

TOWN and AROUND



ISSUE 178 AUGUST 2020

PRICELESS!

NEWS FROM
NW NORFOLK
FREE

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

First word

Hello and welcome to an issue full of news, information and articles that I hope you will enjoy. More articles are published throughout the month on the website - do take a look.

Foodies will be pleased to hear that some local restaurants are participating in the scheme that offers a 50% discount of up to £10 per head on their meal. You can see some of them on this page.

My thanks as always to our volunteer delivery team and everyone who has written and advertised in this issue.

With best wishes

Elaine

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'Operation Raspberry Yoghurt' honours the heroes of York Avenue

On Saturday 11th July Hunstanton residents turned out to say thank you to the family that run the convenience store on York Avenue.

Customers, friends and neighbours gathered in the evening to pay tribute to the corner shop which has supported them through lockdown.

York Avenue Premier Convenience Store in Hunstanton has stayed open throughout the pandemic sourcing essentials, delivering to self-isolating customers and helping to keep an eye on those in need.

Locals gathered outside the shop to thank Kumar and Jamuna Velumylum, who have run the business for six years, to thank them.

A collection to treat the couple and their two sons, Udaesh and Rajeenth, raised more than £1,000.

Customer Chris Bishop told them: "You've been a lifeline for our community over the last few months. You've sourced supplies, you've

helped us keep tabs on vulnerable neighbours, you've delivered to people in lockdown and I know you've supported needy customers in other ways.

"This is all despite the fact that Asian people are more at risk of serious complications if they do contract coronavirus.

"I take my hat off to you for that, I truly do. You're brave people who have been our unsung heroes throughout this, so we just thought we'd turn up tonight to say thanks.

Mr Velumylum said: "We appreciate it, we really do. We've just all tried to stick together and help one another."

Mr Bishop later tweeted "Operation Raspberry Yoghurt was all about saying thanks to the fantastic people who run our local corner shop for the amazing support they've given our community over the last few months."



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Norfolk MP gives Smithdon High glowing end-of-year report

Improvements could herald more investment at Smithdon

The refurbishment of Smithdon High School in Hunstanton could be a sign of things to come after MP James Wild visited the site to see the extensive work that has been carried out during lockdown.

After being impressed by what he saw during his visit to the school on Friday last week, it is hoped the member for North West Norfolk will support Smithdon's vision for significant redevelopment and investment at the Downs Road school, and raise the issue in Parliament and with the Education Secretary - perhaps even persuading Gavin Williamson to visit the school himself.

"It was a pleasure to visit Smithdon High School and hear about the progress the pupils are making academically and through extra-curricular activities to realise their potential," James Wild MP said.

"Education is key to opportunity and the school's ethos is all about giving young people chances to learn and develop and be successful. Now we can look forward to schools reopening fully in September and young people learning once again." Smithdon is a member of the West Norfolk Academies' Trust, which runs 11 schools across the region, and during new head John Hirst's first year in charge, has undergone a transformation in the classroom and in the facilities, which have had an instant, visible impact on raising morale and standards throughout the school. "We are all committed to ensuring every student at our school has the best education possible," said Mr Hirst.

Major positives that Ofsted



North West Norfolk MP James Wild flanked by Smithdon head John Hirst on the left and West Norfolk Academies Trust Executive Headteacher Andy Johnson

highlighted in the school's latest inspection included pupils commenting on how teaching quality and student behaviour had improved, parents also noting a raising of standards, and a growth in demand for places. Smithdon is well known in the world of architecture as a prominent example of the post-war brutalist style, and around one million pounds in SCA funding has been spent giving its distinctive look a facelift, to create a dynamic, forward-looking learning environment. Art studios, two ICT suites, a food technology area, the sports hall and other facilities have all been transformed, as well as new roofs put on buildings throughout the school.

Mr Hirst continued: "We know Smithdon is already a very distinctive-looking place but

complete overhaul, with new windows, flooring, insulation, light and heating, as well as a fresh coat of paint. "With the transformation of C Block, a new roof and a complete new floor in the sports hall, this is the most significant investment in the school in a very long time.

"We can't wait to have people come and see all the improvements we've made. In October we're planning open activities, and we look forward to welcoming more visitors then, so they can be like Mr Wild and see all the good work we're doing."

Hirst has had an eventful first year in charge of the school but said he was thrilled by how much change had happened to set Smithdon up for a new era. "We now have 21st century facilities to go with a 21st century curriculum, and some great new appointments coming up," he added.

For more information about Smithdon, including watching the progress of the refurbishment and to find out more about open events, please visit the Smithdon High website or follow @Smithdon_High.



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Amy's new designs at Angelina's

Lockdown for some was a challenge and for others it presented an opportunity for creativity and so it was for Amy Coates of Angelina's Curtains and Blinds of Heacham.

Former art teacher Amy learned lino cut printing at the Curwen Print Studio in Cambridge several years ago, and over the past three months she has used the time when the shop had to be closed to customers to create some new designs, some geometric and others incorporating ever-popular seaside images.

Linoleum was invented by Frederick Walton in the 1860's and it was developed into the flooring material that we are all familiar with. Traditional block printing was difficult and laborious to manage while linoleum was cheaper and much easier to work with. It wasn't long before linocut prints became popular with artists but it was when Matisse and Picasso took an interest that its popularity spread more quickly. Picasso's work in the 1950's really moved it into the fine art category.

Amy said: "I wanted to produce designs that are exclusive to us; I've chosen colours that I love for stock and I can produce bespoke colours for customers too."

The layout of the shop has been changed to comply to social distancing guidelines and customers are seen on an individual basis so it is always better to phone for an appointment!

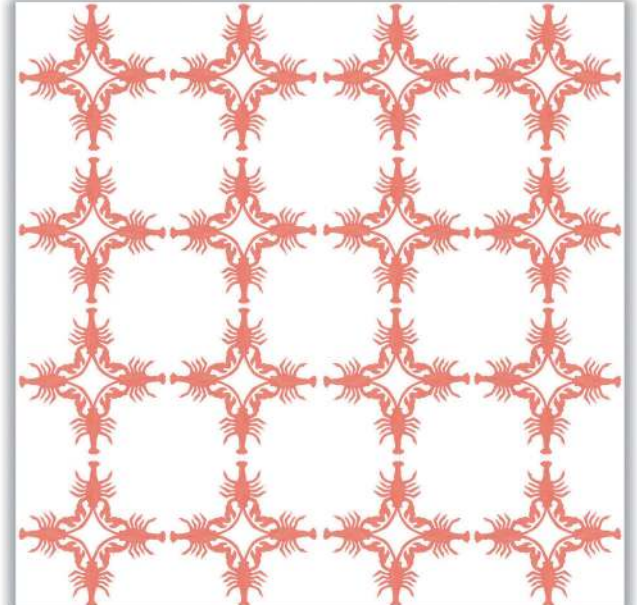
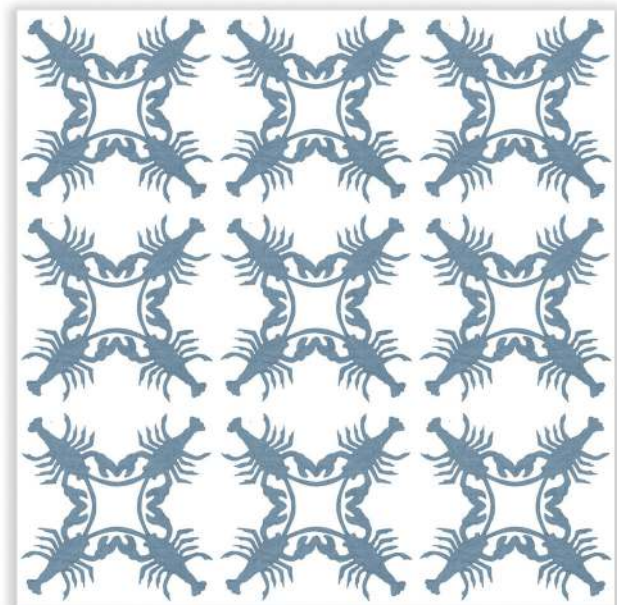


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The Barking Bugle - Walks with Pupstar

Brancaster and Brancaster Staithe circular walks

We absolutely love this part of the North Norfolk coast and although my pawrents and I have been on sections of both the Brancaster and Brancaster Staithe walks before there are always plenty of new discoveries.

Each walk is 4.5 miles in length but you can combine them if you are feeling energetic, which is exactly what we had decided to do. However, I will tell you about each walk individually first of all and then explain how you can link them to make one long walk. You can start each walk at various points but here's what we did.

BRANCASTER CIRCULAR WALK – 4.5 MILES

We were lucky to do the Brancaster circular walk first on a really nice, cool, sunny day. We parked in a small lay-by just outside the village of Titchwell on the A149, a short distance from the church and a sign with the name of the village. (You can pick up a signpost for the walk from here). The first part of this walk takes you through some woods and then the scenery is totally pawsome as you emerge – you can see the dunes and the beach in the distance.

The path is really easy to follow and if you fancy a dip in the sea you can just leave the path and turn left towards Brancaster Golf Club. (This would be another good place to start the walk as there is a pay and display car park).

Turning away from the sea you carry on walking along the path until you reach Beach Road. Turn right and go past Brancaster church which is on your left. Then cross the main A149 and walk a short distance up Mill Road before turning right – the route is clearly signposted. The path climbs a little at this point before flattening out again. Then you find yourself going down Chalk Pit Road which leads you back down to the A149 again, where you turn right in order to reach the lay-by where you started the walk.

BRANCASTER STAITHE CIRCULAR WALK 4.5 MILES

One of the starting points for the Brancaster Staithe circular walk is at Burnham Deepdale where there is a car park with a few shops, a small campsite with a visitor centre and also a petrol station. Walk alongside the main road towards Brancaster and go past the White Horse Pub.

Keep going until you reach the Jolly Sailor Pub where you turn left along Common Lane. Keep walking up the lane which is a quiet road without too much traffic – you can use the grass verge on either side if a car comes along. This leads you to Barrow Common which is a great area for my furry friends to explore. The road eventually bends to the left but keep going, and just before the junction turn right where the walk is signposted next to a little lay-by with enough room for three or four cars. There are other paths you can take to your right before the junction appears in order to access the Common, but if you want to cover the entire distance of the walk take the signposted path just before the junction.

You might like to know that there are many varieties of tree here



such as sycamore, oak, ash, silver birch, beech, elder, hawthorn, elm, lime, sweet chestnut, apple, hazel and holly. Phew! That's a lot of trees! For all you bird watchers out there you can spot many species including the firecrest, marsh harrier and turtle dove. Five species of bat have also been seen here. There are wonderful views to be had of the North Norfolk coastline once you emerge from the woods.

The path continues down Green Common Lane where you then turn left on the A149 and continue alongside the main road for a short while. Then cross the road and follow the signpost which leads you closer to the sea. After a few minutes turn right and you will find yourself walking close to the creeks and past Brancaster harbour. You pass by the bottom of the White Horse pub, which is dog friendly, and keep going until you eventually turn right and go back to the main A149 road. Cross the road and you will find yourself back at Burnham Deepdale where the car park is.

BRANCASTER AND BRANCASTER STAITHE CIRCULAR WALKS COMBINED – 11 MILES

I'll now tell you how to combine the two walks if you are feeling energetic and want to go further.

Start doing the Brancaster circular walk and when you reach Beach Road, which I mentioned at the beginning of my third paragraph, you turn left instead of going right. This heads back towards the beach and a few metres further on you turn right at the signpost for a footpath.

The route continues along a boardwalk. To your left you can see lots of creeks and in the distance you will see boats moored, bobbing too and fro on the water's surface. We have been canoeing here and have explored many of the channels several times. The path here is easy to follow as it winds its way past Brancaster Harbour, the Sailing Club, the White Horse Pub and beyond.

Head towards the village of Burnham Deepdale where the Brancaster Staithe walk begins (see previous details). When you are descending Green Common Lane you turn left on the main A149 road and instead of crossing the road you keep walking. Go past Brancaster Church and turn left up Mill Road and then turn right – the walk is signposted and you will now be on the Brancaster circular walk.

Combining the walks means that you probably cover an extra two miles so the total length you cover will be approximately 11 miles. This is a long way so make sure you are fit and healthy and aim to go on a cool day. There are some shady spots en route but there are equally areas where you are totally exposed to the sun for long periods. It is possible to take a doggy stroller but it is tricky in places so be careful. It is not easy to maintain social distancing on the boardwalk stretch as it is quite narrow.

Whether you do the two walks separately or combine them I would thoroughly recommend you try at least one. The scenery is absolutely pawsome! Please send me your pictures if you do go – I would love to woof at them!

Woofs Pupstar

To download a map of both walks visit our website at www.thebarkingbugle.co.uk

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THE CHANCELLOR'S SUMMER ECONOMIC UPDATE

By Kathryn Gigg Chartered Accountants, Hunstanton

1. VAT Cut for the Leisure & Tourism Sector

The 5% rate will apply from 15 July 2020 to 12 January 2021 for supplies of on-premises hospitality, hotel & holiday accommodation and admission to certain attractions.

Each individual business will need to decide whether to pass the VAT reduction on to customers by reducing its prices.

The VAT rules for this sector are already complex and as a result HMRC has updated several of its VAT Notices to provide more detailed guidance on the application of the change in areas particularly affected by the rate reduction.

There is also guidance available for the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme (see point 2 below) which highlights that VAT will be based on the full amount of the customer's bill. This is on the basis that the scheme is a form of payment towards the meal and the value of the meal is unchanged.

This highlights the difficulties that some businesses face in implementing the rate change at short notice. So, please do contact us if you need help making the necessary changes to your invoicing and accounting systems, e.g. if you need us to guide you through adding a new VAT rate on Sage, QuickBooks, Xero or your spreadsheet records.

2. Eat Out to Help Out

The Eat Out to Help Out Scheme will entitle every diner to a 50% discount of up to £10 per head on their meal at any participating restaurant, pub, café or other eligible establishment.

The discount can be used unlimited times and will be valid Monday to Wednesday on any eat-in meal, including non-alcoholic drinks, for the month of August. Alcohol & service charges are excluded from the offer.

3. Job Retention Bonus

To help mitigate the potential job loss "cliff edge" when the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme ends on 31 October 2020, the new Job Retention Bonus will be available to employers who have furloughed employees and subsequently bring them back to work, if they continue to continuously employ them between 1 November 2020 and 31 January 2021.

In February 2021 such employers will be able to claim a one-off £1,000 Bonus for those employees who earned at least £520 per month on average for each of the above-mentioned 3 months.

Full guidance on the Job Retention Bonus Scheme will not be available until the Autumn; some key questions still need to be answered.

4. Kickstart Scheme

The Kickstart Scheme is designed to help 16-24 year olds through the creation of high quality 6 month work placements. Employers will receive up to £6,500 per work placement to cover the individual's wages and associated costs (NIC & Pension contributions).

It is not yet known exactly how the scheme will work but it is expected that there will be an element of employer contribution towards the cost of employing the individual.

Unfortunately, one condition that will limit the labour market that employers will be able to draw from is that the potential employee must be receiving Universal Credit prior to undertaking the work placement.

Again, there are numerous unanswered questions regarding which detailed guidance is still needed.

5. Stamp Duty Land Tax Cut (SDLT)

The Nil Rate Band of Residential SDLT is being temporarily increased from £125,000 to £500,000 from 8 July 2020 to 31 March 2021.

AND DON'T FORGET!

31 JULY 2020: Despite the fact that the payslip you have received from HMRC for your second 2019/20 payment on account states that it is not due until 31 January 2021, if you can afford to pay it on 31 July you should do so.

31 JULY 2020: This is the last day for making a claim under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme for those employees that you had furloughed up to 30 June.

17 AUGUST 2020: The HMRC Portal for applications for the second tranche of the Self Employed Income Support Scheme opens on this day and will remain open until 19 October 2020. Be aware that your eligibility will be based upon whether you were adversely affected by Coronavirus on or after 14 July 2020.

31 AUGUST 2020: Registration for businesses to join the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme opened on 13 July 2020 and will remain open until 31 August.

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.**

Mrs K H Gigg FCA

Caution: The information listed above is for general guidance only. You should neither act, nor refrain from action, on the basis of any such information. You should take appropriate professional advice on your particular circumstances because the application of laws and regulations will vary depending on particular circumstances and because laws and regulations undergo frequent change. Whilst I endeavour to ensure that the information contained herein is correct, neither I nor my firm shall be liable in damages (including, without limitation, damages for loss of business or loss of profits) arising in contract, tort or otherwise from any information contained in it, or from any action or decision taken as a result of using any such information.
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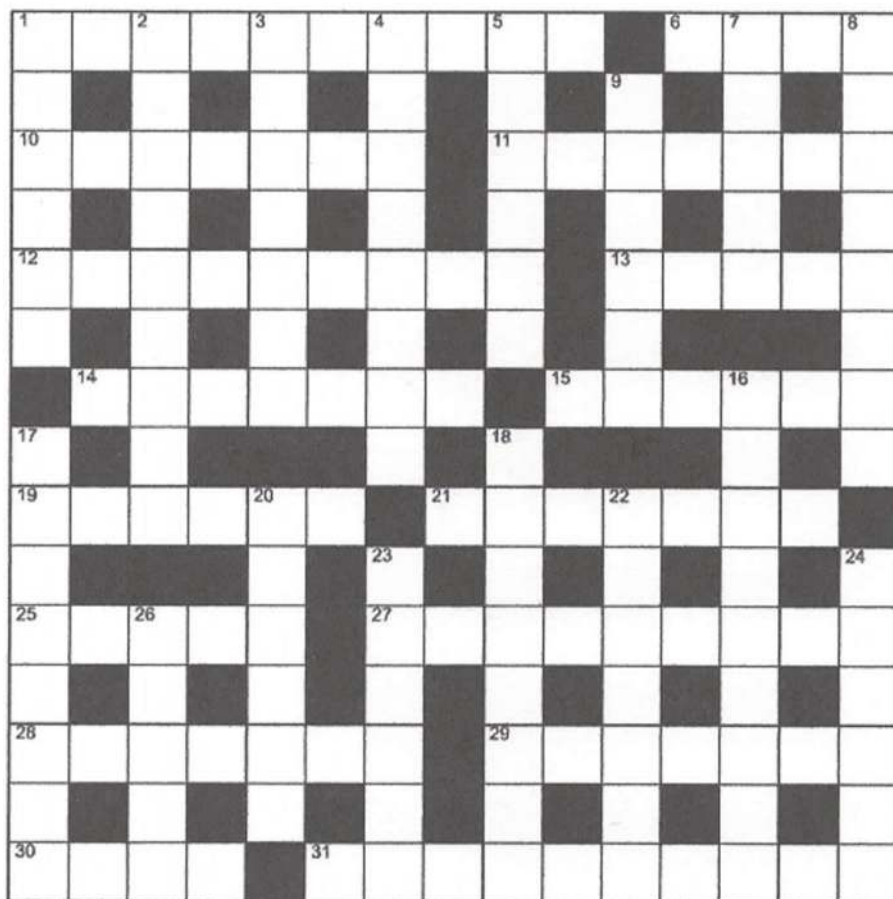
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David Elsey's Cryptic Crossword



Crossword solution on page 31

Crossword Clues Across

1. Flyers heading west went for something hard to take (3-7)
6. Check banks when tackling VAT (4)
10. Converter is fitted wrong way round (7)
11. Get joke? Excellent stuff! (7)
12. Trapped tail during fight (9)
13. Wants to broadcast works do? Ugh! (5)
14. Panel beater? (7)
15. Rose gets mother to pose (6)
19. Developing chic with cool shirt (6)
21. Paid wages religiously (7)
25. Float on river somewhere near Brighton (5)
27. Jet stream up north impacts on industrial town (9)
28. Bond shows average return, with bank suppressing prime rate (7)
29. General Assembly official drops off bundle somewhere in Spain (7)
30. Broad is off the mark (4)
31. Notice sets out risks (10)

Crossword Clues Down

1. Vocal put down isn't right (6)
2. Dress down for crab and main course, perhaps (5,4)
3. No longer active and without money, gets cold over time (7)
4. Casual can't drive, having taken drug (8)
5. Represent East Midlands force (6)
7. Stagger through a complex network (5)
8. Most anxious to speak about favour (8)
9. Time and finesse are needed to make programme (6)
16. Heading north ships go round Oz and finally drop anchor (9)
17. Pull back and tie (8)
18. First row starts off verbal fightback (8)
20. Tight finish for Usain Bolt (6)
22. Sleepover set up after getting something to eat (7)
23. Striker in A & E department relented (6)
24. Take heart from almanacs and records (6)
26. Quick-change right at start for Victor is uninspiring (5)

Ray Butchers Su Doku

Easy first...

...then the more challenging

			9		5			
	4			3			1	
		5	7		8	2		
		4	6	7	9	3		
							6	
	6						9	
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A Page from the Sage

I hope you are all getting through this terrible time, this sunny weather helps a bit, this is for the Town and Around for August, issue no 178 from the Sage in the mountains of Sunny Hunny.

Butchers

I was having a chat with Niel Quincy and we were talking about the butchers shops in Hunstanton that were there before and after the Second World War. In 1925 there was only one butchers shop in the town and that was Rands that was in Victoria Buildings in Greevegate this shop had a large cellar underneath and people were allowed to store food in there to keep it cool, there was also a slaughter house at the back of the shop. In later years this shop was taken over by Burton's who later moved into a shop in the High Street that was Mr Lee's. Burton's is now the only butchers left in the town. There were other butchers, we had were Baxters that later became the London Central Meat Company, Dewhurst's, these shops were in the high street, then at the corner of Westgate and Church Street was the Co-op butchers with their grocers shop next door. I have now come up with another butcher a Mr Pull who had a butchers shop in Westgate and another shop at High Street Heacham.

The Hawes family

Last month I mentioned the petrol pumps that were down Southend Road on the corner of the Grove Lane that led to the Gas Works Cottages, the Sheep Field and Alexandra Road but for the life of me I could not remember the name of the man that kept them, once again Neil put me right it was Mr Hawes. Then it all came back to me; the Hawes family also had the caravan site in the pit in Southend Road this was also the coach park, Mr Hawes had two caravan sites up a little lane behind the Eastern Counties bus garage down the bottom of Southend Road, I think they were called Hillside and Sunnyside, the Hawes family also had some children's rides on the fair and on the ground near the Kit—Kat. Mr and Mrs Hawes lived in the first bungalow on your left in Alexandra Road and their son Bobby and his wife Janet lived next door. I think Mr Hawes was the first to have fruit machines in the town.

Seals

In the 1980s a lot of seals in the Wash suffered from a virus and many of them died; all the evidence pointed to untreated sewage and agricultural run-off being responsible for the decimation of the seal population in the Wash - that was the claim being made in a book being published in April 1989. The book is written by a principal lecturer in biology at Staffordshire Polytechnic and a



by
Dick Melton
01485 535658

leading environmental consultant, he said that the adverse effect of the pollution on the seals immune system was such that many of them were unable to combat the virus that killed them, the same pollution had also affected shellfish like mussels and other sea creatures and while it would not be scientifically accurate to claim that there would be no marine life left in the wash in five years' time the signs were ominous and matter of grave concern. He said that government action to stop the ever-increasing contamination of Britain's coastal waters was needed urgently. Whilst we all know a lot of seals died of this virus in the 1980s, the Wash seems okay at the present time and there is nothing wrong with the selfish in the Wash; I and many other people have been eating shellfish taken from the Wash for many years. This report was taken from the Eastern Daily Press printed on the 13th February 1989.

Wash Barrier

In the June issue of Town and Around, Robin Limb had an article about building a barrier across the mouth of the Wash, I have found an eight page flyer that I had put through my letter box in about 2005/2006 the heading was "The Wash Tidal Barrier Corporation PLC", it was printed by the same company whose address was given as 197 High Street, Cottenham, Cambridge. The company was founded by Cambridgeshire based entrepreneur Peter Dawe specifically to promote and build a barrier across the Wash from Hunstanton to Skegness; when I first looked at this flyer I thought it was an April Fools' Day joke but after reading it I did not really know what to think, most of the eight pages were full of squit, it was the last few lines that made me think this gentleman might be serious.

Phase one: assemble a team of people and companies with the skill to understand and answer the many questions the scheme poses, target December 2007.

Phase two: gain permission from the

government, landowners and other interested parties to construct the scheme target December 2009.

Phase three: resolve the detailed engineering, logistical and other managerial problems of the scheme target 2010.

Phase four: raise the funds to construct the scheme, target April 2011.

Phase five: construction of the barrier target April 2011 completion April 2012..

Well what do you think of that? I expect a lot of you had one of these flyers. I looked out towards the mouth of the Wash this morning Saturday the 13th June 2020, eight years since the barrier should have been there but it is not, I reckon it is just a dream like the pier and the railway, what next?

Norfolk pronunciation

Norfolk place names and their pronunciation baffle the uninitiated, it is well known that Norwich rhymes with porridge, but who could guess that Wymondham is Windum, Costessey is Cossey, Alburgh is Arburgh, Ravingingham is Ranningham, and Cley is Cly though some posh telephone operators used to call it Clay, Hulver is the pretty dialect word for holly, gives its name to a Suffolk village near Beccles.

Although the once great herring fishery is now defunct, Yarmouth people are still called bloaters, Cromer people are Cromer Crabs, but for no reason that anyone can explain the inhabitants of Sheringham (which also has its crab and lobster fishery) are called Shannocks from the dialect word shanny meaning wild or excited. On the other hand an old rhyme says:

Cromer Crabs, Runton Dabs, Beeston Babies, Sheringham Ladies, Weybourne Witches, Salthouse Ditches, and the Blakeney people stand on the steeple and crack hazel nuts with a five farthing beetle (mallet)

Further along the coast we have Blakeney Bulldogs, Morston Dodmen (snails), Binham Bulls Stewkey (Stiffkey) Trolls and Wells Bitefingers. Wells Bitefingers is an allusion to an injurious story that Wells people used to lure ships on to the treacherous sands off the north Norfolk coast, and bite off the fingers of drowned sailors in order to get at their rings.

A kinder jingle about another group of Norfolk villages simply says. Gimingham, Trimingham, Knapton and Trunch, Northrepps and Southrepps lie all in a bunch.

Le-Strange Terrace

My son took me out for a ride around the town, wherever you look there is new building going on; they are building on every bit of spare space and they will soon be building on Southend Road Coach Park. There is talk of a car park for 125 cars being

built on land near South Beach Heacham, maybe people will park there and walk along the beach to Hunstanton, as an old boy who was a mate of mine would say "it's a rum in old job".

We drove along Le-Strange Terrace and what a mess it looks. When the railway station was built in 1862 the resort had one hotel and five small cottages then Brenda Lodge (Green Lodge) and Minna Lodge (Cassie's Restaurant) were built in Le-Strange Terrace and it was not long before there were many shops and businesses in the street including Barclays Bank, Sydney Barkham Fancy Repository, Cedric Coxon Dentist, Stephen Coxon Dentist, Jones Brothers Drapers and Tobacconists (later on fried fish and chip shop) Walter Lemon Chemist, Agnes Patrick Tea Rooms, Robert Taylor Earthenware dealer, The Railway Hotel (changed to Wash and Tope in 1969), Henry Winlove Baker, Richard Winch Fishmonger and Greengrocer Station Yard, and one I nearly forgot Parkers Grocers Shop who also had a shop in Dersingham. The shop premises are still there in Dersingham at the junction of Manor Road and Sandringham Hill. The Post Office was right down the bottom of Westgate near the junction of Westgate, Southend Road and Le-Strange Terrace, the Sandringham Hotel was built in Le-Strange Terrace by the Great Eastern

Railway Company in 1875 (demolished in 1967) the site is now occupied by the Harlequin House.

In 1886 the present High Street was still a by-road with cottages on the east side only, the development of the High Street was started in 1890 and a new Post Office was built on ground in the High Street that had belonged to Tamworth House in 1899.

Going back to Le-Strange Terrace: it was a very busy street up until about five years ago when it began to look shabby, there has been many businesses in Le-Strange Terrace - one of the most popular restaurants in town was the Seagull, that was there for many years as was the Grade A café, very popular with the locals. In the 1950s when the Casino Ballroom and the Americans were here it was an all-night café, there has been two or three fish and chip shops, a wine merchant and even a bookmakers and a power boat sales shop.

Well it looks like we are in for some good sunny days; we are due for it after the terrible time we have all had but the people of Hunstanton have got through two world wars and the 1953 floods so I reckon we will get through this in time.

That's all for this month, just keep on a troshin' and keep safe.

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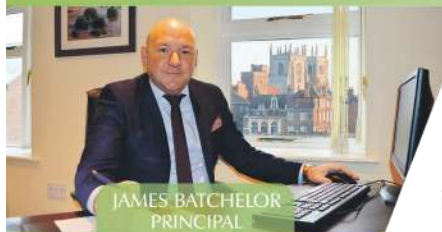
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Howard's Way – at Open Sky Cycles



Howard invites you to: "Share your cycling journey with us."

Based at Ken Hill Farm, this new independent bike repair and cycle shop can be found just off the main road between Heacham and Snettisham.

Previously with Fatbirds and Pedal Revolution, Howard Cholerton's business is the first to open at the site that has glorious views across poppy filled fields that are currently under conversion to organic land.

His plans include outdoor seating areas for cyclists and shoppers and a shop with a range of clothes, accessories, parts, tools and gifts. Howard says: "We will be stocking a range of grit, road, hybrid, mountain, electric and kid bikes as supply chains recover, due to Covid-19."



"Our mission is to make cycling better and more enjoyable for all people who use bicycles, regardless of what bike they ride and how much knowledge they have so don't be afraid to step inside."

Additionally the business is offering a fixed price collection and drop-off service for any repairs operating within a five mile radius of the base with appointments available between 8am-10am and 5pm-6pm. The website has full details of pricing:

<https://www.openskycycles.co.uk/>

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Brick Lane Bikes are specialists in Fixed Gear and Single Speed bikes. For German engineering & design – Merida's emphasis is on quality throughout with their Lifetime Frame Warranty on bikes across the range.

Open Sky Cycles Ltd, Heacham Bottom Farm, Lynn Road, Snettisham PE31 7PQ. Open from 10am-5pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. 01485 493255

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DNS Computer Services

We wrote a piece a few months ago about the different types of internet connections available, and we touched on using mobile broadband via a SIM card rather than the more traditional phone line type broadband offerings.

Over the lockdown period of the past few weeks, we have seen a huge demand for improved broadband reliability and speed in rural areas, as people who previously used their home connections just for shopping and Facebook have suddenly become much more reliant on the internet for much more, including work, keeping in contact with family and friends, and getting shopping delivered.

To provide a solution to this demand, we have utilised mobile networks to supply additional, temporary services to homes and businesses across Norfolk.

Many of these customers have found that the new service is actually better than their old connection, and will be sticking with it going forward.

There are still quite large areas of Norfolk where phone line broadband services are very slow and unreliable, and using a 4g sim router can be an effective solution to the problem.

There are many options available, and flexible 30 day contracts for those who may want to stop and start their service at different times.

The service can also be used to supply wifi to temporary sites and events.



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Mood lifted by New Orleans style music in Docking

Walking the streets of Docking on Saturday 11th July the New Orleans style band, East Angles Brass performed to celebrate the end of the Spark, Kindle and Glow project delivered by local mental health charity, Norfolk and Waveney Mind in association with Community Action Norfolk.



The aim of the project was to reduce social isolation and its impact on older people living in Docking and surrounding villages by helping them to engage in social activities and build their own community support networks.

Funded by Comic Relief over a two year period, the aim of the project was/is to target five communities in West Norfolk with comparably higher levels of isolated older people and where service uptake across local providers is low.

Freedom Duma, Operations Manager, Community Action Norfolk said: "The Spark-Kindle-Glow project started in September 2018 and since then we have reached over 210 people across five villages and we were also able to identify the most isolated older people who were likely to need one-to-one support.

Beth Twite, Project Worker at Norfolk and Waveney Mind said: "COVID19 meant our social get togethers, music and games session had to be put on hold. It has been so important to maintain contact with group members throughout lockdown, but with members unable to access digital communication tools, all contact has been via telephone and post. We have introduced a pen pal scheme and sent cards containing sweet pea seeds for the members to plant."

The group always intended to have a big celebration in July to mark the end of the project and The Railway Inn at Docking kindly delivered food to each of the members so they could have a shared experience (even when apart) and then at 2pm, East Angles Brass performed (socially distanced) the village whilst performing their New Orleans style music.



"I had a lump in my throat, it means so much to know we are being thought about", said one of the group members.

Beth Twite added: "It was a brilliant day on Saturday, we had a socially distanced parade of people who left their houses and were clapping, and most importantly smiling. One of the group members who the band performed specifically for said "I'll actually have something to talk about on the phone tonight" - and that is the whole purpose of this project and the event, giving people who are socially isolated a way to connect with others. I was emotional to see so many people with grins on their faces after what has been a tough time of isolation and worry."

Images here and cover photo: Ian Burt

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Heacham and Hunstanton at Night

Terry Parish

Since lockdown began, there have been no live astronomy meetings though enterprising people have set some up on Zoom. In the late 1980's, when Microsoft Powerpoint emerged, it was hailed as a wonderful tool for presentations. Some years down the line, 'death by Powerpoint', was the cry. I can see the same happening with Zoom; it is not going to replace face to face meetings.

Anyway, astronomy outside, in your gardens, on the beach, or in a dark spot somewhere. Eyes will find most things but binoculars will help and a telescope is a bonus.

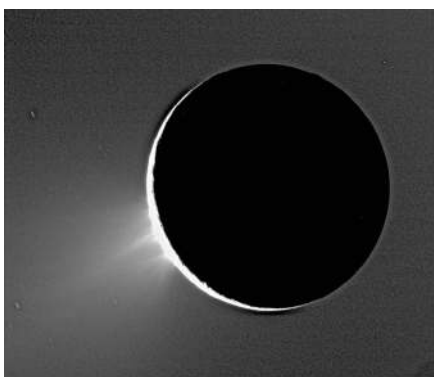
I didn't see much early last month but, at the time of writing, there are two weeks to go and a comet to look for - see below. I did observe Jupiter and Saturn in the SW around midnight. Very clear to the naked eye with bright Jupiter obvious and, a couple of hand widths to the left the dimmer, yellow tinged, Saturn. It is the same configuration this month though you will see them earlier and against a darker sky.



See the gas giants all month.

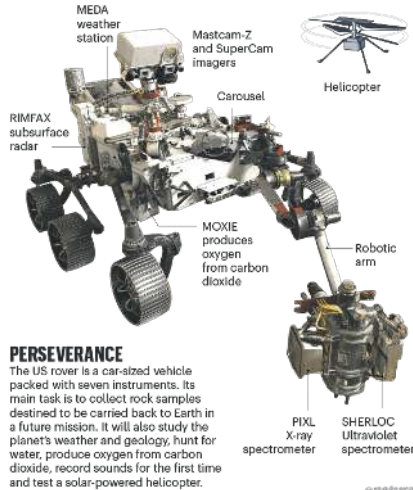
After the last newsletter, Saturn featured on a tv programme which was more about its moons than its rings. At the last count there are 62 moons and three are particularly interesting, Enceladus spews salty water into space; Dione has traces of oxygen in its atmosphere whilst Titan is the second largest moon in the solar system and larger than the planet Mercury. It has a fairly dense nitrogen rich atmosphere and a weather system which creates rivers and lakes similar to features on the Earth. The water-cycle of Earth is replaced by a methane / ethane cycle on Titan. It has a water ocean beneath its surface and emerging cryo volcanos - they have 'lava' made of frozen compounds rather than molten rock.

Like Enceladus, Titan is now a candidate for life - albeit very low-level life. You can see Titan through a small telescope; a spark of light beyond Saturn's rings.



The fountains of Enceladus. NASA

Mars is becoming more prominent. A morning object at the beginning of the month, it rises in the SE at 10.30pm by the middle but, for a good view, you will have to allow the Earth to turn a bit further and raise Mars higher along the ecliptic so look in the SW after midnight. Mars is heading for opposition, closest approach, in October. The red planet has been in the news too, as three spacecraft are heading its way. NASA's Perseverance Rover mission should have left at the end of July and will land in February next year. It's going to look for life; launch a helicopter device into the thin Martian atmosphere, and collect rock samples for a later mission to return to Earth.



PERSEVERANCE

The US rover is a car-sized vehicle packed with seven instruments. Its main task is to collect rock samples destined to be carried back to Earth in a future mission. It will also study the planet's weather and geology, hunt for water, produce oxygen from carbon dioxide, record sounds for the first time and test a solar-powered helicopter.

NASA

Launching about the same time is Tianwen-1, a Chinese craft which will orbit the planet and drop a lander, with rover, to the surface. It will arrive at the same time as NASA's craft.

And a third mission, by the United Arab Emirates, in collaboration with several American universities, should launch, from Japan, a week or two before the others but arrive around the same time. This will be an orbital mission to study Mars's atmosphere and climate.



UAE news release.

So, look at Mars in August and think of those three craft heading its way. Other countries do such things whilst, apparently, we dream of a rail link between Lynn and Hunstanton.

August 1st and 2nd, 11pm SSE to S. The Moon is close to Saturn and Jupiter. The bright star a little to the right is called Nunki. One lunar month later, on the 28th and 29th, this grouping is repeated.

August 9th and 10th, 1.00amish ESE. The Moon is close to Mars.

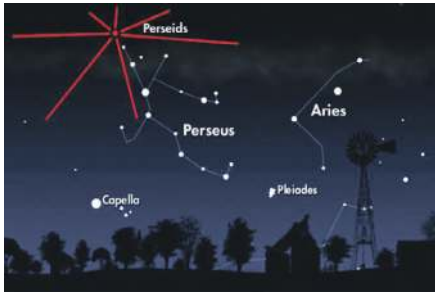
August 15th to 17th, 4.30am, before sunrise, E. See Venus below the waning crescent Moon. The reddish star to the right is Betelgeuse, the top left shoulder of Orion, a harbinger of winter!

If you observe Venus with a telescope, in the early hours throughout the month, you will see it change from a crescent to a half phase.

August is the month of the Perseids meteor shower which has meant a trip to my North Norfolk Astronomy Society site in the last few years. I don't know if those meetings will have started by then, so it might be viewing the event from the back garden. To be fair, except for one year, I have seen more meteors from Heacham. This is down to time rather than location as, generally, the best time to watch the debris from Comet Swift-Tuttle impact Earth's atmosphere is after midnight when I have returned from the wilds of North Norfolk. This year, the Moon will be rising then, so it will be better, and more convenient, to look up at the sky from when it becomes dark to midnight. The meteors can appear in any part of the sky, usually behind you.

Get comfortable, have a blanket, look straight up and count. I have seen well over one hundred some years. I think it was more

like 20 or so last year – look up September's 2019 newsletter and remind me.



The Perseids appear to come from a point, the radiant, in the NE in Perseus. Internet.

Something I missed last month: the best naked eye comet since Hale-Bopp has been in our skies throughout July. Spectacular pictures have appeared in newspapers, one taken from Brancaster beach. Most observations were in the west.

It is Comet C2020 F3 Neowise, named for

the NASA satellite which first spotted it. In early July it was visible in the NE before sunrise Mid July onward and into August it is in the NW after sunset. It was closest to the Earth on the 22/23rd July. Look below the Plough star asterism but Google to find its position on a daily basis

The comet is in a parabolic orbit, it will visit us just this once which explains why it is bright. Regular passes close to the Sun erode comets, leaving behind debris trails which, if the Earth passes through them, become meteors.

Uranus and Neptune are visible, the latter through binoculars but I will leave them to next month when they should be a tad brighter or, at least, seen against a darker sky.

The minor planets Ceres and Vesta are also about. Ceres is at opposition on the 28th. You will need a decent telescope to try and spot this and need to observe it over several nights to confirm the sighting by determining if it is moving against the star field around it (distant stars will be 'fixed' whilst much closer

objects within the Solar System will move). Vesta is less favourably placed towards the end of the month. Google to find precise locations of each.

Whilst you are looking South for planets, use binoculars to sweep across the sky from about 10pm. You will be looking towards Sagittarius and the centre of the galaxy. Lots of star clouds to see. Globular clusters M4 and M80 are well placed.

Darker nights are coming and the stars will shine. Please keep outside lighting to an absolute minimum; light pollution is akin to litter and dog mess and I know you don't like either of those.

Think of the possibility of life orbiting distant Saturn, the continuing attempts to find evidence of past life on Mars, and the extraordinary analysis of observations of exoplanets (planets orbiting far distant stars). Humanity doesn't like isolation.

If and when strangers are allowed to meet again, I will arrange a talk or telescope viewing, or both.

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Thaxters plant of the month

Japanese Anemones by Wendy Warner

As the summer colours begin to fade and bedding plants are looking tired, the fresh growth of Japanese Anemones will come into their own with their long flowering season from August through to October.

They have saucer-shaped flowers in white and various shades of pink on stems above a mound of dense, green leaves and unlike many perennial plants this foliage won't die down completely over the winter. Most varieties flower at approximately 3 – 4 feet but there are other more compact types. Despite the height, due to their structure, they are unlikely to need supporting unless planted in a very exposed position. For this reason, they are commonly known as windflower as the flowerheads will sway gently in the wind. They lend themselves to being planted mid to back of a border but look equally good as loan plants in a gravel garden or can be grown in pots. They are low maintenance and just require deadheading after flowering.

Ideally, they require a sunny spot with partial shade and a well-drained, moist soil. In full sun or very dry conditions, their leaves can become brown and crispy. Saying this, they don't like to be waterlogged and may not survive quantities of winter wet. Mulch round plants in the Spring to help retain the moisture in the soil. Once established they like to be left undisturbed and will make up into larger clumps and can be known to sucker and self seed too. Therefore, when planting, allow a little more space than the initial plant requires! Feed with Bonemeal in the Spring and Autumn to help strengthen the plants and with a high-potash tomato-type feed as they are coming into flower. Any signs of powdery mildew on the leaves is likely to mean the plant is too dry, so some supplementary watering may be required.

For pink varieties, chose Anemone 'Hadsen Abundance' or 'September Charm' or the smaller 'Pamina' with reddish-purple semi-double flowers. 'Honorine Jobert' is pure white



and tall reaching up to 5 feet and 'Whirlwind' a pretty double-white form. My personal favourite, and not strictly a "Japanese" variety, is Anemone 'Wild Swan' as it can flower from June through to November and is shorter at approximately 2 feet with white flowers with purple-blue bands on the underside of the petals looking very elegant.

In a shady spot they combine well with hostas and ferns or can be used in a mixed border with other late summer flowering perennials such as hardy geraniums, asters, sedums penstemons and echinaceas and will give you months of colour.

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Nature Notes with Roger

Winged Wonders of Wayside Walks

What a good year for butterflies so far. I have seen more this year than I can recall for a long while. Maybe this is again because of less disturbance, and fewer hedges and field borders being cut; or maybe I have made trips to different areas and walked more footpaths I have not been to before. As with so many keen bird enthusiasts, my entry to this 'field' of nature was through butterflies. As a young boy living just a jump across the green belt from London, I had the North Downs for my playground, and was enthralled by the sights of these colourful winged creatures as they danced their way along the grasslands and woodland rides. I remember well the Speckled Woods that used to inhabit a particular shady path, and the Small Coppers resting on the downland sward like bright orange buttons on a green dress.

Butterflies are known as indicator species, as their abundance or otherwise can be an excellent early reflection of the general health of the environment. Numbers can increase or decrease remarkably rapidly depending on weather conditions and on how human activities affect their habitats and food plants. This year so far, throughout April and May I have been delighted to see good numbers of Orange Tips, Holly Blues and Green-veined Whites, and now later, in June and into early July, Meadow Browns have been particularly prolific, and the fast flying, russet coloured Small Skipper has been well in



Female Meadow Brown

evidence. On one outing I took near Houghton Hall, a field had attracted up to 30 Small Whites which fluttered over the top of the crop like a flurry of snowflakes, and showing up well at a distance. Along a narrow wooded path a small brown butterfly flew up from my feet and settled on the bracken nearby. At first it appeared quite dull with light sandy coloured underparts crossed with a thin wavy white

line, until it opened its wings to reveal a brilliant iridescent bluey-purple – a male Purple Hairstreak, quite a rarity for this area and a specialist of oak woodlands.

The Meadow Brown is our commonest butterfly, found throughout the UK except in really mountainous regions, and in my various walks around lately I have seen them in good numbers. The female is larger and



Male Purple Hairstreak

more brightly coloured than the male, having orange patches on the fore-wings with a dark 'false eye', which can serve to warn off predators. It can be seen almost anywhere in cultivated fields, meadows, heathlands, roadside verges and waste ground. John Clare, the early 19th century rural poet was probably describing them in his work 'The Shepherds Calendar - for June': "where their old visitors in russet brown the haytime butterflies dance up and down".

The colour palette in the fields has changed from the mainly yellows and whites of a month or two ago to the added reds and purples of late June and July – the full colours of high summer, although the weather at the moment would seem to indicate a different season. Knapweed, Slender Thistle and Red Clover, all really loved by bumblebees, can be seen in abundance on any area of grasses and waste land, along with swathes of Field Scabious, Chicory and Meadow Cranesbill along field edges, this latter being a member of the geranium family sometimes found growing wild in our gardens. By the end of July to beginning of August it is possible on some mornings to detect a scent of autumn, and this will be even more poignant this year as it feels that we have missed out on our summer. I am sure, however, there will still be some good weather to come to enable us to get out and enjoy the sights and sounds of our wonderful countryside and the butterflies and other creatures that inhabit it.



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LIVING THE GOOD LIFE AS A DAIRY STUDENT IN CHESHIRE

By Robin Limb, agricultural consultant

In January 1977, just before going to Newcastle University to study agriculture, I worked for six months at Woore Hall Farm in Cheshire. My uncle Michael, who was operating the ICI/Milk Marketing Board costing service at the time, decided that 'Little Robin' was having it far too easy at home and needed to experience livestock farming, and so he transplanted me onto this farm. When I first walked into their kitchen it smelled of cow dung: when I finally left, I couldn't smell it all.

My first job on arrival at the farm was to shovel the snowdrift clear so that the milk tanker could get through. I recollect very fond memories of farmer Charlie Platt, his wife Doreen, and off-springs Paul, Ian, James and Ruth. After a hard day's labour, we would all walk across the field to the local pub and have at least five pints of wonderful local beer, before staggering home, just before milking began in the morning. Sometimes we didn't go to bed at all – it was just easier to get stuck in. It was the Queen's Jubilee celebration year, and the bunting came out.

Charlie was a hard task-master, but he could drive you around the neighbourhood and give you the history of all the local farmers. He was very generous with his time and insight, and I respected him for that. At the time I kept a daily diary, but I seem to have lost that somehow. Evening meal times were somewhat frugal, involving such delicacies as calf brains on toast, before the days of BSE. I would fill up on copious amounts of brown bread and jam. There was no central heating, so I took a hot water bottle to bed with me at night and ended up burning my foot as a result.

I was a complete failure at milking dairy cows after being kicked at by young heifers and shit on whilst trying to attach the milking machines to the udders. I did however do everything else on the farm, including shovelling huge amounts of excrement downhill, mowing grass for silage, spreading nitrogen fertiliser, and repairing gates and fencing. I managed to annoy the local silage contractor by mower-conditioning the fields in straight lines so he could not just go round and round in circles as he liked to do.

The most rewarding sight was releasing new-born calves out into the grass field for the first time. They just ran and ran until they hit the hedge, stood up, shook their heads, and wondered what was happening to them. I fell badly trying to catch one while running over a tussocky grass field, and damaging my right knee. It took me a week before I was able to climb into a tractor cab, and I still suffer from problems with that knee to this day. When herding cows, you had to be careful to keep your feet clear, because if one stepped on your foot, it didn't necessarily lift it off straightaway.

In those days there were no luxuries such as one-tonne bags of nitrogen lifted by a

telescopic handler. Filling the fertiliser spreader was done by hand-balling 50 kg bags manually, which was back-breaking work. (HSE note: workers are now not permitted to lift more than 25 kgs).

Ruth Platt, who was teaching at Wolverhampton College at the time, took me with her to Shrewsbury one Saturday in her Morris Minor, and although she was older than me, I fancied the pants off her. I have to say Shrewsbury is a beautiful town and maybe you should go there sometime if you have never been.

The short six-month experience seemed like a lifetime. I have never worked so hard in all my life, and I will never do so again. I had to be at work at 7.00 am and work until 7.00 pm, with just a breakfast and lunch break. The best thing was that on the days when the processors were not testing the butter-fat levels we would skim the bulk milk tank, and pour the un-pasteurised cream onto our porridge – and it was gorgeous, with lots of brown sugar to boot.

The worst and most exhausting job was renewing the cow crates with sand and straw every Monday morning. I thought I was going to die at the time after shovelling tonnes of sand by hand as fast as I could to keep up with the tractor driver. He had a 120 horsepower Leyland tractor, which seemed like a big one at the time. Now it is probably just pulling a milk cart or a shooting trailer somewhere in Cheshire, unless it has died and gone to heaven, or suffered terminal rust failure.

Block calving 180 dairy cows in the winter months of January and February is not a barrel load of fun at sub-zero temperatures, especially when you have to be up all night to check for birthing problems and be ready to stick your arm up cow's uterus to release a trapped baby calf. If all else failed we had to get the calving ropes out. I would be comatose in the chair on a Sunday afternoon and Charlie would kick me awake and say: "Come on, I don't keep a dog and bark myself", which I thought was a bit harsh at the time.

I shall never forget the lovely cantankerous dairyman, Harry, who was stopped by the



police at 5.00 am. They said: "What are you doing out at this time in the morning?" He simply replied: "I'm going to work". We used to sit together in the parlour drinking tea out of unclean chipped enamel mugs. I never had a stomach upset in all my time at the farm, and I think my immune system is all the better for it – even to this day.

At the time, my father let me use our decrepit Renault 4 van to travel backwards and forwards to Woore, which actually took only just over an hour, via the Derby ring-road. I would have to say that although I had some wonderful experiences, it cured me of dairy farming forever. You can leave the gate open on an arable farm and nothing can escape. My enduring memories are of seeing nothing but blue sky, green grass, and listening to the 'scrunch' sound of grazing black and white Friesian cows as they made the most of the new spring grass. I will never fit as much into six short months ever again in my life.

AUTHORS NOTE: UK dairy farming is currently under the cosh of the wholesalers, determined to play fast and loose, and get away with the lowest paid price possible. The number of UK dairy farmers has halved over the last ten years, and this trend shows no sign of reversing. The NFU is currently lobbying for fixed-price contracts for dairy farmers, but that has yet to materialise.





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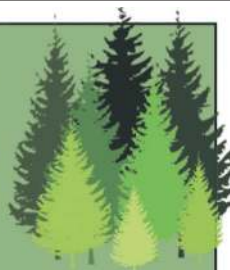
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Mudpies & Butterflies

with Louise Barby, Balanis Garden Design

August is often the month we take often take time off work to enjoy the outdoors. This year feels very different, when so many of us are either working longer hours than ever, or not able to work at all. Why not visit a nursery and go for something that looks pretty for a pot or main border to brighten your August chill time in the garden.

Echinacea, rudbeckia or grasses are all fabulous options.

Flowers - Cut back flowering stems of hardy geraniums. A Viticella variety of Clematis will provide late colour to a wall or fence. Many will tolerate semi shade and any aspect too. Watering is essential for camellias and Rhododendrons to ensure next years buds set well. Prune shrubs if they have finished flowering to maintain shape and form.

Bugs - Remove slugs and snails. Spray should you find green/black fly. You can spray with a weak washing up liquid solution, or just treat with a feed to make the plant stronger to fight for itself. Liquid seaweed is an excellent choice.

Lawn - Keep blades high during dry weather, water with your water butt or sprinkler if necessary. Rest assured, even if the lawn is looking a rather pale version of it's former self, it will soon recover with a few good downpours.

Vegetables and fruit - Many crops have been harvested by now, if not, feed and water regularly. You can re-utilise the space by planting onion sets or garlic. Sow spring cabbage or winter lettuce to further extend your growing season. Pin down strawberry runners in order for them to take root, they can be removed from the mother plant later.

Ponds - Keep the water topped up and aerated. Scoop floating weed and algae from ponds where necessary.

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Dersingham Open Gardens 2020

What a strange time we are all living through at the moment! So, knowing how much you have missed us and to give you the excitement of putting something into your diary, Dersingham Open Gardens is back! We will be opening our gardens on Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th September 11am-5pm.

Governments guidelines on Covid-19 will be in place, which may mean some of our gardens are not suitable for opening. However, we aim to give you a great couple of days. It is the first time we have opened later in the year, although it has been suggested before. It will mean that all visitors will have the excitement of seeing the gardens looking very different to usual. It will also be a wonderful opportunity to see how our gardens have fared as our gardeners will have had a lot more time to devote to them. I know that we have had some of our usual problems with muntjac and moles, and the dry Spring.

Tickets will be £5 on the door and refreshments will be served in the Village Centre on both days. Governments guidelines on Covid-19 will be in place. Proceeds will be shared between St Nicholas Church and the Village Centre. We look forward to seeing you then!



Flower Rainbow

Pat and Lesley Richardson's garden is a joy to behold and every summer a new display or feature is added. The couple have won many accolades for their floral displays over the years and Pat is well known for his work judging the allotments each year.

This year it is fitting that a rainbow of flowers takes centre stage in the front garden at their home. Their floral rainbow is 10ft wide and 7ft high fixed at both ends to an old horse plough; it's made from recycled flower pots tied to a metal bow with cable ties and the flowers are Begonia non-stop.

Note the scale of this magnificent display - Lesley is standing beneath the arch.



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On the turf with Charles Joyce

Liverpool finally delivered for Town and Around when they belatedly won the Premier League. Before a ball had been kicked last August they were 10/3. The Reds went down to Atletico Madrid who are Town And Around's pick in the Champions League. We'll know more after Diego Simeone's team play Leipzig in mid-August. The quarter finals and semi-finals are due to be played in Portugal which given the Government's travel restrictions on Portugal may prove interesting if Manchester City complete the job and put out Real Madrid. Irrespective of the result Manchester City will be in the Champions League next season with the fine imposed on them under the fair play rules much less than they would have lost by being banned from Europe. They are 4/1 to win this season's Champions League and can be an addition to Town and Around's Atletico Madrid as the two teams will not meet until the final. In the FA Cup we were lucky with the draw as Arsenal now play Chelsea in the final on 1 August. We must win with one bet, and be paid on the place part of any bet for both teams.

On the racing front we were right to avoid Godolphin's Pinatubo in the 2,000 Guineas, but had mixed luck in France when The Summit ran second at 10/1 behind a rejuvenated Victor Ludorum. Disappointment of Magic Attitude missing the French 1,000 Guineas

was eased when Drea And Do come home at 10/1 with local bookmakers and 78/10 on the French PMU. Meanwhile in Ireland Siskin continued his unbeaten record when winning the Irish 2,000 Guineas and not unexpectedly Aidan O'Brien had one ready for the fillies Irish 1,000 Guineas when Peaceful won. A couple of Ger Lyons first time runners also did the business for us as well.

As we go forward into August the York Ebor is one to look forward to. At this stage it's not easy to identify how things will transpire, but when racing is at York it is usually worth taking a close look at Epsom Derby winning trainer William Haggas's runners. Although training at headquarters in Newmarket, he is from Yorkshire himself. His wife, Maureen, may have learnt a bit about horse racing while on the knee of her father, Lester Piggott, who won thirty British classics including nine Epsom Derbys. The York runners of William Haggas to keep a particular eye on are the younger ones up to four years old, and that had a recent run in the last seven weeks, and most especially those ridden by Ryan Moore.

As always. Remember the golden rule of punting. 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.

Take the train to Hunstanton: Sign the petition!

Howard Johnston

Local residents and visitors to West Norfolk are being urged to play their part in reopening the Hunstanton to King's Lynn railway line, which has been shortlisted for Government funding.

They are being asked to sign on the on-line petition – you can find it at <http://www.hunstantonrail.org.uk> – to take it to its next target of 7,500 names, and then hopefully to 10,000 and many more.

“It really can make a big difference. We need to publicly demonstrate that everyone in our area is fully behind one of the most important game changers for a generation”, says Norfolk County Councillor Andrew Jamieson. Along with local MP James Wild, he is a keen pro-rail supporter.

From the smallest of beginnings three years ago, the prospects of the railway coming back were given a major boost at the end of June when Transport Minister Chris Heaton-Harris announced to the national press that he was impressed with our application for up to £50,000 funding to take the project to its next stage.

He has included the 16-mile line in a national short-list of schemes worthy of taking forward for a share of Transport Minister Grant Shapps' £500 million pot for 'Reversing



Beeching' cuts in the 1960s. While 50 have applied for ten places to go forward, our MP James Wild has declared he is pleased that there is only one other East Anglian project in the running (a takeover of the Dereham-Wymondham tourist line).

The case for the new Hunstanton rail service (it was ended in May 1969, and not by Dr Beeching who wanted to develop its potential) is that the town, along with Heacham, Snettisham and Dersingham, desperately need to open up the

Cambridge jobs market to young people.

As well as easing pressure on the A149 road at holiday times, older residents can also expect to reach the Queen Elizabeth Hospital at King's Lynn faster and more safely, and towns such as Fakenham and Swaffham can also drive to a major new park-and-ride facility avoiding using the busy streets of King's Lynn.

Hunstanton Rail Group spokesman Howard Johnston said: “We are delighted that our presentation to Norfolk County Council late last year persuaded

it finance a full professional survey, and it has formed the basis of the latest presentation to the Government.

“We are pleased to have secured solid and influential support at a very level, and we know that our case is a very strong one. Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said he wants to equalise the economies of isolated areas such as West Norfolk, and this ticks all his boxes.

“We should know the outcome fairly soon, but the Government has said it will continue talking to us even if our first bid for money is not successful.”

It is seen as too early to speculate which route the new railway would take, although it is likely that very little of the old trackbed would be used again because it has been built upon and is also a long way from the centres of villages.

If the line is electrified, through trains can run to and from London, providing easy access to both Gatwick and Heathrow airports. In years to come, the additional reopening of the old Cambridge-Oxford railway will make it possible to easily travel by rail to as far afield as the West Midlands, Bristol and even Wales.

So, please play your part and sign the petition.

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Railway Campaign news – King's Lynn to Hunstanton

By Andrew Murray, Chairman, King's Lynn Hunstanton Railway Campaign

As a result of a presentation that Howard Johnston gave to the Infrastructure and Development Select Committee of Norfolk County Council in September 2019, the County decided to finance WSP to do a feasibility study on the viability of re-opening a heavy railway line from Hunstanton to King's Lynn, not necessarily on the original trackbed.

Because it is in draft form the report by WSP is at present confidential.

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They have been involved in many high-profile UK projects including the re-development of London Bridge Station and Quarter, Alder Hey Children's Hospital, HS2, Transport for the North Strategic Development Corridor studies, One Blackfriars and the Shard.

Local MP James Wild has submitted a bid to the Department for Transport's Ideas section of Restoring your Railway Fund for a grant

of up to 50K. to take things to the next stage. If that bid is successful it will need match funding from local sources of £12.5K

Hunstanton Town Council has agreed to support the campaign and in principle and to contribute £1,000, if the bid to the DfT is successful. BCKLWN and NCC and the villages along the route will be asked for their support and contributions.

Because some people in the villages have adverse sentiments towards Hunstanton, the name of the Campaign may be changed to West Norfolk Railway Campaign which could encompass the March - Wisbech railway extending to King's Lynn. Through trains from Hunstanton to Cambridge and Peterborough are possibilities at some time in the future.

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AN ITEM OF INTEREST FROM THE HERITAGE CENTRE

S.T. (STEAM TRAWLER) SHERATON (NHER Number is 34507)

This month's OBJECT is far too large to have in the Heritage Centre, but we do have a collection of different pictures and its history in our files. The OBJECT is "The Wreck of the Steam Trawler Sheraton." Most people know that her remains lay on the shore below the Lighthouse.



It was built in 1907, by a ship builder based in Beverley, called Cook, Welton & Gemmell Ltd and was powered by a single screw propulsion made by Amos & Smith of Hull.

The Sheraton was 130 ft long, 23 ft wide and had a draught of 12 ft. She had a carcass of wood, probably oak and then clad with steel.

She was built so strong as her first duty, as her name suggests, was as a Trawler in the North Sea. This environment has some very rough sea conditions, so it was right to have that in mind in the design stage. Also with Germany flexing her muscles it was unsure if a war would start in her lifetime, in that case she would be requisitioned by the Navy in a non-Trawler roll, that being a Minesweeper or anti-Submarine duty.

The remains of the wreck photographed in 2002

When WW1 broke out in 1914, some 800 Trawlers from the east coast ports were requisitioned and the Sheraton was one of them. Her new duty was as a Boom Patrol Vessel.



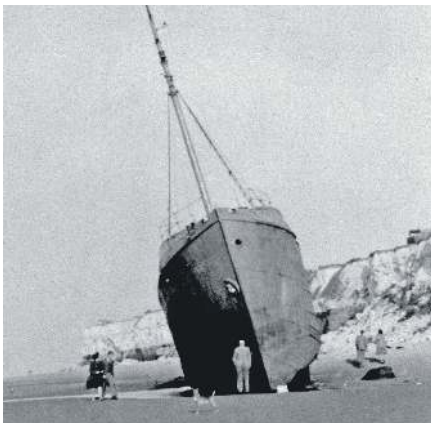
S T Sheraton in working order

Once WW1 was over I assume she went back to Trawling, being based still at Grimsby her home port. As I found no reports to the contrary, until WW2, when in January 1942 she was again requisitioned by the Royal Navy.

This time she was to be part of the Nore Command which patrolled the North Sea, a large task, but with many other ships this command looked after over 200,000 square miles of sea.

Before the Sheraton could start her new job, she had to be fitted with a six-Pounder Gun on her bows and then registered as an Armed Patrol Vessel.

After the Second World War ended, and now nearly 40 years old she was stripped of all valuable equipment and painted bright Yellow. Her destiny had been decided by the Admiralty for her to be a Royal Air Force Target ship. She was towed and anchored off Brest Sand in the Wash, and there she stayed until in 1947 on the night of April 23rd/24th she broke loose from her anchors in severe Gales and drifted across the Wash and got beached on the shore against the cliff near the lighthouse – and what is left of her is still there today.



S T Sheraton beached at Hunstanton 1947



A Local boy (Norman) with S T Sheraton in the background



S T Sheraton c 1948 – a dangerous playground

One of the rewarding things when working in the Heritage Centre, is when visitors talk to us about an article because they have a story to tell you, or they've heard a story from a relative or friend. These stories are like a piece of a jigsaw, and to us they are all helpful in trying to complete that jigsaw.

For instance: We had no idea what the Deck was made of, but whilst talking to a visitor about the wreck, she said she had a photograph of her Father in uniform, home on

leave and standing on the Deck. She returned a while later with the picture and we now know it was wooden planks with Hemp and Tar in the joints.

From older local residents we learnt that for the first few days after coming to rest on the shore, it was guarded by armed soldiers, and nobody was to go near it until 'some equipment' was removed from the ship by the Ministry of War ?

When it came to its salvage, the first thing that disappeared was the mast. Masts were a very saleable item from any wrecked ship. The ship then laid there for some time.

Another gentleman visited us who told me that his father had a contract to salvage what was left, remember she was metal clad.

It was going to be difficult to salvage the ship, being it was along the coast from both access points, Hunstanton Old or New.

But this man had done his homework, he had bought a 4 wheeled drive lorry from the American Military after the war which made his job much easier. No doubt it was the steel he wanted, not the wood, or we would not have the wreck we see today.

On another day we were open, a lady came in to say she had found what looked like a 'manhole cover' near the Wreck. But this cover had some lettering in the casting. This spelt out the name of the shipbuilder who built the Sheraton in 1907. A few volunteers went to see it and possibly bring it to the Heritage Centre. They managed to retrieve it, with the aid of a sack barrow, to the bottom of the steps up to the North Promenade, but no further, age was against them as it was too heavy.

But help was nearby, a healthy and much younger male Wrestler saved the day. He not only lifted it, but carried it up the steps and into a volunteer's van. Oh what it was to be young!

Help is being sought through a Trawler Museum to identify this item which we hope to have on display soon.



The 'manhole cover' retrieved from close by the wreck of the Sheraton

It just goes to prove, that however small the stories we are told it's another piece of the big jigsaw that we can record for others to learn from.

We have in our files a copy of the 15 page Marine Archaeological Survey carried out in 2007 on S T Sheraton should you wish to learn more about this vessel's history.

Researched by Heritage Volunteer
Tony Armstrong.

Borough Council News - Heacham, Sedgeford and Fring

Terry Parish, Leader of the Group of Independent Councillors (15)

The Borough Council is functioning almost entirely on Zoom with the odd Microsoft Teams added for a bit of variety. It used to be novel but up to 7 online meetings/week varying from 30 minutes to 5 hours in length gets a tad tedious.

There are rules and procedures to follow - Zoom etiquette - signing in 30 minutes early to make sure you can connect - not consistent, and remembering that many meetings are streamed on U Tube.

Some meetings are useful, these are often with officers who get work done. I had one with the CEO and the Resort Manager recently all about Heacham beaches and how to improve them. I think, perhaps, hopefully, something might happen this time. Another meeting is scheduled at the end of July.

Planning Committee is, as always, a drawn out affair and Zoom doesn't stop some decisions being weird. However, the planning inspectorate is in my good books at the moment. An inspector dismissed an appeal in Downham Market I was involved with and a local appeal in Heacham was dismissed too. There is an appeal pending in Sedgeford and I hope that inspector makes it a hat trick.

Making an appeal against a planning refusal is too easy. If a Parish Council recommends refusal and this judgement is confirmed by the planning authority, the Borough Council, in my opinion, that should be it. However, almost every agent or applicant from big developer to householder now tends to slap in

an appeal if a decision goes against them. An inspector from the planning inspectorate, based in Bristol, looks at the planning papers, makes a visit and determines their judgement which supports or overrules the planning authority.

The Knights Hill appeal has been allowed so that means there is another 600 houses in the Local Plan - they were removed from supply calculations months ago. Hence 600 more reasons not to build new sites and/or the BC land supply increases further. I am not surprised that the inspector made this decision as the reasons for appeal utilised were very weak. The real reason for public concern, traffic, was removed by the Borough Council, from the case, before the appeal started. They did this as NCC Highways would not support it. I objected to both the stance taken by the Borough and, earlier, to the illogical arguments of the County.

At the time of writing, Sedgeford Primary School appears to be closing in September. Given the problem of social distancing when all schools open, perhaps Sedgeford should still be utilised. Just a thought, have no idea how County thinks (about anything).

The Cheney Hill development Heacham: After some activity around March it is a waiting game again. Highways want a different road layout for phase one but the developers have yet to respond. Bits of phase one also extend over the red development boundary, possibly into phase two, possibly not. I haven't been able to establish that yet.

NEW SOUTH BEACH CAR PARK. The capacity of this has been increased from 120 cars to 260 (15th July notice). This, potentially, means a few hundred more people at South Beach. The consultation period for members of the public is now, officially, 11th August.

The first on line Full Council was 5 hours long. The Leader proposed shutting it down after 3 but some of his members had dropped out by then, three others voted against him, and he lost the vote. This meant that Cabinet members could be questioned for the first time in months. However, key votes earlier in the meeting were very disappointing. The climate motion was defeated as was that relating to Harding's Way in King's Lynn.

At the time of writing there is no dedicated Cabinet Member for the Environment. My group is very concerned about this and hopes the matter is resolved swiftly. This matter is compounded by the fact that no Council report on environmental issues between February and now has yet been written, despite a Cabinet Member being in post until mid-June. Perhaps these facts may explain why, for example, there is a growing litter problem; and why the Environment Agency has not been taken to task about suspending water quality measurements at our beaches. Water quality was raised as an issue by both the EA and Anglian Water last year. Certain measures were proposed by them but there is no evidence that they have been adopted.



The Borough has made a good bid for very significant government funds to redevelop the 'High St' in Kings Lynn.

The Hunstanton to Lynn Railway: This has been in the news recently as it is on a short list and will get a feasibility study grant. It is nothing to do with the Borough Council though, if money is forthcoming the BC will no doubt support the concept.

I know some people I respect think it is a marvellous idea because they remember the railway of their youth. Travelling to school on it, day trippers and holiday makers arriving with their back packs or suitcases. If it does come to pass, I don't think it will be like that. Most people will still travel to Hunstanton in cars as they either carry a lot of junk, kids, and the dog with them; they use Hunstanton and district as a base from which to travel elsewhere, or they don't like public transport.

What the railway will do, if it comes to pass, is produce another development corridor to match the southern one through Downham Market. There will be additional pressure to build, potentially, thousands of homes between Dersingham and Old Hunstanton. Land owners likely love the idea. If it happens, don't say I didn't tell you.



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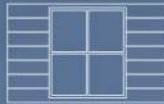
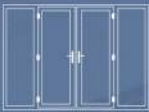
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Political opinion by Richard Bird

Against all local demands another 600 homes to blight local life

Housing overdevelopment on the junction of the A149 and A148 at Knights Hill could blight the lives of all who live around Kings Lynn but especially the town of Hunstanton and the villages of North West Norfolk.

So, the appeal by the developers has been upheld, it was always going to be close. I would suggest the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, (KL&WNBC) should be held accountable for this debacle. Back in 2011 it (KL&WNBC) put forward this site as a proposed area for development, the then KL&WNBC leader, (now retired) who now opposes the site, lives close by but apparently took no notice of the proposal.

The chair of the committee who approved the site for development under the local development framework setup was also the chair of planning that recommended the site should NOT go ahead nearly 10 years later.

This didn't happen by accident; the site was approved and the officers of KL&WNBC went about the business of marketing the site, finding a buyer, negotiating the details of acceptance, outlining what social contributions were needed for local benefits, detailing what types of homes would be built and presumably the financial ramifications of the whole deal. This took years of negotiation and all the while nobody appears to have taken any notice of the possible objections of which there were many. Only when the detailed plans were submitted did the local communities start to be aware and complain.

Town and Around magazine covered the story: 'First Battle Won', in the April 2019 edition (page 16). 'Planning Appeal Pulls in big-hitters' February 2020 edition (page 6). Backed up by the on-line magazine article: 'Wholly inappropriate' dated 16/01/2020.

The case, whichever way it went, was bound to cost the ratepayers money.

It was obvious that the developer, who had worked closely with the

officers of KL&WNBC to create the final offering, who had spent much time and money on the plans, who had purchased parcels of land to gain access to the site, were not going to walk away without compensation. Clearly, they believed that the site was viable and marketable, their concerns were not the same as the objectors who, had they known of these proposals would possibly have been in a position to contribute ideas and compromise, making the project acceptable to all parties. The ineptitude is beyond belief. The Borough Council seems to be incapable of making decisions with the support of any local community, the very people that voted them into office. Both the former and the current MPs for the constituency put forward impassioned argument against this development, both were rejected. All are blaming the Norfolk County Highways for not supporting them in their objections to road issues, but they (NCCH) are obliged in law to follow criteria laid down by Westminster.

So, in conclusion, unless there is another objection, put forward by the Parishes and their supporters, that will be a huge gamble and incredibly expensive, the homes will go ahead. (Old Hunstanton did win a much smaller similar case). Given the recent track record of financial ineptitude by the KL&WNBC, and given that we currently have 4 levels of government squabbling amongst themselves: Parishes and Towns, Districts, in our case KL&WNBC, Norfolk County Council and of course our MPs all largely supporting the same political party, is it not time for a change, a consolidation, reform to eliminate to clarify reducing by at least one level the amount of red tape and costly governance?

Experience tells us that NO heads will roll that the taxpayer and ratepayer will foot the costs bill and that, just as in the case of the Norfolk Incinerator and the KLIC building nobody will be blamed, accused or charged with any misdemeanour. How much longer will the lives of our local people be taken for granted by four levels of governance while having to pay for the pleasure?

T&A's Special Investigator reports - 600 homes - the background

I see from last month's Town And Around that Councillor Terry Parish thinks there are devious things going on across the Borough with developers and some planning applications. Early in July the Planning Inspector released his findings on the Knights Hill application. It was in March 2019 the Borough Council's Planning Committee refused permission for outline consent for 600 homes the councillors did so on highways and heritage grounds. An outline planning application is often little more than a red ring drawn around an area of land with details as to how anyone will access the site. Norfolk Highways are the experts the Borough planners rely on for advice, and they raised no objection to the access. Shortly after the Borough Council elections were over in May the new Planning Committee was told the developer was appealing the Borough Council's refusal of his application for 600 homes, and if the Council did not drop the highways objection the developer would definitely press for costs which could be as much as £500,000. With no support from Norfolk Highways, the new Planning Committee agreed to withdraw its objection on highways grounds, but maintain the objection on heritage grounds. It now seems that decision has saved local taxpayers possibly half a million pounds but will still be a huge expense overall. The Local Plan had allocated the site as a potential development site and not unexpectedly a developer applied for planning permission and was awarded it. It could have all been so different.

Back in 2014, the local development framework (Local Plan) that had the site proposed as one suitable for development came before the Borough Council's Cabinet where it was recommended that "the content of the draft Site Allocations and Development Management Policies – Proposed Submission Document and the relevant supporting material for Knights Hill, be approved for it to be placed on deposit for

representations and subsequently be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination." At the time Charles Joyce was Chairman of the Council's Cabinet Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Committee decided to look at the Cabinet's proposals at its meeting on 20 November. His Vice Chairman, Councillor Paul Foster took the chair because Charles J. was in Ireland on family business. The Local Development Framework Manager told the Scrutiny Committee that the Cabinet Report dated 4 November related to the Allocations and Development Management Policies and had been subject to the King's Lynn Area Transport Strategy modelling previously undertaken for the Core Strategy which looked at traffic flow within the town centre and contained development scenarios. There had been a chain of correspondence from local people relating to traffic flow and these had been taken into account by Norfolk County Council when previous representations had been received.

At this Scrutiny Committee anti-incinerator campaigner and Independent councillor June Leamon from West Winch asked questions about the necessary infrastructure to support the proposed development and the cumulative effect of the proposed traffic numbers, particularly during the summer when tourists were travelling within the Borough. The then Borough Council Leader, and ward councillor for South Wootton explained that all potential development schemes would be required to go through the planning process and infrastructure requirements assessed. Former Mayor and Independent councillor Mike Pitcher asked about questions on the impact of the proposed development at South Wootton and Lynnsport, in particular, the transport network and the ability to cope with the forecasted demands. The then Council Leader commented that if the Council did not have a Local Plan which was approved by the Inspector, then status quo would

remain and the Council could not stop development happening. Once the Inspector had approved the Council's Local Plan as the sites allocated were developed, the required infrastructure would be provided. The Vice Chairman, Councillor Foster referred to National Planning Guidance which at the time quoted that infrastructure should be in place prior to development. He stated that Councillor Pitcher was asking where this information could be found within the proposed submission document. The Local Development Framework Manager pointed out that during the preparation of the Local Plan, the Core Strategy had been adopted in 2011 which had looked at the growth in the Borough and at the Examination in 2011, the Inspector had determined that the Core Strategy was sound.

Later that month at the meeting of all the councillors, Vice Chairman Cllr Paul Foster, said that he would not be supporting the recommendations relating to the Local Development Framework (Local Plan), and asked if the Council Leader would be voting for it, or whether he would be supporting his residents. The Council Leader confirmed that he would be voting for it, and he would be supporting the residents in his ward. - Some may argue that looks like a conflicted positions given the opposition to the Knights Hill application.

Councillor Paul Foster proposed an amendment that read "that the amount of housing in South Wootton, Knights Hill, West Winch and North Runcton be reduced to reasonable numbers". The late Independent Councillor and former Mayor, Michael Langwade, supported Councillor Foster's amendment. The Council Leader and



South Wootton councillor urged fellow councillors to reject Cllr Foster's amendment and continue with number of homes envisaged in the Local Plan. If he had wished, he could have suggested dropping the numbers in Knights Hill only, but he didn't. Cllr Foster's amendment was rejected by both South Wootton councillors. Anti-incinerator campaigner, Lord Howard, a long-time opponent of such a large scale development in the Wootton's was not able to speak or vote, because of an interest he had.



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Linking up - Tackling our economic, social and infrastructural disadvantages

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

You will have seen that Norfolk County Council, with the support of James Wild MP and informed by a large and articulate group of supporters, has applied for £50,000 to help fund the submission of a business case to reopen the railway under the Governments 'Restoring your Railway' initiative.

We need to maximise all opportunities to secure investment and deliver significant infrastructure that is not reliant upon more car use: Restoring Your Railway is just one of these. We are facing significant challenges: an ageing population without the skills necessary to attract new firms; fewer people going on to and returning from higher education; and fewer economic opportunities in the surrounding region. Growth is held back where this is compounded by poor transport and digital connectivity. Reopening the rail line would address some of these challenges. It would open the town of King's Lynn up by rail to a large surrounding area providing access to jobs, education and leisure / retail opportunities for a large number of people. This would raise skills levels and increase employment catchment and labour pools. For the wider area, connectivity would be significantly improved. Hunstanton and villages along the Wash Coast face serious problems if connectivity with King's Lynn is not significantly improved. It will become difficult to retain young people due to the lack of connections to opportunities. A new rail connection will improve access, encourage investors to create jobs on the doorstep, and significantly improve connectivity for sustainable tourism. There are enormous transport issues in the area with severe congestion on the A149 road. A rail connection clearly has the potential to provide for commuting and leisure trips that would otherwise be car-borne. This could help to address some of the congestion problems and lead to a reduction in carbon emissions from road transport.

But securing this initial investment is just one strand of Norfolk County Councils' drive to drive behavioural change to support the



green economy and enhance quality of life as we emerge from COVID-19. I am working to deliver strategies to deliver further significant walking and cycling infrastructure, both within the next twelve months and beyond. What is considered applicable to larger urban areas is equally applicable in rural areas like ours. E-bikes, better parking strategies, 20 MPH zones, lower speed limits in tourist and conservation 'hot-spots', making certain roads walking/cycling only, better bus schemes and, in particular a significantly expanded and legible walking and cycle network aimed at visitors and residents alike are all initiatives that I am actively pursuing.

The Norfolk Trails network is at the core of the Councils' promotion of active leisure. From the outset it was planned to interconnect our main settlements with easily accessed walking and cycling routes but we are now moving on to identify new routes by revitalising disused railway lines, capitalise on and install more quiet lanes and make roads safer for cycle users by creating new cycle paths or by reducing speed limits.

However, nothing that we do should be done in isolation. Walking and Cycling, or seeking better rail transport, are just part of the drive to achieve better health outcomes, reduce our effect on the environment (not least NCC's commitment to carbon neutrality by 2020) and, crucially, help the economy both in the immediate and longer term.

Together with the New Anglia LEP, we have set out immediate plans in the Norfolk and

Suffolk Recovery and Restart Plan. For the medium term Norfolk County Council has launched a Norfolk Delivery Plan, backed and financed by £6.7m Norfolk Strategic Fund.

In the immediate term, we, together with Suffolk have received a total of £32m to get 'shovel ready' projects started. Projects will be announced shortly and will be based the following criteria:

1 Deliverability. Much of the funding needs to be spent in this financial year and the balance in next year. This means we really need projects ready to go.

2 Economic Outputs. Our role is supporting economic growth, so we need to see clear and tangible economic outputs from the projects, as well as good value for money.

3 Leverage. How much additional public or private funding will the cash unlock.

Then taking the portfolio of projects together, we will ensure we have a balance both in the types of project and the geography they effect.

Also, we have looked at ways in which our key businesses, such as tourism, care homes, renewables and agriculture are protected and supported; additionally, plans for apprenticeships and those seeking work as unemployment bites are in place as well. To give an example of the type of early initiatives, I list below some of those measures that we have put in place within the tourism sector.

Our funding or tourism is split into two parts:

1). The provision of immediate funding to purchase PPE, cleaning products, improve the presentation, cleanliness and hygiene of key tourism locations; communication of safety messages to visitors; disbursement of business support grants; and increased staff costs relating to cleaning, marshalling and delivery of the tourism offer within public spaces.

2). We will be supporting an extended season this year into early next year. Support will cover ongoing staff costs for extended time periods, more permeant adaptations, increased safety messaging and more strategic and sustained support and sensitive marketing.



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Wild in Westminster & West Norfolk

As MP for North West Norfolk, I am pleased to be supporting a bid to re-open the railway line between King's Lynn and Hunstanton.

Re-opening the line is not a nostalgic trip down memory lane. It is an exciting opportunity to deliver significant economic, social, and environmental benefits.

The bid was submitted to the government's "Restoring your Railway" fund in July and marks the first stage in potentially re-opening the line that closed in 1969. It was only possible due to the close co-operation of King's Lynn Hunstanton Railway Campaign, Norfolk County Council, and of course, Councillor Andrew Jamieson.

Short journey times from Lynn to Hunstanton would provide connectivity for job opportunities. It could attract new investors to the area and would open our tourism sector up to more visitors. And it would provide a fast, reliable transport link between North West Norfolk and Cambridge, which continues to sustain one of the strongest and most successful economies in Europe.

A new rail route would offer an alternative to car journeys, reducing congestion on the A149 and there is the potential for reduced carbon emissions and better air quality in King's Lynn and surrounding areas.

The proposal draws on an initial feasibility study championed by Andrew Jamieson on behalf of Norfolk County Council. This considered four options in high-level terms including the former route from King's Lynn to Hunstanton as previously operated, a review of the option proposed by KLHRC, and two potential new options.

If the bid is successful, the Department for Transport will fund 75% of costs up to £50,000 for transport and economic studies and to create a business case. Further development of benefits of the railway forms part of the work proposed, including the potential to re-open a railhead to King's Lynn docks.

Some have raised concerns about various routes and this study would consider the respective merits and costs. Importantly, a core element of the bid is wide engagement with local people, businesses, rail companies, and others.

It is exciting and easy to get caught up in the opportunity – but it is important to recognise that this is only the beginning of a journey. The train has not yet left the station let alone arrived.

There is the potential depending on the route to improve links to the QEH.

Last month I was successful in the

lottery that MPs enter to determine who gets on the list for Prime Minister's Questions. My first question focused on my priority of securing more investment into the QEH which I said it would be a fitting tribute to the dedication staff have shown in responding to Covid-19.

In response, the Prime Minister referred to active consideration of longer-term plans and I continue to make the case.

Back in June I was delighted when the Prime Minister responded to my call to support coastal areas by encouraging people to take a staycation in Sunny Hunny. Now pubs, restaurants, cafes, hotels, B&B, campsites, and attractions have re-opened, let's support local businesses and enjoy summer safely.



James Wild MP

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Would Lynn be treated like this?

John Maiden



Zooming in on an extraordinary meeting of Hunstanton Town Council can be quite interesting, but it can also be very depressing for anyone old enough to remember the town as it was in the 1950's, before the rot set in!

The latest threat to the what remains of the town's character, as envisaged by Henry and Hamon le Strange, comes in the form of a double-whammy. While much attention is being focused on the loss of the Tourist Information Centre from the Town Hall, the loss of the bus station and car parking spaces, on the car parks in Southend Road and St Edmund's Terrace, should be ringing alarm bells for everyone who really loves Hunstanton.



When I listened to town councillors acknowledging the adverse effects these proposed changes would undoubtedly have on the town, it looked as if they would recommend refusal of both planning applications. Unfortunately, it seemed as if they were resigned to the fact that the borough council is all powerful and would go ahead with both schemes come what may. The best they could hope for was that the plans would be modified in some way to make them less damaging.

The grass and a few trees on the bus station site are a sad reminder of the Westgate Gardens, which together with the 'plantation' (Spinney) of more than twenty trees, used to enhance the town centre. In 1963 the Westgate Gardens was bulldozed to make way for the bus station, central car park and a filling station. It was another ten years before King's Lynn turned its cattle market into a bus station! It is extremely doubtful if the decision makers in Lynn would consider going back to the time when buses used the Millfleet has a bus terminus, but they have no qualms when it comes to using St Edmund's Terrace as an alternative to the bus station in Hunstanton.

The route for the new King's Lynn to Hunstanton Railway has yet to be determined, but if the new Hunstanton station is to be somewhere close to Le Strange Terrace, it makes no sense at all to build more than 30 apartments on the Southend road car park...

Sinking spades into the new normal

Old Muck

If it hadn't been for our allotments, I don't know how a lot of us would have coped with lockdown. Northfields gave us the opportunity for fresh air and exercise as the pandemic raged.

While we had to socially distance through the height of the coronavirus, we had the comfort of being among friends - even if all the usual banter and leg-pulling had to be shouted over the fence and the legendary Tea Horn fell silent.

We decided to keep our plots open because we could garden safely if we took a few common sense precautions, like hand sanitiser before and after touching the gate and closing communal areas like the loo and tool shed where the Tea Horn currently rusts in peace.

It's made many of us realise how important allotments are on another level, above and beyond what we grow. Beyond even the fact we cultivate friendships as well as fruit and vegetables, on a site which has a wide age range and people from several nationalities.

We enjoy each other's company as much as what we harvest. We share produce, tips and recipes along the way.

Our gardens were the green shoots of our well-being, as Summer sailed in regardless amid the tide of doom and gloom. We marvelled at the wildlife, as red kites soared on the sea breeze and the bees buzzed in our blooms.

We've been dishing out some of our crop to neighbours in lockdown. Surplus rhubarb went down a treat at one old folks' home. Radishes and tomatoes were the order of the day at another.

Shielding and self-isolating members were shopped for, helped by friends like the York Avenue corner shop. We all pulled together to get everyone through it. And it brought us all closer together as a community too.

Many members were in the crowd which gathered to say thanks to Kumar and Jamuna last month - and among those who donated to the appeal which raised more than £1,000 to treat them and their family for their incredible efforts.

It's not been an easy time and parts of Northfields look unkempt. Not everyone has been able to get up to the site this season. Other gardens look pristine, after furloughed workers took out their frustrations on the weeds.

Years ago, allotments were mainly occupied by men and women of a certain age. Our plot holders now include several young families. Some have found the outdoors a perfect spot for home-schooling. Others just appreciated the safety valve.

A new normal was evolving at Northfields, long before the phrase was coined for the aftermath of coronavirus.

Gardeners use a lot less chemicals than they did a generation ago, including slug pellets and pesticides.

We value the wildlife for which our site has become an oasis and try to work with it. Red kites, which were on the verge of extinction a generation ago, are almost daily visitors along with a host of other birds, animals and insects.

Our ponds breed frogs, which help keep pests under control.

Allotments are no longer all about spuds, cabbages, carrots and onions - with a raft of runner beans and greenhouse tomatoes thrown in.

Sweetcorn - barely a viable crop a generation ago - is now a popular staple. If you've never eaten it straight from the harvest, you haven't lived. So are peppers, especially the bring tears to your eyes, keep the loo roll in the fridge varieties. Then there's the garlic and shallots, along with more ambitious crops like sweet potatoes and melons for those adventurous enough to take a punt.

We have projects in hand, like equipping all plots with butts to harvest the water which is set to become a more scarce resource as climate change continues to kick in.

Talking of the C-word, growing your own can cut your carbon footprint, when - according to a report from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) - bought chillies or peppers produce 5.88kg of carbon per kg of fruit, cucumbers or tomatoes 3.79kg and imported green beans from outside Europe a whopping 10.7kg.

Our allotments have never mattered as much to the diverse community who enjoy all they bring to our table - not to mention their importance for our well-being and that of the environment, as we move on and sink our spades into the new normal.



Part of the ethos now is to co-exist more with the wildlife for which the site is an oasis, whether birds of prey or bees.

Images Chris Bishop

UNION CHURCH

Our building was completed in July 1870, making last month our 150th Anniversary. Although sad that we could not meet in it, we have still celebrated with our email and zoom services. We remembered that our origins as a Church began before this date when before having a building, the only place allowed to hold services was on the beach.

Although we have not had to resort to meeting on the beach (the Victorians were hardy souls), as we have not been able to meet in the building, we have had to look for alternative means of phone, post, email and zoom. In the Bible in the book of Acts, it always talks about the Church as a body of people and we have always said that the Church is not the building but is the people who meet in it.

We give thanks to God for the many who have come to Union, worshipped and served Him faithfully throughout these 150 years. That little band of Christians who were prepared to step onto the beach became the foundation stone for Union Church and we today have that same willingness to worship God in whatever way is open to us as we continue to be that Church with or without a building.

With Every Blessing, Janet Brown.

Snettisham Salvation Army

It seems as if life has been on hold for the last three or four months but now there are signs that things are beginning to change. We won't be back to normal for a very long time but the strict lockdown rules are being relaxed slowly but surely and we can begin to do some of the things we used to do and take for granted like meeting up with friends and family and going to a restaurant or café. I don't know what you're looking forward to doing but I'm looking forward to having my hair cut!

It has been a very strange time for us in The Salvation Army. Our charity shop in Hunstanton had to close as did our worship hall in Snettisham. All our usual activities had to stop and it seemed very strange not to gather for worship on a Sunday. However, we have still been available to anyone needing practical assistance or even just a chat if they were feeling at a bit of a loss.

Many churches, including many Salvation Army corps, have moved their worship online so that not only their own congregation could still worship but others who would not normally join with them could worship with them as well. This has not been possible at Snettisham and our worship is printed out each week and delivered to each member of our congregation. If you would like a copy just let me know and we can make sure you are added to our list of recipients.

The good news is that as from Saturday 1st August we plan to reopen our charity shop at 60 Westgate Hunstanton. We will be open Wednesday to Saturday 9.30am to 4.30pm. We will again be able to receive donations of clothes, bric-a-brac, books, toys and small electrical items and small items of furniture and you will be able to come and browse for bargains.

It may be some time before we can recommence worship and the other activities that took place at our corps in Snettisham but we are reminded in Romans 8:28 that 'In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.' We may not understand why this has happened or see how we will ever return to normal but we know we can trust in God who can use all adversity for good.

Alison Kirby

E mail: alison.kirby@salvationarmy.org.uk Mobile 07436425118

Hunstanton & the Saxon Shore

For me, the most abiding memory of the recent lockdown has been shut doors or gates. What has yours been?

I have been using some of my extra time phoning round those people for whom I have their numbers, and many have been perturbed by our orders from the authorities to lock church doors. However, there has been a plus side. There has been a proliferation of virtual church services and meetings via the internet, and many more have been accessing these compared with what might one day be considered the "old fashioned" way. Paradoxically I find leading church service on Zoom much more intimate: the faces that might have been hiding far away at the back of a cavernous building are now right in front on me on my screen!

However, I am aware that sadly some do not have the technology or knowhow to go on line and find that different sort of door that the danger of infection cannot shut. But thinking of this brings to my mind Jesus' statement about himself in the Gospel of John (10:9):

I am the door: if anyone enter in by me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

This is a door that the coronavirus can never shut and is open to all who wish to go in, a door that is found within the human heart. Strangely the current pandemic is leading quite a few to find it for the first time. Maybe you might like to push it open in prayer.

And if you want to find when and where our physical church doors are now open and services happening please go to saxonshorebenefice.co.uk, or look for the latest notice on our doors or notice boards.

Rev. James Monro, Assistant Priest

Christian Science Church

A way forward from lockdown has begun, a much wanted and happy start to opening up to normality. During lockdown, the opening up of thought has been going on and a new way of living our lives. We've seen an expanding appreciation for care-workers, whose selflessness has touched everyone. Deeds of kindness, businesses adapting to meet the needs, and a working together, have been so evident. It has been a time of re-evaluating the so-called norm, of seeing things differently, fairly and justly. While so much communication has been done online including church services, we are now looking forward to churches opening up, reaching out, being part of the well-being of all. The worldwide Christian Science church, with branches in many countries, has held services online like other denominations, keeping everyone connected.

Follow us on Facebook to find out when our regular services in Hunstanton will resume. Further information on the worldwide Christian Science church can be found at www.christianscience.com. At present Christian Science services are available online. Please go to www.spirituality4.me 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.

A Path Between Fear and Folly

Gordon Tanner, a member of The Way C F Leadership team

Coronavirus seems to have brought three distinct types of people into focus for me. At the beginning of the epidemic everybody seemed to be compliant with the regulations the government were putting in place to the extent that it seems nature noticed it. Did you hear the amazing amount of bird song? It was as if they had noticed the quiet of the great reduction in traffic noise and it was a void they needed to fill. It was lovely sitting in our courtyard garden in the town to be serenaded by so many enthusiastic feathered friends.

The wildflowers have been amazing this year. The fields of poppies on the way towards Snettisham were causing people to stop and take photographs. The wildflower meadow in Courtyard Farm, Ringstead was brilliant with oxeye daisies when we went for a walk there and there was evidence of a good crop of cowslips prior to the daisies. The road into Hunstanton was brilliant with a mixture of native poppies, oxeye daisies and Californian poppies.

But back to the people types. Until there was some hint of an easing of lockdown things seemed to be going OK. Some people responded to the news that the easing was coming as if it was all over. We all saw on the TV news the crowds on the beaches in Bournemouth. That same day we had driven back into Hunstanton from a quiet walk and the lighthouse car park was rammed with cars. It was a warm day and it seemed the population of East Midlands had decided to have a day at the seaside despite the home schooling that was supposed to be happening across the country. The threat of the virus had not gone away. To me this behaviour was folly. It appears that some people feel 'it won't happen to me' and they walk around in groups obviously from more than one family but with no hint of social distancing.

At the opposite end of the scale some were full of fear, many because of the doom and gloom that the news broadcasters seem to like to convey. They hardly go out at all. Admittedly some people were shielding for medical reasons, but many more seem to have just been afraid to go out. Brain scientists recognise that the brain only has two basic reactions – love and fear. Fear is really negative, and in the Bible it says 'Fear not!' 365 times, once for every day of the year.

King David described the balanced path between folly and fear in the well-known 23rd Psalm. 'Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for you are with me'. That is a thought worth holding on to.

The copy date for the September 2020 issue of Town and Around is 12th August.



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Holiday Home Covid cleaning

All holiday homes on our register now have their own cleaning, disinfecting and sanitising programmes devised by owners, housekeepers and ourselves and with guidance from the Government with exactly what to use and where to use it. Mmmm. Where to use it. Some of our cleaning teams could tell them. Initially when these 'guidelines' were issued, we had visions of our housekeepers dressed like pathologists from TV shows like 'Silent Witness' or 'CSI Miami'. We even lost a small handful of holiday homes because owners and housekeepers found the instructions so scary. But when it boils down to it, the regime is simple – it's a normal clean but with virus killing disinfectant and ensuring ALL nooks and crannies are reached. A sign of dust is a sign of not being touched. All surfaces – high, low, underneath and over furniture, switches, knobs and knockers, TV remotes and more should still be cleaned and if they were not included in normal changeovers, they should be, regardless. Wearing a mask, gloves, shoe slippers (covers or sprayed shoes) and aprons should now all be the norm for cleaning attire and with a list of cleaning rules and items in place. Simple. Plus there is now an extra hour for making that extra effort to dispose of nasties. Woe betide any cleaner who is not doing their job properly – that area of dust or finger prints will most definitely be spotted by the avid, Covid 19 spotter who arrives on holiday. Trust me, they will be scrupulously looking.

There are clear guidelines and direction on government websites, plus other sites relating to holiday homes and associations about meeting guests, housekeeping, social distances plus all the 'what to do if.....'. So why on earth are holidaymakers being 'metted and greeted' very closely by holiday home owners in Station Road, Snettisham. Hands were shaken, keys and paperwork were passed over, and social distancing went out the window as the family was shown into the holiday cottage by the owner. Kids were running riot too. We are all told to arrange keys to be left, sanitised and untouched to be picked up by the guest and guest left to discover the accommodation themselves. Questions can be asked when necessary over the phone or email. So apart from the systems used for many years in our office, we now have a revised 'Covid' one. As Agents, we are trying damned hard to secure safety for all our guests by asking them to follow procedures and protocols where Covid Health and Safety is concerned. Most visitors who have booked anywhere to stay are just glad to escape from the confines of their homes, jobs and meet family members (at a safe distance) and realise they have to abide by the same rules when in a different place.

I had a call from an individual holiday home owner who had not got a clue on how to make her cottage safe for her guests. And I bet she is not the only one. It is the minority who are making it more of a pandemic than necessary by not keeping safe, so those individual holiday home owners please make a note of 'PASC' and Google this for updates on the virus rules and regs relating to yourselves, your holiday home and your guests. You can also look on the Government site for information, but take time to dig deep on the site, information is buried. Shame Covid 19 is not buried with it.

**Sandra Hohol, Norfolk Holiday Homes
01485 534267**

Can't move, so why not improve?

The current Pandemic has impacted on all walks of life, and the housing and mortgage market is no exception to this. First time buyers are now frequently finding that they may need to have a larger deposit than previously, which can result in the typical first time buyer property, remaining unsold.

The first time buyers are the foundations of a home buying chain. If they are not buying, the market above them stagnates which can result in the people further up the home buying chain being unable to move home.

Many people that choose to move home do so because they require larger accommodation. They may enjoy living in their current location, but just need more space.

A question many are asking themselves at the moment is, "If I can't move, shall I improve?"

If you have the space to extend or improve your current property, why not look at this option? It may be possible to raise the funds by obtaining a further advance from your existing Lender, or by re-mortgaging to a new Lender. Whichever is the case, we can assist and advise you.

Re-mortgaging or obtaining a further advance may also have some financial benefits when compared to moving home.

You can usually obtain a free valuation, whereas you may have to pay for one on a new purchase.

Legal work is usually free on a re-mortgage, whereas you would pay legal fees for buying and selling if you were to move home.

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Improving rather than moving may not suit everyone, but for many it could be the ideal choice.

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HIDDEN TREASURE ON OUR DOORSTEP

The Arts have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic but even in this time of uncertainty, we must believe the crisis won't last forever. Virtual tours and experiences have taken us all over the world. We've seen inside places we may never have visited, seen plays at the theatre and listened to wonderful opera, all from the comfort of our sofa.

Lockdown is easing and visitor attractions and museums are now beginning to open. Pre-booking and some form of social distancing will probably be just two of the new 'normal', or the new temporary' as some prefer. We will become cautiously more confident to travel away from our homes but probably not too far. So now may be the time to plan visits to more of the hidden treasures on our doorstep.

Clifton House, Kings Lynn would be a recommended place to start. '800 years of history in one incredible building'. The house nestles into the Georgian surroundings of King Street and is believed to be the finest medieval merchant's house in England. It's magnificent vaulted undercroft is thought to be the first brick building in the whole of Norfolk. Very atmospheric – you can imagine the wealthy first resident surveying his vast imported wine stock.

It boasts a magnificent 5 storey tower, built in 1570 as a symbol of status and wealth. Unique to others in England by virtue of its original relationship with the surrounding buildings, which stand from the Middle Ages and it's painted interiors, chimneys and character.

Happily since 2005 the property has been in the best possible ownership, Dr Simon Thurley, former Chief Executive of English Heritage and director of the Museum of London and his wife Dr Anna Keay, notably an historian and biography writer as well as a director of the Landmark Trust. The restoration and conservation work they have carried on at the house is wonderful to see, along with cleverly establishing a family home they share with their 2 children without compromising on the important historical details.

Information on opening times, entrance fees etc. can be viewed on www.cliftonhouse.org.uk.

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Round the bend with Dean Baker

Duck – incoming bills! or let the sun do work

Had I written this article before the water bill landed on the door mat of the Baker household I would have been writing as Dean the 'pleased with himself', plumber. Mrs B is partially responsible for our predicament but, it would be a very brave man who points that out. I'm not that brave. I suppose it happened because of the lure of the internet and our attempts to entertain the 'not so littles'. The weather has generally been good and we were all confined to barracks. So, we bought a swimming pool. Its 12ft across and 3ft high. And I must admit, it has been very popular. We've all enjoyed it. Its heated by a solar mat which does take the chill off the water cheaply. But the water usage is eye watering!

And I expect that we're not the only household who are staring down the barrel of bigger than usual utility bills.

If you have found that your electricity bill has more numbers than a modest lottery win, what should you do?

Don't suffer in silence. Contact your energy supplier and explain. We've all been and still are in the same boat. In the case of your water bill, unlike the USA, you cannot be cut off. Ask about a repayment plan. Make sure that you are the best plan for your household. If you are in debt to your utility provider you won't be able to switch. But if you can, its worth considering your options.



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This is the perfect time to revisit how to save money in your home.

Look out for dripping taps. Those drips cost money. Don't linger in the shower, its summer, do something more interesting. Turn lights off. The nights are drawing in so get into the habit of turning off when you leave the room. The thermostat should be turned right down. If you are chilly while watching the TV in the evening, heat your area. Put on a jumper, wrap a rug round your knees. If you are cold in bed, have a hot water bottle or an electric blanket on a low setting. Finally, ditch the tumble drier. They are expensive and for the time being Sunny Hunny will do the job for free!

Until next month, all the very best.

Dean Baker plombierdean@yahoo.com 07973 131 906

QEH Maternity Bereavement Suite

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn is fundraising for a Maternity Bereavement Suite.

The hospital's 2020 appeal aims to create a dedicated facility for families who sadly lose their babies either during or shortly after birth.



The campaign is incredibly important to the hospital and the wider community, ensuring families and loved ones are given a less clinical environment to say goodbye to their baby in.

The project would mean a redevelopment of an area currently attached to the Waterlily Birthing Unit in the hospital's maternity space.

Bereaved parents are currently cared for in a space where women can be heard labouring and celebrating the birth of their new-born. The new suite will be soundproofed and have a separate entrance from the main corridor, ensuring that families do not have to walk through the main maternity unit to access the space.

Kate Jackman, the hospital's general manager for women and children, said: "The dedicated space will include a nursery and partner facilities which will provide a private and comfortable environment.

"This will ensure parents have the maximum opportunity to create precious memories whilst spending time as a family."

The appeal is currently at 11% of its target, having raised £22,000 out of the £185,000 target. With multiple events postponed due to COVID-19, the hospital is hopeful that fundraising will be back in full swing over the last six months of the campaign.

The QEH Charitable Fund is called 'Maternity Bereavement Suite Appeal', number 21816.

MORE ARTISTIC TALENT ON HUNSTANTON NORTH PROM

There is new artwork to be seen near the beach in Hunstanton. Two more panels of beautiful and colourful ceramic tiles have now been completed on the sea wall. The project, started by local artist, Kate Dunbar and sponsored by Hunstanton & District Festival of Art was started back in 2012. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee was the first design theme followed by Memories of Hunstanton and later Sea Creatures.

These panels were also made with help from local design studio Paint Me Ceramics which has sadly now closed. The Large Ship mural and the Turtle scene were both created by students from Smithdon High School and the other sea creature tiles were painted by local people and visitors young and old in the last two years. These new tiles can be found on the sea front near the Sailing Club beneath the beach chalets. Christine Earnshaw, Chair of the HDFA, thanked Martin Turner, Chris Ellis, Jim Worley and Mike Sherwood of Hunstanton Men's Shed for their hours of work fixing the tiles so beautifully in place and she presented them with a donation for new equipment to help with their work. The Men's Shed is a community group based in the old café next to Hunstanton Library for anyone who likes to work with their hands.

Further info from: Christine Earnshaw (Chair HDFA)

2chrisearnshaw@gmail.com.
Ann McKimm 01485 533933 Hon Sec. Or Chris Ellis of the Men's Shed for more details at chriscellis@talktalk.net.



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