

Mayor's Report for Atherstone Town Council Meeting March , 2026

Saturday, March 7th, Coleshill Brass Band Concert, Coleshill Town Hall

This was a very enjoyable evening hosted by the Mayor of Coleshill, Councillor Ian Tomkinson and his wife Jan, in the spacious setting of the Town Hall.

The Coleshill Brass Band looked very impressive in their splendid scarlet red uniforms and captivated the audience with their playing. The programme included a variety of pieces from classical to modern including film scores and stage musicals, as well as a very moving hymn called Gresford, which was written and dedicated to the 261 victims of the colliery disaster in Gresford, near Wrexham in 1934.

The band was conducted by Malcolm Reid, who told me after the concert that there is a beginners' band and a junior band as well as the band of adult musicians appearing this evening. There were solos and duets from members of the band, displaying virtuoso skills on their instruments. I also learned that their Christmas Concert gives every member of Coleshill Brass Band the opportunity to play for an audience. It will certainly be one I will look out for this coming Christmas.

Sunday, March 8th NWBC Mayor's Civic Service at St Peter and St Paul Church, Kingsbury

I was very pleased to be able to attend this Civic Service on International Women's Day. Reverend Carole Young, who led the service pointed out the relevance of this day to the service being held. It was an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the role that women play in our community and the contribution that they make. Amongst the notable females she mentioned were our hard-working MP, Rachel Taylor, the Mayor of North Warwickshire Councillor Debbie Bates and Consort, daughter Elleloise, as well as noting that a number of civic leaders attending were also female, including myself.

Funds raised from the service were donated to the Church to help with much-needed repairs to the heating. We had all been prewarned to dress accordingly. Although the inside of the Church itself was very chilly the welcome we all received was very warm indeed.

Wednesday, March 11th Oldbury Cottage Care Farm, 2 Lodge Cottage, Oldbury, Nuneaton

I only became aware of this wonderful place recently when I was introduced to the owner, John Smith and Manager, Martin Bliss at a performance by Leading Players at OSCA. John invited us to visit and fortunately the weather was very kind on the appointed day.

The care farm provides a facility for adults with learning needs as well as those suffering from dementia where they can socialise, take part in a variety of activities including taking care of the numerous animals, gardening, cooking and crafting.

After being welcomed by John and Barry, one of the directors, and introduced to volunteers and the participants for the session we were shown around by John and Ian, one of the regulars and a member of Leading Players. The tour began with a visit to the sensory garden, then on to the poly tunnel where a variety of plants and vegetables are grown. Then we had an opportunity to look at the Woodworking Workshop. Inside we were shown a variety of prepared kits for participants to assemble to make items including, kitchen roll holders and bird boxes, which are then sold for fundraising.

The farm has a variety of animals including goats, sheep, pigs, chickens, a turkey and a horse. John described how taking part in the various activities on offer helps to develop confidence, gives an opportunity for exercise and also enable participants to experience a degree of independence which they may otherwise not have had. It provides an opportunity to recognise the abilities of those taking part rather than their disabilities.

There is currently construction of a new barn underway, which will house workshops and activity rooms. So far the project has received funding from the National Lottery and Severn Trent.

We were very impressed with what we saw and heard whilst we were there and hope to return sometime in the summer when the sensory garden and polytunnel will be at their best.

Wednesday, March 11th, Leading Players Easter Bingo, The Grove Sports and Social Club, Atherstone

Dawn Teagles, Honorary Citizen and Leader of Leading Players invited us to join them at The Grove for this annual event. It was very-well supported with a crowded clubhouse of eager bingo players.

The bingo caller for the evening was Brian Henney, supported by his wife Pauline, other volunteers and regular helpers at Leading Players sessions.

A very successful event which, together with a wonderful Easter themed raffle, raised well over £1500 for the Leading Players.