



Yarnfield and Cold Meece Parish Council



Your wellbeing is our business

November 2024

Welcome

Dear residents,

Welcome to our Autumn newsletter. You'll find inside an update on some of the work your parish council has been doing and some of the future events we are looking forward to.

In July we welcomed a new councillor, Una Simpson. Una brings a wealth of knowledge and experience and some of you will already know her as Yarnfield Village Hall's treasurer. In Yarnfield and Cold Meece we are really fortunate to have a hardworking group of councillors who really care about this parish and the people who live here. They have a wide range of talents, and they give their time and energy free of charge. However the clerk and councillors are most successful when we work together with members of the community, so I would like to say a heartfelt "thank you" to each and every one of you who has supported us.

Between writing this introduction and going to print our community has faced some serious and unexpected challenges and we find ourselves in a situation nobody would ever have wanted. We took the unprecedented decision to cancel the October parish council meeting and in its place to hold a community meeting. I would like to thank everyone who came together on 23rd October and for those who have spoken to us since, demonstrating that in good times and bad, this is a community where people care for each other.

The parish council will update our website and provide a note of the meeting and information from our strategic partners over the coming weeks.

As always, if you have any comments, questions or ideas, just get in touch.

With my very best wishes,

Sally

Sally Parkin, Chairperson.

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Parish Picnic



On July 14th we were blessed with warm dry weather for our parish picnic. We were really happy that so many of you joined in with this community event where everyone is welcomed. This year, in response to your feedback we made sure there were toilets on site and we added an inflatable assault course for older children.



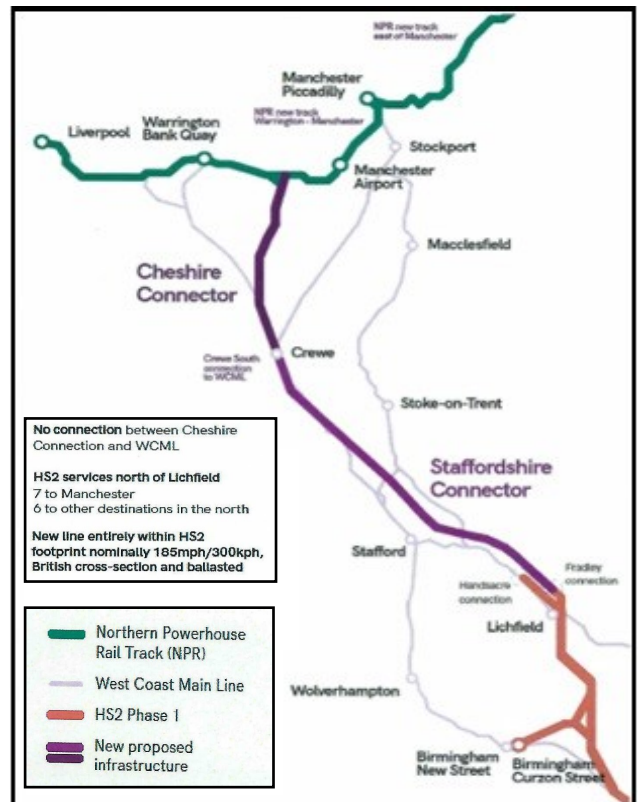
We were pleased that our new MP, Allison Gardner responded to our invitation, she was keen to meet constituents of all political views and I know many of you talked to her about things that concern you.

Thank you to all the volunteers who contributed to the success of the day. If you have any ideas or suggestions or if you would like to be involved next year, please let us know.

HS2—Update

It has been over a year since the cancellation of HS2 Phase 2, but there is still no sign of the company removing any of its site compounds or security fencing around acquired woodland and farmland in the vicinity of the parish. It is also proving very difficult to get HS2 Ltd to take responsibility for the uncontrolled surface water run off from its Environmental site on Yarnfield Lane, which has caused localised flooding on the road on many occasions over the last year.

The obvious reason for this lack of engagement and action by HS2 Ltd is the company's belief that the new Government could be persuaded to resurrect Phase 2 and in the process waste £billions on a railway that will lead to a significant deterioration in services to most West Coast stations, including Stafford, Stoke-on-Trent and Crewe. With that objective in mind, several HS2 contractors produced a report in September asking for Phase 2 to be brought back under the guise of the Midlands North West Rail Link. The parish council is very concerned about this proposal. The SRCG is working hard to persuade the Government to adopt an alternative HS2 scheme that will really deliver improved rail services for the West Coast destinations that would otherwise be negatively impacted by Phase 2.



The NPR route is a mix of new and upgraded railway lines. The precise route has not yet been confirmed by the Government. The route shown on this map is an indicative assumption.

Pavements—We want to hear from you?

Everybody probably knows someone who's fallen outside. But surprisingly little is known about how many pedestrians fall, who falls, why, or where.

Falls happen to people of all ages, but older people are disproportionately affected. The poor state of the pavements in the parish and the lack of repairs and maintenance is a recurring theme for residents.

It is no comfort to know the County Council recognises that substantial investment is needed to repair the damage done after years of neglect, as there is little sign that this is likely to happen any time soon. The quality of our pavements can act as a deterrent to walking and this can have a profound effect on people's health and wellbeing and lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation.

The same is true for wheelchair users, mobility scooters and prams. The poor state of repair can have a negative impact, making journeys at best uncomfortable and at times dangerous.

The parish council wants to hear from anyone affected by the state of our pavements. Over the next three months parish councillors will be interviewing people to hear about their experiences. This will support a report that will detail the lived experience of disabled, elderly or frail residents. This will then be sent to the County Council to support the argument that work needs to be programmed as a matter of priority to repair the pavements in the parish.

You can get involved by contacting one of the councillors or the parish clerk. (Contact details- page 8)



Walton Hall Academy Help out in the parish

On June 12th we welcomed students from Walton Hall Academy for a work experience day, and what a fabulous day we had! The students helped to plant out the summer bedding and went litter picking around Yarnfield.



Thank you to the community volunteers who supported these activities.

Some of the students also helped out at our lunch club in the afternoon and at the end of the day we were treated to a sneak preview of some the songs from the school show, Mamma Mia!!

These wonderful students were a credit to their families and school and we would be more than happy to welcome them back.



Yarnfield Park— Playground

The parish council has started discussions with Hackberry Development Ltd, owner of the play area on Yarnfield Parkway, to take over the running of the site.

The site has over the years been the source of numerous complaints and the football pitch is no longer in a state to allow it to be used for matches.

The opportunity came about during discussions with the owner about the neighbourhood plan which hopes to have the area designated as public green space.

The long term ambition is for the parish council to buy the site.

Discussions about the future use of the site have some way to go before a decision can be made but the parish council is doing all it can to secure this area as a valuable asset for play and leisure.

Spotlight on Tom Watson

At 95, Tom is one of our oldest residents. He was born in Aldershot to a military family in June 1929.

His working life started at 12 years of age while he was still at school, making sausages at the butcher's shop for a princely sum of 4 shillings a week. Tom left school at 14 and became a telegram boy. This incredibly important job shaped his life. One of Tom's responsibilities was delivering "railex" messages. These were highly confidential written communications entrusted to the dispatch rider in London, passed to the train guard then to the local telegram boy who had to hand the document to nobody but the Adjutant.

It was a harrowing experience for Tom to deliver the news everyone dreaded to people he knew well. The day after D Day was particularly tragic with so many men lost. The telegram boys were called the hidden heroes of the war.

It was during this time that Tom had a brief encounter with his wife Phyllis. She was 12, he was 15 and their paths crossed at the corner shop.

At 18 Tom joined the army and served in Germany, playing his part in the Berlin Airlift, for which he was honoured. His regiment was also deployed at home, supporting the civil authorities in the period after the war.

Back at Farnborough, aged 20, Tom went to the dance at the Royal Aircraft Establishment where he met Phyllis, now 18 for the second time. They married a year later in 1950 and settled in Farnborough.

Tom and Phyllis came to Yarnfield with the GPO in January 1974. Tom was a senior motor mechanic, working on HGVs and he became an instructor. Phyllis also worked for the GPO, at first in Stoke and then at Yarnfield.

After retirement many people take life easy but Tom and Phyll took on the Senior Citizens Club in Staffordshire which they ran successfully for 10 years.

After 71 years and 2 months of marriage Tom's beloved Phyll passed away. Looking for new connections, Tom was one of the first people to come along to the Warm Welcome at the village hall. He is now a regular at the Wednesday lunch club and the Friday morning coffee club and he always has a tale to tell!

We are grateful to Tom for laying the Parish Council's wreath at the war memorial in Cold Meece at our remembrance ceremony on Saturday 9th November.

Do you know anyone with an interesting story we could share? If so, just let us know.



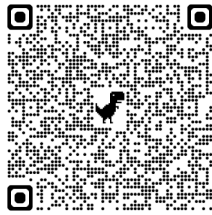
Know your hedges

Do you own a tree or hedge that borders onto the highway or pavement? We often receive enquiries about responsibility for maintaining trees or hedges.

In general hedges mark the boundary of a private property, and it is the responsibility of the owner to maintain any trees, hedges or other vegetation where overhanging growth impedes movement on the pavement or highway.

Full details can be found on the County Council website:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Highways/Weeds-Grass-Trees-Hedges/Hedges.aspx>



Snippets

Labour in Vain — Allison Gardner MP has met with the parish council and members of the core group working to save the pub. She has now written to the Secretary of State, Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, asking for an assurance that the government will introduce a new round of the Community Ownership Fund.

Defibrillator — work has started to secure funding to buy a new defibrillator to be sited on Ford Drive, Yarnfield.

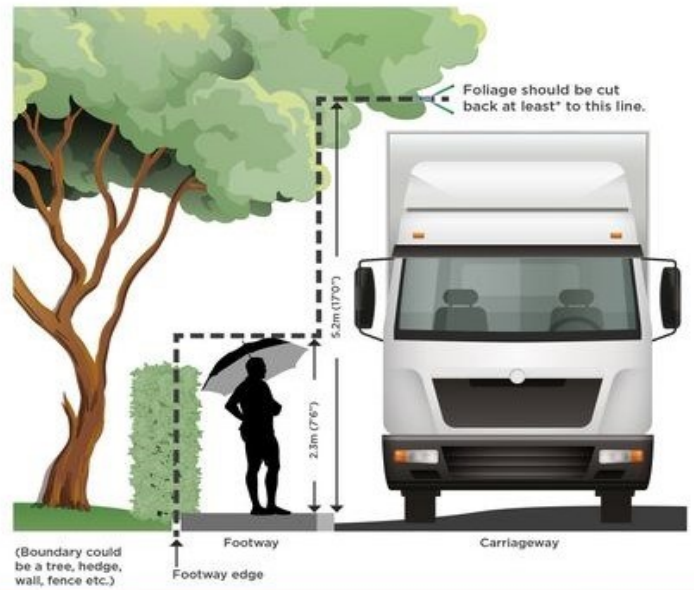
Trustgreen — Held their first “get to know you” event for residents of Yarnfield Park to listen to their views and to set out what work they will be doing in the coming months. More events are promised in the future.

Village Green— work to secure a long lease on the whole of the village green is nearly complete. Once the lease has been secured the parish council will be able to use the money allocated to it by Stafford Borough Council to improve play and environmental projects on the green.

Neighbourhood Plan— the latest version of the proposed plan has been prepared. The plan sets out what the parish council would want to see should the undeveloped land on Yarnfield Park and the former testing station in Cold Meece be put forward for development.

Guidance for cutting back overhanging foliage

Cutting back encroaching foliage from footway & carriageway.



*Cutting back further would allow for growth before more pruning is needed.



Yarnfield & Meece Parish Council

Wednesday Lunch Club

4 September—11 December, 2024

1.00pm—3.00pm

Yarnfield Village Hall

Open to everyone, no need to book.

Hot drinks and light refreshments — soup and a roll, cakes will be served.

Come along for a catch up with friends and neighbours and enjoy a sociable afternoon.

Small voluntary donation towards the cost.

Yarnfield Village Hall Christmas Fair

Saturday 23rd November 11-2pm

Free admission

Refreshments:

Tea,
Coffee,
Mulled wine
Cakes

Stalls including
Beaded jewellery,
Xmas gifts,
Christmas plants,
Christmas crackers,
Christmas wreaths,
Paintings,
Diamond art gifts



Plus
PTA stall
and an RAF stall.

Come and join us

Merry CHRISTMAS

★ YARNFIELD VILLAGE HALL ★
CHRISTMAS PARTY

JOIN US FOR A FUN AFTERNOON FULL OF GAMES, DISCO,
SANTA PRESENTS, FOOD AND DRINK. FOLLOWED AT 5.00PM
BY CAROL SINGING WITH MULLED WINE AND MINCE PIES.

21st DECEMBER
2.30PM - 4.30PM
£3 PER CHILD & £2 PER ADULT
LIMITED TICKETS AVAILABLE

An illustration of a snowman wearing a red hat and scarf, standing next to a decorated Christmas tree. In front of the tree are several wrapped presents. The background is a soft, snowy scene.

Community Speedwatch

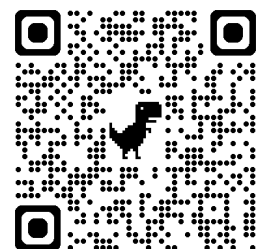
Community Speedwatch (CSW) is a national initiative where, in partnership with the police, members of the community use detection devices to monitor vehicle speeds.

The volunteers report drivers exceeding the speed limit to the police with the aim of educating drivers to slow down.

The local CSW, which is supported by staff from the neighbourhood policing team, monitor traffic speed once a week at key locations in both Yarnfield and Cold Meece, covering the 20, 30 and 40mph roads. The results of the survey, if the data proves a driver is ignoring repeated warnings, can lead to the police prosecuting.

The local CSW team currently has 5 volunteers but are always pleased to welcome new people to support this important work.

For more information on how to become part of the local CSW, please go to Staffordshire Safer Roads Partnership to register and for more information.



Cold Meece Defibrillator

The parish council has a successful record of fund-raising to install defibrillators in Yarnfield and now wants to extend this work to provide a new unit in Cold Meece. Through a combination of donations from BIFFA, Eccleshall Mercia Rotary Club and a donation from a resident the money needed to by the defibrillator has now been raised.

Euro Lighting Ltd has generously agreed to provide a home for the defibrillator outside their office and will also be paying for the installation.

Orders for the new defibrillator have been placed with AEDDonate and it is hoped to have it up and running before the end of the year. Training in the use of the defibrillator will be provided to coincide with the arrival of the new unit. Further information about this will be publicised nearer the date.



Neighbourhood Plan

The purpose of a neighbourhood plan is to give parish councils a say in how their area is developed in the future. The plan outlines what type of development should happen here and where it should be. It identifies important historic and natural features and adds a layer of protection to the green spaces we value.

The plan must not conflict with the Local Plan for Stafford Borough and it can't recommend no further development, but once it has been through the various stages of approval it carries a legal status. We have been working on our plan for several years with help from our consultants Urban Vision, reports from the consultancy AECOM and advice from a group of local residents. The draft plan is now ready for the first level of screening by Stafford Borough Council. After this step has been completed and any necessary changes made, there will be a period of consultation with the community. We promise that this will be widely advertised and there will be many ways for you to comment. There's still a way to go, but it feels as though this project is really coming to fruition now.

Village Hall

Yarnfield Village hall has now secured planning permission to extend and remodel the existing entrance to create a new entrance and form a

new meeting room. Work has started to secure quotes and to apply for grants to pay for the work which it is hoped will start in summer of 2025.



Proposed South East (Front) Elevation

Parish Council Calendar 2024 2025

Date	Start	Meeting	Venue
13 November	7.30pm	Parish Council	Yarnfield Park
11 December	7.30pm	Parish Council	Yarnfield Park
13 January	7.30pm	Parish Council	Yarnfield Park
21 January	7.30pm	Community Action Group	Village Hall
12 February	7.30pm	Parish Council	Yarnfield Park
17 March	7.30pm	Parish Council	Yarnfield Park

November

Saturday 9 — 11am	Remembrance Day	Cold Meece Memorial
Saturday 23 (11am — 2pm)	Village Hall - Christmas Fair	A wide range of stalls plus refreshments

December

Saturday 21 (2.30 — 4.30pm)	Children's Christmas Party, village hall	Ticketed event—see posters for how to book
Saturday 21— 5pm	Carols at the Village Hall	Carols, mulled wine, tea coffee soft drinks and mince pies around the Christmas tree

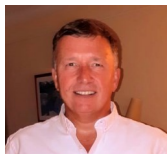
Contact details



Cllr. Sally Parkin (Chairperson)
Yarnfield Ward
Tel: 01785 761553



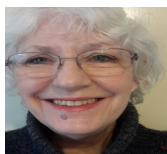
Cllr. Kirsty Treen (Vice-chairperson)
Yarnfield Ward
Tel: 07976461919



Cllr. David Beeston
Cold Meece Ward
Tel: 01785 760326



Cllr. Margaret Broader
Cold Meece Ward
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Cllr. Stella Hughes
Yarnfield Ward
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Cllr. Una Simpson
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