer.

Frank Winfield was at the first meeting of the Blythe Camera Club in October 1950, with his father Bill Winfield, so a long link with the club.

It all began with Syril Bradshaw who owned the hairdressers by Blythe Bridge Station where we used to get our hair cut and he persuaded us to come along.

New members are always warmly welcomed. For further information, please contact Frank on 01782 393771 or email secretary@blythebridgecameraclub.org.uk



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Tudor Hollow Improvements

Fulford Parish Council is pleased to share a positive update regarding long-standing concerns at Tudor Hollow.

Over a number of years, both the Parish Council and local residents reported a fallen tree and significant overgrowth in the area to Staffordshire County Council. Unfortunately, the tree was not removed, and the vegetation continued to spread, eventually encroaching onto the roadway.

With safety and the well-being of residents in mind, Fulford Parish Council voted to take proactive action, despite the matter falling under the responsibility of Staffordshire County Council. The Council felt it was important to address the issue for the benefit of the community.

Our Grounds Maintenance Contractor has now completed the necessary work. Great care was taken to protect local wildlife, ensuring that habitats were preserved and that natural areas were retained to support biodiversity.

The result is a safer, tidier environment that continues to respect and protect the natural character of Tudor Hollow. Fulford Parish Council remains committed to maintaining and improving our local area for the benefit of all residents.



Before



After

MEIR HEATH



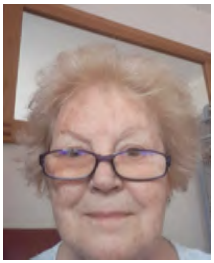
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MEIR HEATH

Hilderstone Road Speed Campaign

We knew that this would be a long and arduous process, and that is exactly what is happening. We have been assured by Staffordshire County Council that the Feasibility Study will be taking place and that we have been put forward for inclusion in next year's capital budget which begins on the 1st April 2026. We have the full support of Dr. Allison Gardner MP, Councillor Sean Baggeley and Councillor Alec Sandiford, not to mention over 1,000 members of the Community. Watch this space!

Cllr Penny Meakin

Meir Heath Community Facebook Page

Having completed the petition for the Hilderstone Road Speed Campaign, it became clear that our Community wanted a forum whereby they could communicate with each other. A Facebook page for the Community of Meir Heath did not exist, so one was created last November. The idea was that we could have discussions and share information about local issues and concerns. It also became clear that there was a need to raise awareness for us to look out for our vulnerable members.

Six months later we have over 600 members and continue to grow. All that we ask is that you are a local resident and we encourage local businesses to join too, but ask that they keep your ads to one per month.

We also have some amazing photographers, so 2027 will see a calendar of shots of Meir Heath. More of that in the Winter edition of the Parish News.

Footpath Clearance

The first of our footpath clearances, took place last October, where working with the Stone Ramblers, we began the clearance of Footpath 38, which runs past the Allotments in Meir Heath.



A huge thank you to everyone that took part. If you want to get involved, these

are the dates and sessions:

All sessions 10:00–14:00:

Footpaths 38 and 30
Meet at the Windmill Car Park
• Tuesday 5 May
• Tuesday 2 June
• Tuesday 7 July

Footpath 30
Meet at the Spot Gate Car Park
• Tuesday 4 August
• Tuesday 2 September

For more information please contact cllrmeakin@fulfordparishcouncil.gov.uk

Parking outside of Meir Heath Academy

Many of you are concerned about car parking around Meir Heath Academy, particularly around Golborn Avenue, at drop off and pickup times.

Staffordshire County Council's new 'School Streets Scheme' is being considered. This aims to reduce traffic and congestion outside schools at drop-off and pick-up times, providing safer and healthier spaces for children, residents and school staff. We'll let you know more in our next magazine.

In the meantime, you can report any parking problems, including parking near schools, to Staffordshire County Council www.staffordshire.gov.uk and look for 'problem parking'.

WTA Tea & Toast

WTA Tea & Toast is a welcoming, down-to-earth community space where people can gain connection and purpose. It's more than just a warm drink and a slice of toast – it's a place where conversations begin, confidence grows, and individuals feel seen and supported.



From the moment you arrive, there is a genuine sense of warmth and belonging. The relaxed environment encourages open conversation, helping people who may feel isolated or unsure of their next step to connect with others who understand. The team create a supportive atmosphere where no one feels judged.

What makes WTA Tea & Toast truly special is how it links into the wider Walk Talk Action journey. It often becomes

the first step for individuals to engage, build trust, and then move on to deeper support such as the 10-step programme, coaching, or new opportunities within the community. It gently opens the door to change in a way that feels safe and achievable.

The impact is clear—people leave feeling uplifted, more connected, and more hopeful about their future. For many, it's the start of rebuilding confidence, finding purpose, and taking action toward a better state of mind.

WTA Tea & Toast proves that something simple, when done with care and good intention, can create meaningful and lasting change in people's lives.

We welcome guest speakers to book in with us to share any opportunities to the group. Please email teri@walktalkaction.co.uk



Grass Verges

The Parish Council works hard to maintain the appearance of our Parish and keep it an attractive place for everyone to live. This includes regularly clearing paths and footways and ensuring that grassed areas are properly maintained.



Unfortunately, in some locations, this effort is being undermined by damage to grass verges. Grindley Lane has been particularly affected. If you have recently had work carried out at your property, we kindly ask that you ensure the grass verges outside your property are restored to good condition once the work is complete.

Where verges have been damaged by utility providers or private contractors, residents are asked to report this directly to the County Council so that the responsible party can return and reinstate the verge. Reports can be submitted using the

following link:
https://formshighways.staffordshire.gov.uk/

Grass cutting across the parish will begin in March. Unfortunately, due to the poor condition of several grass verges, some areas may not be suitable for cutting. We therefore encourage residents to review the condition of the verge adjacent to their property and take any necessary action to restore it where required.

The Parish Council may contact residents directly where verges require attention. Your cooperation in helping maintain these areas is greatly appreciated and plays an important part in keeping our parish looking its best for the whole community

Cllr Carol Baskin

Grindley Lane Footpath Restored for the Community

After years of raising concerns about the unsafe condition of the footpath along Grindley Lane, Fulford Parish Council has taken positive action to resolve the issue.

Despite repeated reports to Staffordshire Highways, the path continued to deteriorate, making it difficult — and at times unsafe — for residents to use. Determined to improve safety and accessibility for the community, the Parish Council stepped in and arranged for the necessary work to be carried out directly.

It is fantastic to now see residents once again confidently using the footpath. The restored path provides a safer, more accessible route for walkers and helps reconnect parts of our community.
To help maintain these improvements, Fulford Parish Council would like to make contact with the adjacent landowners regarding regular hedge cutting and ensuring that any machinery used remains on the grass verge rather than the edge of the footpath. This will help protect the surface and ensure the footpath is not lost again in the future.

The Parish Council would like to thank residents for their patience and looks forward to working collaboratively with landowners to keep this important local route safe and accessible for everyone.



Before



After

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ROUGH CLOSE



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VE Day Commemorative Planter Installed on Leadendale Green

Fulford Parish Council is proud to announce the installation of a new metal planter on Leadendale Green, donated to the community in honour of Victory in Europe (VE) Day. The planter serves as a lasting tribute to the courage, sacrifice, and resilience shown by the men, women, and families of the Second World War.



The bespoke metal planter has been positioned in a prominent spot on Leadendale Green, providing a striking focal point for residents and visitors. Designed to reflect both strength and remembrance, it captures the spirit of VE Day and the national unity it represents. The planter will be filled with seasonal flowers chosen to bring colour and interest throughout the year.

The Parish Council donated the planter as part of its ongoing commitment to enhancing public spaces while acknowledging significant moments in national history. VE Day, marking the end of the war in Europe on 8th May 1945, remains an important milestone, and the planter provides a thoughtful and visible way to commemorate the occasion at the heart of the community.

The installation has been warmly welcomed by residents, many of whom value the care and attention given to green spaces across the Parish. The Council extends its thanks to everyone involved in the installation and planting, including local volunteers who continue to support the upkeep of Leadendale Green. The new VE Day planter stands as a lasting symbol of remembrance and community pride.

Cllr Andrew Lovatt

Fulford Parish Council Agrees Budget and Precept for 2026–27

Fulford Parish Council has approved its budget and parish precept for the 2026–27 financial year, which begins on 1 April 2026.

Following detailed discussions and careful financial planning, councillors agreed to keep the parish element of the Council Tax precept at the same level as 2025–26. As a result, the annual charge for a Band D property will decrease from £46.03 in 2025/26 to £45.53 in 2026/27.

The Parish Council recognises that increases in Council Tax are a concern for residents in the current economic climate. For consecutive years, the Council has therefore maintained a standstill position. However, with devolution fast approaching, the Parish Council may not always be able to sustain this approach, as the future remains uncertain. It is also important to note that the Parish share represents only a small proportion of the overall Council Tax bill.

To ensure transparency, the Council has published a table showing the annual and monthly charges for each Council Tax band, clearly setting out the actual cost for households.

The agreed budget will allow the Parish Council to:

• Continue cutting a large number of highway verges across the Parish

• Maintain the high standard of facilities at Grindley Park
• Continue work on the Neighbourhood Plan

In addition, the Council is mindful that, as a result of local government review and devolution, further community assets may be transferred to the Parish level. In future years, this may require an increase in the precept to ensure any additional assets can be maintained for the long-term benefit of the community. Fulford Parish Council wishes to reassure residents that financial decisions are never taken lightly.

Councillors carefully scrutinise budgets and future commitments, with a strong focus on protecting local services and investing in facilities that benefit residents. The needs of the community remain at the heart of every decision the Council makes.

Year	Total Precept	Council Tax Base	Annual @ Band A	Annual @ Band B	Annual @ Band C	Annual @ Band D	Annual @ Band E	Annual @ Band F	Annual @ Band G	Annual @ Band H	Monthly @ Band A	Monthly @ Band B	Monthly @ Band C	Monthly @ Band D
2025-26	£105,208	2285.54	£30.69	£35.80	£40.92	£46.03	£56.26	£66.49	£76.72	£92.06	£2.56	£2.98	£3.41	£3.84

Actual Amount of Rise

Year	Total Precept Increase	Council Tax Base	Annual @ Band A	Annual @ Band B	Annual @ Band C	Annual @ Band D	Annual @ Band E	Annual @ Band F	Annual @ Band G	Annual @ Band H	Monthly @ Band A	Monthly @ Band B	Monthly @ Band C	Monthly @ Band D
2026-27	£104,947	2305.24	£30.35	£35.41	£40.47	£45.53	£55.64	£65.76	£75.88	£91.05	£2.53	£2.95	£3.37	£3.79

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DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

An Update from Your Hardworking Borough Councillor, Alec Sandiford

Working hard for you all year round to protect our area, stand up for residents and keep our villages places to be proud of.

Over the last few months, I have been working hard right across the area on the issues that matter most to local residents. From protecting green spaces to reporting highways problems, tackling anti-social behaviour and pushing for stronger enforcement, I have continued working to make sure our villages remain places we can all be proud of.
A major recent success has been helping to win the campaign to protect the heathland on Grange Road from housing development. Protecting our green spaces matters deeply to many residents, and I was proud to play my part in supporting that campaign and standing up for the character of our local area.

I have also continued reporting potholes and blocked grids, while pressing the County Council to do better. Too often, residents are let down by poor responsiveness and weak follow-through, but I will continue raising issues and pushing for action until repairs are carried out properly.

Keeping our villages neat, tidy and well cared for remains a key priority. That includes supporting efforts to improve cleanliness, working with an increased team of litter pickers, helping secure new bins, and working alongside council officers to deal with fly-tipping and other environmental issues.
Residents have also raised repeated concerns about anti-social behaviour, dangerous parking and wider enforcement issues. I have been working hard on these matters, including action on illegal and unsafe parking such as transporters, support for a range of local speed campaigns, and work on several ongoing enforcement cases across the area.

Parking pressures remain a concern in parts of the ward, and I have continued working to improve parking arrangements for residents wherever possible. I have also been supporting efforts to get green spaces and highways adopted from greedy maintenance companies so that residents are treated more fairly and are not left carrying the burden of poor private management arrangements.

Throughout all of this work, I have maintained 100 per cent attendance at council meetings, because I believe residents deserve a councillor who shows up, speaks up and works hard all year round — not just at election time. Whether it is protecting green spaces, tackling day-to-day problems or standing up for residents when others fall short, I remain committed to working hard for our area and keeping residents updated every step of the way.

Illegal Traveller Site Update

At the time of writing, Stafford Borough Council and I have made good progress in the fight against the illegal traveller development, supported throughout by determined local residents.

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

The planning application submitted by the applicant was refused, and because of the enforcement action already under way, they then ran out of time to lodge an appeal. That now means there is currently no route open to secure further applications or approvals on the site, which is very welcome news.

Because there have been major breaches of the stop notice, there is due to be another court hearing. I hope this will lead to firm action against what has been a serious disregard for the rules and processes that the overwhelming majority of people rightly follow.

One strange aspect of the current situation is that those involved have largely moved off the site, leaving only one caravan and someone watching over it. At this stage, it is unclear whether they have gone to another site or whether they intend to return.

Whatever happens next, the message remains the same: the Council, residents and I will not give up until this matter is resolved properly and once and for all. I promised residents that I would support them every step of the way, and that remains exactly my position.

We have made strong progress, and I will continue to keep residents informed as matters develop.

Local Government Reorganisation Update

The Government is still expected to press ahead with local government reorganisation, with a decision on its preferred model for the new authorities due this summer. At the time of writing, however, there is still no confirmed date for that decision.

From mid-February to the end of March, residents, local stakeholders, councillors and the existing councils were all invited to submit their views through a formal consultation. In total, five different options were put forward from across Staffordshire.

Fulford Parish Council and I, in my role as Stafford Borough Councillor, have supported the option of creating two unitary authorities for Staffordshire: North Staffordshire and South Staffordshire. Under this proposal, the current boundaries affecting our area would remain in place, with our area falling within the South Staffordshire authority, while Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire Moorlands and Newcastle-under-Lyme would form the North Staffordshire authority.

While I do not believe this reorganisation is necessary, I do believe that, out of the five options on the table, this is the best one available for our area. It offers the clearest structure, keeps communities together more sensibly, and is the option I believe would work best for residents locally.

I will continue to keep residents updated as soon as the Government confirms its decision and as more detail becomes available.

GENERAL NEWS

Neighbourhood Plan Householder Questionnaire – Summary of Findings

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire. We received 141 responses from residents across the Parish, representing a broad range of age groups and households.

What Residents Value Most
There is a strong appreciation for:

• *The rural setting and open countryside*

• *Green spaces, mature trees and hedgerows*

• *Community spirit and village identity*

• *Quietness and separation from the Stoke-on-Trent urban area*

• *Local amenities and schools*

Residents clearly value the Parish's character and wish to see its distinctive rural feel protected.

Areas of Concern
The most frequently raised concerns include:

• *Speeding traffic and road safety*

• *Poor road conditions and potholes*

• *Limited public transport*

• *Lack of regular bus services*

• *Anti-social behaviour in some areas*

Transport challenges were a consistent theme, with many residents stating that access to a car is essential due to infrequent or non-existent bus connections to nearby towns.

Future Development
There is strong support for:

• *Protecting green spaces and surrounding fields*

• *Avoiding dense or large-scale developments*

• *Ensuring new housing reflects the character and scale of existing properties*

• *High-quality design with good energy efficiency*

• *Retaining separation from nearby urban areas*

Many respondents support a mix of housing to meet local needs, particularly affordable homes, but emphasise that development must be sympathetic and proportionate.

Community Facilities
Residents highlighted the importance of:

• *Protecting and enhancing Meir Heath centre*

• *Maintaining local schools and community facilities*

• *Providing safe walking and cycling routes*

• *Ensuring adequate green and open spaces*

GENERAL NEWS

There were mixed views on sports provision and play areas, with some calling for improvements or additional facilities.

Transport
The overwhelming majority of respondents regularly use a car. Public transport is widely regarded as inadequate, with limited service frequency and poor connectivity to surrounding towns. Many residents feel rural isolation is a significant issue for those without access to private transport.

Parish Identity
There were mixed views on whether the Parish Council should consider changing its name, with some suggesting a broader name to better reflect the full area it represents.

Overall, the responses show a clear message: residents deeply value the Parish's rural character, community spirit and green environment, and want future planning decisions to protect and enhance these qualities while addressing traffic, transport and infrastructure challenges.

What's Next
The Parish Council will translate these findings into policies for the merging Neighbourhood Plan that protect rural character, natural and historic environments, safeguard our community facilities and services and seek to ensure the right types and mix of homes are delivered.

The Household Questionnaire also gave us further insight into other important community matters and concerns.

The Parish Council will take these and seek to engage relevant bodies and organisations, raising awareness of locally important issues such as the lack of public transport, limited bus services and anti-social behaviour.

The Parish Council sincerely thank all those who participated to inform the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

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GENERAL NEWS

Fulford Parish Office – Change of Location

Fulford Parish Council regrets to inform residents that the Parish Office will no longer be located at Meir Heath and Rough Close Village Hall. This decision follows a significant increase in the proposed licence fee to £400 per month and electricity charges of £450 per quarter, along with elements of the legal licence agreement, including permitted use, that could not be mutually agreed upon.

The Parish Office has now relocated to the Trade Locally building 209 Grindley Lane for £200 per month, which includes electricity and internet.

The office will continue to operate at the same times: Wednesdays and Thursdays, 09:00–15:00.

Residents are kindly asked to call ahead to arrange an appointment on 07946 169337 before visiting.

Shuttle Bus to Stone – Use it or Lose it!

Since June 2024, the Parish Council has been subsidising a monthly shuttle bus to Stone. Unfortunately, uptake has been low, and we risk losing this valuable service if it isn't used.

This bus is here to support our community – whether it's for shopping, appointments, or just a day out. Please help spread the word so that all residents know about it and can make the most of this facility.

Remember: If you don't use it, you may lose it!

Refuse Collection



A refuse collection vehicle will be at the following locations between 09-1100hrs:

Fulford Village Hall – Saturday 28th November 2026

Blythe Bridge Mayfield Drive car park – Saturday 24th October 2026

Rough Close Common Lane Layby – Saturday 26th September 2026

It does not include such items as soil, rubble, fridges, freezers or televisions, liquid waste, paint waste and hazardous materials.

Free Defibrillator Training



Thursday 18th June
1900-2000 - Springcroft Primary School

Wednesday 15th July
1800-1900 - Fulford Village Hall

GENERAL NEWS





Outward timings	
Blythe Bridge Flats, Uttoxeter Road - bus shelter	10:00
Stallington Road, Stallington - bus shelter	10:05
Fulford Village Hall, Fulford Road - bus shelter	10:20
Windmill Pub, Meir Heath - car park	10:26
Morrisons, Stone - car park	10:50
Marks & Spencers, Stone - layby near Canoe Club	11:00

Return timings	
Marks & Spencers, Stone - layby near Canoe Club	13:00
Morrisons, Stone - car park	13:10
Windmill Pub, Meir Heath - car park	13:30
Fulford Village Hall, Fulford Rd - bus shelter	13:36
Stallington Rod, Stallington - bus shelter	13:42
Blythe Bridge Flats, Uttoxeter Road - bus shelter	13:47

Rooted Christmas Trees Bring Festive Cheer Across Fulford Parish

This winter, Fulford Parish was once again brightened by the addition of beautifully decorated Christmas trees installed across key locations throughout the Parish. The initiative, now becoming a cherished seasonal tradition, brings together community volunteers, parish councillors, and local groups to create a warm and welcoming festive atmosphere for residents and visitors alike.

This year, sustainability was at the heart of the project. Unlike previous cut trees, the Parish Council chose rooted, living Christmas trees that can flourish and grow year after year rather than being used only for the festive period. This environmentally conscious approach supports long-term sustainability, reduces waste, and enhances the local landscape. The trees can already be seen flourishing in their permanent spots, becoming part of the Parish's natural character.

Sites across the Parish where the trees are planted:

- *Fulford Village Green*
- *Moss Gate*
- *Stallington*
- *Saverley Green*
- *Meir Heath*
- *Rough Close*
- *Blythe Bridge by Creda Roundabout*
- *Blythe Bridge outside the flats*

Each tree was decorated with festive lights, seasonal ornaments and local school handmade decorations, bringing a touch of magic to the darker winter evenings. Carols were also sung around the Saverley Green tree a few days before Christmas.



Local residents commented on how the illuminated trees help create a sense of togetherness, especially during the run-up to Christmas.

A Community Effort

The project has once again relied on the support of dedicated community volunteers, parish groundsmen and Parish Council members. From preparing the ground and planting to the careful installation of lights, each tree represents hours of shared effort. The Parish Council extends warm thanks to everyone involved – your support helps keep this tradition thriving. A special thank you to the children and staff at SpringCroft Primary School and Meir Heath Primary School.

Cllr Andrew Lovatt

GENERAL NEWS

First Christmas Party at St Francis' Church, Meir Heath

On Friday 5th December 2025, Fulford Parish Council proudly hosted its first ever Christmas community event at St Francis' Church, Meir Heath — an afternoon filled with festive spirit, music, creativity, and joy for all ages. The free party was warmly received by residents across the Parish and has set a fantastic foundation for what promises to become a cherished annual tradition.

The celebrations were beautifully opened by the Fulford Community Choir, who performed a selection of traditional Christmas carols and songs. Their enthusiastic singing encouraged people to join in, supported by song sheets handed out to everyone. The sound of voices filled the church hall with a heartwarming atmosphere and brought the community together in the true spirit of the season.



Throughout the event, attendees enjoyed a range of homemade cakes and sweet treats set out on each table. Parish Council Volunteers served teas, coffees, hot chocolates and soft drinks from the kitchen offering a warm and welcoming break between the festivities. The refreshment area became a lovely space for neighbours to chat, reconnect, and enjoy time together.

A variety of Christmas-themed activities kept families entertained, including festive gingerbread decorating, a lively tombola with prizes generously donated by local residents and businesses, assorted children's games and, of course, Santa's Grotto. Every child who visited Father Christmas left with a present, bringing smiles and festive excitement to our young visitors.

This first Christmas event at St Francis' Church was a resounding success, drawing residents from across Fulford, Meir Heath, Rough Close, and surrounding areas. The Parish Council wishes to thank all volunteers, donors, St Francis' Church, and the Fulford Community Choir for their time, enthusiasm, and dedication.

In particular we would like to thank Ms Jenni Walker from cup-cake-queen, Saverley Green who made all the delicious gingerbread men free of charge and Mrs Lynn Kent, also from Saverley Green, who made some lovely cupcakes.

And last but by no means least, the main man of the day, Santa himself! Thank you Mr Mark Halkett. You did a wonderful job and at the last minute too!

The community's response has been overwhelmingly positive, and plans are already being considered to make the next Christmas event even bigger and brighter.

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COUNTY COUNCILLOR

An Update from the County Councillor

At this time of year, the toll of a harsh, wet winter is being borne out on Staffordshire's roads.

Now that spring is finally here, the county council is starting to roll out its road maintenance programmes for the year. The year-long programme will see:

• Carriageway structural and preventative maintenance to fix roads before they deteriorate further

• Targeted work on known maintenance hotspots

• Maintaining, strengthening and renewing bridges

• Improving drainage to help roads cope better with impactful weather

• Renewed road markings, signage and safety barriers

The programme also supports coordination of works, including schemes delivered with developers, helping to reduce disruption and ensure improvements are planned and delivered across the county.

Added to this, crews will also be out dealing with the backlog of lower-level potholes that are being seen around the county. While the most serious defects are repaired within 24 hours or seven days depending on their severity, lower level potholes can take longer. And, with machines such as the JCB Pothole Pro, Thermal Road repairs and our velocity patcher, residents should see more defects repaired over the coming months.



LOCAL POLICE

STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE

Your local officers

Stone Town

Oulton, Barlaston, Fulford, St Michael's & Stonefield and Walton



PCSO 25565
Megan Rogers



PCSO 8849
Rebecca Davies



PCSO 28240
Neil Moffatt

"Your local police and Borough Council working together to keep your community safe"

Visit us at www.staffordshire.police.uk

Non-Emergency 101 | **Emergency 999** | **staffordshirepolice** | **@staffspolice**

Drop in and chat with your local Officers

Saturday 20th June 2026 & Saturday 12th September 2026

Event Times & Locations:

13:00 – 13:30	Swynnerton Arms Car Park
13:45 – 14:15	Windmill Car Park, Meir Heath
14:30 – 15:00	Ridgway Drive, Blythe Bridge
15:15 – 15:45	Stallington
16:00 – 16:30	Fulford Village Hall

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STONE RAMBLERS



News from the Stone Ramblers and 'Walk of the Month'

By the time that you get this, I really hope that it has stopped raining, that the sun is shining and the spring flowers are blooming!

I'm writing this as we have yet another weather warning for wind, rain and perhaps a bit of snow, but I do live in Meir Heath, twinned with Narnia!

The dreadful weather hasn't deterred us and perhaps have a little laugh, when you look at the photos that I've included this time. Intrepid, that's us!

We've recently got back from our annual jaunt to Shropshire, where we spent three days enjoying the beautiful scenery of that rather remote county. Up soon is Almouth in Northumberland, which will be amazing. At the present time we are completing Two Saints Way, in manageable stages, over the course of the next couple of years.

I've thought carefully about this walk. Everywhere is so wet underfoot, so this walk around Yarnfield and Swynnerton, includes quite a lot of road walking.

Walk of the Month: Yarnfield to Swynnerton

Swynnerton is the home of Lord Stafford and the Fitzherbert family and was listed in the Doomsday book. The record shows the settlement consisted of ten villagers' households and five smallholders.

Part of this walk goes along the perimeter of the former Royal Ordnance Factory, more specifically a filling factory, located to the south of the village. It was built between 1939 and 1941 and remained operational until 1958.

Length: 5.3 miles / 8.5 kilometres and there are 14 stiles and it should take you between 3 and 4 hours.

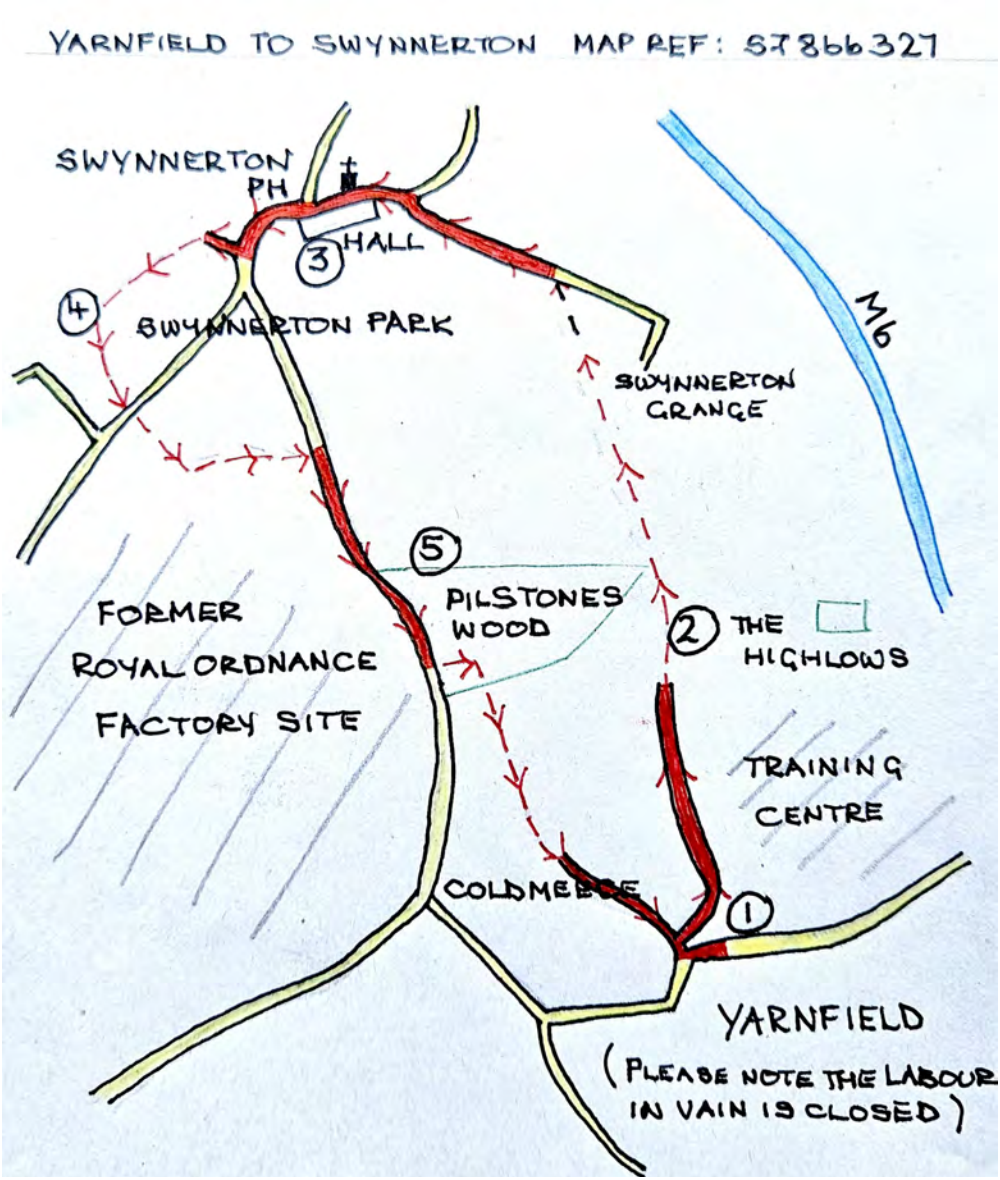
Refreshments: Fizherbert Arms, Swynnerton. Please note that the Labour in Vain pub in Yarnfield is now closed.

1. Park as near as you can to the Labour in Vain (now closed). Leave the former Inn car park and go right and then right again into High Lows Lane following it round to a tree-lined track. Passing the BT Training College, seen through the trees on the right, and the wireless mast left, pass through fields to a private concrete road leading to The Highlows.

2. Here turn right and after 25 yds turn left passing a large corn drying barn. In 150 yds take the stile on the right in the corner of the field. Now go diagonally right across the field, over a stile and slightly to the left on a well-defined path. Ignore a track on the right just before the next stile. Over the stile and keeping the

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STONE RAMBLERS



STONE RAMBLERS

same general direction head for a large oak tree to the left of a pylon. Now cross 2 fields to 2 stiles set close together and continue half right to the corner of the field, crossing the stile. In 25 yds, cross another stile on the right, bearing left up the field to the corner of the wood and over the stile into Hall Lane. Going left walk into Swynnerton.

3. To the right is the Church of England church and to the left one of the few remaining private Catholic chapels left in the UK.

St Mary's Church dates back to the 13th Century. Back in the 14th Century a market used to be held every Wednesday and a fair was held on August 15th each year. A grand manor house used to exist until its destruction by Cromwell's men – its replacement being Swynnerton Hall, built in 1725 by Francis Smith of Warwick. It still dominates the Swynnerton skyline today. A Roman Catholic Church, built in 1868 by Gilbert Blount, adjoins the hall. Most of the houses in the village are post war and help to make up a thriving community.

At the First World War memorial turn left past the main entrance to the Hall. Immediately past a black and white period cottage we go right and take a tarmac path going straight ahead between houses, to a minor road. Crossing over and passing the cricket field on the left go through a kissing gate and along the edge of a wood to a coppice directly ahead.

4. Now take a permissive path through the trees until you reach another minor road. Here go straight across and follow a path running parallel with the fence line until you meet metal railings.

Turning left keeping the fence on our right (after 300 yds note the view of Swynnerton Hall on the left) continue to the road, turn right and taking care of traffic walk for about ½ mile.

About 150 yds past the Land Fill site entrance turn left, into a wood and continue on a defined path leading to an open field. Keeping the hedge on our right proceed to a concrete road, cross and take the path which leads directly to Yarnfield and the car park.

We should make you aware that changes can occur to footpaths, so please let us know if you spot any.

We're planning to have a stall at the Stone Farmers' Market this Spring, so please come along for a chat and find out a bit more about the Stone Ramblers. Alternatively have a look at our website www.stoneramblers.org.uk where you find all the information that you need to join us. Meanwhile, Happy Walking and don't let those pictures put you off!

Penny Meakin
Chair, Stone Ramblers.

GENERAL NEWS



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COMMUNITY AWARDS

Fulford Parish Council – Community Awards 2026

Fulford Parish Council is delighted to introduce our bi-annual Community Awards, celebrating the people, groups, and businesses that make our community such a wonderful place to live.

These awards recognise those who go the extra mile to support others, strengthen our neighbourhood, and make a real difference in Fulford Parish.

Award Categories

Nominations and votes are now open for the following categories:

1. Business of the Year

2. Young Person of the Year

3. Community Group of the Year

4. Neighbour of the Year

5. Service to the Community

6. Councillor of the Year

1. Business of the Year Award

Eligibility criteria:

• The nominated business must operate within the Parish boundary and include businesses working from home.

• Have been trading for at least 12 months.

• Are compliant with relevant regulations and licensing.

Core Award Criteria:

• Excellent levels of customer service and reputation.

• Positive impact on the Community, both residents and the environment.

• Responding to local needs.

• Use of local suppliers and services.

• Support of local charities, schools, or clubs

• Adaptation during difficult periods (e.g., economic downturns, severe weather)

2. Young Person of the Year

Eligibility Criteria:

• Age range up to 18 years old.

• Lives in or attends school in the Parish.

• Contribution to the Community made within the last 12 months.

Core Award Criteria:

Nominees should demonstrate one or more of the following:

• Made a positive impact on the Community both for its residents and/or the environment.

• Supported vulnerable or isolated residents.

• Given significant unpaid time to a good cause.

• Supported local organisations, clubs, faith groups, or events

COMMUNITY AWARDS

• Has shown long-term commitment and responsibility.

Safeguarding

Parental/guardian consent for nominees under 18

3. Community Group of the Year

Possible things to consider:

• Number of people helped or involved

• Positive impact on wellbeing, social connection, or support

• Whether they help vulnerable or isolated residents

• Feedback from the community

4. Neighbour of the Year

The Parish Neighbour Award recognises an individual who exemplifies the spirit of community, kindness, and service within the parish. This award honours someone who consistently shows compassion for others, supports those in need, and helps build a welcoming and caring parish community through their generosity, dedication, and everyday actions.

5. Service to the Community

Possible things to consider:

• Number of people helped or involved

• Positive impact on wellbeing, social connection, or support

• Whether they help vulnerable or isolated residents

• Feedback from the community

6. Councillor of the Year

Awards Presentation Evening

The winners will be announced at a special presentation evening at a venue and date to be confirmed.

How to Vote

Residents can cast their vote by visiting the Parish Council website or Facebook page, or by scanning the QR code below.

If you do not have internet access, you can place your vote by calling the Parish Clerk on 07946 169337.

Voting Deadline

All votes must be submitted by Friday 31st July 2026.

We encourage everyone in the community to take part by recognising the individuals, groups, and businesses that help make Fulford Parish such a special place. Your vote helps celebrate their contributions and say a well-deserved thank you.

Scan code to vote

VILLAGE HALLS

Meir Heath and Rough Close Village Hall (registered charity 506032)

Monday
0900-1500 Available to hire
1700-2000 Karate
Contact Carol 07947771772

Tuesday
1000-1100 Yoga *Contact Jan 07765966911*
1900-2030 Allsorts Choir *Contact Tracy 07585892598*

Wednesday
2000-2200 Stone Fencing Club
Contact stonefencingclub.co.uk

Thursday
0900-Midnight Available to hire
Coming soon: Line Dancing (from May). Details will be on our website.

Friday & Sunday
0900-Midnight Available to hire

Saturday
0900-Midnight Available to hire

Available for public use
Fees £20 per hour

For booking enquiries contact the booking officer on 07864015187
or email mhrcvillagehall@gmail.com

www.meirheathandroughclosevillagehall.co.uk

VILLAGE HALLS

Fulford Village Hall (registered charity 522663)

LITTLE LEARNERS
(Fulford Pre-school) operates during school term time.
Monday to Friday 0700 - 1600
Contact Amy Colclough on 07736575036

Monday

1100-1300	Knit & Natter *Contact Jan 07972 817309 (Alternate weeks)*
1800-1900	YOGA *Contact Noel Beckhill 07546 360095*
	For any ability, beginners welcome. Stretch out and improve your posture and mobility.

Tuesday

1000-1200	Art Club
	Contact J Barnard 01782 393141
1900-2100	Patchwork and Quilting
	Contact Jane 01889505738
2000-2200	Medieval re-enactment
	Contact Adrian 07760177776

Wednesday

1900-2000	Badminton
	Contact Sheila 07981 549013

Thursday

1000-1200	Village Residents' Coffee Morning
	Every 3rd Thursday
1630-2000	Bluebells Dance Classes
	Contact Louise 07813184225
2000-2230	Indoor bowls
	Contact Martin 01782 397629

Friday

1000-1200	Table Tennis
	Contact Sheila 07981 549013

For booking enquiries contact
bookings@fulfordvillagehall.org.uk

www.fulfordvillagehall.org.uk

VILLAGE RESIDENTS Coffee Morning
3rd Thursday of each month, 1000 – 1200
Contact J Conlon 01782 388784

Fulford Community Choir
Meet regularly for Choir Practice during the week and also weekend concerts.
Contact: fulfordcommunitychoir@gmail.com

USEFUL CONTACTS

Dates for next Parish Council Meetings

Thursday 9th April 2026
Springcroft Primary School

Thursday 14th May 2026
Fulford Village Hall
Annual Meeting 1800
Full Council 1915

Thursday 11th June 2026
Springcroft Primary School

Thursday 9th July 2026
Springcroft Primary School

No Parish Council Meeting in August

Thursday 10th September 2026
Springcroft Primary School

Note: All meetings start at 7.15 pm with an opportunity for any local government elector from the parish to ask questions of the Parish Council relating to any parish issue. At the formal meeting, which follows at 7.30 pm, these matters will then be considered; the public may also attend but are not allowed to join the debate. Alternatively, write to the Clerk so that the matter can be raised at Fulford Council.

Stafford Borough Councillors
Cllr Mike Dodson- 01782 399855
Alec Sandiford- asandiford@staffordbc.gov.uk

Staffordshire County Councillor
Cllr Sean Bagguley
sean.bagguley@staffordshire.gov.uk

Fulford Parish Council Office
07946 169337 (Wed and Thu Only)

Stafford Borough Council
General Enquiries 01785 619000
info@staffordbc.gov.uk

Staffordshire County Council
01785 276207
contactus@staffordshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire Highways Department
https://apps2.staffordshire.gov.uk

Non-emergency Police
101- In an emergency, where life is in danger or a crime is in progress, call **999.**

Medical Help
111

Electricity Issues
105

The Samaritans
24-hour confidential telephone helpline on 08457 90 90 90.

Staffordshire Mental Health Helpline
0808 800 2234

Crimestoppers
0800 555 111

StreetScene
01785 619000

We hope that you have enjoyed our Parish newsletter.

If you have any suggestions on content then please contact our clerk via e-mail:
clerk@fulfordparishcouncil.gov.uk