

Coaley Parish NEWSLETTER

Issue no 144

October / November 2025



Local Government Reorganisation
Produce Show Results

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

DATE	EVENT	TIME	VENUE
2nd Oct	Knitting	2.30pm	Field End
7th Oct	Friendship	2.30pm	Jubilee Room
9th Oct	Produce Show AGM	7.00pm	Jubilee Room
11th Oct	Nature Morning: Fungi	10am–12	Hall
13th Oct	Whist	2.00pm	Hall
14th Oct	Hall AGM	7.30pm	Jubilee Room
31st Oct	Halloween Trail around the village		
2nd Nov	Fireworks	5.15pm	School
4th Nov	Friendship	2.30pm	Jubilee Room
6th Nov	Knitting	2.30pm	Lapley Bungalow
8th Nov	Nature Morning: Hedgehogs		
10th Nov	Whist	2.00pm	Hall
10th Nov	CRAG Pub Quiz		The Old Fox
2nd Dec	Friendship	2.30pm	Jubilee Room
4th Dec	Knitting	2.30pm	Harvest House

Parish Council meetings are normally on the first Tuesday of each month, except August, at 7.30pm.

See the council's website at www.coaleypc.org.uk for meeting agendas and minutes and to sign up for email updates from the council for news that can't wait for the next newsletter.

Please let us have your contributions for the next issue by Sunday 16th November 2025.

email: newsletter@coaleypc.org.uk

web: www.coaleypc.org.uk

facebook: [coaleyparishcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/coaleyparishcouncil)

This issue edited by Stephen Cook.

Cover picture: Harvest by Mike Davis

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Some of you may be aware that Gloucestershire is going through Local Government Reorganisation, or devolution as it was previously known. The Government are requiring two tier councils (District and County) to form unitary authorities, which already are in place across much of the UK. These authorities combine the responsibilities of the District, County, Borough and City councils into a single organisation. They will cover all planning, refuse collection, council tax collection, social housing, health, highways, oversight of policing, welfare, education, and social services across their area.

There is a consultation of how the current seven councils should be combined and into how many unitary authorities. The option of a single unitary authority would cover the existing Gloucestershire County Council boundaries or, have two authorities either east and west or an expanded Gloucester City authority and all other areas of Gloucestershire.

In order to maintain local delivery, the newly formed unitary authority(ies) is encouraged to create lower level 'neighbour areas', or other designated name to support more local delivery of services which will be cross organisational co-ordination forums likely to include parish and town councils, health, police, social housing, community organisations overseen by

the new elected unitary councillors. How these would work will be decided by the new unitary(ies), but one model is to associate these to market towns (Stroud, Dursley, Wotton etc.) and their surrounding villages.

Each current council is required to decide on which model they prefer, or express no preference into government by the end of November. The government will then make their decision by summer 2026. There remains some uncertainty as to when this new authority model will come into effect, but the current timetable is during 2027 as a shadow authority with the existing councils ceasing to exist in March 2028.

You can find more about these changes on the Gloucestershire County or Stroud District websites.

Martin Pearcy

District Councillor, Stroud District Council



CRAG UPDATE

Celebrating Nature, Community, and Progress at the Rec.

It's been a busy and joyful couple of months at the Rec, with nature walks, community gatherings, and exciting progress behind the scenes. Our summer nature evening in August gave villagers a chance to explore the Rec and surrounds after dark with bat detectors in hand (picture below). The stillness of the night was broken by clicks and flashes overhead as bats swooped and dived, much to everyone's delight. As one participant put it, "I didn't realise how exciting a clicking detector could be down a still, dark alleyway. Then look up—and bats as big as small birds, ducking and diving overhead." Another noted how encouraging it was to see different species thriving right here in our village.



September brought a gentler pace with our hedgerow morning, a sociable morning celebrating the bounty of the season. There's still more to come, on Saturday 11 October from 10am to midday we'll be hosting a fungi session,

exploring the hidden world of mushrooms and toadstools that flourish in autumn. It promises to be another chance to learn from nature and share the experience as a community.

Meanwhile, the Rec itself has been buzzing with life. Fine weather has filled the tennis courts and football pitch, the Plaza with neighbours chatting, and the play areas with children enjoying the space. The increased activity has been a boost for our shop too, which thrives as more people pass through.

Behind the scenes, progress continues on projects large and small. We are thrilled that our £15,000 grant application—submitted by Bromford to Travis Perkins—has been successful, bringing us to around £30,000 of our £50,000 target for the toddler park. Bromford's tree supplier has also generously offered to provide and plant trees at the Rec with their volunteer team, and we'll soon be finalising details so planting can go ahead.

We're also laying foundations for the future in other ways. Work to register CRAG as a charity is progressing well, which will strengthen our governance, secure financial independence, and open up new funding opportunities. At the same time, conversations with CUCAN and The Fox have sparked plans for composting and soil improvement—a small but important step in keeping the Rec green and flourishing.

None of this would be possible without

you—our volunteers and supporters. Whether you've watered plants, repaired goalposts, organised events, applied for grants, or simply turned up to join in, your efforts are what keep CRAG moving forward. We are deeply grateful. Looking ahead, we'd love to hear from anyone interested in helping with planning, communications, or event delivery as we continue to grow.

Thank you, as always, for your support and enthusiasm. Let's keep the momentum going—we look forward to seeing you at the Rec soon.

— The CRAG Team

PLAYGROUP

It has been lovely to welcome the children back after the summer break and to hear about all of the fun things they have been up to with their families. We have also welcomed some new children and their families to playgroup and they are all settling in well. This term we are focussing on all about me to get to know the children and what their interests are. We will be looking at the colour monster book to learn about feelings and we will also be learning about recycling during recycling week in September. Our book of the week for this term will include

The Gruffalo, Aliens love underpants and Owl Babies.

Fundraising

The Sheep Hunt was a success despite the weather and we had lots of positive feedback about the day. It was really lovely seeing the community coming together and enjoying the event. We want to say a huge thank you to everyone who helped out with the event. To those who made a sheep, helped out at the event, made a donation, sponsored a sheep, made cakes or attended the event. We are truly grateful to you all.

A special thank you to Susy Keating and Sarah Lorkin for arranging the whole event and spending so much of their time doing so! We are so grateful for all of your support and raising these crucial funds for our playgroup. We are so lucky to have such a wonderful community.

Availability

We are still very busy and encourage those in the village that would like to bring their child to Coaley playgroup to get in touch to add your child's name to the list as soon as possible. Please let us know if you would like to be added to the waiting list.

September 2025 Playgroup Session Times

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday	Morning session 8:50am – 12:50pm	Full session 8:50am – 2:50pm
Wednesday and Friday	8:50am - 12:50pm	closed

SCHOOL REPORT

We have had a fantastic start to the new academic year here at Coaley C of E Primary Academy. It has been a real joy to welcome our new Reception children into school – some joining older siblings and others experiencing our school community for the very first time. They have been nurtured by their older peers and have settled in brilliantly.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of the villagers who have been in touch with Mrs McClung (Robins class teacher) to share their knowledge of the village. Your photographs, memories, and generous offers to speak with the children will be invaluable in helping them understand how our community has changed over time. We are so fortunate to have such strong links between the school and the wider village community and would like to thank everyone for their help.

Another highlight of the new term has been re-electing our young leaders across school. We now have new house captains, worship leaders, school council representatives, eco-council members and play leaders. Some of these roles were voted for democratically in class, while others required children to write formal letters to me, outlining their passion and commitment. We were overwhelmed by the number of thoughtful applications from children of all ages. It was truly inspiring to see so many of our pupils speak with confidence, passion and share a strong desire to make a

difference.

We are very proud of the enthusiasm, kindness and ambition shown by our children, and we are looking forward to all the exciting learning and opportunities that the year ahead will bring.

Jen Thomas

Headteacher, Coaley C of E Primary Academy

COALEY VILLAGE HALL

The AGM of the Village Hall is taking place on October 14th at 7.30pm in the Jubilee Room.

This is an opportunity to learn of what has been achieved in the past year and of plans for the future.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

Copies of the Chair's Report and Financial Report can be obtained in advance by contacting barbaradavis4119@gmail.com.

Also the Committee is actively seeking new members to help with running this important asset to the village. Please consider coming forward to help the Hall keep running.

Barbara Davis. Hon Sec



FIREWORKS DISPLAY

Sunday 2nd November

6pm **Doors open 5.15pm**

COALEY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

Please pay cash on the door

Adults £5

Children £2.50

Under 3's Free



**Hot Food & Drink
Available**

**No sparklers, smoking or
alcohol please**

friendsofcoaleyschool@gmail.com

PRODUCE SHOW

The 2025 Produce Show was held on the 6th September. We had over 700 entries from 155 entrants.

This year has been a difficult year for growers weather wise, although the high temperatures have been good for fruit.

There were lots of other entries, particularly in the photography section. The new on-line entry form for photographs was used by most entrants and has been a successful introduction. The Produce Show committee may decide that we will be only accept on-line entries next year.

The playgroup were keen to be involved in the Produce Show and we

have a new cup to recognise that. This year it was awarded for the best flower painting.

Through the year we have been able to fund:

- The planters by the shop
- A grant to CRAG
- The village Christmas Tree

Produce Show events coming up:

- AGM 7pm on 9 Oct
- Christmas Tree Lights on Sunday 30 Nov
- Next year's Garden Cup will be The Wildlife Garden

Trophies

Vegetable Cup - Mark Wyatt.
G. S. Neale Cup for Fruit - Ian Whiting.
Flower Cup - Jean Bryant.
Floral Decoration Cup - Lisa Boden.
Domestic Cup - Judy Cook.
Rose Bowl - Kay Lynch.
Coaley W.I. Cup for Arts and Crafts - June Dunlop.
Jean Steel Cup for Children - Lana Lorkin.
Billet Cup for Children - Rowan Fawcus-Gibbs.
Frank Workman Rose Bowl - Pat Grimwood.
Winnie Brooks Cup for the Most Beautiful Flower - Ann Bahcheli.
Major Memorial Award - Mark Wyatt.
Wooden Spoon - Reg Spyvee.
Cospa Cup for Photography - Alan Lush.
Florie Curson Dahlia Cup - Susan Tucker.
Centaur Cup for Coaley School (7 and under) - Frankie
Centaur Cup for Coaley School (8-10) - Megan
Playgroup Cup - Grace



OPENING EVENT

The extension to the Village Hall was officially opened on Saturday 20th September. This extension was a long held ambition of Tony Eve, the Chair of the Management Committee, to make the Jubilee Room a self contained unit with its own kitchen and toilet. Also of great importance was to make the room accessible to all by the installation of a lift.

The generous bequest by the late David Billett meant that funds became available and it was agreed to sell one of the properties bequeathed by him. However there were various loopholes to jump through and it became evident that the sale would not go through quickly.

Thanks are due to Martin Hall who took on the task of applying for a grant from the Platinum Jubilee Fund. This was successful but left a tight deadline to be met. Once it was evident that the sale would not go through in time, a loan was obtained - again thanks to Martin Hall with help from Julian Rees in obtaining this. The loan will be repaid once the sale of the property has completed.

Stevenson's were appointed to undertake the construction work and worked efficiently to get the job done in the timeline.

Thanks are due to the community and community organisations who were inconvenienced during the construction for their understanding. This required a

lot of patience as two projects, both with tight timelines, were in operation at the same time.

The hall was officially declared open when a ribbon ribbon at the entrance to Jubilee Room was cut by Alison Billett.

In the afternoon there was an opportunity for anyone to come to inspect the new facility.



*Above: Alison Billett cuts the ribbon
Below: The new kitchen area.*





Coaley Halloween Trick or Treat Trail

Friday
31
October 2025

TRAIL STARTS
COALEY
VILLAGE HALL

TRAIL
5.00 - 8:00PM
—
DISCO
6.00 - 9:00PM

FIRST CHILD £3 - SIBLINGS £1



Hot Dogs



Crafts



Activities

BYO carved pumpkin competition - 50p entry - Prizes for adults & children

Sponsored by our friends at



COALEY SHEEPHUNT 2025

Well in spite of the weather the Sheephunters all turned out on Sunday 14th September helping this year's Coaley Sheep Hunt raise £800 for Coaley Village Playgroup. Many thanks to our friends at Windowcraft Designs Ltd and Cam Family Butchers for their sponsorship and continued support of our fundraising. Outstanding local businesses such as yourselves make such a difference and we're truly lucky to have your support.

Thanks also to Tesco Cam, Fennell's Alpacas and Woodchester Valley Vineyard for kindly donating raffle prizes. We're so grateful to everyone who decorated a sheep (and my, there were some competitive entries this year!)

Much gratitude to our excellent BaaBBQ team in the kitchen. Anne Morgan, Brian Harper, Jackie and Mike Davis, Mike Wathen and Tim Kidner, we couldn't have done it without you. From co-ordinating the BBQ to moving everything inside due to the weather and even growing the onions for the burgers! Your willingness to help with our playgroup fundraising is inspiring and we are so very grateful to you.

Special thanks go to International Superstars Dave Lane and Abdullah Kologlu for turning up to play their eclectic mixture of tunes adapted for guitar and saz, keeping us entertained all afternoon.

The staff team from Coaley Playgroup were at the hall all day, selling maps, running the tombola and entertaining the little ones in our pre-school craft and play area. Thanks to Sarah Portlock (Playgroup Manager), Shelly Carter (Deputy) and Sophie Goode (Deputy) for giving up your Sunday to raise funds. The Playgroup is an essential resource in our little community and it's a testament to your dedication and love for the children that you spent your weekend volunteering your time to keep it going. Our thanks also to Susy Keating (the big mouth of the committee) and especially to Sarah Lorkin (the beating heart actually getting everything done). The Sheephunt really is a team effort and we're very glad to have you all on our team.

As ever we couldn't hold these events without the good people of Coaley and those of you from the surrounding areas who come along to do the trail. Our most heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you. See you all next year!

SHOP

Annual General Meeting

We had a very successful and well attended AGM on 13th September. Steve Wills, as chair of the management committee highlighted the achievements of the year, which were many. The shop continues to go from strength to strength, keeping prices low at the same time as increasing income. We are continuing to support local suppliers wherever

CADS Presents
Camelot

by Limelight Scripts

Coaley Village Hall

27th-29th November 2025



Tickets on Sale
6th October 2025
For Tickets Contact Box Office
01453 860570
Email:
coaleyamdramboxoffice@gmail.com



possible and building our reputation as a destination with walkers and cyclists. This has been helped with the improvement to the environment created by CRAG. We work closely with CRAG and other local groups to promote a spirit of partnership and ensure that the village has 'joined up' services. Steve thanked all shop volunteers and members of the management committee without whom the shop could not provide the important service to the village that it does.

He thanked especially Jackie Davis and Sian Smith who are standing down from the management committee after many years of sterling service. This leaves some vacancies on the committee, so we are looking for new members. It's a good opportunity to contribute to the efficient management of the shop and to improving the service it offers to local people. If you'd be interested speak to a member of the committee and we'd be happy to talk with you about what it would involve.

Hobbs House Bakery

Steve Wills and Graham Hardy had the pleasure of visiting Hobbs Bakery in Chipping Sodbury for an open evening to see their wonderful array of bakes for this Christmas. We also saw their impressive, family run bakery operation and heard them explain their decision to remove nuts from their operation for the safety of customers and staff. We have their full catalogue in the shop together with their Christmas supplement to help you start planning for the coming Autumn and festive

seasons.

Autumn stock

It definitely feels as though Autumn has come in with a vengeance after the long hot and dry summer. We will be stocking a range of seasonal products that will be useful as the evenings draw in. These include Halloween specialities to complement the Trick or Treat trail on 31st October. Other essentials might include soups, batteries and paracetamol. We also have bird food and kindling. We continue to stock a wide range of alcoholic drinks for those long dark evenings when the pub is shut.

Your suggestions

If there is anything that you can't find in the shop that you think we should stock do ask one of our volunteers. Or you can use our suggestions box to request items or make any suggestions for improvements in the shop. We check the suggestions box at every meeting of the committee.

Contact us

<https://www.coaleycommunityshop.org/>

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

WI

There is no WI meeting in August which means members have extra time to fine tune any entries for the Produce show and this clearly works as many members were successful on the day . There were wins in lots of the categories and also some trophies.

We were lucky with the weather (not counting the wind which blew the gazebos away!) and it is always nice to support this village event with our cafe.

Thank you to everyone who supported us by enjoying the teas and cakes and thanks to the shop for allowing us to use it and to Friends of Coaley school for the loan of the gazebos. Our sales were down slightly which we think was due to cash only sales could only take cash but it was still a good fund raiser for us which helps with our outgoings - hall costs, speakers, refreshments etc. It also meant we were able to donate to the shop and FocS.

Our September meeting was a social and we had activities of crafts and a blind cheese and herb taster. There was an abundance of crafting goodies and members made cards, decorations, gingerbread men and much more. The cheese and herb tasting was surprisingly difficult!

The programme for 2026 is almost complete and we have lots of interesting speakers lined up.

Our next meeting in October is our AGM and this will be followed with a visit from Woodfernall cottage nursery who will be talking about autumn and winter planters. Visitors are welcome to join us and with your £4 entry fee you also get a glass of wine or juice on arrival and tea and biscuits at the break.

SEAGULLS

Now I know most people dislike them intensely but they are fascinating to watch.

I lived on the top of the Cotswolds for many years, and they were a continual presence in farmer's fields - but every night they flew away.

When I came down from the top I realised they were all going down to the Severn. However what is fascinating about that is, every morning very early they would fly over my house up to the Cotswolds. They made an incredible noise squawking to each other. When they came home in the evening they were silent and flew as little as possible - just glided down to the Severn.

Now that I live in Coaley I see them especially in the winter congregating in a particular field. This is one of the first to get sunshine and I imagine they are getting warm after the night.

Another glorious sight is on a windy day if there is a vortex. They start at the bottom and glide round and round getting higher and higher. At the top they plummet down and do it all again. They really seem to enjoy the wind.

Having written all of this they are not flying up and down to the Cotswolds this year. They seem to be far fewer. Is this due to the incinerator and lack of a tip (food)? Have they Gone elsewhere?
Paris Major

USEFUL CONTACTS

Parish Councillors	Martin Pearcy John Hobson Shona Pearcy Penny Wait	890818 07715 558110 890818 860191
Parish Clerk	Lynn Thornton clerk@coaleyঁpc.org.uk	545880
Stroud District Councillor	Martin Pearcy cllr.martin.pearcy@stroud.gov.uk	890818
GCC Councillor	Richard Dean richard.dean@gloucestershire.gov.uk	
Vicar	Graham Stacey	709859
Village Hall	Lesley Chalmers	890788
Need a lift to Coaley Church? Co-ordinator	Isobel Farmer	890556
Tree Warden	Shona Pearcy	890818
Snow Warden	Jonathan Leigh 07767 660206 coaleysnowwarden@gmail.com	860665
Community Shop		899000
Coaley WI	June Dunlop	890302
Friendship Group	Pat Grimwood and Isobel Farmer	890689 890556
ST Emergency Water & Sewage Centre (24 hr)		0800 7834444
Gas Emergency Leaks etc (24 hr)		0800 111999
Electricity Loss of Supply (24 hr)		0800 6783 105 or 105
Street Lights		08000 514514