

Community News

July 2026



HMS Godwit: A remarkable wartime naval past

Then...



And Now...



Just outside Ollerton once stood a surprisingly important wartime establishment, HMS Godwit, the Royal Navy name for RNAS Hinstock, a Fleet Air Arm training station active between 1942 and 1947. Though today the landscape is peaceful farmland, this area played a vital role in preparing naval aviators for the demanding conditions of instrument and blind-approach flying during the Second World War. Originally opened in 1941 as RAF O Ollerton, the site served as No.21 Satellite Landing Ground, supporting RAF Tern Hill, RAF Burtonwood, and RAF Shawbury. Its early years saw maintenance units rotating through, using the grass airfield for storage, repair, and emergency landings. In August 1942, the Admiralty took over and renamed the station HMS Godwit. Under the Royal Navy, it became home to the Central Naval Instrument Flying Training School, where pilots learned to fly safely in poor visibility—an essential skill for

wartime operations. The airfield featured a steel-track runway and a distinctive four-storey naval control tower. By February 1947, with the war over and training needs reduced, HMS Godwit closed. It has since been later converted into a private home, but still known within the parish as “HMS Godwit.” Little remains of the air station today, but its contribution to the war effort lives on in the memories of residents and the quiet traces still visible in the fields around Ollerton.

In and around....

The Old School House



Bryan would agree that progress has been “slow” over the past few months and has caused a fair degree of frustration. However, the specifications have now been signed off by the structural engineer and work is set to begin again at pace. The demolition phase of the redevelopment is now complete. It hasn’t prevented the installation of the steel supporting the main oak beams or the beams that completes half of the first floor. Neither has it prevented the removal of barrowfuls of woodworm sawdust that was 3 feet deep inside the walls. Or the discovery that the main hall wasn’t attached to the building (only with Blue-Tack and hope!) and needs to be rebuilt!

Blooming Marvellous: The Ercall Gardeners Strike Again!



Our very own band of green-fingered heroes have been spotted stealthily pottering about the village, armed with watering cans, trowels, and an optimism that frankly borders on suspicious. And their efforts are paying off. The hanging baskets, vegetable tubs, and flower tubs are now bursting into bloom. Rumour has it that one of the tomato plants in the village tubs has grown so confidently it's considering standing for parish council. Meanwhile, the flowers are flourishing with the kind of

self-assurance normally reserved for people who know how to pronounce *clematis* correctly. So give a nod of appreciation to the Ercall Gardeners, the unsung heroes of horticultural happiness. Thanks to them, the village is blooming... and so are we!

A message from Neil (Unitary Councillor, Cheswardine Ward)



I would like to thank the many organisations and neighbourhood groups who have invited me to events over the past few months. It has been a pleasure to see our local communities at their very best, I look forward to attending many more events in the months ahead so please do get in touch if you are planning something. Following a significant period of change last year, I am pleased to welcome Tanya Miles as the new Chief Executive, alongside Duncan Whitfield as Interim Chief Finance Officer. While there are still difficult decisions ahead to ensure the council is fit for the future, there are encouraging signs of recovery. Across Childs Ercall, I continue to support residents with individual concerns and to work closely with parish councillors and local groups on planning matters across the parish. I am also continuing to press highways officers for updates on the A41 speed cameras, in the hope that work can begin soon, and I remain in ongoing discussion with the council's legal team on some wider issues."

Planning Matters

26/01212/FUL | Mixed residential development of 27 dwellings (inc. 8 affordable homes)

The consultation period was extended until the 10th of June to allow for submissions from consultants. The objections to this proposal now numbers 243, which is a hugely significant response against the proposals.

The **Local Plan Consultation** is open until **15th July**. Have your say by logging in using the following URL:

<https://getinvolved.shropshire.gov.uk/consultations/shropshire-local-plan-scoping-consultation/>

The link to the maps showing the land that has been promoted to the Council for consideration in the new local plan is...

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/232e9007138641d293996b3ba10e3>

An on-line version of this newsletter can be found on the website. (www.childsercall-pc.gov.uk)
Roger Griffin, Councillor, Childs Ercall Parish Council, email: cllr.griffin@childsercall-pc.gov.uk