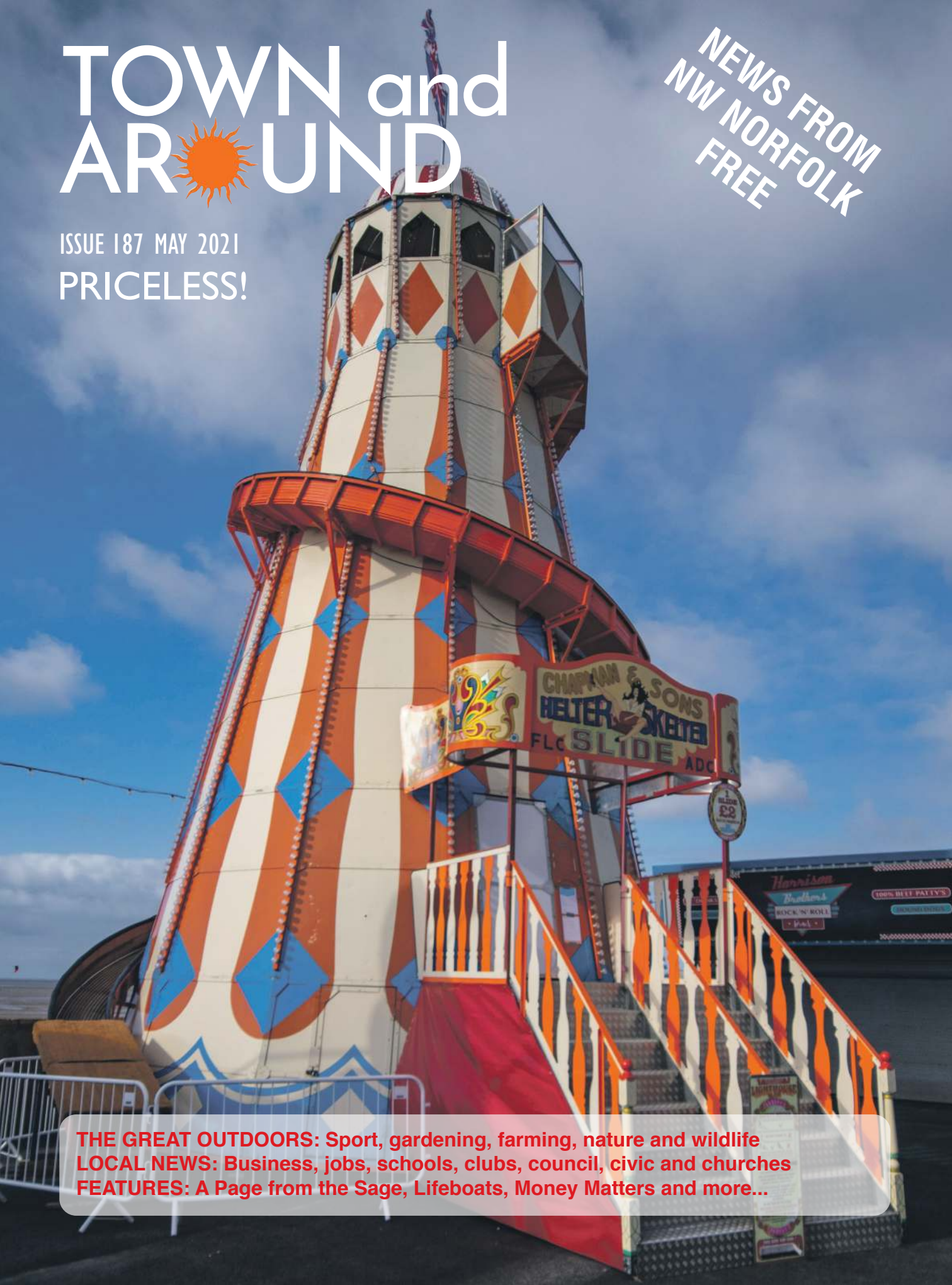


TOWN and AROUND



ISSUE 187 MAY 2021
PRICELESS!

NEWS FROM
NW NORFOLK
FREE



THE GREAT OUTDOORS: Sport, gardening, farming, nature and wildlife
LOCAL NEWS: Business, jobs, schools, clubs, council, civic and churches
FEATURES: A Page from the Sage, Lifeboats, Money Matters and more...

First word

May is my favourite time of year, I love the long (and hopefully warmer) days. It feels like summer is just around the corner - and the peonies are looking very promising in my garden this year.

After months of lockdown, life suddenly seems full of possibilities and one of the things I am determined to do this month is to ride on the Ferris Wheel at Rainbow Park. Manufactured in the USA the wheel has a tenuous link to Elvis, but you'll have to turn to the centre pages to find out what it is!

The biggest and brightest Supermoon of 2021 will appear on 28th May says Terry Parish and his night sky article appears on page 44, while on page 42 Old Muck ponders on the best way to grow potatoes. Apparently some folk believe they should be planted when there's a full moon.....

This issue is crammed full and I thank everyone who has provided articles, photos and information to make it such an interesting read.

My thanks also to our advertisers, without whom we couldn't print the thousands of magazines that are distributed each month. Please use them if you can and tell them you saw their advert here.

With best wishes

Elaine

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New home for tourist information in Hunstanton

Hunstanton and District Civic Society (H&DCS) has very much welcomed the Borough Council's decision to locate tourist information in Alive Oasis on the promenade as of 17 May this year, particularly because Alive Oasis staff will receive training to help them respond to visitor queries, thereby supporting businesses and the local economy.

The TIC Action Group has worked tirelessly and meticulously over the past nine months, providing extensive evidence to support the campaign for reinstatement of a staffed service in Hunstanton for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.

Direct, face-to-face access to informed, local, reliable advice is essential for the area's tourist economy, even more so in what is expected to be a bumper season this year for our small coastal community. Technology certainly has its place in the range of media required to highlight what the area has to offer, but its value is dependent on a dedicated development team that engages users, updates content and promptly responds to queries. The welcoming, human face of a staffed information service on the spot can make an invaluable contribution to visitor satisfaction and retention through personalisation of their experience.

As part of a potential "blended" solution for Hunstanton (linking the southern seafront with the town centre) H&DCS has offered to host a small display of tourist information in the Heritage Centre with some of its volunteers receiving the same training as staff at Alive Oasis. We hope to increase the opening hours of the Heritage Centre from 19 May onwards and will actively welcome feedback from residents, businesses and visitors throughout the coming year.

Best wishes from the TIC Action Group members (Amanda Bosworth, John and Yvonne Bridger, Stephen and Sheila Kent)

In a press release dated 7th April the Borough Council outlined the new provision and states:

The Tourist Information Point is located at the front of the Alive Oasis Sports and Leisure Centre, which is perfectly situated on a busy promenade with one of the best views in Hunstanton.

The Tourist Information Point has been relocated from the Coal Shed following a petition from the Hunstanton Civic Society, their consultation with local businesses and ongoing liaison with the borough council.

The Tourist Information Point is just one method used to promote the area and encourage visitors. For the financial year 2020/21 the www.visitwestnorfolk.com website saw an unprecedented 78% increase in page views compared to the previous year (that was over 2 million page views from March last year to now). VisitBritain launched a 'Know before you go' campaign last year and clearly people are taking heed and sensibly checking what is open and available before they travel, to ensure they can visit safely.

Once the proposed new library is built, Norfolk County Council have agreed that they will stock tourism information at that venue.

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The importance of female-friendly garages

Going to a garage can be an intimidating, confusing, and anxiety-inducing experience for some women, with many avoiding taking their car in for a service or MOT, regardless of the risk to their safety. Some garages work hard to create a safe, comfortable environment for all gender identities, but unfortunately, this isn't true of all.

What makes a garage 'female-friendly'?

Clean and tidy reception/waiting area

The reception or waiting area is usually the only space you'll see when visiting a garage. If you're a woman - or man, or someone who identifies as another gender - who has had a bad experience with garages in the past, for example, walking into a dark, grubby, cold reception area isn't going to put you at ease. This space must be kept clean and tidy and it should offer somewhere relaxing to sit and wait for your car if you need to.

Helpful, understanding staff members

We're not just referring to the front-of-house team - although they should be extra smiley! All staff, whether on the reception desk or in the workshop, should treat every customer with respect and compassion. If you don't know much about cars, you're not going to understand the jargon. Both reception staff and mechanics should explain any problems with a car and proposed repairs clearly and in layman's terms, without being patronising.

Good communication with customers, and at the right times

No garage should conduct any work on a car before quoting the cost to the customer. This is just common decency, but it can go a long way to making a customer feel more at ease.

You may have heard horror stories about women being taken advantage of when they came to a mechanic for help, perhaps being overcharged for work, or having more work done than was discussed and still being charged for it. In fact, according to a study performed by The Times, women are much more likely to be quoted higher prices for car repairs than men, for the same services. It's important to note that this isn't always the case, however.

Costs should be laid out and explained to the customer before work on their car commences, and no work should be undertaken unless the customer has given consent. And, of course, all customers should be treated equally, particularly when it comes to costs.

A lot of changes need to be made to ensure all garages are safe spaces for all gender identities but thankfully, there are already a lot of businesses, such as ourselves, that consider this a priority.

Visit www.kbrownautoskingslynn.co.uk for more information. Call 01553 763763 for the King's Lynn garage, and 01485 533786 for Hunstanton.



Keith, founder of K Brown Auto Repairs

Getting it right: first time, every time

There's no such thing as an easy option or a quick fix solution at K Brown Auto Repairs – just a professional service you can trust

You'd be surprised how many people take their car to different garages every time they need some work done or wonder why a strange light has suddenly appeared on their dashboard – but it's usually based on poor previous experiences or problems not being solved correctly in the first place.

There's a reason why people have been bringing their cars to K Brown Auto Repairs in King's Lynn and Hunstanton for over 25 years, and it's not just the friendly reception staff or the highly-trained technicians.

"We have so many customers who

come to us with persistent issues that won't go away despite them having tried two or three different garages," says Tamsin Brown. "Cars are very intelligent and highly complex these days, and the easy option usually only fixes the symptoms of the problem – not the cause. And in many cases the easy option is also the most expensive."

Her husband Keith (who founded K Brown Auto Repairs in the spring of 1995) takes a very different approach to car servicing and repairs – insisting that all diagnostics have to be proved before any work is carried out. It's simple to replace an expensive part that appears to be faulty and it may even appear to solve the problem for a week or so.

But K Brown Auto Repairs doesn't work on assumptions, guesswork or possibilities – and never carries out

any work until the true cause of the problem is identified and proved and the customer has been fully informed.

"I think that's why we've built such a strong reputation for being totally trustworthy," says Tamsin. "We'll always trace issues back to their root cause, which may be as straightforward as replacing a single small wire."

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HUNSTANTON LAWN TENNIS TOURNAMENT AND 'MR HUNSTANTON TENNIS' RECEIVE NATIONAL AWARDS

Tournament looks forward to serving up 2021 event

Hunstanton Lawn Tennis Tournament, dubbed the 'Glastonbury of Tennis' by the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), has received its award for being named 'Competition of the Year'.

Additionally, LTA president David Rawlinson has presented long-serving Tournament secretary Chris Holt with a prestigious Meritorious Service Award.

Presentation of the awards - delayed due to the Coronavirus pandemic lockdown - came as organisers of the UK's largest tennis Tournament said they hope to hold this year's event on the Hunstanton Recreation Ground from August 15-21.

The Tournament won the 'Competition of the Year' title at the 2020 awards of the governing body for tennis in Britain on account of the outstanding event held and work within the community throughout 2019.

With more than 1,300 entries, the Norfolk tournament boasts some of the highest player rates in the country, while in 2019 it raised £2,000 for a hospice within the area.

Meanwhile, Chris, who lives in Snettisham, and has served as Tournament secretary since 1981 and been a committee member since 1975, was one of nine "amazing individuals" recognised in 2020 by the LTA with Meritorious Service Awards.

The 2020 LTA Awards were held virtually due to the pandemic. Consequently, with the easing of lockdown restrictions, trophy presentations by Mr Rawlinson can only now take place.

Chris said: "To have the annual 'Sunny Hunny' Tournament held in the sleepy backwaters of North Norfolk recognised as the best competition in the UK by the LTA is a fantastic achievement."

Known as 'Mr Hunstanton Tennis', Chris



Chris Holt (second from left) and Janice Campbell (right), treasurer, Hunstanton Lawn Tennis Tournament, with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) trophies. Looking on are Association president David Rawlinson and Heather Bottomley, LTA councillor for Norfolk.

acknowledged his personal award saying: "I am delighted and humbled to receive a Meritorious Service Award from the LTA. However, the Tournament is not just about me, but a fantastic committee and many behind-the-scenes supporters who all make a massive contribution to the success of the event."

Meanwhile, as the UK 'reopens' from pandemic lockdown, the Tournament committee is planning for the 2021 event to include a celebration of its centenary.

Chris said: "Cancellation of the 2020 Tournament due to the pandemic meant our plans to recognise the 100-year anniversary of the event were put on hold.

"As the Tournament committee plans for the 2021 event to take place, we will be guided by the Government, the LTA and, critically, the community of Hunstanton and the surrounding villages as the UK emerges from the pandemic. For the Tournament and centenary celebration to take place as scheduled in August the safety of everyone - competitors, spectators, event supporters and organisers and, crucially, the area's residents - is essential.

"While we hope the 2021 Tournament takes place - and we currently plan to start taking entries online on May 1 - the committee is absolutely conscious of its safety responsibilities."

Poetry pleases lockdown learners at Snettisham Primary

Pupils at Snettisham primary school have been using poetry to get rid of any lockdown blues.

The school's assistant headteacher and Year 5/6 teacher, Clare Enters, saw how much encouraging expression through poetry and spoken word performance made an impact on students, and so encouraged them to learn and perform a poem called Peer Pressure, by London-based hip-hop artist Karl Nova.

One of the recordings, by 10-year-old William Mann, even got back to Nova, who sent a message of congratulation.

"The pupils have really enjoyed the experience," said Louise Jackson, executive head teacher. "Talking about the meaning, thinking about the structures and vocabulary and then the challenge of memorizing and performing verses have really excited them."

Snettisham Primary is part of the West Norfolk Academies Trust, which runs 11 schools in the borough.

Ms Jackson added: "We set up something called the Poetry Spine in the school, to make sure all pupils can discover and enjoy poetry suitable for their age group, so they've learnt all kinds of poems, traditional and modern, and seeing how it helps them to find their voice and express themselves can be quite moving."



William Mann

Annual surface dressing work starts this month

Road users are being advised that work starts soon on the annual spring and summer surface dressing project. This year 305 miles of Norfolk's roads will get a new seal to extend the life of the road, prevent potholes opening up, and provide a new skid-resistant surface to help reduce the risk of accidents.

The work is carried out between April and September every year while the weather is warmer. The team aims to get the holiday areas and main roads treated first so they are complete before the start of the summer season.

Crews will be starting work on 22nd May in the Burnham Overy, Brancaster, Burnham Market, Titchwell and Thornham areas.

The new seal consists of a thin layer of bitumen and chippings which is laid onto the road. This helps prevent water penetration and potholes.

The action of vehicles passing over the new surface plays an important part in helping the new surface to settle in. People are urged to drive slowly and considerately across the new surface until it is bedded in and highway teams return a few days later to sweep up the loose stones and a 20mph speed restriction will be imposed during work and on the freshly-laid surface.

People living along the routes which are to be given a new seal will receive notification a day or two before the crews arrive. The road will not be closed to residents, but they will be asked not to park on the road on the day of the surface dressing work, or on the following day when surplus chippings will be swept up. Also, bin collections should be unaffected.

Princess Theatre news

The Princess Theatre in Hunstanton has received a second grant from the Government's £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund to help the organisation recover and reopen.

Theatre Director Brian Hallard said: "The money will allow us to reopen our doors when restrictions permit, continuing to provide a much loved service and venue to our local community and to deliver a more robust marketing strategy with a wider reach across Norfolk, enabling us to bounce-back strongly just in time for the summer."

"We are grateful to the Arts Council for being awarded this second grant especially as we have put so much hard work into rescheduling nearly 100 shows in the last year."

"We have also offered socially distanced shows and our annual pantomime, which has kept the theatre open as much as government restrictions would allow."

"This 2nd grant will enable us to continue providing top quality entertainment for locals and tourists year-round and keep the Princess Theatre open for many years to come."



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Building a granny annexe

By Charlotte Bentley, Solicitor, Hayes + Storr

If you are thinking about building an annexe for an elderly parent or other family members, you will need to have the necessary planning consents in place before you start work. If not, the local planning authority could require you to remove the dwelling and return your home to its original state. Being unable to show the requisite consents may also cause problems when you come to sell your home.

Planning permission, do you need it?

The good news is that depending on what you want to build, and where you live, you are allowed certain building works without having to make a planning application. Permitted development rights allow the improvement or extension of a home without the need to apply for planning permission, where that would be out of proportion with the impact of the works carried out.

However, a separate self-contained building in your garden is likely to need an application for full planning permission. A home extension, which satisfies other conditions relating to height and physical layout, may not.

If you're unsure whether planning permission is required, you can apply for a certificate of lawful development. This can give you peace of mind that your proposals are lawful from a planning perspective.

What other consents will you need?

There may be restrictions in your title deeds which mean that any building works require the consent of an adjoining landowner, or another third party. If your home is a leasehold property, then it's likely you will need consent from your landlord for any structural alterations. If your home is subject to a mortgage, you may need your lender's consent too.

What about stamp duty land tax?

Building an annexe should not ordinarily give rise to any liability for stamp duty land tax. However, stamp duty land tax will apply on any future sale of your property, affecting how attractive your home is to would-be buyers.

What about finance and ownership?

If you are combining finances with other family members, you should all be clear about the arrangement. Ensure there is a written agreement which reflects your true intentions. This should take account of your relative contributions and what could happen in the future. For example, what legal interest, if any, will your parent have in your shared

home?

Joint ownership as tenants in common may seem like the obvious and fairest choice, because it would allow each of you to have a fixed share, reflecting your different contributions. However, if your parent dies, their share in the property will pass as per instructions left in their will if they have one, or according to the rules of intestacy. You could then find yourself sharing ownership of your home with their beneficiary, which may not be what you had in mind at all.

For further information about extending your home to share with relatives, contact Hayes + Storr on 01328 863231 and ask to speak to someone in the property department.



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Pride in our Neighbourhoods 56

Cllr Andrew Murray

**Regulation 16 consultations :-
Hunstanton Neighbourhood Development Plan closes
on Tuesday 25 May.**

**Heacham Neighbourhood Plan closes on Tuesday 1
June at 17.00 hrs.**

Why is this important? The objective of the planning system is to provide the correct quantity and quality of homes of the appropriate sizes and tenures in the right places with matching services and infrastructure.

Despite guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Borough's Development Management Policies, a serious mismatch has developed between what the developers consider to be profitable; what the planning committee have permitted to be built and what the local people consider to be needed in the area.

These two plans have been submitted to the Borough Council and the Regulation 16 consultation periods have commenced. This is the opportunity for local people to view what is proposed, to comment on the ideas and influence the final form. All comments will be forwarded to the independent examiner for consideration. Some adjustments to the plans may be made as a result of the examiner's report prior to the plans being put to a referendum during the summer.

The referendum question will be "Do you want the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to use the Neighbourhood Plan for the relevant parish to help it decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood area?"

Everyone on the electoral rolls will be entitled to vote and if more than 50% of those voting agree, the plans will be 'made' and become material considerations whenever planning applications are being considered for that area.

Neighbourhood plans are already in force in **Brancaster, Sedgeford and Snettisham** whilst the plans for **Holme next the Sea and Thornham** are awaiting a referendum date and that for **Castle Acre** is with the examiner. Plans for **Dersingham, Ringstead, Bircham and Old Hunstanton** are at various stages of preparation.

The plans have been made by members of the parish councils sometimes with assistance of volunteers from the community and with varying degrees of professional input and financial assistance. All the plan groups have sought to involve all sections of the communities by the use of public meetings and questionnaires.

Although the plans are all different, there are common themes running through the aspirations and objectives which reflect the facts that residents value the sense of place and distinctiveness of the individual areas, the proximity of the Wash and North Sea coast, the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and wish to protect the natural environment, the sense of tranquility and the dark skies.

There is widespread concern about the imbalance of the age



structure of the population and there is a wish for measures to be taken to enable young people to remain in the locality by improving connectivity and promoting the building of starter or affordable homes.

In **Holme next the Sea** over 55% of the parish housing stock was in the 2011 census in use as a second home, holiday let or empty. More recent surveys suggest the figure has increased to over 60%. Of the 2894 homes in Hunstanton, 571 or 18% are thought to be second homes but that represents 30% of the total number in the borough.

When the proportion of second homes becomes large, the economy of the area and degree of social cohesion changes. For several months of the year the properties remain empty.

Whilst properties can still be purchased as second homes, **St Ives** in Cornwall led the way in restricting ownership of new build dwellings to those who wish to use them as their principal residence.

Further information about Neighbourhood Plans can be found on the Borough's web-site:

https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/116/plans_being_prepared or
<https://www.hunstantontowncouncil.gov.uk/news/2021/03/draft-hunstanton-neighbourhood-development-plan-872> or
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Alternatively telephone the Town Clerk on 01485 532402 or Andrew on 532376 or Robert on 298367



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OLD HUNSTANTON VILLAGE HALL UPDATE

The Village Hall renovation continues with the good news that we will be hosting the elections on the 6th May. It is hoped, Covid 19 permitting, events and functions will follow on a regular basis.

We now have Khushee Street Food visiting the Village Hall front car park on a regular basis, I will post the dates and times on the OHVH Face Book page. Don't forget Bordoli's Pizzas visit every Friday and dates and times will be posted on FB as well.

Donations:

Anybody wishing to donate and/or volunteer, please contact either of the Trustees, listed below, for bank details, gift aid paperwork or any other matters you need to discuss. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

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David McLeod. dmc008@me.com Tel: 01485 532814.

Mob: 07850950570.

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OLD HUNSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL

We have had a response from N.C.C. Highways regarding our request for an assessment of our proposed Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), concerning parking and speed restrictions in the village,

In regard, to parking, they have noted our suggestions of seasonal parking and single yellow lines with notices. N.C.C. Highways are looking at this problem for all the coastal villages, but they have moved on from seasonal restrictions to probable year-round restrictions because the visitor season is getting ever longer. They are looking at policies that would include reducing the impact on the residents and understood our request for the whole of the north side of the A149 to be restricted. However, these plans are for 2022 but some temporary measures will hopefully be put in place for this year.

The Parish Council requests for a 20mph speed limit on the A149 through the village and a 20mph speed limit for Chapel Bank and Church Road together with a request for the speed sign at the east end of the village to be moved to the Holme side of the bridge are all under consideration by N.C.C. Highways. We are expecting to hear further within the next few days as the Parish Council has re-iterated our need to apply for the extra Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), money by the end of the month.

Plans have been made to reopen the Playground ASAP. It requires a deep clean, a spruce up, signs installing regarding adherence to the relevant Covid 19 regulations and a maintenance check. This will be done as fast and as safely as we can. We are a small Parish Council and do not have the wherewithal to police the Playground and so will be dependant on residents to notify us and/or the police in real time so that we can take action on any infringement of the regulations.

David McLeod
Chairman OHPC

Borough Council News: Heacham, Sedgeford and Fring

Terry Parish Leader of the Group of Independent Councillors (16 Strong)

Happy May Day. I trust it has stopped snowing and the frosts have abated - I am writing this on the 12th April not long after a 6-hour planning meeting.

There were three correct decisions at that meeting which have the potential to benefit local residents.

An application to demolish and then rebuild a holiday home at South Beach was refused. Effectively it was too big, too tall and detrimental to neighbours and the locality. This is important as too many owners of beach front properties seek to expand modest holiday accommodation to substantial houses which turn a nice profit when resold but damage the character of the dune areas.

A retrospective application for back garden holiday accommodation was refused, for a second time. Hopefully this will persuade others to not follow suit.

The third application was in Hunstanton. However, it does have a bearing on residents of Heacham, Sedgeford and Fring. It was for 32 apartments on Southend Road carpark. Six of these are deemed 'affordable', 16 are market housing. There was a caveat that these 16 would be sold to locals first (anyone in West Norfolk). However, any resale could be to anyone at all. Given their location this would quite likely mean they would be holiday flats before very long.

Most people raised continuing concerns about loss of car parking spaces. I raised the issue above – the apartments should be retained for local purchasers in perpetuity. This would also have the effect of reducing their market prices. Such a condition is in the gift of the Borough Council as it is Council land and a Council planning application. There is further justification as the proposed development is being subsidised by a tax payer funded government grant to aid development of Council land.

Several other councillors, from different groups, appeared to have sympathy with my proposal. However, it was lost on the advice of officers who said it was not a planning issue but up to the Housing department (and, no doubt, Cabinet and Council). The planning application will come to planning committee, for a third time, likely on May 17th, possibly later. I expect the parking issue will likely be resolved.

However, should taxpayer subsidised development, on council land, stay available for local people for its lifetime or be allowed to turn a profit for individuals or potential speculators? I advise you to make your opinion clear to councillors, cabinet, officers and the press as soon as possible.

Other matters. The Government gave the green light to pop up campsites to remain open for 57 days or thereabouts. I hope this does not cause problems in this ward. Please tell me and your County Councillor if they happen and monitor and report any problems to csnn@west-norfolk.gov.uk copying councillors in.

The Borough is supposed to have strategies to cope with increases in litter and rubbish expected as visitors arrive. Please report problems in my ward to me and to

Clr.stuart.dark@west-norfolk.gov.uk

Questions to Cabinet Members and to the Leader now have a strict time limit of 45 minutes and 15 minutes. The Tory Group has also started asking 'questions' for the first time ever which reduces opposition questions further – someone must have been taking instructions from China.

The Independents will continue to press for answers where they are not forthcoming and change when it is needed. Vote wisely in the County elections on 6th May.

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Crabby Slam Dunk the Junk Coastal Litter Campaign

Jan Roomes, Town Clerk

Hunstanton Town Council have launched 'Slam Dunk the Junk', a positive and fun initiative to address coastal litter and are inviting businesses and residents to participate. HTC hope the campaign will encourage positive social behaviour along our coastline, and result in people using the bins provided or taking home their litter.

Councillors have been out and about spreading the message and delivering posters. 'All the businesses we have approached so far have offered to put up a poster. It's fantastic that the community is pulling together to address this issue,' stated Cllr Amanda Knight.

The Council spoke to several environmental organisations to seek advice about a litter campaign. They were informed that a negative campaign tended to result in negative behaviour, and an upbeat and more positive message was needed.

With that thought in mind HTC have created Crabby, the eco crab! The Crabby character has been designed by local artist Kate Dunbar, the person behind the 'Sandi Starfish' lost children project. Cllr Knight stated, 'The campaign has been designed to appeal to both adults and children. Children make great influencers and they can encourage their parents to take notice of the message. Rather than a 'Don't and No' campaign we wanted to put the emphasis on those who do care about the environment.'

The problem with litter is not going to go away anytime soon and current predictions are for a very busy UK staycation in 2021,



so they needed a campaign that could develop and adapt as required. Ideas for the future include a range of 'Beach Buddies' to join Sandi and Crabby, beach cleans, education workshops and story competitions with prizes such as a 'buddy' toy.

Tony Bishopp, Mayor of Hunstanton, said: 'It's good to be working with local businesses to tackle the growing problem and I would like to thank residents who have been out in all weathers litter picking. Keeping our beach and town clean is a responsibility we all share. We're very fortunate to have the support of our community.'

Members of the Council hope to visit all the town's businesses, but if they have been unable to contact you and you would like a poster or a banner please contact The Clerk at HTC on 01485 532402 or clerk@hunstantontowncouncil.gov.uk. If any residents would like a poster please do get in touch - we can drop one off at your address or email a pdf for you to print.

u3a

HUNSTANTON
Learn, Laugh, Live

Our next Zoom meeting will be on Monday 17th May starting at 2.00 pm which will be "Stories from the Clink", speaker Neil Sadler a former police officer.

For anyone who would like to join us: Hunstanton u3a website gives more details and membership information.

For further details and request for Zoom link as a visitor contact memsec.u3ah@gmail.com

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A Page from the Sage

Well here we are again with some more writing about Hunstanton of years long gone for the Town and Around for May 2021.

Alan Gallagher

These are some memories of Hunstanton seventy years ago that were passed on to me by a gentleman by the name of Alan Gallagher. In 1943 he started work at the age of fifteen for a builder by the name of Groom who had a builders yard at the top of Hill Street. It was always a struggle getting up Redgate Hill as Alan lived at Snettisham so he had to bike to work.

After a while Alan left the building trade and went to work for the Etna Stone and Shingle Company in the pits on Snettisham beach where he learned to drive an excavator loading up trucks onto small railway trucks that took the shingle to the grader at the end of the shingle pits.

In early 1945 he was called up to serve in the Royal Navy; hostilities were nearly over thank god, a mate and Alan volunteered for to serve in submarines as the pay was thirty shillings a fortnight and they got sixpence a day extra for serving in submarines. Beer was five (old) pence a pint and you could get 200 Navy cigarettes for one shilling. Alan was demobbed in 1948, he said his Chief Petty Officer tried to persuade him to stay on but he had had enough.

Alan told me about an experience when cockling down on Snettisham beach, his uncle decided to have a go and said that he could join him. Several families in Snettisham made a good living from it. He often used to hear them going by the old cottage at two o'clock in the morning and he wondered how can they could see in the dark. He got a surprise; the cockle beds shone in the dark, so they raked them up into nets then when it was daylight they cleaned them up in a gully left by the outgoing tide and according to the tide times they made two trips a day.

He then joined F W Shanks Builders and Contractors who had their yard in Hunstanton on the land where Nene Drive is today. Alan worked as a bricklayer, he worked on many local projects such as the Smithdon School and the Old Hunstanton sewage scheme and many other jobs before joining Hunstanton Urban District Council as a bricklayer and pavior where he met a lot of fellows many of them real characters. One right character was Sid Plattern who drove a dust cart for four years without renewing his licence, his mate on the dust cart was Len (Choker) Daw, another character was Dolly Raines (Billy Raines father). There were a lot of trees down Westgate that overlooked the council nurseries so when autumn came and the leaves began to fall Dolly would have his holidays so that someone else would have to



by
Dick Melton
01485 535658

sweep them up.

Amongst the UDC staff were Sam Howard refuse collector, Les Hodgson who worked with Dick Garwood, Jimmy Wheeler a deck chair attendant, Les Fenton a foreman gardener, the two Frary brothers from Heacham Claude and Doug who were also gardeners, Arthur West the sewage man and rat catcher who worked with Jack Jones and Ernie Proudfoot. Bert Fenton ran the bowling green, Vic Guy was a painter and decorator, Tom Playford another carpenter, plus Ginger Woods, Vic Gosnell, Bert Bix, Mr Murray, George Jewell, Neil Quincey and Jack Driver. On Sunday afternoons in the summer time Jack Driver would row Bert Bradshaw out to the island in the boating lake to play to all the people sitting in the shelters around the lake, Bert weighed 25 stone it was a good job that Jack was a strong old boy! One more chap I missed out who worked at Shanks with Alan was Snowey Nobes (The Duke) who always wore a white shirt, one night Snowy was in the hole in the wall with his lady friend when an American started chatting her up so Snowey knocked him to the floor with one punch, it took four Snowdrops (American military policemen) to handle Snowey out of the door.

Dinner Dance

Next this is about a dinner dance on the 2nd February 1952 given by Mr Shanks to all his workers it was held at the Kit-Kat public house in Hunstanton.

This was the menu: lamb cutlets sauté, green peas, French beans, carrots, sprouts, roast and fondant potatoes. To follow was blackberry and apple tart with ice cream or custard, cheese and biscuits and coffee.

This is now a list of all the people who got up and proposed a toast and those that replied.

The King: Mr F W Shanks. The visitors: Mr A R Seward, Capt E Murray Harvey OBE. MC. The staff: H W Temple-Cole Mr D J Deakin, Mr Shanks and the Directors, Mr F T Smith and Mr F W Shanks.

The entertainers where A W Deans and

party from King's Lynn the toast master was Mr Osiey Hayward who was at that time manager of the Kit-Kat. This information was passed on to me by Mr Alan Gallagher who now lives in Heacham, thank you Alan.

WWII

I was asked what I can remember about the second world war, well I was born on the 7th July 1939 at Hillsea Military hospital in Portsmouth, my father was in the army and in 1940 my father was sent to France; he was captured by the Germans and was a POW until he was released in 1945, so my mother and I came to East Winch to live with my granny, my mother's mother, also living there was my mother's sister and two brothers all in a two up two down semi-detached cottage. About the first thing I can remember during the war was going to school in 1944 at the age of five; the A47 road passed through the middle of the village as it still does.

The A47 was very busy with American and British Army and Air Force trucks up and down day and night, we all had to take our gas masks to school with us and we had to go home for lunch as there were no school dinners. My uncles would take me up to the corner of Station Road, where we lived, to the junction of the A47 where we would shout and wave to the trucks going by, sometimes the Yanks (Americans) would throw us some gum or even oranges and if you did not catch the oranges they would squash when they hit the road but we would still pick them up as there were no oranges in the shops. sometimes they would throw a packet or two of cigarettes, I well remember at the end of the war we were up the corner when George Formby came by in his Rolls Royce on his way to Wroxham where he had a house, we all waved to him and George and his wife waved back, I thought that was wonderful. We didn't get many air raids though King's Lynn got bombed with people killed. When there was an air raid and the siren went my mother and I would get under the kitchen table, my aunty and uncles would go in the coal shed but my granny just carried on as normal. The nearest East Winch got to being bombed was when a doodle bug (flying bomb) crashed on a bungalow at Middleton, the next village to East Winch, no one was hurt as the bungalow was empty.

Food was very short during the war but living in the country we had very large garden also there were plenty of rabbits and pigeons about. I remember very well my granny would take me to King's Lynn on a Saturday morning and we would go to Mr Lancaster's the butchers in Tower Street to get some meat with our ration coupons; more than likely we would end up with a half pound of sausages or they would run out before you got to the counter, then you would have to try another

shop, and sometimes you would come home with no meat at all.

I well remember VE Day when there was a big party in Mr Burman's (the farmer) big barn in the middle of the village I do also remember when all of us children were given a banana, this was the first time I had ever seen one, yet eaten one! About two weeks later my mother had a telegram to say what day my father would be home, my uncles got an old white sheet and painted on it 'Welcome home Jim' in black paint then they strung it across the road from tree to tree. Unfortunately his train was late getting into King's Lynn and he had to walk to East Winch getting there about 2am so he did not see it till it was daylight. Also during the war there were air raid wardens who walked around the villages and towns to make sure your blackout blinds were not letting any light through, people also had air raid shelters in their gardens, they were called Anderson shelters, I remember one still being in a garden down Manor Road Dersingham in 1962.

A report from 1951

A lady gave me some very old newspapers, one of them was a Lynn News and Advertiser from Friday 28th of December 1951, included was the following report about Hunstanton, the report was entitled 'Looking back, looking forward at Hunstanton'.

With 1951 drawing to a close, Hunstanton can look back on a year not without its achievements, the town has progressed in several ways during the last twelve months and looks like progressing further in the coming year, the Urban Council continued with its housing plans steadily during 1951, ten more houses were completed and occupied on the Hill Street housing estate and another 14 are well advanced and will be completed (Chiltern Crescent, Melton Drive, Willow Road) by March if everything goes according to the schedule, and a tender for 14 two bedroom houses on the estate has been accepted, building of these houses will probably start in January and they will be completed before the end of 1952.

The council is looking forward to the completion of arrangements for the buying of 12 more acres at their Hill Street site, when this land becomes the council's it will be able to build up to another 100 houses on it. Another big step forward by the council in the matter of accommodation has been the conversion of the Sandringham Hotel into a block of offices and flats, the 12 flats there will all be occupied next month, the council will occupy some of the offices and the rest have been let to various private firms.

I will carry on about what was going on in Hunstanton in 1951 in the next issue of Town and Around.

All the best for now, just keep on a troshin'.

**The Boy Dick
from Sunny Hunny**

St Mary's Church Tower Appeal

For 800 years St Mary's has stood at the heart of old Heacham's village; Watched riots and wars, the railway and floods and been there to care and encourage.

'It is much loved, used and welcoming,' says Veronica the Vicar, 'We'll soon reopen for worship and praise and peace from candles a-flicker.'

But there is a problem, a big one at that; there are holes in the walls of the tower. The gutters and roof let the rain come through, whether a deluge or shower.

The cost of repairs is a worrying sum; Twenty-Five Thousand or more! We do need support, donations and gifts so we can the tower restore.

Please go to Just Giving and support the appeal, to our website and Facebook page too; Bank transfer or cheque, or follow the links, * Your kindness will help us get through.

And then we can celebrate, praising God's love. Our tower is safe, strong and sure For Christmas and harvest and weddings as well – and 800 more years in store!

*Just Giving: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/stmaryschurch-heacham

Website: www.heachamchurch.org.uk

Facebook @StMarysHeacham

Bank account – Heacham Parochial Church Council

Sort code 20 46 65 Account no: 10464554

Cheques and cash to the Church Office please

17 High Street, Heacham, King's Lynn PE31 7ER (01485 572539)

Thank you for your support.



Jewellery for Sale in aid of St Mary's Heacham Church Tower Appeal

My daughter has been busy making jewellery for us to sell in aid of the Church Tower Appeal. The photos above show a representative sample. Each piece is unique. They make very useful little gifts for friends and relatives. All are priced at £5, are easy to post and all proceeds are for the church.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could hold a sale....? However, at the present time, if you are interested, please give me a call on 07787 842796 or email ver.welham@gmail.com and I can give you more details of what is available or send further photos. We can then discuss viewing / collection / payment / delivery etc.

I look forward to sharing these lovely items with you.
Thank you

Veronica Welham



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NEW PROPERTIES ALWAYS NEEDED

As I write this, our 'road map' journey from 12 April is just about to start and by publication, it will be well under way with holidaymakers having been in situ for their first vacations since before November last year. We are awaiting opening our doors with bated breath. Before welcoming in the public again, we three (myself, Julie and Carol) have to remember to put the 'open' sign on the door and 'closed' when we leave. Plus, to put out and take in the advertising board and pile of brochures. Most importantly, not to lock the door after we get to work in the mornings! Not much to remember, but having not done it for several months, the brain will have to revert back to its previous memory when we walk through the door as all retailers will. But I am sure that once we all get used to being open, we will almost be back to normal albeit still with masks, tests and sanitising.

We are here to chat to any potential holiday home owner and will be glad to make a visit to properties to discuss holiday letting. We do have a package in the office for anyone considering letting their holiday home or it can be emailed. But meeting new clients and chatting with them about the pros and cons of holiday lets is what we prefer. We can then see the accommodation first hand and give an honest opinion from our long-term experience of letting. We see a property as the owners second home, which of course it is if they intend to use it for themselves, family and friends and therefore advise accordingly. Décor is personal taste and there is no need to emphasise the need for seaside, boutique or high-end luxury hotel styles. As long as property is safe and legal, clean and tidy, it should be fine. So if a potential new client is reading this, we ask that you furnish a property how you would wish to find it when you walk through the door as if you were arriving as a guest yourself. Holiday guests who come to the coast are mainly families wanting to feel comfortable where they are staying and not to feel obligated to tip toe through rooms terrified to take food or drink across the floor in case of spillage. Being fearful of touching or bouncing the Royal Doulton or Claris Cliff collection off the shelf of the posh cabinet as you walk across the floor is not how we want our guests to feel, especially if children are about. No-one needs tension on holiday. Chilling, relaxation, calm and enjoyment of the property and area. We want our guests to feel that they can happily return. We are not saying nothing of high quality, but a very good quality and standard of furnishings, etc which is hard wearing and fit for holiday letting purpose. Our information guide will help and photos of our holiday homes can be seen on our website as another guide.

Apart from clients meeting us, we like to meet our guests too. Having a handy office in the town, we are open all year Mondays to Fridays and on Saturdays too from April – October. So if you are on your much needed holiday this year or here for the day and want to return please call in to book as we do get really busy with over half our guests each year returning from previous years to what they know and love. Knowing all our properties personally we will be able to answer any queries and help you to decide.

Sandra Hohol, Norfolk Holiday Homes,
70a Westgate, Hunstanton PE36 5EP. 01485 534267
info@norfolkholidayhomes.agency
www.norfolkholidayhomes.agency

Across: 1. Assured, 5. Dubious, 9. Onion, 10. Assembled,
 11. Highwaymen, 12. Gael, 13. Regardless, 16. Skid,
 18. Goat, 19. Endangered, 21. Odds, 22. Banana skin,
 26. Crosshead, 27. Icen, 28. Predict, 29. Results
 Down: 1. Another, 2. Sting, 3. Ringworm, 4. Diary,
 5. Dyspepsia, 6. Bomb, 7. Oil tanker, 8. Saddled,
 14. Grandiose, 15. Land agent, 17. Ignatius, 18. Good cop,
 20. Dandies, 23. Adder, 24. Knell, 25. Asti

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

Hunstanton & District Civic Society

HERITAGE CENTRE - CORONAVIRUS

With the country succeeding on keeping to the road map set by our government, we now have plans to reopen the Heritage Centre in May. It would appear that with our appeals for additional volunteers to help 'man' the Centre, we now intend to reopen, fingers crossed, on Wednesday, 19th May 2021 as mentioned last month with our opening days during the summer season as being Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 2pm to 4pm. This would involve just one pair of volunteers on duty for two hours on each of those days. A number of our volunteers who responded positively to Terry's communication said that they would prefer weekday volunteering and these days might prove popular.

We may be able to open more hours each week and that would be wonderful.

If anyone else would like to add their names to our growing list of volunteers, please contact Terry Ashworth on 01485 535292 or email ashworth@hunstantoncivicsociety.org.uk – Thank you.

CALENDARS FOR SALE

(fundraising effort for the Heritage Centre)

We continue to receive lovely photos from budding photographers which is giving us a stock that we can use for the calendar that we would like to publish at the end of this year. Keep them coming! There are twelve months in the year which will need to be populated. We do need appropriate photos featuring a scene, an object or other image relevant to our area for each month. We are appealing for members or friends of the Society to provide photos that you have taken during the course of the year up until October from which we would select the best. Each used would be attributed to the photographer.

Photographs in Landscape format and ideally in excess of 1MB in size should be submitted to Secretary, Sheila Kent secretary@hunstantoncivicsociety.org.uk or mail to 2 Clarence Road, Hunstanton PE36 6EG. Thank you.

H&DCS Website

We recently applied for and were successful in obtaining a grant from Norfolk County Council for their Go Digital funding which involved two main parts – 1. Zoom meetings with a digital expert to identify what our Society might do to improve our online presence including our website and other Social Media exposure. 2. A grant of up to £500 to provide the resources needed to allow us to achieve an improvement in our Digital Technology. NCC put us in touch with Romily Broad from Norwich. Amanda Bosworth and Sheila and Stephen Kent were helped by Romily who prepared an excellent report following about 4½ hours of discussions over Zoom. As a result, we have decided to change our website to one that is a lot more user friendly than that which we have created previously. It should end up being more readable on all devices from Desktop, through to Mobile phones. Our present site developed from one that was created on a commercial basis by a resident of Hunstanton and replaced by Stephen Kent using simple, but effective, HTML language that is very stable but not as flexible as we would like. We are having to learn how to use WordPress in creating a new site but ultimately others will be able to access the site and provide additional material to be added to it without the need for just one person to have to physically do all the work in uploading it!

As a result, our website (www.hunstantoncivicsociety.org.uk) is now 'under construction' but we hope that within a month or so it will be functional, even though we will continue with its development.

We wait to hear whether part 2. (the grant application) will be successful. We have applied for funding for a number of items that will hopefully enable us to properly develop what we can do in the Heritage Centre. We are hoping to acquire an A3 printer/scanner, a credit card reader which can be used anywhere there is a mobile signal that can be used for our sales and donations. Also we have requested a 10" Tablet computer for use in the Centre and finally a microphone of some sort to ease the recording of Talks and other uses that will improve our technological presence!

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Andrew Jamieson, Norfolk County Councillor, North Coast & Cabinet Member for Finance

The Reality of the Roadmap II

We live in a time of unprecedented challenges, but this gives us unprecedented opportunity as well. The Government's announcement of a Levelling Up Fund: up to £20 million for every constituency in the country, which means of course a total of £180 million for Norfolk for projects driven by local MP's, means that we are delivering on our commitment to kick-start investment right across the country post Covid. James Wild, MP, is determined that these funds should be allocated right across the constituency. This one-off sum of money gives us reason to feel a bit more hopeful about the future but today I would like to focus on the Community Renewal Fund.

The Community Renewal Fund (CRF)

The CRF is a one year revenue pot of up to £3 million for four 'priority places' in Norfolk; one of them being the Borough of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk.

The fund has four themes to tackle some of the post-COVID challenges that face us: Investment in skills; Supporting people into employment; Investment for local business; Investment in communities and place.

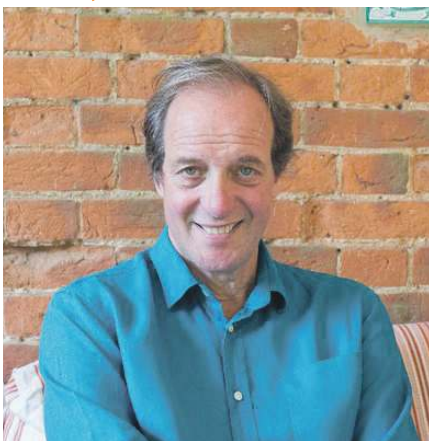
The timelines are incredibly short: bids have to be in by 18th June. Fortunately, I have been working with local business leaders and voluntary groups on local projects (i.e. local to Hunstanton) which are, if not quite shovel ready, then at least well thought through.

If re-elected, these are some of the areas that I believe I will be able to support through the application process with NCC:

Investment in skills: providing work-based training, upskilling, or retraining.

Investment in local businesses: helping entrepreneurs to create more job opportunities and develop their innovation potential; help to support local craft skills.

Investment in place: explore opportunities already highlighted in the Hemmingway



report.

The link can be found at <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/business/grants-and-funding/community-renewal-fund>

I will be happy to help any prospective bidders with their application.

Other bids abound: at NCC we are working on a range of proposals; I am focussed on the next round of bids for Active Travel, as the Greenways Project that I have written about before takes shape; for Bus Back Better, to support local operators to bring less financially secure routes and timetables back to our area; for the Local Pinch-point Fund to assist us to deliver road widening and other schemes in the County.

ELMS

Another key area that I am working on with NCC officers is ELMS: how we respond to it and how communities as a whole can benefit from it. The Common Agricultural Policy, that ELMS will in part replace, had a typically proscriptive approach to the management of access. We had permissive paths (for a while) but their creation was neither strategic nor, in many cases, for the public good. They were often an afterthought to landowners' submissions to CAP for funding. Going

forward, I strongly believe that permissive paths under ELMS should be a community led initiative: a single entity per parish, preferably the Parish Council, working collaboratively with landowners to put paths that work both for farming and for walking. NCC and the Norfolk Local access forum have done an enormous amount of preparatory work; I am already liaising with parishes that had previously expressed an interest in pursuing this type of dialogue. Again, if you would like more information, I am happy to assist.

Norfolk: The Place

One important lesson learned by Central Government through this terrible pandemic has been the effectiveness of getting things done at a local level, rather than attempting to micro-manage from the centre. Norfolk's Public health department, led by the commendable Dr Louise Smith, has been shown to be able to deliver when the going got tough.

I think this is an idea that Government have not been slow to grasp: it is interesting that the CRF is being channelled through NCC, not the LEP, for example. I believe that it would be hugely helpful if a similar approach is adopted following the recent floods in west Norfolk. Although we got there in the end, having to deal with 36 different agencies, most of whom we only consultative powers over, meant an unwieldy, slow response was inevitable. Fortunately, the Task Force we set up under General Lord Richard Dannatt will report shortly on a series of immediate steps to be taken to avert a similar response next time: a single 'emergency Flood line' is an obvious first step.

Similarly, it will be good if much of the work surrounding public access is centred clearly on Norfolk County Council, rather than split between different government agencies and local councils: we will be able to achieve far more for far less. Indeed, this is my ambition across the piece in the next administration.



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Rise up Norfolk

John Crofts

I, like you, have had ups and downs this past year. By far the biggest 'up' has been seeing the strength of our communities coming out in force to look after each other in response to coronavirus.

However getting through the worst of the pandemic is just the beginning. We were already facing some of the biggest challenges in a century: the immediacy and uncertainty of Brexit, the fact that for the last 4 years Norfolk's rate for creating new jobs has fallen year on year and the sudden realisation that the world we live in is vulnerable, just as we all are.

These challenges need more than goodwill to resolve. They're actually when governments are at their best: when, in the face of adversity, political leaders can command the trust and respect needed to guide society towards a brighter future.

In Norfolk, we've been let down for decades by political leadership that lacks vision, and the energy and dynamism needed to make things happen.

Recovery

As we continue to emerge from the restrictions placed upon us by the pandemic we need to look to the future and Norfolk's post pandemic economic recovery. These proposals should include:

- establishing industrial zones for technology-enabled agriculture, advanced manufacturing, and environmental technology
- providing a tailored management training programme to the tourism, medical, research, elderly care, and arts & culture sectors
- launching a prestigious growth programme for those companies wanting to take the next step in their growth
- promoting training, best practice and showcasing of the care sector across the county and beyond
- seeking to make Norfolk the national leader in rural mobile phone connectivity by partnering with the Shared Rural Network collaboration between network operators to



deliver 100% indoor mobile phone connectivity across Norfolk

The Environment and Climate Change

As someone who will in the next few weeks become a grandfather for the first time, my horizons are more than ever focussed on the long-term legacy that my generation is bequeathing.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change confirms that limiting global warming to 1.5°C is still possible with ambitious and immediate action. This is necessary to avoid global destruction, and to avoid losing many parts of Norfolk to rising sea levels.

No-one has the monopoly on good ideas, and it is my belief that the best projects emerge organically from within communities when people come together to make things happen. It is important to acknowledge make sure that innovations, projects and schemes that come from within Norfolk have the chance to flourish.

If elected, as well as committing to putting the environment and climate change at the centre of everything the council does, these are some of the things I would like to see:

- Anyone who lives in a rural community, as I do, is likely to have oil-fired central heating. The biggest impact on greenhouse gas emissions in Norfolk would come from properly insulating these homes – but this requires innovative materials, a dynamic group of companies to supply and install them, and a county-wide campaign to draw on Government funding opportunities around home insulation.

- A fund created specifically for local green initiatives. We need to promote and enable the setting up of community energy schemes, so that local communities can benefit from the latest in green energy technology and the power generated on their doorstep.

- Increased emphasis on and funding for environmentally sustainable flood prevention work, more re-wilding and biodiversity schemes across the county the purchase of more land for planting native trees and increasing tree density in hedgerows are all important.

- We need to re-think public transport, and build a sustainable transport approach across the county that combines public transport, rail, walking and cycling. Our hub and spoke network would see park and ride-style car parks in out of town locations across the county. Then, rather than people driving all the way to the outskirts of the city, they'd only need to drive the first few miles to the nearest hub. This networked approach would make it easier to send small electric shuttle buses around the villages to collect non-drivers and bring them to the same hubs.

- As a Liberal Democrat, I believe that power lies with people and therefore I would like to see a Climate Change Partnership group, involving councillors, residents, young citizens, climate science and solutions experts, businesses, Citizens Assembly representatives and other relevant parties to guide our policy development, as well as its implementation. Protecting and improving our environment needs leadership across all areas of local government.

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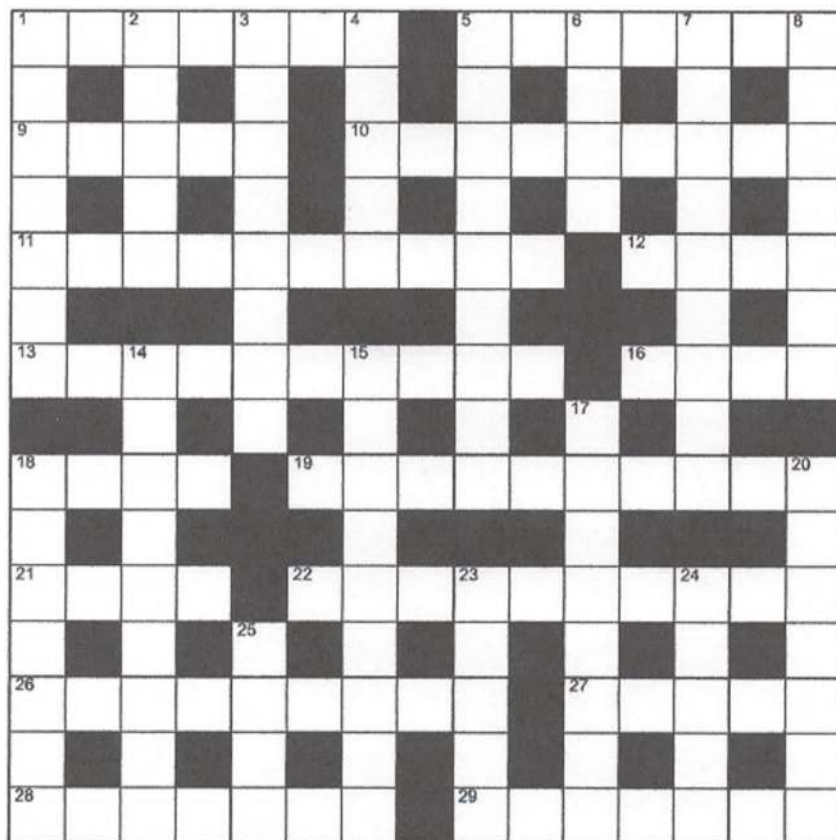
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David Elsey's Cryptic Crossword



Crossword solution on page 16

Crossword Clues Across

1. One's bound to succeed finally, it's guaranteed (7)
5. Class markers are funny (7)
9. Head back - No. 10 has new addition (5)
10. Fit to drop heading across mire, going back to be collected (9)
11. Old outlaws rode soundly with chaps on (10)
12. Miss nothing inside the big house (4)
13. Anyway, consider taking off ... (10)
16. ... plane has small issue (4)
18. Billy has beard trimmed (4)
19. Dash to cross, being at risk (10)
21. Likelihood of complete turnaround starts to drop significantly (7)
22. Crazy family connections might create difficulty (6,4)
26. Screw ticked off by governor (9)
27. Celtic band get nice break on island (5)
28. Call before police officer goes to court (7)
29. Consequences arise from United having lost in last few seconds (7)

Crossword Clues Down

1. Woman wrongly accused after article shows it's someone else (7)
2. Casting around having lost needle (5)
3. Disease takes toll on underground worker (8)
4. Record set by Samuel Pepys ... (5)
5. ... Pepys said, "To write badly can cause a feeling of discomfort" (9)
6. Clip hairstyle adopted by Miles (4)
7. Well stocked container (3,6)
8. Landed, with passengers at rear in a state of confusion (7)
14. Relative to amount one invested it's impressive (9)
15. Get a respectable guy to manage estate ... (4,5)
17. ... work suiting a saint? (8)
18. Part of a double act, when accused, is brought in for questioning (4,3)
20. Dare say cutting devices are blades (7)
23. Run away from large snake (5)
24. Signal little shop girl to follow king (5)
25. Drink? It's a round! (4)

Ray Butchers Su Doku

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Hunstanton EyeCare blog

If we had been in "Normal for Norfolk" times we would have been turning over our spectacle frame stock very quickly, but things have slowed this year, as for many businesses. Now we are beginning to be busy again, I have had a good old sort out of our stock, so in the practice we have a large

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In order to be as safe as possible during the pandemic, which is certainly not over, we are maintaining our high standards of cleanliness and infection control. You can't be like buses and all come along at once, so to avoid having too many people in a limited space at any one time we still have to operate a "Locked Door" policy. As much as I don't like leaving you standing outside on the doorstep, I'm afraid these arrangements are here to stay for a little while yet. However, we want to welcome you into the practice, and if you would like to browse our frame collection, or discuss anything spectacle/eyes related, please phone for a time slot.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

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On the turf with Charles Joyce

When the improbable happens it quickly gets overtaken by the impossible. At the Cheltenham Festival Irish trained horses won 23 of the 28 races leaving a yawning gap in British national hunt racing. Then the first five home in the Grand National were all trained in Ireland as were 10 of the first 11 home. Much of this is down to the involvement of a small number of leading owners such as Michael O'Leary's Gigginstown Stud, JP McManus and Susannah Ricci. Due to these and a few other owners no longer is it the norm for British owners to go to Ireland to find the next Gold Cup or Grand National winners. The journeys across the Irish Sea are becoming much less fruitful and finding a horse hidden from Irish eyes is all but impossible in the past few years. It is true that with the advent of the syndicates more people are becoming involved in owning racehorses, sometimes for less than a couple of hundred pounds. It may only be a hair in the tail that is owned, but most still feel an allegiance to the entire horse when it runs, and this small level of ownership can mean entry to the parade ring as an owner at Royal Ascot. Nonetheless, ownership of the very best horses is dominated by only a handful of key players.

The late Vincent O'Brien's successes are written in the annals of Cheltenham and Aintree. But this year Cheltenham saw the three principles races winners were for the first time in history trained by the one trainer, Henry De Bromhead. This year also saw Rachel Blackmore become the first female to be top jockey at the meeting. The equine science graduate did show one flaw when like most top jockeys (Lester Piggott excepted) she picked the wrong horse in the Gold Cup finishing second on A Plus Tard as Minella Indo, her usual mount, won under Jack Kennedy. Yet all that paled when the young woman from County Tipperary rode Minella Times to win the Grand National becoming the first female jockey to win the greatest race in the world in the almost 200 years of the race. How many daughters, granddaughters and great granddaughters told their elders I want to back Rachel Blackmore to win the Grand National is not known except it is likely to be in the many thousands. Unlike many of the leading women jockeys such as Katie Walsh, Nina Carberry, Kate Harrington or Lizzie Kelly, Rachel Blackmore did not come from a traditional racing family. Maybe the most endearing comment was when told of her own achievements her response was I can't believe I'm Rachel Blackmore. We should not overlook the achievements of Henry De Bromhead who was the first trainer since 1908 to train the first and second in the great race. But it was Rachel who rightfully took the limelight. I do hope Hunstanton Town and Around readers were on a few of Rachel's winners as I have been babbling on about her since this column started.

Racing has taken many blows already this year. In January Prince Khalid Abdulla passed away. Judmonte Farms have produced many winners in what are world famous colours. Among the horses to carry the Prince's colours were Frankel, Dancing Brave, Arrogate, Kingman and Enable to name only a few. In late March Sheik Hamdan Al Maktoum also passed away. His Shadwell Stud also produced many winners. Horse to have carried the Sheik's colours include Nashwan, Dayjur, Battash, Taghrooda, At Talaq, Jeune and Erhaab. Without the support of beyond avarice rich Arab owners horse racing would be a very different sport. Along with "the lads" at Coolmoore they have dominated many of the top races across the globe. In no way does the recognition of the important role the involvement of Arab owners in racing reflect on the concerns expressed about Sheik Mohammed's daughter. Nor the debt horseracing owes David Thompson who was lost at the very end of December. As co-owner with his wife of the Cheveley Park Stud the red white and blue colours became famous. In 1992, he purchased for his wife Party Politics two days before the horse won the Grand National. Already his widow, Patricia, is considering ending the relationship with national hunt racing even after a successful Cheltenham where the stud had 3 winners along with being runner up in the Gold Cup to balance the defeat of Envoi Allen.

Denise Coates has made the news again with her take from the Bet365 company. In 2019, she handed over £125 million to HMRC,

and £75 million to her charity foundation. The Sunday Times claims she was the largest taxpayer last year with another £85 million going to her foundation. This year with salary and bonus she received £469 million. I'm sure it's nothing to do with the Labour Party which the company has lodged donations with, but it's about the only firm where I can bet without being restricted to such an extent it is silly. Although according to the Guardian, not a great fan of Jeremy Corbyn, her father, an ex-miner, did for many years donate to the Labour Party.

There has been much in the news about women being able to walk safely in public. It's been suggested that there should be a curfew for all men, because women have an effective if not registered curfew. Once it was women did not feel safe in the home as the men in the their lives saw them as some kind of punch bag. The response from the women was often he's a lovely man except when he's drunk. Yet still she stayed and he still drank too excess. Some high profile cases brought the issue into the public eye as men died at the hands of their female partners. Laws were changed and no longer are women seen as a legitimate target because some man has drunk too much or is simply a nasty bully. Although it is seldom that police attitudes have changed, but there is now the odd exception.

I watched on YouTube Stevie Wonder's Heaven Help Us all. The version I saw was put up by someone by the name of Sean Connolly. It doesn't have the lyrics, but the pictures are shocking and some may find them offensive but they are absolutely incredible. There is one with 2 young girls and a soldier. This picture does not tell only a thousand words. A writer could not describe the look of the girls in a book the length of Tolstoy's War and Peace.

The lyrics include "Heaven help the girl who walks the streets alone". In my mid to late teens my reading material consisted of the Sporting Life and Penthouse. In one of them I read that when walking behind or towards a lone woman in the street it will make her feel more comfortable if you cross to the other side of the road. It was not an issue to me nor my friends. So we often crossed over to the other side of the street. Sometimes friends not used to this idiosyncrasy would question why, but they usually went with us.

That would not have stopped the murder of Sarah Everard. Nor of sisters Nicole Smallman and Bibaa Henry. How the mother of the sisters feels is difficult to contemplate, especially if there is any truth in the Daily Telegraph story that police officers took selfies with the women's bodies. Gordon Elliott's idiotic pictures pale into insignificant if that is true. There was then the issue of a police officer involved in the Sarah Everard investigation sending inappropriate memes to his colleagues which makes you think what have the police come to with their standards falling to such a low. It really does make you think, Heaven help us all.

As we move forward to May and the Newmarket Guineas meeting it looks early on as if they too are booked for export with family O'Brien, Jim Bloger and Jessie Harrington seemingly holding the ace cards. At present the Derby has 8 of the front 9 in the betting and the Oaks 7 of the front 9 in the betting all trained in Ireland.

That may change in a few weeks. In the meantime, in the Class one races, I'll be looking out for Aidan O'Brien teaming up with Ryan Moore at the May Chester meeting with a son or daughter of Galileo or where the champion stallion is the sire of the sire. Coolmoore often use these races as a guide to their Epsom Derby and Oaks runners with several running well in the later Classic races or at the Royal Ascot meeting. The French Open begins in the middle of May. It was won last year by the nineteen year old Iga Swiatek. She was so dominant it's hard to oppose her this year, but 5/1 this far out is not for me. Nor Simona Halep at 6/1. I suspect they may meet in the final, but their odds are really off putting. Ash Barty won in 2019, and didn't play last year. She's around 10/1 and has already won in Miami this year. At 10/1 she'll hopefully give us a run for our money.

As always. Pay the bills first and under no circumstances bet if you cannot afford to lose, because even the best professional punters lose more often than they win.



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Opinion: Unprecedented? - not really Mr Ashworth

By John Maiden

According to a report on the Lynn News website there were confusing scenes at a meeting of the borough council's planning committee on April 12th, but eventually a decision on a controversial application to build apartments on part of the Southend Road car park was deferred until a later date.

This came as no surprise to me, because it has been abundantly clear for a long time that members and officials have failed to learn anything from previous planning debacles.

Evidence to support this theory came when planning officer Stuart Ashworth said that he had never known anything like this before, describing it as 'totally unprecedented'. Perhaps Mr Ashworth has forgotten the contradictory advice given to the planning committee by officials in 2002.

Following the fire in May of that year, planning officers recommended approval, for a 'modern' building to be erected on The Green. In spite of this enthusiastic support from the 'professionals', at their July meeting, members of the committee said a resounding 'No' to 'the hangar' without even the need for a show of hands.

This meant that in August, Head of Planning Control, Richard Dobson, had to sign a Notice of refusal, stating the reasons for rejecting the same application he had hitherto supported. These reasons included the borough council's own policies for our Conservation Area and for the whole of The Green, an historically important area of Public Open Space. This was in addition to national policy guidelines, especially PPG 15.

Needless to say, the applicant, CHS Amusements Ltd wasted no time at all in coming up with a range of alternative designs. It was intended to put these on show for invited members of the public, including members of the planning committee, known as the 'planning control board' in those days.

It was only when a retired judge pointed out to the Head of Legal and Property Services, Timothy Leader, that if members voiced an opinion as to their preferred option, they would have been lobbied, and therefore would be unable to vote on the matter if it came back to the committee. CHS called the display off...

Less than five working days before the meeting on September 9th 2002, CHS submitted virtually the same plans for the hangar, but overhanging the promenade by an extra eight metres, with the addition



Hunstanton Pier in its heyday

of a 'short pier' facing west and serving as a balcony.

This meeting was chaired by Councillor Clifford Walters, a retired district planning officer and Richard Dobson's former line manager. From the chair Mr Walters declared that the proposed building should be approved without waiting to find out if it would be lawful to build anything of this sort on a site set aside for the entrance to Hunstanton Pier.

The application was approved by just two votes with six abstentions. Within days the borough council was informed by Graham Sinclair, an external barrister, that since CHS occupied the site under the terms of a 999-year lease for Hunstanton Pier and nothing else whatsoever, they could be instructed to vacate the site, or else submit plans for the pier specified in their lease.

The fact that the 'hangar' is still blighting our Conservation Area, with no sign of the balcony, much less a pier, is testimony to the incompetence of borough planners, and the time wasted by other departments in trying to cover up the wrongdoing of senior, overpaid officials and members. This should stir up some memories for Mr Ashworth and make him more careful with his use of the word 'unprecedented'.

Letters to the Editor

Birthday surprise

I had a big surprise on Monday the 29th March when my granddaughter Chloe rang me up to say over 100 people had gone on Facebook to wish me a happy birthday; this was very nice and I thank you all, but my birthday is not till the 7th July.

Thank you all,

Dick

Poor architecture is ruining the environment

I live in Hunstanton and work locally. I love it here, and the beach and sea views are breathtaking. However, I am astonished at how ugly some of the buildings are near the seafont, and how badly organised the space is. It's as if someone had deliberately tried to make the seafont- especially near Southend car park, as unattractive as possible! I think it would be a good idea to have a park and ride scheme for Hunstanton so that the heavy traffic is kept at the edge of the town during the summer months, and redevelop the carpark area for pedestrians, for shops and bars and leisure activities. The Oasis leisure centre, the Azam's building and the Pier Family building are shocking examples of poor architecture and ruin the natural beauty of our environment.

Does anyone else agree? And what can be done about it?

Miss L Blunden, Hunstanton

Civic Pride

I have often wondered whose responsibility it is to maintain the new roundabout near the Butterfield Meadows development. There are along the A149 several attractively planted and cared for roundabouts, but that is not one of them. In fact it is reminiscent of the weed strewn roundabouts in inner city Liverpool in the 1980s, when at least that Council had the excuse that it was an area of enormous depravation.

What do tourists make of the shabby roundabout as they approach Hunstanton? I don't think it gives a very smart impression of the area. Why is there such a lack of civic pride. Something ought to be done.

Name and address supplied

Dog fouling

On Saturday, 10 April my partner and I went on our annual cowslip walk at Courtyard Farm near Ringstead. The fields are full of this delightful flower which is both beautiful and really uplifting at this time of year.

Despite there being signs requesting dog owners to keep their dogs on a lead to protect wildlife, we saw several dogs running free.

We also saw lots of dog poo. Why do dog owners not clear up?

It's disgusting and dangerous. You know who you are. Please be more considerate.

Alan Coleman, Snettisham

Hunstanton's railway vital for jobs

I welcome the opinion of Mr Mike Reynolds to the reopening of the Hunstanton-King's Lynn railway in the last Town & Around. I trust that he did not hold such negative views before he retired as a rail operating and commercial manager. If other senior British Rail staff ran down their industry in this way, it is no small wonder that so many lines closed in the 1960s.

Mr Reynolds appears to have completely sold out to the notion that improved bus services are the entire answer to our economic ills. They can do nothing to stop the exodus of young people drifting away through lack of work prospects, the closure of the sixth form at our principal secondary school, intolerable congestion on our roads, and our inability to meet our targets to reduce air pollution and improve the environment.

All these issues are recognised our local MP James Wild, and most if not all of the candidates (politics aside) vying for seats on Norfolk County Council are pro-rail. Teenagers want to get to jobs in Cambridge and get back home at night, and Lynx buses can't help with this.

The Port of King's Lynn recognises the potential for expansion, job creation, and taking lorries off our roads if it can be connected to the national railway network. Queen Elizabeth Hospital has just gone on record that it loves the idea of a station on its doorstep.

I also don't know where Mr Reynolds gets his 'billions of pounds' from for putting the railway back. Norfolk County Council doesn't think so, and because it's always tight with its money, I'm prepared to trust its word against Mr Reynolds.

Across England Wales, almost 100 towns and cities are now clamouring for government grants to get their railways back, so are they all wrong? Help us get the railway back for all our sakes, and join almost 8,000 people who have signed our petition on <http://www.hunstantonrail.org.uk>

Howard Johnston, Hunstanton Railway Group

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The Honey Bee Dispensary

There is an exciting new product on the market, The Honey Bee Dispensary's Active honey – England's answer to Manuka.

We have all heard about Manuka, an Active honey with great anti-microbial and anti-viral properties, which has developed a strong fan base in the UK. One of its biggest downsides, however, is that all Manuka honey comes from Australia and New Zealand, where the manuka plant grows, and therefore has to be flown half way around the world to reach British consumers.

The good news is that English Active honey is also available. The recently launched The Honey Bee Dispensary offers Active honey made by Leigh's Bees Ltd's bees in Norfolk. Leigh's Bees has produced single apiary, English honey for years, and its Bee Keeper, Leigh Goodsell, has used his extensive knowledge of 'all things bee' to place hives in locations where bees can forage plants which lead to particularly active honey.

Most natural honey has some anti-microbial properties, ranging from insignificant to potent. This is generally a combination of potency derived from the nectar the bees have collected, and enzymes/amazing bee stuff that they create themselves.

The main difference between Manuka honey and The Honey Bee Dispensary honey



is that the activity in Manuka is believed to be derived from a combination of Methyl Glyoxal and an enzyme called Glucose Oxidase whilst the activity in the new English Active honey is mostly derived from Glucose Oxidase, which the bees put in the honey. For reasons unknown, some plants encourage more of this enzyme to be stored than others.

The antimicrobial killing power of The Honey Bee Dispensary honey is the same for equivalent strengths of Manuka honey. However, slightly muddying the water from

the consumer's point of view, the Manuka industry uses two different numeric scales to describe the strength of its honey, so it can be tricky to work out which is strongest in terms of anti-microbial strength.

The Honey Bee Dispensary's Active honey is fully tested and certified, with a Total Activity (TA) rating of +20. This is equivalent to a Manuka honey rated +20 UMF (Unique Manuka Factor) and a Manuka honey rated 829 MGO (MethylGlyOxal).

UMF and TA share the same number (derived from the same test), generally ranging from +5 to +20. The MGO scale is completely different, ranging from 83 to 829. Armed with this knowledge it is easy to see that The Honey Bee Dispensary's +20 Active honey is right up at the top of the activity ratings. It is worth noting that its +20 name refers explicitly to the Activity level, and no reference is given to the plants foraged by the bees – that, not surprisingly, is a closely guarded secret!

Distribution to retail outlets is progressing, and +20 can also be bought online from The Honey Bee Dispensary website (<https://www.thehoneybeedispensary.co.uk/>), where more information about Total Activity in honey, the benefits of eating Active honey, and even the importance of bees in history can be found.

The Coal Shed Gallery in Hunstanton returns to its former glory as an art gallery. 'A right little treasure trove of Norfolk talent!'

Located along Le Strange Terrace in Hunstanton, the Coal Shed Gallery is part of the original railway site which ran from the seaside resort of Hunstanton to the nearby town of King's Lynn. Following investment from the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (BCKLWN) in 2008 and support from the Hunstanton and District Civic Society (HDCS), the once derelict building was beautifully converted into an art gallery.

The new tenant of the Coal Shed Gallery, Jacqueline Kitch who ran the art gallery and shop in Westgate, Hunstanton up until the national lockdown in December 2020 says she is absolutely thrilled to be moving into this beautiful building. "My Husband and I love the building and we always make a bee line for it on our walks. I could not believe my luck when I walked past and saw that the



building was empty and after making enquiries through the Borough Council and through the Civic Society, I managed to secure

a lease. I have lots of local Artists and Artisans coming on board along with some of the old favourites that were previously in the gallery and shop and on the website.

"The lockdown has been tough on lots of local businesses and at one time I was ready to just give up but now the Coal Shed Gallery door has opened and I am going to jump straight through it!"

A spokesperson for the Civic Society said: "Hunstanton and District Civic Society is delighted that this iconic building will finally be put to good use. We believe that the art gallery and retail offer will enhance the area and bring vibrancy to Le Strange Terrace".

NakedNorfolk @The Coal Shed Gallery opens its doors on Sunday 2nd May at noon and asks that customers remain Covid aware and follow the Covid guidelines at all times.

Royal Air Force Bircham Newton Heritage Centre Open Days 2021

The Heritage Centre at Bircham Newton has a unique collection of memorabilia from the former Royal Air Force station's past service, which spanned more than 44 years, including two world wars and the Cold War. On display are photographs and personal memories of servicemen who served there and other related items from its fascinating history. The Centre is manned and run entirely by

volunteers, many of whom are ex-servicemen or children of service personnel. Close by there are two stone memorials to remember those who served at Bircham Newton and its main satellite airfield near Docketing.

Open 10-4 on Sunday 27th June, Sunday, 25th July, Sunday 29th August, Sunday 26th September, Sunday 31st October and Sunday 14th November (Remembrance Sunday).

Disabled access & toilets will be available, and car parking and entrance will be free.

www.rafbnmp.org.uk FACEBOOK RAF Bircham Newton Heritage Centre



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Springing forwards

With spring/summer collections offering a fresh, lighter palette, it's time to enjoy some long-awaited retail therapy writes Allez Chic's Cheryl Daubney

Spring has most definitely sprung and I don't think there has ever been a year when we have looked forward to longer days quite so much. The easing of restrictions last month and the ability to reopen our door to customers was so eagerly anticipated and a wonderful moment to celebrate our new-found freedom. Allez Chic was ready and waiting, our rails and shelves full of beautiful spring/summer collections from all our favourite brands not found on the high street. Fresh pastel blues, greens and pinks – quintessential colours – run through many of the collections and during lockdown we spent some time refreshing the store with new displays which show off these gorgeous garments to their fullest.

We have also been recruiting and regular customers will notice some new additions to our team, all of whom share my ethos for excellent customer service with a smile. Among these is Sayle Christensen who is a style and colour consultant and is available by appointment to help ladies discover the tones and styles which will suit them most. It really is an insightful experience and so many customers tell me how a colour consultation has saved them from many a 'just not right' purchase, so if you haven't already enjoyed a session be sure to book some time with Sayle – just call the number below to book.

We have several new brands to add to our regular favourites, including Spanish label Paz Torras which has been dressing stylish ladies for more than 40 years. Elegant, chic and perfectly cut, we think you will enjoy the collection. One frequent request is for stylish, comfortable footwear and Lunar Shoes has delivered yet again with gorgeous sandals and everyday plimsolls for a lighter take on its ever-popular trainers. Be quick, as these always sell-out to smart ladies who shop early in the season.

Talking of savvy, we have recently launched a new Facebook group, Allez Chic's Smart Buyers, which offers early access to updates, new collections, special events and sales. To kick things off, we're giving away a fabulous handbag from Spanish brand Abbacino to one lucky winner once we reach 250 followers – be sure to join the group and tag your friends to invite them to do so too.

Finally, for anyone who is still cautious about getting out and about, we are still able to provide a one-to-one shopping appointment, enabling you to discover our beautiful spring/summer collections with one of our team. Again, just call the shop to book a session and enjoy all that this season has to offer.



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Old Hunstanton celebrates 2021!

When Boris Johnson announced the roadmap out of Lockdown, we saw the chance of having a Village celebration and fundraiser at the end of July as usual.

Not the full Flower Festival, as there wouldn't be time to organise it, but something involving flowers and bringing the whole village together to support fundraising for the Village Hall and the church.

So this year we celebrate the village with a festival of Fun and Flowers, Open Gardens, the renovated Village Hall, flowers in St Mary's, Scarecrows, Raffle and much more!

To help make this a success we need your donations for the stalls:

Books and games to Glynis Allen (512311)

Clothes accessories and bling to Christine Earnshaw, (533367)

Bric a Brac, David Johnson (533873)

And offers of cakes, Alyson Wise (779639)

Plenty of helpers are needed too on tents, parking, stalls, catering and stewarding.

If you think you'd like to get involved contact David Johnson (533873), Mike Tuffs (07970 256080) or Chris Guest (533511)

Chris Guest

on behalf of the Festival committee

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Tradition and romance at

In 1964 Elvis Presley starred in *Roustabout*, a film shot in California where he played Charlie Rogers, a singer working for a struggling travelling carnival. Featured in the film is a portable Ferris Wheel manufactured by the Eli Bridge Company in Illinois. Whilst the wheel that Elvis rode (and sang on) is now in Australia, another portable wheel manufactured in 1938 by the same company, has a new home in Hunstanton at Rainbow Park.

There have been fairground rides in and around Hunstanton since 1880 and the Roper family have been operating rides on Rainbow Park, at Hunstanton, since the 1960's taking over the full operation of the Rainbow Park site from its previous owners in 2015.



John-Henry

John-Henry Roper said: "As a family we have always been involved in the fairground industry; we have a proud history of travelling Showmen on both sides of our family, we can trace back at least six generations and there are three generations currently working together on Rainbow Park.

"Although we live here locally and for the most part are permanently sited, we certainly have not forgotten our heritage; we often visit travelling Fairgrounds and some of the equipment still travels to fairgrounds outside of our main season.

"What we do here in Hunstanton is very family orientated. All of our family are involved with every aspect of the business from maintenance through to operation. Being so hands on as a family business is, what we believe, makes Rainbow Park so special."

Installed during lockdown, the Ferris Wheel and the 1950's Lighthouse Slip (Helter-Skelter) have been brought on site by the Chapman family and have already caused quite a stir in the local area altering the skyline with the statueque and iconic silhouette of the lighthouse slip and they have stirred up memories of over 20 years ago



The Roper family from left: Jack-Henry,

when a similar style Helter-Skelter stood on the exact spot, owned at the time by Mr William Thompson.

These new attractions add to the rides on the park that are owned by the Roper family and a number of independent operators; Rainbow Park really does offer something for everyone, from children's rides and thrill rides to traditional family favourites.

Colleen Roper said: "Making memories is what we are all about; we love to help our visitors create special memories of their visit that they will always cherish.

"We see families return year after year and we have the privilege of watching families extend and grow - those that used to visit as children are now not only bringing their children but also their grandchildren too and so this cycle continues.

"The unique connection between our family business and their family holiday becomes interwoven and intrinsically linked forever, visitors often become friends over time and that's something I don't think happens in any other business.

"We honestly can't wait to get back to doing what we have always done and our family before us have done and that is provide a fairground to the local people and day trippers or holidaymakers that visit this wonderful resort.

"We are looking forward to seeing the joy on the faces of our visitors, young and old alike, laughing as they drive a dodgem car or feeling a bit dizzy as they are spun on the waltzer. "That magic of seeing a candy floss made for the first time or that unmistakable taste of the fried onions as they eat a hot dog.

"The thrill of winning a prize on the hook a duck or watching the 2pences fall in the arcade. "Where else can you listen to music from every era or step back in time to Rocky Thompsons the old-fashioned sweet shop where you will see every sweet from your childhood and probably buy a bag of pink and white nougat?

"We think there really is nothing like the magic of a fairground, the sight, sounds and smells all create an extra special feeling of a time

its best at Rainbow Park



John-Henry, Colleen, Layla and Elias

when you didn't have a care in the world and after the last 12 months we are sure that is a feeling we all want to experience again."

The fairground is following all the guidance the government has provided for their industry as they reopen in line with Step 2 of the recovery roadmap and they have a 'Good to Go' certification from Visit England. Visitors will see extra signage, floor markers and queuing systems. As well as numerous hand sanitiser stations and the necessary PPE being worn by team members who have all been trained how to work covid securely. There is even an NHS QR code where you can log your visit using your smart phone.

"Working together with the local authority, our staff and our visitors is key to making sure we can remain open as a responsible business supporting the covid recovery strategy.

"We wish everyone the very best that life has to offer all we ask is that you make every moment a memory and you we look forward to seeing everyone make those memories at Rainbow Park very soon!" John Henry added.

Looking around Rainbow Park as the team prepared for the re-opening Richard and I were struck by the amazing engineering that is behind the Fairground, some of the mechanics are nothing short of wondrous and the traditional designs and painting are colourful and exciting. The Lighthouse Slip entrance (that you can see on the cover of this edition) has been designed, built and decorated to replicate the Park's former Helter-Skelter. Tradition and romance at its best.

Now whilst I can't promise you'll sing like Elvis when you ride the Ferris Wheel in Hunstanton this summer, you may be able to conjure up your inner romantic like the 11-year-old hero Bobby in the 2001 film Hearts of Atlantis when he experiences on a Ferris wheel (also made by the Eli Bridge Company) that magical first kiss "by which all others in your life will be judged and found wanting."



(Grandad) Henry Roper



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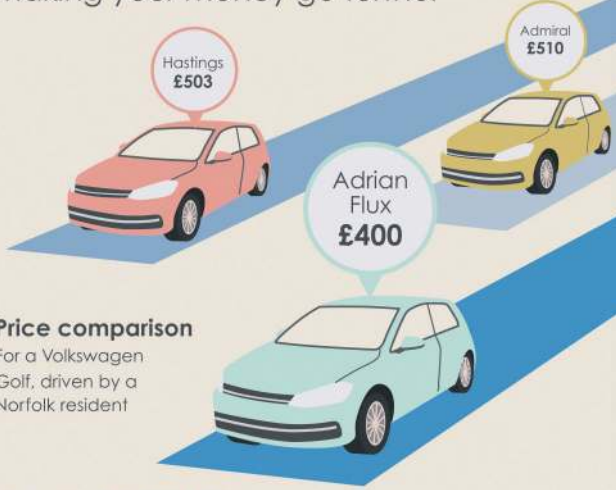
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Adrian Flux Lap of Anglia

East Anglia's toughest multi-day cycling event has undergone a complete rebrand and confirmed title sponsorship by Adrian Flux Insurances Services for an incredible 9th successive year. Adrian Flux has been the title sponsor of the Lap since the very first Lap in 2013 and has been absolutely key to the event's success in raising a staggering £133,827.30 to date! This year the Lap has seen a record take up in entries and has also launched 'The Adrian Flux' Lap of Anglia 'Extreme' an incredible 2 day version of the already gruelling event.

Gerry Bucke, Adrian Flux general manager, said: "We're proud to have been the title sponsor since the very first Lap in 2013 and it forms part of our ongoing drive to support charities and good causes." "It's a gruelling event but one that continues to prove incredibly popular while also raising a staggering amount of money for the East Anglian Air Ambulance. We wish all participants in this year's event the best of luck and hope even more funds can be raised to support this vital life-saving charity."

Amy Bathgate, Community Fundraiser for EAAA, said: "We're so excited that the Lap of Anglia is going ahead this year. Community support such as this is something that everyone at the charity has really missed over the last year, so it means a lot to see the Lap of Anglia team approaching this year's challenge with a nice fresh look and appetite to make this the biggest Lap yet! The team behind the Lap have been exceptional at supporting EAAA since 2013. It's a full on challenge over four days, cycling the main area that our two yellow helicopters cover. I look forward to seeing all participants at the start line in August."

The Adrian Flux Lap of Anglia started in 2013 and has grown in popularity every year. It is run by volunteers with all money going to the charity. visit the website www.lapofanglia.co.uk for more information. Entries are still open.



BUDGET AND “TAX DAY” 2021 – A LOT TO THINK ABOUT

By Kathryn Gigg Chartered Accountants, Hunstanton

In the past, the annual Budget announcement set out tax and spending decisions for a year or two ahead, together with longer term announcements, plans and discussion drafts. The speech itself would refer to these and many pages of fine detail would follow.

In 2021 everything changed. The budget itself was relatively straightforward. There was a further extension of the Covid support package, including new financial support schemes for the self-employed, a new government backed business loan scheme, continued VAT relief for the hospitality sector and some additional business rate reliefs. On the downside, we will see the freezing of most existing tax allowances so that at least some additional tax will be gathered over time as the economy recovers. Additionally, from 2023 Corporation tax rates will rise from 19% to 25% although the lower rate will be preserved for companies with profits under £50,000. There will then be a transitional rate up to £250,000

There were also a couple of specific and quite interesting reliefs for some businesses. Limited companies are offered an enhanced level of capital allowances for the next two years, and both corporate and non-corporate businesses will be given additional flexibility in the use of any losses that they might incur, with the usual one year carry back being temporarily extended to three years.

There is, however, a sting in the tail. Extensive additional financial announcements were made on “Tax Day” March 23rd, and whilst they will have little or no impact for the rest of this parliament, they may have a far reaching impact on taxpayers in future.

Some of the measures are relatively minor. They include provisions to clamp down on tax avoidance (although it is incorrectly referred to as evasion, which perhaps shows how HMRC often muddy the terminology), to make HMRC more efficient by digitisation and, thankfully, to shelve proposals for reform of the taxation of trusts. Other initiatives include reform of business rates and preventing the abuse of the business rating treatment for second homes.

Two other proposals are more concerning. One looks at reforming the whole structure of assessing and collecting tax which would include effectively compelling all businesses to produce accounts on a fiscal year basis rather than, at present, choosing a year end which fits in with business activity (so, for example shops often choose January, when stocks are lowest, or farms will opt for October to fit in with the harvest year)

The second proposal is to accelerate the payment of tax by the self-employed. This could be done on the back of the forthcoming “Making Tax Digital” programme (despite HMRC originally denying that faster payment was one of the reasons behind MTD). The paper acknowledges that voluntary take up of an option to make regular tax payments in advance has been low (apparently mainly because the scheme is poorly signposted) and suggests a system of regular quarterly or monthly payments, linked to quarterly MTD returns. It is acknowledged that there would need to be a transitional arrangement to enable the self-employed to “catch up” but it is suggested that there may be an element of means testing within the design of such an arrangement.

It is perhaps telling that the case studies which HMRC uses as illustration; a gig worker, tutor, landlord, small shopkeeper, personal service company director, business professional and pensioner, are all relatively straightforward individuals. If they had chosen builders, farmers, car dealers and professional partnerships, the design of the scheme and the transitional arrangements might have seemed less straightforward.

The paper concludes by asking 45 questions. Comments are invited, and the deadline is 13th July. Given the enormity of the proposed changes, it will be interesting to hear the responses.

If, having read through the information provided above, you require advice, please contact either myself or my assistant Nicola Tarry FCA on 01485 534800 or email kate@kathryngigg.co.uk if we can assist in any way.



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The Barking Bugle

Phew, what a busy month it has been here at BB HQ! This is a roundup of what we've been up to:-

Normally at this time of the year we are getting ready for the Hunstanton Fun Dog Show, but due to obvious reasons we have had to cancel this for the second year running. We are very disappointed but have no fear, we are already making plans for 2022!

We recently attended the Animal Star Awards online ceremony which is a national event featuring guest celebrities, celebrating the achievements of animals up and down the country. We are delighted to inform you that we were highly commended in the Best Blog category. Thank you so much to all you humans and woof-woofs out there who gave us their sup pawt - we really appreciate it!

After attending an online rural crime briefing held on the 8th March, The Barking Bugle are able to repawt that there were 30 crimes recorded for the year 2020 which resulted in the theft of 52 dogs, of which 16 were recovered. In all 30 cases dogs were stolen from outside kennels, gardens or backyards.

Simon Bailey, Norfolk's Chief Constable, stated that our county still remains a safe place for dogs and that he was not aware of anyone being assaulted or of dogs being stolen while out on walks. He went on to say, "The numbers speak for themselves; there has been less than one crime a week in 2020 and we need to reinforce this because so much of this is being driven by social media across the country." Further to the meeting our advice is to continue to remain vigilant and to take precautions to ensure your safety. We've also been barking with the researchers on the BBC Countryfile programme regarding their upcoming feature on rural dog theft. For more tips on keeping safe visit www.thebarkingbugle.co.uk

And last but not least we have some very impawtant information to tell you about when walking around the Holkham National Nature Reserve. Most of you doggies out there will agree that this is one of the best areas in the whole of Norfolk where you can enjoy a good run in the countryside and a splash in the sea. However, sometimes we can get a bit carried away what with all the excitement and forget that the wildlife here, including all the breeding shorebirds, need to be protected. From the 1st April to the 31st August humans will be urged to keep their dogs away from zones which will be cordoned off, in order to protect ground-nesting birds that are easily disturbed. Under the rules we doggies must be kept on leads on a 90 hectare section of beach around Holkham Gap, and it is advised to keep all furry friends on leads in the 20 hectare area called Gun Hill on the beach's western edge during the same timeframe.

There is no proposal to ban dogs and it is impawtant to state that more than 70% of the open and permissive access will remain available to all you responsible doggies out there to explore. You will still be allowed to roam off the lead in lots of areas including the pinewoods and sand dunes. However, in highly sensitive areas, roped cordons will be in place to protect ground-nesting Terns, Oyster Catchers and Ringed Plovers. There is not a great deal of change at Wells although there will be more restrictions as far as access is concerned where the seals haul out onto the sands.

This essential work is being done to help raise understanding and awareness of these incredible habitats, and to respect and protect them whilst visiting.

We at the Barking Bugle totally understand why these measures are being put into place and hope all you doggie owners out there do as well. The Nature Reserve at Holkham comprises approximately 10,000 acres which means there is absolutely loads of room for all of us to enjoy, so please don't panic! For more details please visit <https://www.thebarkingbugle.co.uk/new-dog-zones-at-holkham-nature-reserve/>

Woofs Pupstar,

Editor of The Barking Bugle

Visit www.thebarkingbugle.co.uk

What about the dog?

Sophia Guymer

Now that lockdown is easing and you may be considering holidays either abroad or in the UK, the question of what to do with the dog might arise. PetStay Norfolk offers a great solution. Your dog stays with a carer specifically chosen by Sophia (who runs PetStay Norfolk) after finding out about your dog's needs. You then meet the carer prior to the booking and only proceed if everybody is happy. All carers have enclosed gardens, are true dog lovers, comply to the licencing guidelines and have 24/7 support from Sophia (formerly a Veterinary Surgeon). During your dog's stay, the carer will treat your dog like part of the family. Some carers do own their own dogs, but your dog(s) will be the only boarding dog(s).

"Our dog Rosie has stayed with Jenefer and Don on numerous occasions and they are brilliant carers. They clearly love dogs and make sure that Rosie is very well cared for. We receive regular photos of Rosie whilst out on her walks. We feel happy and relaxed leaving Rosie in their care", wrote Jenny after her dog's stay. The carers are happy to give updates and most will send pictures during the stay. (view more reviews on <https://www.petstay.net/find-your-local-branch/dog-sitting-norfolk/>)

PetStay Norfolk currently has a team of 18 carers (most of which you can 'meet' on the website) all over Norfolk and they are swiftly getting booked up already for the summer 2021. PetStay Norfolk is currently looking for more carers. This is a great opportunity! Are you recently retired, or working from home and hardly see anyone all day? Or you want to be healthier but need motivation to take action? Being a PetStay carer might be perfect for you! Carers are required to be true dog lovers, have enclosed gardens, be happy to work within our guidelines, have no children under the age of seven, be at home during the day (the dogs are not to be left for more than 3 hours and not on a regular basis) and receive a daily allowance for every day they have a dog and all the love having a dog around the house gives, in return. For more information please contact Sophia on sophia@petstay.net or 07861 957551 for an informal chat.

In conclusion, home boarding is a great solution to the question of what to do with the dog during your long awaited holiday, so that both you and the dog can have a great break.

Contact details: sophia@petstay.net , 07861 957551 More information on: <https://www.petstay.net/find-your-local-branch/dog-sitting-norfolk/>



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Thaxters plant of the month – Begonias

Wendy Warner

For plants that give months of colour with little maintenance required, Begonias definitely fit the bill this summer. Whether you're looking for bedding plants for the front of the border or bright colour for pots, containers, window boxes or hanging baskets, there is a begonia to suit.

Begonia semperflorens are superb, compact bedding plants that produce an abundance of small brightly coloured flowers standing out from their contrasting foliage. The flowers can be white or shades of pink and red, with green or bronze foliage. They are ideal for flower beds, borders or patio pots and containers in sunny or semi-shaded positions.

Non-stop begonias are vigorous, upright tuberous begonia, bearing masses of blousy flowers in a range of colours including red, orange, pink, white and yellow, throughout summer and into autumn. They grow well in sun and shade and are perfect for growing in pots as well as flower beds.

There are trailing or pendula Begonias with different types of flowers. The Illumination series have large double flowers in similar colours to the non-stops. My favourite is Illumination Apricot Shades which is unusual in that it can have yellow, apricot and orange flowers at the same time dependent on what stage they are at. I plant four plants in a 14" hanging basket and they make a wonderful show. There are also pendula begonias with single, funnel shaped flowers such as the Starshine series or the spectacular orange Begonia "Bonfire". All are very versatile and will prosper in sun or partial shade, in all weathers. These trailers are ideal for hanging baskets, window boxes or tall pots or chimney pots where they can spill over the edges.

With all these begonias no dead-heading is required as faded flowers will just drop off. Water plants frequently throughout the growing season taking care not to overwater, as this will cause new flower buds to drop and can rot the whole plant. Feed fortnightly with a high-

potash fertiliser such as Tomorite to prolong flowering.

These are all available as ready grown plants in late April and May but must be protected from and frosts. The semperflorens varieties can also be grown from seed earlier in the year, and the Non-stops or pendula varieties can be started from corms in a frost-free position from January onwards.

Brighten up your garden with Begonias this summer!



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* **Flowers** - If time is tight, clear a patch of garden or a few pots and Sow, sow, sow. Try cosmos, different poppies, or even night scented stock for a speedy and stunning display.

Pots and hanging baskets can now be filled with annuals, plug plants are very effective and can be planted in sheltered areas or protected in the night time from frost. Try popping some water retaining granules in the compost mix as this ensures the baskets won't dry out if you forget to water them!

If you have a very small garden or patio, try some annual climbers Ipomoea (morning glory) or sweet peas. They will happily grow in a deep pot, adding height is always a good idea and in tight spaces, height is the answer.

Plan - There is still time to plan a border or add further height to your garden. Think about clematis for a long season of interest. Ornamental grasses will also wow factor later in the summer. If planted now, keep well watered during dry spells in order to ensure the plants establish a good root system.

* **Bugs** - Keep an eye on new perennials and annuals, wash off bugs with your hose, treat with warm soapy water in a spray gun or a chemical spray before they consume all the new growth. Addressing bugs now will ensure your plants and flowers remain healthy throughout the growing season.

* **Lawn** - It's the time to address moss by scarifying, use lawn sand, sow lawn seed and start to mow fortnightly to weekly. This is great exercise if you are working from home or self isolating, but well. Do it gradually for a daily exercise until the whole lawn is complete.

* **Vegetables and fruit** - Beetroot, spinach and similar, should be thinned out. Small plug plants of cut and come again crops can be

purchased at this time of year. Alternatively, just sow at regular intervals for a crop of new baby leaf spinach and rocket straight from ground to table throughout the summer. For a bright show in a raised bed try Kale 'Redbor' or Nasturtium, lots of colours to choose from. If you have spent the last year getting in to gardening, do try to continue, if even on a smaller scale. Here are a few vegetables to consider.

Calendar for the easiest vegetables to grow

Veggie	Sowing	Harvest
Pink radish	April to Sept	May to Oct
Lettuce	Mid-April to Sept	Mid-May to Oct
Bean	March to June	May to Oct
Tomato	April to May	July to Sept
Pea	April to May	June to July
Carrot	March to July	May to Nov
Potato	April to May	June to July
Squash	April to June	Sept to Oct
Onion	March to May	July to August
Corn	April to May	August to Sept

* **Water** - Pond or tub, large or small, water is great, you will be surprised at the. If you have a larger water feature, lift and divide overcrowded pond plants and introduce water lilies now for a great flower display.

Nature project - Try to introduce water in to your garden. Tubs, old containers or a full on pond, any water is appreciated and will bring so much wildlife to your garden. Make sure there is a shallow end for ease of access. Surrounding the area with shrubs or foliage is also good for cover. Even an old washing up tub will ensure you encourage dragonflies, pond-skaters and amphibians, even in the first season.

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Nature Notes with Roger

Daytime owls and surprising fowls

Over the last few weeks I have made a number of short rides in the car and several walks in various locations, and have been rewarded with a number of unusual wildlife sightings.

First, while driving along a narrow road, a Barn Owl suddenly dropped over the hedge and flew along the roadside just in front of the car, crossing back and forth a number of times before flying back up the road the way it had come. It can be quite hazardous, driving and trying to birdwatch at the same time, but thankfully there are not too many cars on the rural roads in Norfolk, and the lockdown rules meant there were even less than usual! Out walking a few days later, another Barn Owl flew out of the trees in front of me, crossing to some rough ground where I followed it with my binoculars for about twenty minutes. It quartered the area; twice it hovered noiselessly with eyes keenly scanning the ground and twice it dropped into the longer grass. Both times it failed to catch anything, showing how difficult it is for these birds to catch their prey. These sightings followed a few days of very rough weather – strong winds and wet nights, and I guess the owls were unable to find much to eat so were forced out to hunt during the day. Later in the year it is more likely to see Barn Owls out in daylight hours as the adults are kept busy providing a constant supply of food to a nestful of hungry youngsters. On another walk by a field edge with a belt of woodland on the far side I heard the distinct hooting of a Tawny Owl, and yet a further owl sighting in the day was a chance encounter with a Little Owl as it sat on the top of a gravestone in a country churchyard.

On one day in late March it was a delight to see two small clumps of Early Dog Violets at a woodland edge, adding a splash of colour to a rather sombre pallet. These small pale violet flowers are amongst the earliest to appear, often in mid-March, and are also known as Wood Dog Violet. I was not the only one interested in these small wayside jewels, as a large bumblebee came to visit them; it did not stay long, however, as it was no doubt unable to find much nectar at this early time of year. I believe this must have been a queen Buff-tailed bumblebee, the largest species found in the UK. It is only the queen which has the characteristic buff tail, and will be the first to appear as all members of a colony will die at the end of the year, except for the fertile queen which hibernates over winter and emerges in early spring to found a new colony.

Yellowhammers are returning to the hedges from their winter flocks, which tend to gather near farm yards and in the field edges which have gone to seed. As I walked some of the farmland footpaths, the birds flitted along just in front uttering their short dry buzzing call, but I did



hear my first one in full song on 23 March. I also heard the first Chiffchaff on 30 March, and have noticed quite a few calling since.

Our summer visitors are beginning to arrive, and by the time you read this, Swallows will be returning to the familiar places where they have made their nests for many years. These walks have taken me past several ploughed fields which provide great feeding opportunities for many birds. In one field there were numerous gulls, along with 35 Curlew and two Oystercatchers, while in another, rather surprisingly, as I was some twelve miles from the coast, there were four Shelduck. These large waterfowl form a connecting link between geese and ducks, their name coming from a middle ages dialect; 'sheld' meaning pied. They are startlingly white birds that can be picked out a long way off, but at closer range it can be seen that the plumage is a pattern of white and black with a chestnut orange breast band. The bird has a bright red bill which is broad and short and ideally suited to sieving through wet mud for marine crustaceans and molluscs. In the breeding season the male also sports a bright red knob at its base. Shelducks can be found on sandy and muddy shores, along sand dunes, flooded gravel pits and marshes, and one of the best places to see them is on the shore of the Wash at Snettisham. As I found, they are becoming more familiar inland and will often take to feeding on ploughed fields quite some distance from water. Rather unusual for ducks, they nest in burrows; in most cases deserted rabbit holes, but they will burrow out a nest hole for themselves, and more rarely they will nest in a hole in a tree or even in stacks of hay bales.

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Here we hoe again

Old Muck

You wanna chit them first. No you dun't. You wanna put 'em in a trench when there's a full moon. I always leave mine 'till Easter. I just put mine in buckets in the greenhouse an they always grow OK.

If you're a potato, your ears must be burning. For the seemingly never-ending annual debate over the best way to get your spuds in marks the arrival of spring in a hail of controversy.

Having an allotment gives you the chance to grow even more varieties than there are arguments over how to grow them.

Line the trench with comfrey. Don't bother with a trench use a dibber. Chit them, sweat them, do a dance first (assuming no-one's looking...), have a wee on your compost (make double sure no-one's looking after checking wind direction first...) or just chuck 'em in and chance 'em.

One thing I like about spuds is you do normally get a crop. In a good year, you'll be lifting your first earlies in a few weeks' time and have bucketfuls to take home.

In a bad year, you'll get an impressive show of foliage with a few marble-sized 'taters underneath and have to pretend you were aiming to grow bespoke micro tubers all along to cut down on your carbs.

But like everything else, we keep on trying as once they're in the ground all you can ever do is hope.

That probably applies to most gardening in our increasingly-uncertain climate, when you can no longer take things like the last frost, rainfall or the ups and downs of temperatures for granted.



For while we can now grow sweetcorn fairly reliably in these climes, the onions often bolt or go bull-necked, the beetroot sulks and the parsnips sometimes sink without so much as a trace.

But while the proof of the pudding sometimes doesn't deliver too much when it comes to the eating there's an amazing satisfaction when your efforts actually do bring something to table. And therein lies the fun.

So come on you spuds. And you carrots, corn, beetroot, fancy salad stuff and you onions. And fingers crossed.

HUNSTANTON IN BLOOM

There will be no judging day again this year but this certainly is not stopping Hunstanton from being a beautiful town as anyone who has walked through the Esplanade Garden would agree as the polyanthus are particularly good this year. There are several hot



spots around the town where people have put out planters packed with spring bulbs which would not go unnoticed if we had to publish a portfolio for 2021. Please do continue to enhance our town throughout the year. The wild flower strip along

Redgate Hill has been rotavated so hopefully we can look forward to a good show again – with just enough rain to germinate the seeds please.

This year we hope to be planting trees in the Community Centre grounds contributing to the campaign for 'A Million Trees for Norfolk'. The central swathe of grass on the Cliff Top has been left unmown is now much more established as an area for birds and insects and is therefore good for biodiversity.

I'm sure you have seen the recycled Christmas Trees that



were on the Upper Green. Three have been moved to the Spinney and five are tied to the railings on the Esplanade Gardens. The recycled flowers were all made by local children and adults and very colourful they are. Look out for some more competitions for horticultural and artistic people to join in which we will announce in the June T&A magazine but you might like to sow your sunflower seeds now to give them a good start! Would you like to join the team of volunteers who help in the gardens? There are still a few flower beds that badly need some TLC.

If you would, please email me on 2chrisearnshaw@gmail.com

so I can introduce you to the team.



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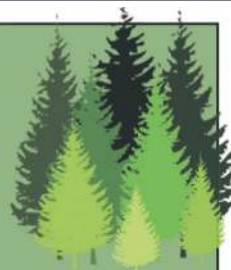
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Heacham and Hunstanton at night

Terry Parish

My apologies for a short article this month but time ran away, I need that Harry Potter device which spins it backwards.

Venus and Mercury are planets to look out for. Both in the evening and before bedtime. Look West early in the month and WNW as it progresses. Try from about 7pm and find a bright dot low in the sky. This, with any luck, will be Venus at magnitude -3.9. It gets higher in the sky as the month advances and also easier to see as it gets darker. It sets at 9.15pm at the start of the month and 10.30pm at the end.



Relative positions early in month. They get higher and Mercury falls below Venus late in month but is then very faint. Internet

Above Venus and to the right look for a tiny spark which is Mercury. It will have a magnitude of around -1.0 which is 12 times dimmer than Venus. You may have to wait until around 9pm for the sky to darken sufficiently. Mercury will get fainter every night and you will need binoculars after about the 17th.

On 3rd/4th Mercury will be just to the left of the Pleiades star cluster; Venus will be below it. The reverse happens on the 9th and Venus is above.

On May 12th /13th, look WNW from 9pm and find Mercury close to and a tad to the right of the faint Crescent Moon.

Mars is still high in the sky and on the 17th, at 9pm, it is just above and to the left of the Crescent Moon. The two bright stars a little further up the sky are the stars Castor and Pollux. Mars and the stars remain in similar positions the next two nights but the Moon climbs higher.

Speaking of the Moon, on the 28th it is the biggest and brightest Supermoon of 2021. Wear your dark glasses and get a moontan.



Gagarin hero of the world.1961. Internet

Second apology, I forgot the 60th Anniversary, on 12th April, of Yuri Gagarin's epic orbit of the Earth in Vostok 1. This was a small capsule which replaced the nuclear bomb payload in a ballistic missile. It had no means of landing other than crashing so, after falling for a while, Gagarin stepped out of it and parachuted from an altitude of over 4 miles. He survived that, became an iconic hero, but died seven years later in a plane crash. Think of him when you watch astronauts do their

stuff. He was the first cosmonaut.



Statue to Gagarin in Moscow. Internet

Something nerdy: the hunt for planet 9, a massive planet far beyond the Trans Neptunian Objects, theorised as the body responsible for keeping a swarm of smaller asteroids in a particular pattern, is faltering. One batch of scientists say the orbital patterns need no giant planet, others are likely looking for a research grant and are postulating there is a large mass involved but it is a mini black hole – the size of a grapefruit.

I think they should just keep looking. Meanwhile, if your fruit bowl is empty except for a heavy grapefruit...



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Round the bend with Dean Baker

Speak Up! or How Much?

Last week I was called by a customer who was a little hard of hearing. I only mention this because I'm a bit 'Mutt and Jeff' myself! I put the customer on speaker phone in the hope that we could hear each other more clearly. Mrs B happened to walk past and decided to join the conversation: "You can't go to Heacham", she hissed!

I waved her away.

She waved back.

"No H E A C H A M"

"I'm going to Snettisham" I mouth

"No you're not .. because we're ALL going to Pensthorpe"

All the time my poor customer was frantically telling me that she didn't live in Houghton!

As you can imagine this conversation took quite some time to unravel. So here is a rough guide and what to tell the plumber when you call -

If it's an emergency write down as much information as you can. If you have water coming into your house then it's vital you tell the plumber. Also, if you don't have hot water then tell



your plumber straight away – this counts as an emergency.

If your boiler isn't working it may well have a fault code displayed. Have you had work done on the appliance recently? Providing as much detail as you can, will mean your plumber will have a better idea of what work needs to be done and should be better prepared for carrying out your repairs.

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A good plumber will walk you through the options available to you. Your plumber shouldn't rush you into making a decision. A considerate engineer should check that you are following what they are saying and that you are clear about the services they are offering. Finally, costs, a good plumber should always be transparent about their fees.

Whilst they might not be able to give you a definite figure before they've seen what they will be working on. Any plumber should be able to tell you their hourly rates and the likely additional fees they may charge.

So Spring is springing. The warmer days provide an excellent opportunity to have your boiler serviced... email me!!!

Take care.
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I did it! I did it! I did it!.....and now family and friends are doing it too!!

Yvonne Bridger

Between February 7th and April 6th 2021, I undertook a personal walking challenge of 700,000 steps over 70 days. I wanted to mark my 70th birthday in a way that did not totally involve eating cake!

My challenge was to walk in memory of the late Captain Sir Tom Moore, an inspiring and heroic man if ever there was one.

As I wrote in the March 2021 edition, Captain Sir Tom walked, walked and then walked some more.

Captain Tom was the best of the best. His legacy, memory and message of hope live on.

Captain Sir Tom will always be remembered for his gentle, unassuming manner, his keen wit and his smile.

His fund-raising was nothing short of remarkable for a man aged 100 years.

The night of February 7th saw the snow come down in Hunstanton and when I finished my challenge on the afternoon of April 6th on Hunstanton High Street, the snow fell yet again, albeit in small flurries!

So.....having nailed the 700,000 steps walking challenge, I asked family and friends if they could walk the remaining 300,000 steps to reach a million steps!

Within just a few hours, volunteers had come forward and one million steps will have been walked by Tuesday April 27th.

This is a tremendous piece of work on all sides.

As of today (April 15th), the amount of £3,042.34 has been raised for the Covid-19 Support Fund of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn.

For every penny of every pound which has been so kindly donated by neighbours, total strangers, friends and family, if I said 'thank you'

a million times, it would simply never be enough.

It has not been possible to fund-raise in our normal ways during the three lockdowns of the past year, and my gratitude for the funds donated is therefore most sincere and heartfelt.

By the time you read this, you yourself may be participating in the 'Captain Tom 100' challenge taking place locally, nationally and even internationally between Friday April 30th, (which would have been Captain Tom's 101st birthday) and Monday May 3rd. If you are, good luck and all the very best!



Yvonne with husband John. Credit Chris Bishop

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Hunstanton Lifeboat Station news

Geoff Needham

Everyone involved in the RNLI sends heartfelt condolences to Our Patron, Her Majesty The Queen, on the death of HRH, The Duke of Edinburgh. The Duke of Edinburgh has accompanied Her Majesty on many RNLI occasions and we thank him for his long standing commitment to maritime services and a lifetime of support to Her Majesty.

Wednesday 31st March at 17.48 p.m. UK Coastguard requested launch of Hunstanton RNLI Lifeboat to reports of persons cut off by tide at Scolt Head Island. Brancaster. Hunstanton RNLI Lifeboat launched on service to Brancaster, to report of people cut off by rising tide at Brancaster, on arrival at Brancaster 2 people, and two children were located, they were taken on board the Lifeboat and landed on the beach into the care of the local coastguard response team. This was the third incident of people cut off by rising tides in three days, since the easing of restrictions the first was on Holme beach Monday afternoon, which was resolved before the boat reached the area, Tuesday 2 adults and two children plus a dog had to be rescued from Scolt Head by the Hovercraft. These incidents coincided with the high tides and sunny weather, resulting in an increase in the number of visitors to the area, in all cases the people were not local. They were all given safety advice by the local coastguard response team. H.W 9.15 p.m. Vis. Good Sea state Slight. S.W2 Weather sunshine.

Friday 9th April at 10.15 p.m. UK Coastguard requested launch of Hunstanton RNLI Lifeboat to reports of Vessel aground four persons on board on the Outer Westmark Knock, the approaches to the river Nene. Due to the state of the tide it was decided to send the Hovercraft as well, on arrival to casualty vessel, it was located aground and listing. Hovercraft crew evacuated two persons, an elderly gentleman and a ten year old girl, and transferred them to the Lifeboat, the owner skipper and his wife stayed aboard the vessel a ten mtr Ex MFV. The vessel later floated on the incoming tide and was escorted back to Wisbech by the Pilot Cutter, the two persons were brought back to the Boathouse by the Lifeboat and transferred into the care of the local Coastguard response team, no medical treatment was required, later a friend from Wisbech came and picked them up. The RNLI volunteer crew washed down and re-housed both craft, and went home to bed at 4 am. H.W 6.03 p.m. Vis. Good Sea state Slight. SW2. Weather. Fine.

Request from our RNLI shop. Volunteers are needed to help at our Gift shop, situated at our RNLI Station in Old Hunstanton. Full

training will be given, a great opportunity to meet people from all over the UK. If you would like to put something back into our community, and can help. Please give Mike Reynolds a ring on 01485779178

Once again our children's Easter Egg hunt could not go ahead due to present Covid rules. On behalf of the station a big Thank you to Kemps Vegetable shop in High Street who collected Easter eggs and donated some to Hunstanton RNLI. Thanks also to Kate for organising the distribution to the children of crew members, lets hope we can all get back to normal in the near future, in the meantime we have to stay safe and abide by the rules.



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'2 course Sunday Lunch' will be served each Sunday at £7.95, from 12.00 noon

Coffees/Teas and snacks will be available from Mondays to Saturdays from 10.00 a.m.

The Snooker room will be open and Bingo will be held each Friday at 7.00 p.m.



Wild in Westminster & West Norfolk

Without wishing to tempt fate, things are looking up.

There's growing optimism now we have moved to step two of the roadmap to re-opening. It's great to see people able to enjoy our pubs and restaurants, albeit outdoors, and to see more of the normal bustle in town centres as shops re-open. Now is the time to support those local businesses who have had such a tough time over the last year.

Later this month more of the rules are set to be removed if the data continues to support it. That will mean that the Princess Theatre is able to re-open along with indoor hospitality, arcades, museums, the Oasis pool, and heritage sites. Hotels and B&Bs will be able to once again welcome guests.

The removal of restrictions is possible due to the controls reducing infection rates and the success of the vaccination rollout in reducing hospitalisations, and deaths among the most vulnerable groups that have had a jab. Dr Ince

and the Burnhams team including the volunteers are doing a great job in vaccinating priority groups. When I visited Snettisham surgery to thank them for all they are doing to help us get back to normal there was a very efficient operation in place. When it's your turn please get a jab to protect yourself and the community - and I've been asked by residents to say that if you are getting your vaccine please do park considerately.

As we re-open some people have concerns about more visitors coming to the coast. It is important everyone respects local communities whether by following the Covid guidance, not parking and blocking roads as happened last year, or indeed by taking their litter home! On that latter point I encourage people to take part in the GB Spring Clean this month.



James Wild MP

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

james.wild.mp@parliament.uk

www.jameswild.org.uk

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Disgusted of Dersingham

For the first time in my life I was seriously considering voting Labour. That young Labour man made sense to me wanting to spend my money, and it is my money the council are spending, or should I say wasting. The young Labour man wanted to use my money prosecuting criminals. Why should criminals always get away with it when I have to pay extra to the council to have my rubbish collected. It's disgusting, and I think Town and Around readers agree.

The other day my friend and I watched the recent Laurel and Hardy show at the Borough Council. That young Labour man again made a lot of sense when he said the Council should not waste my money building houses that no one living locally will be able to afford to buy. There's already too many empty homes in this area. So I looked to see who Labour were putting up for election this year. I was hopeful it would be a local person. If not local then I would be okay with someone from Hunstanton. I really don't want anyone from Lynn who knows nothing about Dersingham. But when I saw who the Labour candidate is, I was disgusted. I asked myself what idiot thought I would vote for someone from Norwich. The Labour Party must have little respect for us who live in rural areas like Dersingham. It's obvious they think we are all country bumpkins who chew on a piece of straw for entertainment. I did see young Jordan Stokes had put his name forward. He's a decent enough lad. But he's for the Green Party, and they are much worse than Jeremy Corbyn. So sorry I can't vote for the far left. And that leaves the policeman. So it's back to Conservatives.

(Name and address supplied)

WI Easter 'Goody' Bags

Stanhoe & Barwick WI members were thrilled to receive a surprise Easter bag, containing a multitude of goodies, put together, and in many cases, created, by the committee. Amongst other delights, the ladies will be planting seeds, making cheese scones, completing an art challenge and demolishing a creme egg! As one member commented, the bags managed to "cheer us on and give us a sense of togetherness".

We have now held two Zoom sessions, quite a revolution in our 100 years of existence! Last week's, entitled "Poets and Authors", gave members the opportunity to share favourite poems and to recommend, or not, their current reading matter.

Once warmer weather blesses us, we intend to start to meet again, initially in groups of 6 and outside, of course.

Stanhoe & Barwick's Facebook page gives further details of our activities. New members are always welcome! Contact Valerie on 01485 576261 or vjobson1@gmail.com



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Brancaster CE VAP School news

The exciting news is that we had ducklings in school. We had 6 eggs and they all hatched. Bob was the biggest and noisiest. Twiglet was the littlest and sweetest. We learnt all about their life cycle and what other animals lay eggs. We wrote poems and did duckling art and we talked about new life like at Easter. You can see what we did on our blog Our Class Blogs - Class Page Thrift (stmaryfed.org.uk). They were so sweet when we let them swim the first time and they were so happy.

We had a fun Easter egg hunt (thank you PFA) and we made Easter gardens. Hayden and Logan and Miss Trett made an Easter garden for the church. You can see more of our Easter work on our blog.

All our seeds are growing and the runner beans are really big now. We will plant them outside soon.

Samphire Class start swimming when we go back after Easter. Thrift usually go too but because of Covid we can only have 15 children in the pool so there isn't room for everyone.

By Thrift Class

Samphire Class carried enjoyed a project run by English Touring Opera about Ibn Al Haytham. As part of the project we learnt all about light travelling in straight lines and how we see. We also wrote our name in Egyptian Hieroglyphics. We learnt some songs to sing along to in the opera and learnt all about the different skills needed by the top opera singers. As well as having great voices they also need to act, wear makeup and odd costumes as well as sword fencing - sometimes all at the same time!

In science we have started to look at the blood circulation system. We started by seeing how the heart worked. This involved dissecting a lambs heart. We all thought this was going to be quite scary, but it was really interesting seeing all the different chambers, veins and arteries. You can see some pictures of us doing this on our class blog at www.stmaryfed.org.uk and click on Samphire class.

By Samphire Class

Half Term is 28th May for one week.

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Merry sings the praises of music

A speech in praise of music recorded by a Year 8 schoolboy has received high praise from his school community and captured the imagination of many on social media.

Music fan and Springwood High School student Merry Enters was taking part in the Insight Discover programme, run by the Cambridge University to establish links with Year 8 and 9 pupils in local schools, when it set students the task of writing about what they considered to be civilisation's greatest achievement, and then film themselves reading it out.

"I chose music as my topic as it's something I feel so passionate about, and such a big part of my life," said Merry. "I've played the guitar for three or four years, and have dabbled in drums a bit as well. My dad also plays guitar and as a family, we go to festivals together.

"Music, both playing it and listening to it, has played a massive role during lockdown, and I try to make sure I have a different soundtrack to every day. I like all kinds of music from jazz to nu-metal, and it's really given me somewhere to escape to, away from the madness around us at the moment. In the future, I'd love to work in the music industry in some way, maybe as a musician or in production."

Music is something that plays a significant role in the curriculum at Springwood, which is part of the West Norfolk Academies Trust, and Merry said being cut off from the direct involvement of music lessons was one of the hardest things about not being in school.

"Music teaching at my school is wonderful, I really like the teacher and feel that I get a lot out of the lessons, so being at home and not being able to interact properly has been very frustrating," he said.

Merry's mum Clare is Assistant Headteacher and Y5/6 teacher at another school in the West Norfolk Academies Trust, Snettisham Primary. She said she was amazed by what her son had come out with.

"As a parent, I am so proud of Merry for producing this speech and delivering it with



such confidence and commitment," she said. "I feel like I learnt even more about him and had a glimpse of the young adult he may become.

"I was also really impressed because he had so many ideas at the start but then the hard yards he went through to get to the point of a finished speech was amazing."

With the prospect of school going back, Merry will soon find himself in the classroom, and the music room, once again – and in his time away from school, he may have come up with another creative idea.

"Currently I am not involved in any bands or choirs in school, as, to the best of my knowledge, there is not a school rock band," he said. "Once things get back to normal, though, I would love to start one up."

Springwood's director of music Peter Strudwick said music and music teaching is hugely important at the school.

"We encourage as many students as possible to get involved in music. The difference that engaging with music can make to a student's overall academic performance is

proved to be considerable and the social benefits in normal circumstances are immeasurable," he said.

"The lockdown has highlighted how important communal involvement in music is - singing with a choir or performing remotely with a school ensemble keeps things going but is no substitute for live ensemble performances and the joy we get from school concerts.

"I think that next time we can perform in front of parents will be a pretty emotional experience. It will also help remind us that we should never take the feelings generated by live performance for granted.

"It will take a while to get things going again - Concert Band, for example, has not rehearsed for almost a year, but it has made everyone realise how important music is within the school community, and everyone will be working as hard as possible to rebuild and develop music within our school as will staff in schools the length and breadth of the country."

Photo Ian Burt

Hunstanton and District Inner Wheel

Sue Trewin, Club Correspondent

I was thinking hard about what I could write this month and then came the day we had all been waiting for! Our president Hilary Farrell wasted no time in setting up tea in her garden, obeying all the rules of course, and there we were, face to face, experiencing proper social interaction again. Bliss! It felt a little strange actually but very welcome. Here is Hilary with her colour coordinated outfit including tea cosy.

I asked our Inner Wheel members to come up with words or phrases that illustrated how they have felt about lockdown. These were some of their responses:

A walk each day keeps my mood OK

I have got to know my neighbours better.

I am learning how to manage being alone.

I value what we do have rather than anguishing about what we can't or don't have.

Two of our members, President Hilary Farrell and Veronica Welham are both busy fundraising. Hilary is walking 100 miles for the charity Care International (<http://www.careinternational.org.uk>). Have a look at their website. If you would like to sponsor Hilary you can do so via the Hunstanton Rotary Trust Fund, Barclays Account 40229563, sort code 20-46-65, using reference 'Care International'.

Veronica Welham has a very industrious daughter staying with her who has so far made 100 pairs of earrings in aid of Heacham St. Mary's Church Tower Appeal. All items cost £5. For more details please



contact Veronica on 07787842796 or ver.welham@gmail.com
(See photos on page 15)

The Spring photo competition is being judged this week so I will talk about that next month.

News from Thornham

OPEN GARDENS - NOW 26TH JUNE!

We have moved the date of Open Gardens to Saturday 26th June - to make sure we are (hopefully!) well and truly out of Covid restrictions.

We have 11/12 gardens open on the day - if you would like to Open your garden, or help on the day in any way please contact Sue Herbert. There will be lunches (and a Pimms Bar!) at the Hall and Teas in the Church.

Scarce Pug Moth

This is an extremely rare moth, found only in the Eastern Salt marshes of the UK - of which Thornham is one such site. Its larva feed on Sea Wormwood, an unassuming little coastal plant that grows in the margins of Salt Marshes, where the tide covers then uncovers the Marsh. If you find some at the harbour pick a (small!) amount a pinch between your fingers - it has a wonderful smell.

We know that Thornham Marsh is an SSSI and an ANOB and a very special place to all of us, but it is also one of only two sites in England that is home to the Scarce Pug Moth. Unfortunately last year's influx of visitors, with parking along the sides of the marsh, seriously damaged the margins of the marsh and the habitat of the Sea WormWood and hence the whole viability of the Scarce Pug in Eastern England.

It took many groups working together to come up with a plan, which essentially is to protect the sides of the marsh and allow the Sea Wormwood to grow back and the Scarce Pug Moth to recover. This showed our community at its best, pulling together.

Traffic

Cllrs Chesterman and Venes have been negotiating with local landowners/ businesses to secure extra parking for this summer following the traffic problems last year.

Thornham Village Hall & Playing Field, Thornham Farms and the Lifeboat Inn were identified. the Parish council and TVHPF sees a potential plan whereby temporary seasonal overflow parking could be allowed along the northern perimeter of the Playing Field. The funding would come in part from a joint grant application to KLWNBC CIL funding with some match funding required. Costings are being investigated. It is anticipated that this facility could provide an additional 50-60 parking spaces.

Somewhere in Between –

An Adventure on the North Norfolk coast path.



Somewhere in between is the second book of photography from West Norfolk based photographer Jon Clifton.

During the Coronavirus Pandemic in August 2020, photographer Jon Clifton decided to take a walk along the Norfolk coast path. Three days and fifty three miles later, he was back at home with a huge blister, aching legs and a smartphone full of images. Somewhere in between features a small selection of those images and tells the story of Jon's 'long walk home', through which he raised over £1500 for local good causes.

Along with square format images which tell the visual story of Jon's walk from Cromer to Snettisham, the book touches briefly on themes related to the Coronavirus pandemic. The book's title comes from the feeling of uncertainty Jon felt after being furloughed from his day job and not knowing what the future might hold. Publication has been timed to coincide with the lifting of lockdown restrictions and the gradual return of hope.

Jon says: "The walk was a huge personal challenge and I think the story ties in well with themes of perseverance and battles against adversity, things we've all had too much practice in over the past few months. It felt incredibly important to document this period of life, the book includes memories from a strange time that will last a lifetime."

From beautiful beaches to remote marshland and glorious countryside, somewhere in between features a selection of images that visitors to (or residents of) the Norfolk coast will appreciate and perhaps find solace in if currently unable to visit.

Produced with the help of twenty sponsors, somewhere in between has been dedicated to those who've lost their lives to Covid-19, our incredible NHS care staff and the scientists who discovered the vaccines.

The book is available to order now via Jon's website. Jon is now in the process of planning a second coast path walk. Next time he hopes to be joined by a small group of fellow adventurers, all raising money for local causes close to their own hearts.

www.joncliftonphotography.com

The History of the Hunstanton & District Festival of Arts 1940-2000

"Anyone who sings, plays an instrument, or enjoys listening is invited to come"

These were the words on a poster which appeared in and around Hunstanton in the winter of 1940 – Saturday December 14th to be exact – inviting people to "A Day of Music" at the town's Council School. But for the war, many of the people involved would have been continuing their active association with the Hunstanton Choral Society, a long established group that carried a choral tradition in the area dating back to 1889. Unfortunately, with many members of the choir being called up or involved in Civil Defence, it had been impossible to get a balanced chorus. This is where "The Day of Music" stepped in, and with its sessions for singers, instrumentalists, even budding conductors – a day that brought people together to make music, a day that brought people together to make music, a day that helped bring about the creation of "Hunstanton & District Festival of Arts".

The first official Festival was held at the Town Hall on the 20th June 1942. Miss Margaret Sexton, Honorary Secretary 1942-1981 wrote many years later "It was only possible to arrange the first day at the Town Hall because people had come together on the 14th December 1940, and we had all met several times since. This had resulted in a determination to all 'stick together' and make music and entertainment in spite of the war". It was hoped that the Festival would 'Bridge a Gap' so that the Choral Society could start up again after the war, but it never did. However, the Festival itself became a permanent fixture in our Community, that in 1991 it celebrated its Golden Jubilee.

Participants in that very first Festival included evacuee children from the L.C.C. Scrutton Street School in London, and members of the Royal Engineers who at the time were billeted in the Town.

There were adjudication sessions in verse, speaking and music and an evening concert featuring piano and violin solos, choirs, massed voices and an orchestra conducted by Dr. Patrick Hadley, and tenor solos by Malcolm Davidson who had sung at the World renowned La Scala Milan.

By 1948 the Festival had affiliated to 'The British Federation of Music Festivals' and had grown into a "Two Day" affair. By the late 'fifties' this had doubled to four days and by the late 'seventies' had doubled again.

By 1961, the programme had reached 16 days from June 15th and in addition 2 further days for the annual talent contests, also two days for the competitive Music Festival in May of that year.

The Chairman in 1961 was Mr Ken Arnott who commented "But this is definitely as far as we go". As immortalised as we those words might appear to have been at the time, we also have additions to our programme with the Dance Festival held in May. This part of the Festival is gaining in such strength in its popularity that it is becoming recognised as a National Event for up and coming dancers.

Drama and Dancing were introduced in 1951, Bible Reading in 1958 and Art in 1960. And so it went on expanding more every year.

Highlights over the years have included a performance of "Merrie England", during the special coronation year Festival involving a chorus of over 80 voices the 'Granta Orchestra' and ten soloists and a visit by Soprano Jean Reddy shortly after she won the "Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Prize".

We have been able to include Percussionist Evelyn Glennie, Opera East, Jaz Trumpeteer Humphrey Littleton, Harpists Sioned William and Osian Ellis, Violinists Jean Pougnet, Tom Jenkins and Rimma Sushanskaya, Pianists Joseph Cooper, Nina Vinogradova, Arnold Goldsborough and John Parry. Also Singers Jean Manning, Heddle Nash, Olive Groves and the London Community Gospel Choir. We have been able to include other well known personalities such as Actress Prunella Scales, Richard Baker, Richard Stilgoe and Peter Skellern.

Lady Fermoy, the Festival's First President, and the Earl of Leicester have also performed on Piano and Violin respectively – and a number of amateur performers including massed choirs, solo instrumentalists and many singers, school groups and dramatic societies.

The only name synonymous with the Festival is that of Miss Margaret Sexton, who was not only secretary from 1942-1981, she

organised a remarkable total of 40 Festivals with such dedication that one of our former Chairman said "She did it virtually single handed". However, there was always a committee of volunteers who assisted with their advices, and gave an input to the events.

In the mid-Eighties the Festival appeared to be in danger of folding up through lack of support. Then only 2 members attended the meeting, one of them the Secretary who was then resigning.

After the intervention of the Town Mayor, Douglas Hopkins called a special open meeting in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall, that a new committee was formed, and within a very short time, the Festival was once again in "Full Swing".

In former times the most of the Festival Events were staged in either in St Edmunds Church or in the Town Hall. Nowadays, a great majority of events are held in the Princess Theatre, although St Edmunds and the Union Church always stage at least one event each.

In the late nineties, the Festival again ran through another period of difficulties through lack of support, but was again revived with Chris Ellis of Smithdon High School coming on board. Sadly Chris moved onto pastures new and Committee Members fell away, at one point Lisa Powell took on the role of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer in a desperate attempt to keep it afloat. Fortunately Cllr. Richard Bird stepped in as Chairman and in recent times Amanda Knight has taken on the role as Secretary. Lisa still keeps her hands on the purse strings.

The Festival has revived old traditions with the help of Drama now running into, and occupying three days by Michael Williamson and Ann McKimm. We have the valued support of Hunstanton Town Council and also The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk providing financial support, together with a very active committee taking part in every activity produced and performed.

The Festival is a registered charity and runs purely on donations and grants, the main grant being from The Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, without whose help it would not survive.

Ken Arnott

Editor's note: Thank you Ann McKimm for reminding me about this article that I first published in 2006. It is written by the late Ken Arnott who put so much time and effort into the Festival of Arts over the years.

A recipe from the Prudent Pensioner

Pear and Date Pudding. (Makes 4 generous portions)

2 medium ripe dessert pears

Knob of Butter for greasing the dish

For topping:

1 Large Egg beaten

60g/2oz Butter (softened)

60g/2oz Sugar

60g/2oz S.R. flour

50g Chopped Dates

You will need an ovenproof dish approx. ¾ litre lightly buttered.

Pre heat oven to 200c/400f. Put sugar and butter into a warmed mixing bowl, beat together until well mixed and no lumps. Add 2/3rds of the beaten egg and beat well together.

Add rest of egg with a spoonful of flour, mix well. Add rest of flour and fold in. Add 25g of dates and mix in.

Remove and discard cores and peel from the pears, cut into thick slices and place in the prepared dish.

Spread 25g of dates over pear slices.

Spread topping evenly over pears in dish.

Place dish on a baking tray in pre heated oven and bake for 35 mins or until fairly firm when pressed lightly in the centre.

This is nice served with cream, ice cream or custard.

See more recipes on The Prudent Pensioner Facebook page

Email: pru.pensioner@btinternet.com

Hunstanton & District Rotary Club

As the nation mourns the passing of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh we share in this sorrow, remembering him as a member of our Rotary Club, who was welcome at meetings in past years, sharing his amazing knowledge and sense of humour with other Rotarians on those visits.



In the same week we have learnt of the deaths of two Past Presidents of the Club; Father John Hunt and Bob Wright and as we think of Her Majesty the Queen and family so our prayers and with Margaret Hunt and Marguerite Wright and their families at this sad time.

It is barely credible that it is over a year since the Club met for weekly meetings, talks and conversation over meals, but we have enjoyed nonetheless meetings by zoom which have been varied and I hope interesting. We have invited a number of speakers to address us and of course this has meant that the speakers can come from some distance without the time and cost of travel. Since Christmas for example we have enjoyed talks from several charities including:

Mary's Meals whose vision is that every child receives one daily meal in their place of education and that all those who have more than they need, share with those who lack even the most basic things. By providing a daily meal in a place of learning, they meet the immediate needs of hungry children and encourage them to go to school to gain an education that can, in the future, be their ladder out of poverty.

The Purfleet Trust who believe that everyone has the right to live in a decent, suitable and affordable home and therefore they support and empower those in need to make positive lifestyle choices, enhance their health and wellbeing, develop supportive relationships and live independently in suitable affordable accommodation within their community. We have supported their work for a number of years and were pleased to hear from Paula Hall their CEO about recent ways they continue to support their clients and the positives that have occurred in lockdown.

East Anglian Air Ambulance which has existed for two decades to save lives by delivering highly skilled doctors and critical care paramedics by air or car to seriously ill or injured people in the region. Their work from this Summer will be extended to be 24/7.

We also had an evening with the Hunstanton and District Inner Wheel Club for our Joint Presidents' night at which Maggie Anderson from the Dersingham-based charity **Baby Basics** talked about their work to help provide some of the basic needs for life for babies from birth to 3 months born to vulnerable women and families.

We've been delighted to also support these charities financially and encourage them in their work.

We have also enjoyed a number of talks by members of the Club on subjects varying from their own lives through Hospital Radio, the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner to teaching in New Zealand. Quizzes, our annual poetry night and a weekly opportunity to catch up with one another have also been well supported and great fun.

As we continue to emerge from lockdown we look forward to getting back to doing some of the things that traditionally have happened and in particular in the Autumn interacting with the local schools to celebrate achievement, to support through mock interviews or by dis-

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tributing dictionaries to year fives.

Last year sadly we were unable to hold our annual Kite and Classic Car Festival at Smithdon High School in August due to the pandemic and equally sadly this year a combination of uncertainty at a time when we need to do our planning and building work at Smithdon has meant that it won't take place this year either.

We are however delighted that Michael Schumann has kindly invited us once again to return to the grounds of his home in Snettisham where he has a miniature railway running around the grounds. **Norton Hill 2021** will take place on **Saturday and Sunday, 24th and 25th of July** from 1 pm to 5 pm. In addition to being able to ride on the train there will be refreshments and traditional funfair stalls. It's a great day out for the whole family so please do join us for fun and to help us to raise money to support local charities.

As always we are delighted to welcome new members to the club and I would be pleased to hear from anyone who wanted to learn more about rotary by emailing johnpicrofts@gmail.com

Hunstanton's Hidden Treasure

Tucked away behind the children's play area on the recreation ground is a wonderful facility of which many remain unaware. Hunstanton has five superb, full-size croquet lawns.

Established in 1911, the clubhouse burnt down in 2001 and was replaced with the current building where, in normal times, members can meet to enjoy a chat, a cuppa and a biscuit between games.

Although the 2020 season was lost due to covid, the lawns were expertly maintained and are ready for a busy season of informal games and formal competitions when players from all over the country will compete. HCC is proud to host such prestigious events.

Croquet has something for everyone - from complete novice to competitors at international level. It is affordable, accessible and great fun! Fresh air, exercise and good company - what's not to like! All you need to start is a flat pair of shoes. A mallet can be lent and club members are happy to guide beginners through the basics.

Unfortunately, current restrictions (April) mean we are unable to hold our usual, 'Come and Try' day, or our friendly club afternoons at the moment. Perhaps by the time you read this restrictions will have been lifted, but for now, we are adhering to strict covid-secure protocols to keep everyone safe. However, we have started playing again and welcome all enquiries to come and join us at Hunstanton Croquet Club.

If you are interested in more information, head to the website hunstantoncroquetclub.co.uk for further details.

Snettisham Beach Sailing Club

Over the winter Snettisham Beach Sailing Club has bought and implemented a new IT system and you can now use it for all your SBSC needs: booking courses, joining, checking out what events are coming up, sorting out boat parking, volunteering for duties and paying for memberships and courses online. We've also updated the website and started our own You Tube channel.

We've seen a dramatic increase in bookings for training online, which may be a result of having a much easier booking system, or perhaps that people appreciate that there may not be scope for a traditional summer holiday this year and they are looking for local adventure. It may also be that "working from home" has given people an opportunity to shift their hours and freed up the midweek for some learner sailors. So take a look at what is on offer this year and make the most of it.

Is the beach getting steeper? Some members say this is so, and that is the reason it feels harder to recover their boats after sailing. Other members respond that it just indicates increasing ages and decreasing fitness amongst the complainers. Either way, we now have a tractor assisted recovery system to help those for whom its a chore.

Open Days 2021

There are 2 Open Days this year when you can come and try sailing for free and see if it is something to want to get into. :

Saturday 1st May: because of covid 19 precautions we're aiming this event at those who have done a bit of sailing before and want to have a think about getting back into it, or taking it to a higher level. Contact Chief Instructor James Trim to get on board - courses.sbsc@gmail.com

Sunday 4th July: we're hopeful by then we can run our typical Open Day, where you can just turn up, have a sail and enjoy the club facilities. Put the date in your diary please!



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Christian Science Society, Hunstanton

Springtime – Restoration

Our emergence from lockdown this spring, is proving to be a time of reassessment, new beginnings and restoration. There are so many instances in the Bible of restoration to good, God's promise for each of us. "I will restore health unto thee and will heal thee of thy wounds" (doubt, difficulties). The health being restored is not just physical, but the health of business, employment and the joy of meeting up. Churches are looking forward to opening up and to praise God.



Further information on the worldwide Christian Science church can be found at www.christianscience.com. Due to the current situation our we have suspended our church services in our building, but Christian Science Sunday and Wednesday services are available online. Please go to www.spirituality4.me/livestream/ to find live-streamed services around the UK, along with other online events, talks and webinars.

An online shop is also available where you will find books, CDs and many other resources. Follow us on Facebook to find out when our regular services in Hunstanton will resume. For daily inspiration look at <https://www.christianscience.com/christian-healing-today/daily-lift>.

Commissioned

By Gill Tanner, a member of The Way C F Leadership team

The season of Easter has just passed and by the time this article is published Pentecost will also have passed. The central truths of Christianity pivot on the cross of Jesus Christ. God in flesh, dying in our place, bearing our guilt and shame, our rejection and isolation. Then on Resurrection Sunday breaking the power of death and offering pardon and eternal life for all who would repent (that is turn away from sin and towards God) and put all their faith in Him.



As we meditate on the astounding love of Father God and the courage and the full extent of Christ's love in humbling himself, and enduring horrendous torture and death for us all, it is a good time to understand his commission to the church. Scripture tells us that He is the head of the body, and that the church is his body on earth.

He told his disciples as He left them to return to heaven:-

'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you to the very end of the age.' Matthew 28.18-20

So what had He commanded them? He taught them to pray. He sent them out to share the good news of the Kingdom of Heaven. He told them to heal the sick and drive out demons. In the kingdom of which He is king there is no sickness, and the light of His presence drives out all darkness. When he returns the kingdom will be fully established. Until then His followers are to obey His commission. His authority and power have not diminished but often the Christianity that is portrayed today in the affluent and self absorbed western world is a pale reflection of the early church.

The world is getting darker in many ways, and it is time for we, who bear his name and claim to follow Him, to prioritise the things on God's heart and be about the Father's business. God loves people, He designed them, He sustains life on earth and is not wanting that any should perish but that everyone should come to repentance. 2 Peter 3.9

In view of His great love, how can we not love Him and serve Him.

UNION CHURCH

AHOY THERE!

Recently I have been able to have some of my family visit me as part of my Covid 'bubble'. This includes 2 very lively young grandsons who love coming to our seaside to play at being pirates and finding 'treasure' on the beach. At this young age even shells collected in a bucket are considered 'treasure'. And that's what treasure is – that which has value to us.

Jesus spoke about this in Matt. 6.21 – For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. As we move out of Covid restrictions, during the past year we have discovered what is of value to us, where our heart is – health, family, friends, freedom of movement etc. Maybe we have done some readjustment in our priorities in life and changed our perspective on what we 'treasure' the most. Even at the beginning of Covid there were so many stories of compassion and kindness to each other, from the tremendous efforts made by NHS workers to individual communities, looking out for each other, doing shopping for the vulnerable, giving extra to food banks. In Matt. 6 we are advised not to store up treasure on earth which will not last, but to seek those treasures that will last – the sort we have discovered anew as a result of the limitations that have been placed on us during this time.

With Every Blessing, Janet Brown.



New Life

As I am writing this article it is a beautiful spring day outside. Walking around my garden I can see all sorts of signs of new life. Bushes and shrubs are bursting with new leaves after a winter of being bare twigs, bulbs are flowering after a winter of being buried underground and there is even a duck sat on a nest of eggs that will very soon be a clutch of baby ducklings. I love spring. It is a time for new life.

This springtime is especially welcome as we emerge from lockdown. It feels as though we are beginning to emerge after a period of hibernation. After spending most of our time at home we are beginning to venture outside. After being limited in our social contacts we are starting to meet our family and friends in person. The High Street is coming back to life as shops and outdoor hospitality reopen and most welcome of all for me is a visit to the hairdressers!

For us at The Salvation Army it was wonderful to be able to reopen our Community Shop on Westgate and for us to see all our wonderful volunteers and customers again. We have even been able to open for Sunday worship at our premises in Snettisham and although we are limited to numbers and what we can do it has been a real blessing to be able to worship together again.

Jesus said, 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' (John 10:10). The Message paraphrase says, 'I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.'

Do you ever feel that there should be more to life? Are you content with your lot or do you feel there should be something more? Take Jesus as your Saviour and you will have a new life, life in all its fullness.

For more information about Snettisham Salvation Army visit our website www.salvationarmy.org.uk/snettisham.

You can contact us on 01485 579079 or email alison.kirby@salvationarmy.org.uk Follow us on Facebook 'Snettisham Salvation Army'

**Alison Kirby, Corps Leader,
Snettisham Salvation Army**

From the Rector of Hunstanton & the Saxon Shore

Dear Friends,

It is May already, how did that happen? May always makes me think of blossom on trees and images of children dancing round a Maypole and a little song that goes along the lines of "Now is the time of Maying the merry month of maying, fa la la la" I am taken back to my early days of teaching when one Friday around May Day we took all the children in the village school to dance in the village square. They were all dressed up, we had the maypole and all was looking great, until the heavens opened. We had small children with brightly coloured crepe paper ribbons, round their heads and in their hands, that bled the colours everywhere. It really wasn't a pretty sight! It is a great memory though.

That got me to thinking about memories. With the desperately sad loss of so many people due to the virus and the recent death of Prince Philip there has been much talk of memories. The conversation often starts with "Do you remember?" Or "I remember the time when..." it is good to look back with a smile but not to dwell in the past too much I think. Perhaps now is the time to spend less time looking back at old memories and more time creating new ones.

If we were to think about what sort of things we would like to remember I wonder what you would make sure to include? How about time spent with family and friends. After the last year I should imagine we wouldn't mind where we saw them but that we saw them and spent time in their company. Seeing a new family member, like a grandchild, would be about seeing them and having a joy filled first meeting. The memories that we want to look back on with a smile are often created without great cost. Perhaps now is the time to think about meeting with family and friends in a safe way and building up some new memories.

In the Bible we hear these words from God, when his people felt that they were being forgotten in Isaiah 49 *"Can a woman forget her nursing-child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you."*

See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me."

This image of never being forgotten by God, having our name inscribed on his hands makes me feel valued and loved. I am not forgotten! You are not forgotten, ever.

Whatever new memories we may make it is good to be reminded that we are never a distant or forgotten memory to God. We are known and loved.

May you know God's blessing as you make new memories,

Rachael, Rev Rachael Dines

We are now back having services in our churches across the Benefice. Do look at our pattern of services on the website or on our church notice boards and come along! We would love to see you.

Chicken and Egg hatch a plan



Annie Kelly and Jenny Beake will be participating in this year's May Marathon in aid of Scotty's Little Soldiers. They hatched a plan to run in fancy dress and decided on the perfect partnership, so a pairing of a dippy egg with Scotty's Little Soldiers seems cracking. Annie will be wearing an egg costume, meanwhile Jenny will be dressed as a chicken.

Who will win the race first, the chicken or the egg? A half marathon, 13 miles approx, is no mean feat and will be the furthest Jenny has run in one go, apart from after a bus that didn't stop in Dersingham and she ended up running to Hunstanton. Their route will take them through Dersingham and Sandringham, scrambling up steep Donkey Pond Hill. It's going to be eggsausting.

Annie, originally of Ingoldisthorpe, is a keen runner and teaches group fitness classes, Active With Annie, via Zoom. She's looking forward to their event on Sunday 9th May saying, "I am going to boil in this egg costume! If it's sunny on the day I really will feel fried! Jenny and I run together regularly, but she is always poaching my jokes, or should I say yokes?!"

Jenny, musical comedian, denies this however, adding, "It will be tiring on the day and I hope it will be all white, I want to give it a crack and not chicken out, but I know by the end I will have had un oeuf!"

Supporting Scotty's Little Soldiers is really important, Jenny has raised money in the May Marathon for the charity in the past running a mile a day as the Pink Panther and Wonder Woman. The King's Lynn based charity was founded by Nikki Scott whose husband was killed in active service and the charity supports bereaved Forces children and young people.

"We hope to raise a large amount for Scotty's, so please sponsor us as your support will really egg us on!"

The just giving page details are
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/jennifer-m-beake?utm-source=sms>



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Adults £6, children free. No dogs.		Adults £5, children free. Dogs on leads welcome.	
Sunday May 16th	Open 11:00 - 5:00pm	Sunday June 7th	Open 12:00 - 5:00pm
CHESTNUT FARM, West Beckham, Holt, NR25 6NX		THORPLAND HALL	
Adults £5, children free. Dogs on leads welcome.		Fakenham, NE21 0HD	
		Adults £6, children free. Guide dogs only.	
Sunday May 23rd	Open 12:00 - 5:00pm	Sunday July 4th	Open 10:30 - 4:00pm
CAVICK HOUSE		THE BISHOP'S GARDEN, Bishop Gate, Norwich, NR3 1SB.	
Cavick Road, Wymondham, NR18 9PJ		Adults £5, children free. Guide dogs only.	
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Exciting new series of concerts to start at All Saints Church Thorpe on Friday May 21st

The church at Burnham Thorpe is well known to people around the world as the “Nelson church”. Admiral Nelson’s father, Edmund, was the Rector from 1755 to 1803 and lived with his family at the old parsonage in the village. (pulled down in 1803).

This is where Horatio Nelson was born and where he spent his childhood. Returning to the village only occasionally during leave ashore in England, he nonetheless lived here 1788-93 while being held in reserve on half-pay. He returned to sea when given command of HMS Agamemnon, which was recommissioned the day before the outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars.

The graves of Nelson’s mother and father are situated on the north side of the church chancel; a brother and sister are buried in the churchyard. It is a church with wonderful acoustics and individual seating so perfectly positioned to cope with the restrictions of Covid 19 but please bring your own masks!

This beautiful church, which is situated in parkland, will resound to glorious live music from May 21st and the series of concerts open with a recital by South Korean born violinist Joo Yeon Sir accompanied by Russian pianist Irina Andrievsky. The performers are well known to Norfolk audiences as they are to audiences throughout the UK and abroad. Tickets are £15 and the concert starts at 7pm.

On May 22nd Thorpe welcomes Costa Rican clarinetist Nelly Rodriguez accompanied by Angela Shan (piano) for a recital at 5pm. Tickets £10 each.

On May 23rd, the South African pianist Neil College will give a recital at 3pm. Tickets are £10 each.

Music on May 29th is of a lighter nature when The Voice finalist Benjamin Lake will be joined by soprano Hayley Moss for an evening of popular music. Tickets are £12.50 and the concert starts at 7pm. Bring a picnic to enjoy in the park prior to the concert.

Further concerts throughout 2021 include a costume performance of works by Gilbert and Sullivan, the electric string quartet Kavoelectrica, the gifted young jazz singer Ella McCready and the Japanese pianist Maki Sekjya.

More information on www.Burnhamsbenefice.org.uk or email thorpemusic2021@gmail.com

Do join us for these exciting musical events and at the same time enjoy a glorious part of West Norfolk and this famous 13th century church.

From May 21 to May 29 there will be an exhibition of the works by the local gifted artist Lusilla Jackson.

The concert series are generously sponsored by the Bespoke Norfolk Group, well known for their quality of craftsmanship and customer service.

ART HISTORY CAN ENABLE SOCIAL DISTANCING

Lesley Nadel

The prospect of travelling out of the Covid 19 Pandemic courtesy of the ‘Road Map’ has filled many of us with joy and excitement. Most of us are fed up with wearing joggers or pyjamas from the ‘loungewear revolution’ that emerged in 2020. Now we want to dress up and go somewhere. Many of us are looking forward to being outside with other people but how do we keep our social distance? We are told that we need to keep 2 metres space between us and the next person but that’s not always easy or possible. It doesn’t come to us easily and the pavements can get pretty crowded in towns and cities.



In China schoolchildren have been making hats decorated with balloons, cardboard and all sorts of quaint and funny things that stick out, all designed to keep the children apart. Fun, playful, effective and surprisingly, an historical precedent going back nearly a thousand years. According to Eileen Chengyin Chow, Duke University Professor, this type of hat is very similar to ‘futou’, characterised with two black wings either side, the official court headgear worn in the Song Dynasty. These two horizontal plumes were used to ‘prevent officials from conspiring sotto voce with one another while at court’. A very early example of social distancing.

Hats have played an extravagant, much admired role in Art History. So many of the wonderful Thomas Gainsborough portraits feature beautiful women in enormous wide brimmed hats. It is thought they also provided women during the 18th and 19th century with a convenient form of social distancing by keeping unwanted suitors and strangers at bay. Whilst the hatpin may have been meant to keep the hat on the head, in the hands of the wearer, it might just have been one of the deadliest fashion accessories in history.

The art of fashion has been used down through the centuries to prevent access for a variety of reasons, health being a major one. About 25 million people were estimated to have died in Europe during the Black Death between 1347 and 1351. It is reported that during this time physicians wore ‘pointed beak like masks and head-to-toe body coverings’ to keep themselves socially distanced from the sufferers. Modern day PPE perhaps but in any event, it is a costume that can be seen to this day if you happen to be in Venice during carnival time.

One of the well-known trends of the 19th century Victorian era was ‘Criminomania’ – a fashion obsession with a voluminous skirt with a stiffened underskirt made using horsehair, linen and cotton. Artists have well documented the crinoline. Opinion has it that this skirt was conceived and widely used to keep the polite social distance between men and women. But it is also possible that the crinoline may also have inadvertently shielded women from the ravages of small pox and cholera. That’s if they managed to escape being set on fire in the meantime.

Seismic world events usually speed up changes that were already occurring. Art history shows us how fashion has influenced such events in previous centuries. The question is how will Art History record the Covid 19 Pandemic.

The Art Society North West Norfolk will be providing ‘on line’ lectures to its members from September, every month, until such time as we are all able to meet safely again in Sedgford Village Hall. Full details of membership and benefits can be found at www.theartsocietynwnorfolk.org.uk

HUNSTANTON HARDWARE



Northgate Precinct, Hunstanton 01485 533968
Under new ownership

It's a family affair!

Carol Nelson and son Matt are the new owners of Hunstanton Hardware in Hunstanton's Northgate Precinct.



From left: Matt, Ryan, Carol and Hannah

Carol said: "I've always wanted to have my own shop; I'm happy in a hardware store so this was perfect for me."

Within walking distance of her home the shop has been spring cleaned and re-organised making it lighter, brighter, more welcoming and easier to see all that's on offer - and that's a lot.

Traditionally a hardware store has a huge range of products and Hunstanton's is no exception. Carol and Matt are continuing with the established product ranges and they have already established some gaps that need filling including a cleaning a valet product selection for vehicles with brand leaders such as Auto Glym.

Second son Ryan who has been furloughed during the recent lockdown has stepped up to organise the plumbing section and daughter Hannah has also helped prepare the shop for opening.

Matt also runs Hunstanton Plant Hire with mini and micro diggers and dumpers available.



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Rose & Crown's brand new alfresco Beach Hut Bar built by local company Anglia Log Cabins

On Monday 12th April The Rose & Crown in Snettisham opened the lovely R&C garden with its brand new, sky blue, Beach Hut bar, built by local business and loyal R&C customers, Anglia Log Cabins.

Until 17th May, Government rules only permit eating and drinking outdoors, with a maximum of six people from different households or any number from two households at one table. Happily, between the marquee and the newly refurbished terrace there is plenty of space for customers to once again tuck into The R&C's Ultimate Burger, or famous Fish and Chips, or share one of The R&C's new Seafood or Ploughman's platters with friends (imagine!) over a proper pint or glass of wine.

Donna Herbert, Anglia Log Cabins said : "We are proud to have worked on the R&C's new Beach Hut Bar, and on the upgrade and landscaping of the garden during lockdown. We had our wedding at The R&C 31 years ago, and our family have been regular customers since, by the log fire in the Back bar during the winter, and in the summer before, during and after (!) cricket."

And husband Eddie Herbert added: "We are booked in on Day One to celebrate seeing old friends, our work with The R&C and the very special place The R&C holds in our lives, and that of the community."

The Rose & Crown has been no lockdown Sleeping Beauty, in fact it's been buzzing. Wonderfully comfortable new beds, new curtains and furniture, paint pots, scrubbing brushes, garden forks, the place is glowing! And, with the help of ALC, the garden looks better than ever.

Anthony Goodrich (owner R&C) said: " We hope our customers have all stayed well and safe through these difficult months. To see friends and families reunited in the wonderfully relaxed, convivial and welcoming surroundings of The Rose & Crown is going to be a huge thrill."



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Health update with Dr David Ince

GP, The Burnhams Surgery, Burnham Market. Deputy Clinical Director, Coastal Primary Care Network

Every year in the UK:

The risk of being struck by lightning is 1 in 1 million.

The risk of dying in a road accident is 1 in 20,000.

20 people are killed by cows.

170,000 people die from cancer – that is more than 450 people per day.

Medically the risk of developing a blood clot is:

1 in 1000 people after long haul air travel.

1 in 2000 women taking the oral contraceptive pill.

And emerging data suggesting 1 in 250,000 people following an Oxford AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccination.

Maintaining life is tricky and ultimately, unfortunately, always fails and we all have to negotiate and accept risk every day and we do this both consciously and unconsciously.

Anyway, this isn't an article about death statistics for the pub quiz now I am allowed back to sip a Tia Maria in the garden of my local hostelry; rather it is a prelude to try and explain how we should or could respond to the news that there may too (like every other aspect of life) be some risk in being vaccinated.

In the last week of January 2021, the average daily number of deaths related to COVID infection in the UK was 1100.

In the last week of March 2021, the average daily number of deaths related to COVID infection in the UK was 32.

I accept I have cherry picked these figures from a statistically busy playing field for dramatic effect but they are dramatic. They, of course, represent a natural drop in a pandemic peak but it does reflect the emerging impact of the vaccination program.

The UK has the highest vaccination rate in Europe and 60% of the adult UK population have now had a first dose of a vaccine and nearly 7 million have had 2 doses.

There has, however, been a slight pause and emerging evidence about the Oxford AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccine has led to the Joint Committee on Vaccine and Immunization (JCVI) to issue guidance this week to offer an alternative vaccine to the under 30s.

So what does this mean? Is the AZ vaccine safe? Should I have a second AZ vaccine? Should I have a first vaccine if it is AZ? Should I hold out or request an alternative? What do I do if I get a headache after the AZ vaccine? Is the vaccine conspiracy being uncovered? Is Elvis still alive?

The risk of developing a clot following a dose of the Oxford AstraZeneca Vaccine is 1 in 250k. This is an observed risk – based on clinicians independently reporting the clot occurrence following the vaccine but, as yet, not scientifically proved. So far in the UK 20 million doses of the AZ vaccine have been administered. There have been 79 cases of a rare type of blood clot and 19 deaths in the month or so after the vaccine has been administered. So one case of a clot in 250,000 vaccinations administered and one death in a million vaccinations administered. So far causality (a direct link) has not been proven and investigations are on-going by the UK and European regulators.

Although a counterintuitive statement to make, I am pleased and reassured by the evidence emerging about the AZ vaccine.

I am reassured when we see reports like this because it means that we then know our systems of adverse effect reporting is both working and being widely reported. We have a robust system of 'pharmacovigilance' or drug watching – known as 'yellow card' reporting. This is where any side effect can be reported to the regulator (Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Authority - MHRA) to investigate. It was traditionally done by filling in a yellow card and sending it via the post.

I am pleased because the serious side effects are also occurring at an incredibly low level (again reassuring us about the identification of even very rare but significant side effects) and not beyond what we would expect of a vaccine. Equally it is not beyond serious, rare side effects that already occur with vaccines that we regularly use – the flu vaccine being an example – I won't expand on this as I don't want to put you off that one too!

Going back to the Coronavirus death rate, you need to look at the great benefit that these vaccines offer in terms of their efficacy and consider the risk versus benefit question.

Investigations by both EU and UK regulators into these reports conclude that they are 'possible' but 'extremely rare' and no causal relationship has been established. Interestingly, neither regulator concluded any age restrictions were necessary but the UK's advisory committee has decided that healthy adults under 30 who are not at risk of developing severe complications to Covid should be offered an alternative.

The advice about the under 30s came from using a risk-benefit calculation looking at intensive care admission versus potential blood clots. In the 20-29 group the harm of vaccination slightly outweighed the risks. However avoiding intensive care admission is not the only benefit of being vaccinated and reducing the risks of getting covid or its severity is also important – Long Covid was not considered as part of this calculation and is likely to be a significant health burden especially to young patients. The good news is that there are other options for vaccinations – Moderna, Novavax and Johnson & Johnson (doesn't hurt if it gets in your eyes) – and the recommendation about the AZ vaccine would not have been made if other vaccines were not being lined up.

As mentioned at the start, blood clots are a common problem. If 1 in 250k will get a blood clot after the AZ vaccine that compares with 1 in 2000 women who will develop a blood clot on the contraceptive pill and 1 in 1000 people who will develop a blood clot from air travel.

Also having Covid infection itself carries a risk of blood clot – 8%, so nearly 1 in 10, of Covid positive hospital patients will develop a blood clot in their lung (Pulmonary Embolism) which is potentially fatal. Of Intensive Care admissions, 23% develop a blood clot. 1% of patients with Covid will have a stroke. So it may be that, just purely in terms of clots, the vaccine is still a much lower risk than having Covid itself.

In terms of the questions I posed earlier about the AZ vaccine. It is safe (not 100% but nothing is) and is much safer than having Covid. If you have been fine after your first AZ vaccine then you will be fine after your second. An alternative is only currently being offered to the under 30s. If you get a severe persistent headache after the AZ vaccine then you should seek medical help. There is no vaccine conspiracy. And, of course, Elvis lives.

The appreciation of risk vs benefit is a complex, individual and not always scientific business. You could reduce your risk of being hit by a bus by never leaving the confines of your bedroom but the benefit you get from leaving your bedroom outweighs this risk.

I would therefore encourage you to have whichever vaccine you are offered, leave your bedroom regularly and avoid both cows and lightning.

I wish you good health.

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