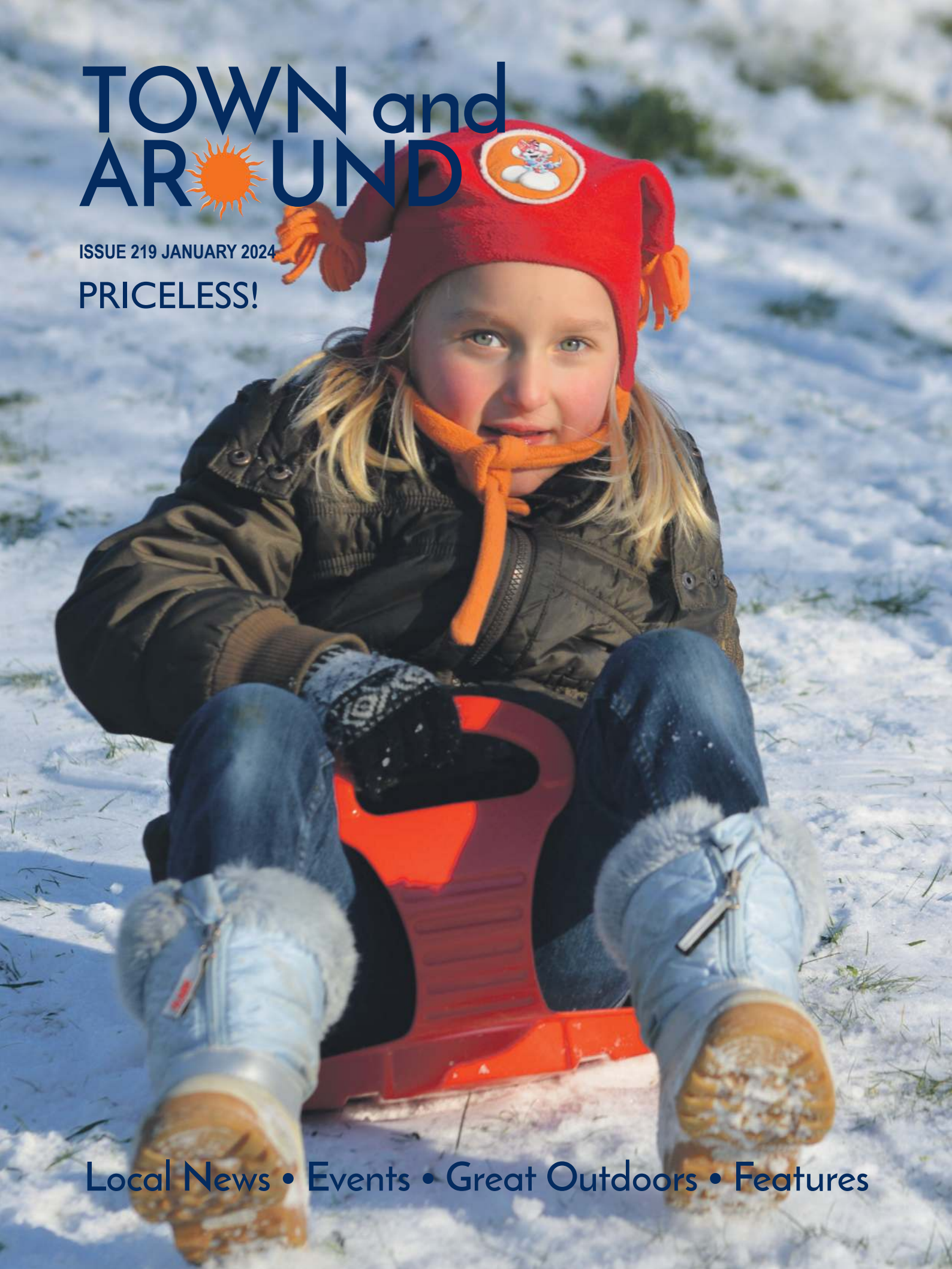


TOWN and AROUND



ISSUE 219 JANUARY 2024

PRICELESS!

Local News • Events • Great Outdoors • Features

First word



Traditionally the time to make resolutions, may I suggest that your first one in 2024 should be to make a cuppa, find a comfy chair and enjoy a good read of our first issue of the new year. It's brimming with news, views and events.

The second one might be to put your best foot forward and join in the New Year's Day walk from St Edmund's Chapel ruins on Hunstanton's clifftop. Free to enter and a great way to work off those mince pies! Page 54 has the details.

You may remember Andrew Jamieson's article about the proposed Devolution Deal for Norfolk that appeared on page 6 of the November 2023 edition. Norfolk County Councillors voted to accept the deal in December and you can recap the detail on page 30. On the same page there's a report about the Borough Council's Corporate Strategy covering a four-year period. The decisions of both affect us all!

Lifeboat Station volunteers have their pagers on every day of the year and you can read about the families involved on page 33.

For 2024 T&A has teamed up with the Norfolk Hospice with our 'Donate' scheme for unwanted or tired motors. The contact details remain the same but all monies raised go directly to the Hospice. See page 12.

My thanks as always to everyone who has contributed to this issue; writers, photographers and advertisers. You are all truly appreciated.

With all best wishes for a happy and healthy 2024,

Elaine

Elaine Bird, Editor,
Town and Around

The Perches, 18 Tapping Close, Snettisham PE31 7FF
T: 01485 540620 M:07533 088196 E: editor@townandaround.net
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Borough Mayor hosts presentation evening for Air Cadets

Gary Walker

No.42 Founder (King's Lynn) Squadron RAF Air Cadets held their annual presentation evening in the Town Hall on 20th November, the purpose of the evening being to present awards to Cadets for varying achievements during the year, these ranging from the best NCO to the Cadet who has achieved the Cadet best academic results during the year.



Sgt Summer Brydon receives Best Drill and Dress Award from Col Tim Allen OBE

The event was hosted by the Mayor of KL & WN, Cllr Margaret Wilkinson and saw a wide ranging group of civic dignitaries gathered to present the awards, together with Air Cadet Staff, Civilian Committee members and a large gathering of parents.

With 33 Cadets on parade, the evening started with a very comprehensive briefing by Cadets on their recent visit to the WW1 Flanders Battlefields in Flanders.

This was followed by the latest intake of Cadets to the Squadron, gathering to recite the Air Cadet Promise, a requirement for all new Air Cadets. They then went on to receive their First Aid certificates and badges, for passing the Cadet first aid course.



Award winners display their trophies



Cadets parading prior to the start of the presentations

The Squadron OC, Flt Lt Pauline Petch, said "it was wonderful to see so many parents present to see their Cadets in parade in such auspicious surroundings and to witness the results of so much hard work by the Cadets during the year".

The evening culminated in a reception for all the Guests and parents present and a raffle towards Sqn funds.

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Happy New Year from all at the lifeboat station

We've got a big year ahead of us, with the RNLI celebrating its 200th anniversary on March 4.

2024 also marks two centuries of a lifeboat station being established at Hunstanton.

We'll be pulling out all the stops to mark both - see next month's T&A for dates and details of some of the events still being planned.

As we leave 2023 astern, we've launched more than 30 times in what was another busy year for us.

We saved one person's life and assisted 19 others in danger.

Running a lifeboat station needs both sea-going and shore crew, along with plant drivers, launch authorities and other roles.



Ken Gregg receives his 10-year service award from Hunstanton Lifeboat Operations Manager Rigil Kent Credit RNLI/Chris Bishop

A volunteer who devoted 10 years' service to the station was honoured with a special award before Christmas.

Retired firefighter Ken Gregg served as a plant driver for 10 years between 2009 and 2019.

He was part of the shore crew, who use the station's tractor to launch and recover its lifeboat Spirit of West Norfolk.

Ken, now 69, retired from his RNLI duties in 2019. But the Covid pandemic and family events prevented him from collecting his award.

Hunstanton lifeboat operations manager Rigil Kent presented Ken's framed certificate at the boat house.

Before Christmas, we welcomed supporters to the station including the family of Alan George Smith, from Peterborough, who passed away at the age of 82 on August 7.

Alan spent many happy times at Hunstanton with his wife Jo and family members in various caravans they owned on sites like Manor Park.

A collection at his funeral at Peterborough Crematorium raised £250 to support our work.



Jo Smith presents a cheque to Paul Stewart, deputy launch authority at Hunstanton RNLI Credit RNLI/Chris Bishop



Rigil Kent accepts the cheque from the triathletes Credit RNLI/Chris Bishop

King's Lynn Triathlon Club swam, ran and rode through town on the Sunny Hunny Triathlon back in the summer.

Some 120 took part in an event which raised £750, which members delivered to the station after one of our busy Sunday training sessions, when both our lifeboat and hovercraft were in action.

If you'd like to find out more about the ways you could help our lifesaving work, we train at the station on Sunday mornings or you can e-mail hunstanton@rnli.org.uk.

Stay Safe, Respect the Sea. Hunstanton RNLI

Mike becomes DLA at Hunstanton after realising lifetime ambition to join RNLI

Mike Gould remembers running to the boathouse at Hunstanton as a boy when he was staying in a holiday home nearby and saw the flares go up to signal a launch.

Now the 48-year-old businessman has completed his training and become one of the RNLI station's deputy launch authorities.

'I've been into watersports on and off all my life and I'm on the committee at Hunstanton Sailing Club,' said Mike.

'I sail, I surf and paddleboard, but while I've lived in the area all my life I haven't been within shout distance.

'I moved to Hunstanton in January and signed up straight away. I used to run down to the lifeboat station as a boy when the flares went off.

'I've always wanted to be part of it and give something back.'

Mike said he found the RNLI's training 'thorough and well-structured'.

A deputy launch authority - or DLA in station parlance - can authorise and oversee all aspects of a launch from when an emergency call comes in to when the lifeboat or hovercraft is returned to service after being washed down, checked and re-fuelled after a 'shout'.



Credit RNLI/Chris Bishop

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The Carolean Cup

Laurent Bernard

Swaffham Bridge Club and Hunstanton Bridge Club have joined forces to launch a new team competition, the Carolean Cup, which has been named to show a new event, starting in the era of King Charles III.

Eight teams from Swaffham BC, Hunstanton BC and Fakenham BC took part.

The first match took place on Sunday 15th October at the Methodist Church in Swaffham. The second match took place at Old Hunstanton village hall on Sunday 19th November.

Photo shows Laurent (left) and Rebecca (right) presenting the trophy to the winning team (Robert Smith, Jo & Malcolm Thompson, Les Baker)



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Meals served from Monday to Saturday each week, from 12 noon until 2.00 p.m.

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22nd January Coffee and Brandy from 10.00 a.m.

REMINDER: subscriptions are due on the 1st January

Yoga for U3A members on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Mondays : Strength and Balance Class 4.30pm. Tuesdays: Cash Bingo starts at 7.30pm

Wednesdays : Scrabble 10am, Whist Drive 7pm.

Thursdays: Games evening from 7pm. includes, Darts, Table Tennis, Dominoes, Cards, Scrabble etc.

Fridays : Lunchtime Raffle drawn at 1pm. Cash Bingo start at 7.30pm.

Saturdays : 'Open the Box' draw at 1pm

www.hunstantonconservativeclub.co.uk



Jamm'in Joe's Around the Clock Jam for Charity at The Terrace

Tim Keogh

Local musician, Jamm'in Joe, will be performing at The Terrace in Hunstanton on Sunday, 14th January.

Starting at 9am, he will be serenading a 12 hour fundraising musical stint in aid of the Royal National Institute for Blind People (RNIB). The popular restaurant will be open all day, starting with Joe's Jazz Breakfast (9am to 11am), followed by two sittings for a Soulful Sunday Roast (12.30pm to 2.30pm and 3pm to 5pm) and a grand finale finish with Toe Tapping Tapas in the evening. The restaurant are advising people to book in advance as it is likely to be busy.

This RNIB is a charity close to Joe's heart as he had cataracts from a young age and now only has peripheral vision in one eye. This makes his music playing the



more impressive as he relies on feel and memory to play his



music.

Joe will be joined throughout the day by guest musicians and singers from across Norfolk. There will also be a raffle with some special prizes given by local businesses. The Terrace will be donating 20% of all profits, corkage fees and tips from the day to the RNIB. Feel free to pop in to donate and cheer Joe on.

The Terrace will be open

throughout December providing breakfasts, lunches, Sunday roasts and Tapas. They can also accommodate gluten free, vegetarian and vegan dietary requirements. For more information on booking a table or renting The Terrace out for a special occasion, please contact chef Victoria Kirk on 07554 760036 or visit www.theterracehunstanton.co.uk

Donation to the Lynn Night Shelter from the Norfolk Farmers Lodge

Richard Dix



Pictured from left: Lucy McKitterick, Co-ordinator Of the Lynn Night Shelter, Jenny Langley, Intensive Support Worker and Richard Dix, Master of Norfolk Farmers Lodge

I was pleased to present a donation of just over £700 that Norfolk Farmers Lodge raised in the early autumn at an event we ran at Marea Farm in Heacham where it was agreed that when the Night Shelter re-opened we would donate the money raised to them as they were well deserving and they are finding funds very hard to get this year.

The funds were gratefully received and I'm working on raising some more monies for them over the coming months.

Hunstanton Library news

Liz Rogers, Library and Information Assistant

Hunstanton Library OPEN Tues, Weds, Fri 9am-7pm, Sat 9am-4pm.

Our Warm and Well initiative is going well at Hunstanton Library; we have hot drinks, toiletries, soft blankets and hot water bottles available - free of charge.

We also have the Tricky Period items - now including sustainable products!

Good News! Our fledgling Writers' Group is underway. It happens once a month on the first Wednesday of the month at 2pm, the first session was on Wednesday 6th December.

We look forward to you joining us at future sessions.

We have Bounce & Rhyme at 10.30am on Wednesdays and Fridays at 10am - lots of fun, singing, stories and bubbles for little ones!! Plus Lego on Saturdays - every week from 10.30am

Colour Yourself Calm is on a Tuesday from 4pm - with refreshments - autism-friendly and very relaxing.

You can now access a new free digital archive from the BFI (British Film Institute) containing 60 years of screen stories from any public computer in any Norfolk Library!

BFI Replay is the result of one of the UK's largest mass digitisation programmes. Thousands of digitised videos and television programmes from the BFI National Archive are available to browse and enjoy, research or study - with some familiar and memorable, others rare and unseen for decades.

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Best practice when acting as an executor

By James Palmer, Associate Solicitor, Hayes + Storr

When someone is appointed to act as an executor of another person's estate, they are legally responsible for carrying out the instructions in a person's will. Certain tasks including arranging the funeral, and registering the death, are often carried out by a family member (who may or may not be the person who has been appointed as the executor).

Some of the key duties of an executor, may include:

- Registering the death - to obtain the death certificate(s) and to enable the funeral to take place
- Arranging the funeral
- Locating and protecting the will
- Locating and protecting the estate assets and property
- Contacting all those with which the deceased had assets or owed money; including banks and investment organisations - for money held or money owed
- Applying for a Grant of Probate (where relevant)
- Calculating and paying Inheritance Tax (where relevant)
- Finalising the income tax
- Gathering in or transferring all assets, including any property
- Paying any liabilities
- Distributing the estate to the beneficiaries

Some estates are more complex than others;

however, in many cases, the role of an executor is often an onerous and technical one. This is particularly so because of the sadness and heightened emotions of having lost a loved one.

Executors often seek the help of legal professionals. This can include a consultation in the early days. The benefits include fully understanding the role and duties so that they know exactly what needs to be done to administer the estate. It is worthwhile to take the time to receive such advice, to relieve the executor of worry and uncertainty in this increasingly complex role.

Alternatively, executors can also instruct a solicitor to assist in a more involved way. Often this relates to either of the following:

1. Certain elements of the probate process and estate administration: including obtaining the Grant of Probate. A Grant of Probate is a court document which confirms the authority of the executor to deal with the assets in an estate. To obtain it, an application is made to the Probate Registry. An executor may also seek legal advice on other aspects such as inheritance tax, capital gains tax, and other taxes.

2. Full Administration of the Estate: another option is that the executor(s) instruct a solicitor to deal with the full administration of the estate. This means that a solicitor will pick everything up for you, and deal with all the administration of the estate.



Accepting the appointment as an executor is a precise legal role. An executor must protect the estate assets, and account accurately to the beneficiaries for their entitlement. If an executor does not fulfil that duty properly, they are personally responsible. An executor is not personally liable for any debts of the estate; however, there are some exceptions, and taking on the role comes with risks.

As you will see, because of the legal and personal duties of an executor, it is important to obtain qualified advice. Instructing a trusted established solicitor should reassure you that you are fulfilling that role correctly.

If you would like to speak to us about your role as an executor and how we can help, call James Palmer on 01328 863231 or email james.palmer@hayes-storr.com.

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Tech Coach's Heartwarming Gift

by Elizabeth Jarred

Quite often, unseen in Gaywood Library, King's Lynn there is an opportunity to contact and make connection in a world that increasingly relies on digital communication.

Being a regular Library user who welcomes opportunities afforded, I was delighted to meet Janie Brister and I want to share with you how she has changed my world.

Janie Brister, with her wealth of knowledge and experience, welcomed the opportunity to contribute to a heart-warming cause, I was planning.

Recognizing the importance of a technology gift for an elderly pensioner, Janie set out to ensure that the technology needed would be seamlessly integrated into his daily life.

The process involved not only configuring a WiFi dongle but also customizing the Alex Echo Dot screen (the Christmas gift) to suit the specific needs and preferences of the recipient, 85-year-old Ray. Janie's expertise allowed her to address any technical challenges that arose, ensuring that Ray could use the device with ease and confidence.

What makes Janie Brister's efforts truly commendable is the personal touch she adds to her role. Beyond the technical aspects, she understands the significance of fostering a sense of connection, especially for Ray, who lives in solitude. Through her guidance, Ray not only receives his first ever technological Christmas gift but also gains a pathway to social interaction and companionship. This serves as, a testament to the transformative power of technology in enhancing the lives of the elderly.

As Norfolk County Council continues to invest in community programmes that promote inclusivity and technological literacy; Janie Brister stands as an inspiring example of how one person's dedication can make a significant impact on the well-being of others.

In the spirit of the season, her efforts exemplify the true meaning of giving, not just in material gifts, but in the gift of connection and compassion.

Round the bend with Dean Baker

Goodbye...

I've tried many times to write this article over the course of today. I've watched a beautiful sunset on the Hunstanton webcam, looked up old friends on the socials and I still haven't written anything ...

The best way to say something is to just say it - so here goes - I'm writing to say that from January I won't be working in Hunstanton or the surrounding villages any more. I'm officially retired now and the dark evenings have nudged me to take stock.

I do and will always think of the town with great affection.

Mrs B asked me if there is one thing that's the most important thing to remember from nearly 9 years of plumbing articles. That's easy - make sure your boiler is serviced every 12 months and install a carbon monoxide detector.

That's it - wishing you all a Safe and Happy New Year. I will miss you all,

Dean Baker - 07973 131 906.

plombierdean@yahoo.com

New Hunstanton Women's Institute

At our November meeting everyone was busy making tree decorations which were used to decorate our Christmas tree at the Christmas tree Festival at the Town Hall.

The ladies enjoyed a superb Christmas lunch at the Lavender Lounge. At the December meeting, after being let down by our entertainment, we had a party atmosphere with Christmas Fayre. This month we have the local police advising us on scamming. All enquiries 01485 572027.

Live life to the fullest with help from the Tulip Centre

Ria Carter-Mayers

The Norfolk Hospice Tapping House, situated just outside King's Lynn, is known for providing compassionate and innovative end of life care, but is perhaps less known for the support on offer to people much earlier in their health journey, where the focus is very much on rehabilitation and living well.

Many people think of hospice care as being for people in the last days and weeks of life, but it can have an important role to play long before that: giving people who have been diagnosed with a life-limiting or long term condition an improved quality of life.

The Tulip Centre at the Hospice provides rehabilitative therapies for those with a life limiting illness. The therapy team use a range of services designed to improve both physical and mental wellbeing, empower people to manage difficult symptoms, identify goals they would like to achieve and regain some control over their life and situation. To make this service as accessible as possible patients can refer themselves, the Hospice doesn't need a health professional to make the referral, rather people can pick up the phone and contact the Hospice directly.



Following a package of support people will usually be discharged (encouraged to go and live life to the fullest) before re-accessing



support when their condition changes. It is therefore also important to have the opportunity to think ahead to the support that might be needed in the future and express what matters most.

Tony, one of the 91 patients currently benefitting from therapy at the Hospice, had recently been diagnosed with heart failure and over a short space of time had become very restricted in his lifestyle, struggling to do the things he wanted to do due to feeling breathless and anxious so much of the time. He had also spent some time in hospital which he didn't want to repeat if at all avoidable. He was referred to the Tulip Centre for support in managing his breathlessness and the team were also able to identify several other areas where he was struggling, and worked with

him to set some achievable goals. He wanted to be less reliant on his wife and regain some of his independence outside of his home. This involved teaching him some ways to manage his breathlessness, building his physical stamina through an exercise programme, and getting involved in our men's woodwork and fishing groups. Tony has since been discharged from the service and is now a member of the local fishing club having achieved his goals and regained his independence.

The Tulip Centre at the Hospice aims to provide support for people as early as possible, and so we encourage you to consider who in your own family and friendship circles may benefit, and invite you to call the therapy team on 01485 601700 to find out more.

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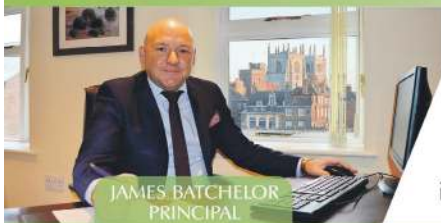
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It's Ho Ho Ho'ver!!

That's it. Another Christmas done and dusted. Now to think about those New Year resolutions!!

What are you going to do?
Give up smoking?
Cut back on the drinking?
Start the diet – again!!
Or just carry on as normal?

That's what we're doing. The Farm Shop will still be open as normal (from 9am–5pm, except on Sundays when we open at 10).

So why not pop in and see us – we might even have a few items on sale.

Talking of sales, the Gift Shop will have their January sale on, and they will be open from 10am to 4pm throughout January. We can't help you with your resolutions, but we might be able to save you some money!!

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Done Different: a double album from Peacock's Tale

Sedgeford folk/storytelling duo Gareth and Melanie Calway have made a double album of songs in praise of Norfolk. Called "Done Different" it sets to music thirty folk ballads (poems which tell a story) originally published in Gareth's volume "Doin Different" (Poppyland, 2015, originally sub-titled 'Boudicca's Country') Both titles are a play on the old Norfolk motto "Do Different" adopted by the University of East Anglia where the duo met in 1975.

Sedgeford-based since moving there to start a family and pursue careers in teaching and early years in 1986, the pair have soaked up the storied history, under-sung glories, heroes and heroines of "Boudicca's country" (Norfolk, Suffolk and parts of Cambridgeshire - plus some forays into the East of England she led in revolt in AD60) set to vibrant tunes and dramatized in stirring performances described by Blues and Roots folk broadcaster Liz Franklin as 'entertaining and refreshing' and by the arts and music magazine Fatea as 'brilliantly conceived' and 'compelling'.

"Done Different 1" begins on "Fiddler's Hill" (near Binham) a haunted Bronze Age barrow made famous by the local legend of a fiddle player who took up the challenge to play underground from the barrow to Walsingham and never returned then moves on to "Extinction Rebellion" (The Ballad of Boudicca). By the end we have heard stirring tales St Edmund (Suffolk/Hunstanton), Hereward (Lincolnshire), a real life Robin Hood (East of England), Binham Priory, Bad King John (The Wash); Mother Julian of Norwich; William Sawtre (Lynn) Margery Kempe (Lynn); Edmund Wood (Norwich and



Photo credit: Bhas Allan

Aylsham), Anne Boleyn, Blickling Hall, Kett's Rebellion (Wymondham and Kett's Hill) and The English Civil War.

Part 2 starts with a triptych about the life and times of Sir Robert Walpole (Houghton), the ghost of his sister the Brown Lady and her husband 'Turnip' Townshend (Raynham); then takes in The Cod Fishers (Lynn, Wells, Yarmouth); Tom Paine (Thetford); Horatio Nelson (Burnham Thorpe); Fye Bridge House (Norwich); the ghost of Susan Nobes



(Sedgeford); Elizabeth Fry (Earlham); Edith Cavell (Swardeston); The Vicar of Stiffkey; UEA, Yarmouth, Vicky Briton (a modern Boudicca) and A Lynn Carol.

<https://www.fatea-records.co.uk/magazine/> a magazine of features, news, reviews, live events, interviews and gossip from in and around the acoustic scene have been so impressed by the duo's music that they're including a track from the album on their Spring 2024 download showcase www.fatea-showcase-sessions.co.uk - a good place to be as recent compilations had over 7400 downloads. Their radio station has already played "Extinction Rebellion" on their internet radio outlet <https://www.facebook.com/AlongTheTracksUK>

and whatever track is chosen from the album for the showcase, it will certainly be a celebration of 'Boudicca's Country'.

Find the new album online here- (<https://peacocks-tale.bandcamp.com/album/done-different-2>) [https://peacocks-](https://peacocks-tale.bandcamp.com/album/done-different-2)

Amateur chefs cut the mustard in cookery contest

Budding Jamie Olivers and Nigella Lawsons showcased their culinary talents in the first round of the 2023/24 Rotary Young Chef Competition.

The aspiring cooks at Smithdon High School in Hunstanton took on the challenge of creating a healthy meal for two within a £6 budget – and all against the clock.

Eight Year 10 students, aged 14 to 15, took part in the contest, which was held at the school and was judged by King's Lynn Rotarian John Thorpe and Liam Nicol, who is Head Chef at Caley Hall in Old Hunstanton.

"The students had a time limit of an hour and a half to create the two dishes and to present them to the judges," said Rebecca Dibble, the Food and Nutrition Teacher who organised the in-house competition at Smithdon, which is part of the West Norfolk Academies Trust.

"The judges looked at the students' costing lists and time plans to ensure they were accurate, and then gave overall scores based on this, taste, and presentation."

Two students were then chosen to go through to the next stage of the competition, the Local Heats, which will take place on 8 January at fellow WNAT high school, Springwood, in King's Lynn.

The pair currying the judges' favour with their culinary creations were Zaniah Fox and Isabel King, both aged 14.

Zaniah's winning meal was peri peri chicken with spicy rice, while Isabel's high-scoring dishes were leek and bacon soup with home-made focaccia bread.

The competition is open to amateur chefs aged between 12 and 16 and aims to help them learn to cook healthy meals, develop food presentation skills, consider food hygiene, develop organisational and



planning skills, and develop the ability to cope under pressure.

The Local Heats will be followed by Regional Finals and Cluster Finals, before the National Final takes place next year at St Benedict's School in Alcester on Saturday 20 April.

It was the third time that Smithdon had participated in the Rotary Young Chef competition, with previous entrants from the school making it through to the District Final.

"It gives our students an opportunity to be involved in activities outside of school and to meet inspirational people," added Mrs Dibble. "It builds their confidence and gives them a sense of pride."

Photo: Ian Burt

It's winter sale time!

With varying degrees of discount across the labels Allez Chic's winter sale begins on 9th January.

Cheryl is clearing stock to make way for the new spring ranges that will be landing in store soon, so this is an opportunity to find something cosy for the late winter season before turning to the fabulous new spring designs.

Sale shopping is so much more than what you buy, it's a treasure hunt to discover something that's perfect for your shape and colouring that will make you feel great – and at a discounted price.

You are bound to enjoy shopping at the end of season sale, the personal, caring service that Cheryl Daubney and her team provide ensures a lovely shopping experience. They will help you choose and sometimes suggest something for you to try that you might have otherwise overlooked, rather like a personal shopper. Their fashion know-how and ability to put an outfit together is second to none.

What are you waiting for ladies?

Snettisham Gardening Club

Thank you all our members who contribute prizes, those that helped on that cold night of the Christmas Fair on Saturday 2nd December and the people who bought tickets - we raised £200.00 to send to East Anglia Children's Hospice.

Our AGM will be on Wednesday 31st January when our 2024 programmes will be available for members joining. We start at 7.30pm and once the business is complete there will be a Quiz and refreshments available. You will be most welcome to come and see what we have planned for 2024. In the meantime enjoy the Festive Season and our best wishes for a Happy and hopefully more peaceful New Year. Any further information can be obtained from Gail on 01485 541279 or Addie on 01485 544754.

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Smithdon High celebrates Good Ofsted

Smithdon High School is celebrating after Ofsted inspectors awarded a 'Good' status across the board following a recent inspection.

The school was praised for its 'well-crafted,' ambitious programmes of study and the inspector said pupils: "Value the opportunities to nurture existing talents and develop new ones. This goes beyond the traditional offer of sport."



Headteacher Amanda Gibbins with head students Izzy and Isaac

Smithdon, a member of the West Norfolk Academies Trust, was previously graded as 'requires improvement' and has 581 students aged from 11 to 16. Headteacher Amanda Gibbins took up her role in September last year, having been deputy headteacher previously.

"This report is testament to the whole Smithdon community and the hard work of everyone involved. We have a fantastic, talented staff supporting our students on their educational journey," she said.

"We are passionate that all children are given the same opportunities to succeed, whatever their background and skills. Our students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities achieve in line with national figures, and we have a school community extending well beyond our fences. Together we are working to continue improvements at Smithdon, and are looking forward to celebrating every future success."

The report says pupils are benefiting from the improvements made since the school's previous inspection, and they know teachers have high aspirations for them, and respond to those well.

Personal social and health education (PHSE) was highlighted for supporting pupils to develop an increasing understanding of sensitive topics.

"They are well prepared to become positive citizens in modern Britain. Pupils learn the importance of difference, tolerance and

respect. They use this knowledge to embrace and celebrate diversity," the report says.

"Most pupils work hard in lessons and produce high quality work. Over time, pupils learn well. Their achievements have increased steadily in recent years."

Mrs Gibbins added that at 67 per cent, achieving grade 4 or higher in GCSE maths and English, was in line with national figures while maths results were especially successful with progress +0.39, ahead of the benchmark.

"Progress figures in all areas have improved since 2019 and, all bar one area, are above Norfolk and national progress data. Our Progress 8 score is above both the county and national average and shows pupil achievement from their last year of primary school to when they take GCSEs," she added.

The Ofsted report says the school has worked hard to improve behaviour of pupils, and there are high expectations which pupils understand. Most adults consistently apply the expected routines and develop positive relationships.

But there are some pupils who, at times, do not feel valued for their contributions and don't make the effort to behave positively, noted the inspector.

Smithdon's staff members 'are proud to work at the school' and feel both included and valued.



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"Tomorrow is the first blank page of a 365 page book. Write a good one" Brad Paisley

January Joy: Elevating your spirits through gardening in the UK

As winter wraps its chilly embrace around the UK, there's no need to succumb to the January blues. Instead, why not turn to the garden as a source of solace and joy? Gardening in January may seem unconventional, but it can be a surprisingly uplifting and rewarding experience. In this article, we'll explore the therapeutic and mood-boosting benefits of immersing yourself in the garden during the winter month of January.

1. Embrace the Winter Wonderland: Step outside and marvel at the beauty of your garden transformed by a delicate dusting of frost or a light blanket of snow. The serene, crisp air and the glistening landscape can be a visual feast that lifts your spirits and provides a unique backdrop for your gardening activities.

2. Mindful Moments in Nature: Use your time in the garden as an opportunity for mindfulness. Focus on the sounds of birds singing, the crunch of frost beneath your boots, and the fresh, invigorating air. Engaging your senses in this way can help alleviate stress and bring a sense of calm.

3. Winter Planting for Spring Cheer: Believe it or not, January is a great time to plant certain varieties that will bring a burst of color to your garden come spring. Consider planting winter-flowering pansies,

cyclamen, or snowdrops. Witnessing these blooms emerge during the colder months can be a delightful and mood-lifting experience.

4. Create a Winter Wildlife Haven: Turn your garden into a haven for wildlife. Hang bird feeders filled with seeds and nuts, set up a shallow dish of water for birds to drink, and leave a patch of your garden untamed to provide shelter for insects and small mammals. The presence of wildlife can bring a sense of vitality and connection to the natural world.

5. Garden Planning and Dreaming: While your plants rest, let your imagination run wild. Use this time to plan and dream about the garden you want to cultivate in the coming months. Flip through seed catalogues, sketch out new flower beds, and envision the vibrant tapestry of colours that will soon adorn your outdoor space.

6. DIY Garden Decor: Engage in creative projects to add a personal touch to your garden. Consider crafting birdhouses, painting plant pots, or creating handmade garden markers. The act of expressing yourself through art and craft in the garden can be a fulfilling and mood-elevating endeavour.

Don't let the winter blues dictate your mood. Embrace the unique opportunities that January presents for gardening in the UK. Whether it's planting winter blooms, creating a haven for wildlife, or simply enjoying the tranquility of your winter garden, you'll find that immersing yourself in outdoor activities can be a powerful antidote to the January doldrums. So, bundle up, grab your gardening tools, and let the uplifting magic of the winter garden work wonders on your spirits.

Wishing you a new year full of garden inspiration and lots more time outdoors.

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Homes for locals

A borough council development of homes in Hunstanton is about to go on the market – with preference to buy given to local people.

The apartments of Styleman Court, off Southend Road, will provide 32 much-needed homes in the town.

Cabinet member for development and regeneration, Cllr Jim Moriarty, said: "It's great to see this development coming towards completion and reach the point where people – and it's important to note we mean local people – can start signing up for these homes.

"This is a high-quality development that will help us to meet the needs of people in Hunstanton."

The £6.8m scheme is the result of a partnership between the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk and development firm Lovell. Funding includes a £520,000 Homes England grant under its Accelerated Construction Programme, which helps authorities to deliver new homes more quickly.

The design of the scheme is inspired by Hunstanton's Victorian heritage. It uses traditional materials and design details to complement the architectural styles of the town, with modern elements incorporated to give it a contemporary feel.

It incorporates 12 1-bed, 18 2-bed and 2 3-bed apartments, based around a central courtyard. Parking and undercroft parking will have EV charging infrastructure built in and secure cycle storage will also be included. 6 of the homes will be classed as affordable, offering a mix of affordable rent and shared ownership tenures.

The council also decided to incorporate bee and sparrow bricks into the development: these are not required under the planning consent but are an optional extra that the council has chosen to undertake as part of its biodiversity commitments.

When sold the flats will have covenants on them requiring owners to use the property as their main home, so they are not used as holiday homes or lets, until all local demand has been satisfied.

The council has selected William H Brown as the selling agent for the scheme. The properties will go live for sale on Boxing Day.

Wendy Warner's plant of the month

Winter Flowering Climbers

In the depths of winter our gardens can look rather dull and sad, so a great way to introduce some colour, especially to the edges of the garden, is with winter flowering climbers and shrubs. When considering climbers, you would automatically think of all the summer flowering clematis, honeysuckle, jasmine and roses but there are also some winter gems that could brighten up your walls and fences. Don't forget there are evergreen climbers that will give foliage colour all winter long too. Varieties of ivies, evergreen honeysuckle and clematis and trachelospermum will all give leaf coverage during the winter and emerge with their flower in the spring and summer.

One of the easiest and most hardy winter flowering climbers is Clematis cirrhosa with varieties including "Wisley Cream" with greenish flowers maturing to creamy white from November to March, "Jingle Bells" also with larger creamy white flowers from December through to March and the vigorous "Freckles" with an abundance of cream flowers heavily speckled inside with rusty maroon from autumn to spring. I have this flowering on an arch in my garden at the moment and it is absolutely dripping with nodding bell-like flowers and hasn't been affected at all by the frosts we have had already. Although classified as evergreen, the foliage of these clematis looks at its best in autumn through to spring and can go brown in hot summers when they have a natural dormant period. Cirrhosa varieties grow best in moist but well-drained soil in a sheltered position in full sun. As they dislike winter wet, plant them in the rain shadow of a wall or where another shrub will give the roots protection. After initial training, they will twine themselves onto their support.

The shrubby honeysuckle Lonicera x purpusii "Winter Beauty" has sweetly fragrant, creamy white flowers on bare stems from November to February and although self-supporting, it can be trained to grow upright on a fence or wall. Jasminum nudiflorum, the winter-flowering jasmine, is particularly tough and dependable and the bright yellow flowers emerge on long, arching, bare stems in winter and spring before the leaves appear.



Garra elliptica "James Roof" is another choice for a wall or fence in a shady position with its leathery dark green foliage, it is festooned with long greyish catkins in midwinter. The shrub Mahonia x media "Winter Sun" will grow in the open garden, but benefits from being planted near to a house wall where its rich fragrance will appear more intense. The bold, prickly, evergreen leaves make a fine background for the clusters of upright yellow flower spikes.

All these winter flowers are a great source of pollen and nectar for any bees that emerge from hibernation on a warmer, sunny, winter's day.

Most of the climbers also lend themselves to being grown on an arch or obelisk that is nearer the house so you can see them from inside when you don't want to brave going outdoors in the cold.



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Nature notes with Carrie Carey

Harriers in the mist

The view from my window is moody. A blanket of grey cloud moves silently and stealthily across the sky, stealing whatever daylight remains. Glimmers of pearlescent light rebel against the invading darkness, but their mutiny is short lived. Winter wins again.

As the sun turns its back on the day, I feel the chilly nip of night air on my fingers and toes. But then the radiators click on, unleashing a wave of warmth into the room and the threat of cold remains at bay. Unfortunately, nature is not so lucky and wildlife has to tough it out whatever winter sends its way. Out on the reserve, the slowly ebbing light signals that it's time for most birds and other wildlife to return home. In the long, cold winter nights, many birds seek safety and warmth in communal roosts and you may be lucky enough to spot flocks of Starlings gathering at dusk. It's not uncommon to see hundreds of these birds performing awe-inspiring acrobatics in mid-air before gradually descending one by one to their resting place for the night.



Highlighted by the pinkish strains of a winter sky, a lone predator rises from its night-time roost, and stretching out broad, black-tipped wings effortlessly takes to the air. The powerful wings beat rhythmically as they carry the bird over frosted reedbeds and marsh, then just as effortlessly he glides over his hunting territory below. It's morning and this raptor is hungry.

Raptors' wings have a wide range of motion that can cope with various wind conditions, long primary feathers aid steering and braking so that the birds can respond quickly to prey. Marsh Harriers have a specific strategy while on the hunt, flying low and slow they 'quarter' the reedbeds holding their wings in a V-shaped pattern. Owl-like facial discs aid the pursuit by allowing them to detect even the slightest movement below before diving down to catch their quarry. These winged wonders will give any Cirque du Soleil performer a run for their money!

Marsh Harriers need to practice their hunting skills consistently so parent birds take their young on forays from an early age. In early summer, keep an eye out for juvenile birds taking flight and catching food in mid-air from their parents. It's a rare and



fascinating sight. On the hunt, these birds are formidable predators often swooping low over terrain in search of prey. A sudden explosion of waders from the Freshmarsh signals the appearance of a large female dropping down through the mist. Carving a path through the air-borne mob her outstretched talons slice through the flurry of wings. But her eye is on a different prize, her quarry lies far below on the sodden marsh. The kazoo-like alarm calls soon quieten and the waders settle back down to feed.

Harriers and other birds of prey play a vital role in maintaining a healthy and balanced ecosystem. By hunting smaller animals such as rodents, reptiles, and even other birds, they regulate population sizes and maintain balance within their environment. This results in fewer turf wars over resources and species which might damage our crops are kept firmly in their place. Who would have thought that these aerial killers could in fact be Eco Warriors? Sadly, the favour is not always reciprocated and these majestic birds, struggling in the face of urbanisation and agriculture, are being forced away from nesting sites and hunting playgrounds.

Undoubtedly one of Titchwell's stars with their striking plumage and aerial displays, Marsh Harriers are one of the success stories of modern-day conservation. Although abundant throughout East Anglia in the 19th Century, they were driven almost to extinction through habitat loss and persecution. The conservation work at RSPB Titchwell Marsh has contributed to the recovery of these stately raptors with resident numbers of breeding pairs stable and growing. Early morning visits to the reserve are often rewarded with views of Marsh Harriers sweeping presidentially overhead. When observed from the warden's hide, this presents a rare and unique opportunity to see the birds up close. Here,

visitors can catch sight of flashes of silver and russet red feathers as the Harriers swoop low over the reedbeds in the mellow morning mist.



All birds of prey in the UK are protected by law. The RSPB's Birdcrime report 2022 details the illegal shooting, trapping and poisoning of protected species including Buzzards, Red Kites, Hen Harriers and White-tailed Eagles. Whilst there are few scenes more thrilling than watching a bird of prey soaring into the heavens, swooping low over fields or hovering intently over hedgerows; because of illegal persecution, these encounters will become a rarity. With some species barely hanging on as breeding birds, the RSPB continues to advocate for improved legislation where current laws fail to provide the protection they need.

The threats to our natural world are huge but together we can save, protect and fight for nature. Join our crew at Titchwell Marsh reserve and be a part of something bigger. Be a part of the RSPB.

For information on volunteering opportunities at Titchwell Marsh please email titchwell@rspb.org.uk or call us on 01485 210779

To find out more about our Harrier events and how you can spend a morning in the warden's hide close to all the action, please speak to Carrie on 01485 210779

Picture yourself differently?

Imagine being a nature guardian, caring for our wild spaces, looking after visitors or baking delicious scones.

Most of all, you'll be part of our team working for nature

Can you see it now?

Ask how you can support your local nature reserve: email titchwell@rspb.org.uk



The poster is a dark blue rectangle with the text 'Picture yourself differently?' in large white font at the top. Below it, in smaller white font, is 'Imagine being a nature guardian, caring for our wild spaces, looking after visitors or baking delicious scones.' Further down, 'Most of all, you'll be part of our team working for nature' is written, followed by 'Can you see it now?' in a larger, bold white font. At the bottom, it says 'Ask how you can support your local nature reserve: email titchwell@rspb.org.uk'. The RSPB logo is in the bottom left. Six polaroid-style photos are pinned to the poster: a woman in a library, a man in a field, a man with a camera, a woman in a costume, a woman baking, and a man working with wood. A 'Volunteer' badge with the RSPB logo is in the top right.

Night Shelter Campaign - A Light in the Dark Streets of Lynn

Cllr Alexandra Kemp, County Division: Clenchwarton and King's Lynn South

Landline: 01553 630329

Mobile: 07920 286636

St Nicholas Chapel was the sparkling setting to the Community Choir Winter Carol Service, in support of King's Lynn Night Shelter.

I have never seen St Nicholas' so packed. The Night Shelter put out a call for help and the public answered.

Night Shelter Director, Lucy McKitterick, spoke movingly about the Night Shelter, as a light in the dark streets of Lynn, taking in people who the state (aka the Borough Council) judges not to be in 'priority need', people with no recourse to public funds, or people who in the eyes of the august officials in King's Court, have, in adverse circles instances, blotted their 'copybook' and sit outside the remit of state support.

The illuminated church and powerful singing rolled back the years for me, to 'Joshua and the Battle of Jericho', which I sang in St Nicholas', aged 12, with classmates from the former Girls' High School in King Street.

At a key moment, all the young people formed a circle round the nave, and we raised a shout so, in everyone's artistic imagination, 'the walls came tumbling down'.

I hope that the walls between Local Government and the Night Shelter will now come tumbling down too. The Night Shelter nearly closed in October, because the lack of Government and Borough help.

Lynn should be really proud we have a Night Shelter, and celebrate the dedication of ours.

Pictured right: Director of the Night Shelter Lucy McKitterick speaks at the Community Choir Winter Concert at St Nicholas on 9 December



Athena Care Homes sponsorship secures second season of Girls' Schools Football League in King's Lynn

Athena Care Homes are delighted to continue their sponsorship of a newly established girls' football league for a second season. The care home operator, who run Amberley Hall and Goodwins Hall in Lynn, have partnered with Alive King's Lynn Community Football in a bid to encourage more girls to play the sport.

This season, up to eight local schools will be invited to join the 7-a-side league with fixtures taking place at Lynnsport's 3G pitches to allow year-round play.

Schools will have the opportunity to bring squads of up to 10 girls from Years 5 and 6 to compete in monthly fixtures, as well as the new 'Athena Care Homes Community Cup' event at the end of the season.

The sponsorship means that the league is free to enter and it is hoped it will inspire a new generation of young female players locally, giving them a taste of the thrill that accompanies competitive sport.

The first session this season was attended by St Martha's, South Wootton Junior, and North Wootton, with Gaywood already booked to attend shortly.

James Eley, Marketing Manager at Athena Care Homes, said: "Football and inclusivity are both important to our residents. When we had the opportunity to renew our support for the girls' league for a second season, we jumped at the chance. We want our homes to be a central part of the community and leave a lasting impact, and this is just one of the ways which we're achieving that. We know many of the residents at Amberley Hall and Goodwins Hall are huge football fans and enjoyed welcoming the girls to our homes and seeing the league grow and progress."



Tommy Goode, Head of Performance and Development at Alive West Norfolk, said: "We are delighted to be working with Athena Care Homes on the girls' school football leagues initiative for the second season. Athena's support will certainly break down barriers making football accessible to a number of girls in West Norfolk."

"Girls' football really took off last season at Alive KLCF and we are grateful for the ongoing support from Athena. We hope the residents at Athena Care Homes and the West Norfolk community enjoy following the league's progress."

A New Year message from Jo Rust

As I'm writing this, we're heading towards Christmas when many of us will be looking forward to spending time with family and friends, hopefully enjoying some down time and the ability to relax a little.

But for many, the Christmas season won't be bringing with it much good cheer or pleasure. Too many will be worrying about the bills, the cost of heating their homes, and whether they'll be able to afford any treats for the family. The cost of living crisis is still very much present in the lives of so many families and individuals.

We also have too many people facing a housing crisis due to fewer private rented properties and not enough social housing available combined with sky high rental costs - being 9.5% higher than in December 2022. The problem of finding decent rental properties has been blamed on demand greatly outstripping supply and has been exacerbated by the cost-of-borrowing squeeze. These worries and social isolation are contributing to a worsening crisis with mental health, with more people than ever feeling mentally ill and unable to cope.

Men's mental health is increasingly low, with one in eight men in England facing common mental health problems such as anxiety, stress or depression caused by work related or financial pressure or health concerns. Men are three times more likely to turn to drugs or alcohol to cope with their feelings rather than talk about them.

Christmas time, when the popular perception is one of loving perfection, can exacerbate these problems. It's important that we all try to shed off this pressure to attain the perfect image which is put out on TV or in magazines. While it does matter if you're so strapped for cash that you can't afford the basics to live, there shouldn't be a pressure to spend hundreds of pounds on unnecessary presents. While it does matter if you're feeling depressed and anxious, there shouldn't be a pressure to achieve a "perfect" life.

Our lives are made up of so many minor actions, reactions and interactions, and each one can make our day seem better or worse. A smile can make a person's day, acknowledging people's feelings shows care and concern. Both of them are free to give, but if you're feeling stressed and worried yourself, they're sometimes too much to send out.

There are groups and organisations out there that can provide some relief. Sadly the local food banks are still much needed, but they are there. We also have social supermarkets which can help a cash strapped family or individual feed themselves some tasty food. There are organisations which provide support for men in particular such as The Men's Shed which sets out to create a friendly and social atmosphere for men who are able to manage their mental health and The 8:56 Foundation which can provide time to talk as well as other supportive measures.

With respect to housing problems, if you're



at risk of losing your home due to rent arrears, get in touch with the council straight away. They'll work to try to help you stay in your property and they can refer to a charity for financial support.

If you're in a fortunate situation yourself, please take a moment to understand why someone else might not have a smile on their face, so give them one. And if you're in a position to volunteer and give something back, I can speak from experience and say how uplifting that is. So, Merry Christmas and Happy New year. I hope 2024 brings joy, happiness and relief from problems for everyone.

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OASIS - HUNSTANTON

New Defibrillator at Sailing Club

Adrian Tebbutt

Norfolk Community Foundation has awarded £1000 to Snettisham Beach Sailing Club towards the installation of a publicly available defibrillator.

Snettisham Beach Sailing Club has installed a public access defibrillator at its clubhouse at the Beach, Snettisham. The defibrillator was installed with grant support from the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk Defibrillator Scheme which is administered by Norfolk Community Foundation, and with support from the Huns family in memory of George M. Fox, Commodore 1961 - 1963.

Current Commodore Adrian Tebbutt said: "Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is one of the leading causes of death, with up to 200 people a day suffering a cardiac arrest in the UK and 270 children dying annually as a result. Having access to a defibrillator drastically increases the chance of surviving a cardiac arrest. Research shows that when a defibrillator is accessed within 3-5 minutes of a cardiac event, this can increase the chance of survival to hospital discharge from 9% to 50%. It is particularly important that they are available close to facilities that children, young people, and the wider community use regularly.

At Snettisham Beach we are adjacent to the coastal path and the RSPB reserve as well as hosting 100 or more club users and members each week between March and October. We are a Community Aided Sports Club and felt that it was important that we made our defibrillator available to all who might need it. We hope we never have to use it, but if we can help save 1 of the 100,000 SCA deaths then it will have been worthwhile."

Catrin Hamer, Senior Programmes Advisor at Norfolk Community Foundation, said: "We are delighted to support the installation of this defibrillator at Snettisham Beach Sailing Club, through a scheme that seeks to make this life-saving equipment available at the heart of more



Vice Commodore Guy Playford, Councillor Chris Morley (Cabinet member for Finance) Commodore Adrian Tebbutt, at the club for the official installation of the defibrillator on 12th December 2023

communities in West Norfolk."

The club has organised training for all instructors who work at the club as well as for club volunteers and local residents.

The location is: Snettisham Beach Sailing Club 61-62 The Beach, Snettisham, PE31 7RB

What Three Words : vent.entire.snuggled

If you'd like to find out more information about Snettisham Beach Sailing Club please contact Adrian commodore.sbcs@gmail.com or visit our website <https://www.snetbeach.co.uk/>

For further information on applying for funding go to Norfolk Community Foundation's website www.norfolkfoundation.com.

News From The Woottons

Richard Coates

The Happiest Place to Live

Yes! It's The Woottons! Rightmove.com have surveyed 26,000 people across Britain and found that Richmond upon Thames in Greater London, where the average property asking price is £952,305, is the happiest place to live. I did a survey of rather fewer in number (O.K. just 1) and found that The Woottons is the happiest place to live where the average property asking price is much lower. I'm sure if I lived in Richmond, at those property prices, I'd feel pretty happy about Richmond!

New Gas Main

The work on the new gas main in The Woottons is due to have completely finished before Christmas and the crew is scheduled to move on to Heacham - with our love - and introduce Heacham drivers to the festive delights of red and green lights as they twinkle on and off as they have been doing for Wootton drivers for many weeks now, except when the lights haven't been in working order.

Knights Hill Development

The builders go from one extreme to another. From previously keeping the parish councils in the dark, they are now sending all details to them. I received a copy email that was so heavy in detail that my council supplied iPad couldn't open the email! A 30 page text only email was OK though. It's of the builder's first draft Construction and Operational Management Plan for the temporary construction road that they need to build so

that it can create a site compound. It will use that to build the roundabout. Once the roundabout's operational, the temporary access will be closed off and the roundabout will be used for access for all purposes.

At the earlier planning committee meeting, although I'm not a planning committee member, I had attended and asked that the main spine road should end in a turning circle rather than a turning head. Many people use the normal turning head as a convenient place to park vehicles but that wouldn't happen with a turning circle. It also means vehicles can turn round without reversing so is much safer, particularly where children are likely to be playing. Many councillors spoke in support and I'm pleased to report that the council has made it a specific planning condition. With an increasing number of delivery vehicles on our roads and a hoped for bus service on this estate, this turning circle may already have saved a life!

Building Without Planning Permission

In my November column I told you about some building work that had been started without planning permission that some of my constituents had told me about in North Wootton. After my enquiry of the planning department and a visit from an enforcement officer, a planning application was submitted but it was unimpressive and there were many objections. I tried to be as helpful as I could with mine but the applicant may have been restricted by her client. She has

now submitted new details and has taken onboard some of my comments but it is doubtful if enough has been done to gain planning permission. Meanwhile, building work continues but at the owner's risk. If there's no planning permission, they'll have to pull down what they've built so, one way or another, they'll be more news on this one!

Election in Castle Rising

The small parish of Castle Rising is included in The Woottons ward and has its own parish council for the 167 voters in the same way as the 1,884 voters of North Wootton and the 3,431 voters in South Wootton. But whereas Wootton voters didn't see the need to have a parish council election last May, in Castle Rising 11 candidates fought for just 7 seats. It seems it didn't stop there and recently two of the successful, longstanding, councillors decided things in parish council meetings had changed and they no longer wanted to be part of the council and resigned. You'd think it should be straightforward after that but, not so. Ten local voters petitioned for a new election to be held for one of the seats, but not for the other! They'll have to have a full blown election for that one seat but the parish council can just co-opt someone to fill the other seat! Normally, an election would be held at the same time as a Borough Council election and so wouldn't cost too much extra but holding a by-election on its own means Castle Rising will pay the whole £2,000 - £2,500 cost. That's £12 - £15 for each voter or £200 - £250 per house if it's



shared between 100 houses! Castle Rising will certainly know the value of democracy compared with the parish council co-opting someone to fill the other vacancy for nothing. I wonder if those 10 local voters might have second thoughts when faced with these costs? Perhaps everyone might get together in the village meeting room one day and agree a cheaper way forward.

Councillor Surgery

Last month I told you about my planned Councillor Surgery where I offered the opportunity for anyone with a problem with the Borough Council that was easier to discuss face to face rather than by other means. Popular many years ago, I was told there was no call for them in today's world. Still I wanted to give Wootton residents this opportunity. Many local shops and businesses helped by putting up posters advertising the Councillor Surgery as did the parish councils on the official parish council notice boards. The result was that the one hour that I'd allocated for anyone to walk in with no appointment, over-ran and I was kept busy beyond my allotted time, talking about the gas main, peacocks, footpaths, rights of way, bus stop and improvements to the football pavilion on Wootton park. Not really Borough Council matters but I reckon I can help with many of these things by making authoritative enquiries as a Borough Councillor on behalf of a local resident. Overall, I judged it successful enough to hold another Councillor Surgery early in the new year. In the meantime, any Wootton resident with a Borough Council problem can contact me by email: cllr.richard.coates@west-norfolk.gov.uk.

P.H.

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Letters to the Editor

QEH

The article by Jo Rust in November's Town and Around filled me with little optimism as to whether a new hospital will ever be built. Why there was the need to spend one million pounds on a PR firm I do not know, the company must have rubbed their hands when they were appointed. Did the exercise achieve anything? I doubt it. A new hospital is desperately needed, the current one supported by props to stop ceilings falling in is representative of a third world country. Time and time again a decision was going to be made, constantly put further and further back before it was finally announced.

With the likelihood of a change of Government next year will the scenario be any different? We can only wait and see. But with an aging population needing more and more care, the new build cannot be put off any longer.

Geoff Harris, Holme next the Sea

Government spending

I am sickened how our Government can find substantial amounts of money to give to foreign countries but they will not help our coastal communities such as Hemsby, with the attitude that you cannot beat nature, well if that was the case the Dutch would be walking around up to their waist in water.

As to the lack of progress on the Hospital site, I have spoken to some builders about the costs etc, approx. £850 million which we all know will double before it's finished. I have no problem with building a multi storey car park which should only be used for the people who work at the Hospital.

But the Hospital could be completely rebuilt a section at a time but three storeys high all fitted out, then patients could be moved back into the ground and first floors, then another section could be done with the corridors being completed as work progresses. Also, this could be undertaken by smaller builders, overseen by a Project Manager with powers to make sure deliveries and budgets were kept to.

David Cook, Cookie sunnyhunny

Wash Barrier letters

I, like many other people who attended the Wash Barrier meeting, spend much of my spare time enjoying the wonders of the countryside.

I grew up in Hampshire, in the days when it was safe to allow children to roam. I spent most of my time fishing, bird watching, or playing sport.

My love for wildlife has stayed with me during my working life and now into retirement.

My wife and I are members of the NWT, the RSPB, EH and the NT. Recently we have enjoyed guided walks at Cley Marches and Holkham, as well as our annual trip to Blakeney Point to see the seals. We are committed to our wildlife.

I agree that we need to do all we can to preserve the wash, for its wildlife and fishing for as long as it is sensible to do so.

The questions are:

How long can we do this for? and

Will, by our determination to protect our wildlife, come what may, have a decremental and irreversible effect on it, and also have a devastating effect on the lives of people who depend on the fens for their livelihood?

'What lies in the future is a mystery to us all'. For a project, such as the Wash Barrier, to progress, we all need to be advised on what our scientists know about climate change and how it is predicted to affect sea levels

The EA have been handed the task by the government of informing the public about the short- term and long-term effects of climate change.

Their officers promise to report on the latest information available to them, because they are aware that their advice can affect the lives and livelihoods of people living in areas susceptible to flooding.

There are numerous questions that we need to know the answers to, before we can make a considered opinion whether to support or oppose

James Sutcliffe's proposition. ie:-

- Is losing the wash and areas of the fens a worst-case scenario prediction?

- Is it a possibility, or a probability? In other words, whether it might happen or will happen?

- If it will happen, what is the predicted timescale for this?

- If we adopt 'a wait and see', or 'it won't happen in my lifetime' attitude, will it be too late to get a sponsor before disaster strikes?

- Have the government got any plans to spend money in our area, to prevent the wash and the fens from being taken over by the sea?

Why weren't the EA represented at the meeting to answer these questions and many more, so that he/she could have put things into perspective, so that the scene could have been set for a more meaningful discussion? Until this happens, we cannot move forward.

I suggest that if another meeting is on the agenda, the council invites a representative from the EA to attend. Sam Kipling would be the ideal officer to invite, even if we have to pay him. He is well informed and tells it as it is.

Then, perhaps the 'we don't want it brigade' might become the 'we don't want it, but perhaps we need to have it brigade' for the future of the wash the fens, our children and our grandchildren.

Alan Dear

Appendix

A taste from Sam Kipling

- Defra's Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management investment plan for 2021 to 2027 states that "The programme will benefit both urban and rural communities and will help to better protect against a range of flood risk sources. Of the total number of projects in the programme, approximately 49% will better protect against river flooding, 34% from surface water flooding and 17% from coastal and tidal flooding". More details of the programme can be found here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/programme-of-flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-schemes>.

- Beyond the current capital programme there is uncertainty about the amount and distribution of future investment. Schemes are prioritised to deliver the greatest benefits for the investment of public funds.

The FCERM Strategy is clear that "For some coastal locations it will unfortunately no longer be technically, socially or economically feasible to continue to provide protection from flooding and coastal change.

I was pleased to see and read the report on the proposed Wash Tidal Barrier Scheme meeting held at the town hall on 3rd November. I think it is important that members of the public air their views on this proposed scheme, and would like to suggest that the editor encourages a dialogue within this publication. I often think that the man in the street unveils considerations which have been overlooked by the specialist in the expert's office.

Firstly, may we dispose of the falsehood that the proposal is a Causeway. It is a Barrage, as a Causeway becomes submerged intermittently.

Secondly, I think that the buffering effect which the Wash Basin has upon the tidal flow should be considered. The main flow in the North Sea is from North to South, and builds up to over 2 knots around our coast. The Wash basin absorbs and releases around 280,000,000 tonnes of water twice daily (62 thousand hectares, with mean tidal range of 4.5 metres: Centre Ports figures). If this tonnage of water bypasses the Wash, without entering and leaving the Wash, it will presumably add directly to the existing flow, and increase the scouring and erosion effect upon the Norfolk coastline. (Conversely, it will effect the S. Lincolnshire coast on the return flow).

Thirdly, as the proposed container handling port will be at the North end of the barrage, with the majority of the traffic flow taking place along the Lincolnshire road and railway systems, why the need for a fully connective barrage from Norfolk?

If the requirement is for a Deep Water Port it is my opinion that it should justify itself on it's own merits, without the elaborations and seductions which Centre Port is attaching to the proposal. Please may we have other and better informed contributions through these pages.

Neville Woolley, Sedgeford

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Big spuds heading to Downham Market and King's Lynn Food Banks



Perfectly good potatoes that are considered either too big or wrong shaped for supermarkets are heading to Downham Market and King's Lynn Food Banks.

A local farmer, D.S. Means Ltd, is supplying them to local food banks on the recommendation of Cllr Paul Kunes, Ward member for Terrington, who said: "These perfectly good potatoes are considered outside the size standards for the packing industry and considered the wrong shape for supermarkets. They're clearly edible and by donating them to local food banks mean they can help our residents who need them."

Helen Gilbert, Project Manager at King's Lynn Food Bank, said: "This donation helps the food bank at a time when we really need it and there's a lot you can do with potatoes when it comes to cooking. We're really busy at the foodbank at the moment and would appreciate donations of tinned meat, tinned vegetables, and soup in particular."

Christmas at the Guildhall

Over 400 people attended Christmas at the Guildhall on Sunday 10 December 2023. A free family friendly event that included activities and a special stage show featuring Father and Mother Christmas.



From midday until 4pm there were a range of free Victorian themed activities for families to enjoy including traditional Victorian games, the opportunity to get creative and make Christmas cards, crackers and decorations to take home, take part in a Christmas trail and make a peppermint cream, a Victorian sweet.

For information on future events visit guildhall-events.co.uk.

Make a Difference! Trustees needed for local charity

Kerry Allison, Charity Coordinator



Are you passionate about your local Armed Forces community? Are you looking for a meaningful volunteer role? If so, King's Lynn based charity, The Bridge for Heroes, is in search of new trustees to aid their continued efforts in supporting the Armed Forces community in West Norfolk and beyond.

The charity provides vital support to veterans, serving personnel and their dependants. Services include a full programme of activities as well as practical support in the form of one-to-one sessions, drop-ins, hosted clinics and referrals to specialist services. These services are coordinated and delivered by staff and volunteers based at the Bridge Centre (South Clough Lane) and the Bridge Activity Centre (Nelson House, North Lynn Industrial Estate).

In order to develop and grow this valuable service, The Bridge wants to recruit trustees who will bring vision, direction and expertise, as well as passion and commitment to the charity. If you are passionate about the local veteran and armed forces community, can offer direction and support in areas such as corporate fundraising, grant applications, or human resources, and can commit to six board meetings over the year, the charity would love to hear from you.

For more information and to arrange a visit, please email Steve Russell, Chair of Trustees at The Bridge for Heroes, at steve.russell@thebridgeforheroes.org, quoting 'BFH TA'.

Appeal from the Norfolk Coroner's Service for help tracing next-of-kin

The Norfolk Coroners Service is trying to trace the next of kin of Richard Moule, aged 74, who resided in King's Lynn and died on 5th December 2023. There were no suspicious circumstances that led to his death.

Despite carrying out extensive enquiries, no next-of-kin have been identified by the Coroner's Office.

Anyone with information relating to Mr Moule should contact the Coroner's Office in Norwich on 01603 774773.

Hunstanton u3a

Our first meeting in 2024 will be at the Community Centre, Avenue Road Hunstanton on Monday 15th January at the usual time of 2.00 pm when Georgette Vale will be reminding us of the great contributions made by Norfolk people Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe. You will be most welcome to join us.

For further information please see our website hunstantonu3a.org Telephone 07443763679

United for Warm Homes Campaign

Jenny Walker, Klimate Concern

On Friday 24 November, James Wild met members of two local environment groups to discuss the energy crisis and the United for Warm Homes Campaign.



The local Friends of the Earth and King's Lynn Klimate Concern have been promoting the United for Warm Homes Campaign since the spring. They have created a petition, written and distributed energy saving leaflets and given away warm blankets.

On Friday, the focus was whether or not the government is doing enough to alleviate the energy crisis. Not surprisingly, James Wild's view about the effectiveness of the government's response was more favourable than the views of members of the environment groups.

There was a difference in opinion about the need for urgent financial support for people dealing with sky-high energy bills. He drew everyone's attention to the County Council scheme funded by central government but working through the County Council called The Client Hardship Service which combines the Norfolk Assistance scheme and the Money Support Service. He was pleased with the package announced in the Autumn Statement and £900 that the government pays directly into bank accounts of those on income support.

The environment groups agree that the package announced in the Autumn Statement is welcome but suggest that it doesn't go far enough to protect those most at risk. 40% of people living in poverty don't receive means-tested benefits and so do not benefit from the extra £900. The £900 is paid in three instalments £300 in the summer, £300 winter (now) and then £300 in the spring. Is £300 enough to cover the increased cost of food and energy? Energy prices are set to increase again, and food is 20% more expensive than a year ago and prices are still rising. On the subject of insulating buildings, there was agreement with James that heat loss from large commercial buildings is a cause of concern. There was also agreement that there are too many homes in NW Norfolk that are poorly insulated but not about what needs to be done.

The previous Friday at a Warm Homes meeting Councillor Rust outlined the various schemes offered by the borough council to help with the cost of insulation. James Wild told us about the Norfolk Warm Home Scheme run by Norfolk County Council. Since 2018 Norfolk Warm Homes has upgraded the insulation of 1,000 plus homes. That's a tiny percentage of those that need upgrading. In North West Norfolk alone, 11,400 need loft insulation. In contrast, if the government funded a national insulation programme, the benefits would be far reaching. Insulation would help keep homes warm, and save money.

Another important way to reduce use of harmful fossil fuels is the generation of energy from solar and wind power. James Wild pointed

out that the UK is ranked first for generating electricity from wind power. According to Friends of the Earth King's Lynn and NW Norfolk however could do a lot better. At present, each year 155 GWh are generated by renewables but we need to generate more than double that each year to reach the target recommended by government advisors the Climate Change Committee.

By the end of the meeting it was clear that the need for urgent action is key difference between the environment groups and James Wild. In order to stress the need for urgency, we asked James to ask the Minister for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to urgently bring before parliament a national retrofit programme consisting of street by street insulation.

Meanwhile the United for Warm Homes campaign continues. We have more leaflets to distribute, more blankets to give.

Energised by our conversation with James Wild and the prospect of a 2024 election we'll promote our petition and have more conversations.

Town and Around approached James Wild MP for comment and he said: "I welcomed the opportunity to meet United for Warm Homes campaigners and talk about their petition.

"Since the illegal war in Ukraine the government has rightly put in place support for higher energy bills which continues today for the most vulnerable people including over 11,000 households in North West Norfolk

"We agreed that Investing in major insulation programmes is vital to cut bills, reduce emissions, and boost jobs. This was a useful opportunity to set out the breadth of schemes and we need to do more to raise awareness of the support available including from the borough council.

"I set out the government's commitment to achieving net zero by 2050 and by investing in offshore wind, nuclear, and solar and decarbonising key sectors the UK will hit its ambitious targets to reduce emissions."



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Council adopts Corporate Strategy setting out four-year plan

A new corporate strategy, setting out the council's ambitions and priorities up to May 2027, was adopted by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk on 23 November 2023.

It features four priority areas: to promote growth and prosperity to benefit West Norfolk; to protect our environment; to support our communities; and to deliver efficient and effective services.

Under each of these priority areas are a number of specific objectives which, among others, include, improving skills and employment opportunities for local people and supporting business growth, working with others to manage and protect our coastline, rivers and streams and improve sea water quality, reducing our carbon emissions, working with partners to reduce isolation, improve access to affordable housing, supporting parish councils and managing the council's budgets to remove any projected budget deficit over the four year period.

Cllr Terry Parish, Leader of the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, explained: "This is our first corporate strategy since being elected in May, and it is the first time in 20 years that a minority administration has been formed, and the first in West Norfolk that is made of up a partnership of independent councillors and other parties. As a result, the approach we have wanted and needed to take has been one of open and honest collaboration, listening to the views of those elected to represent their communities."

"I believe we have developed a well-rounded strategy that focuses on the health, well-being and development of individuals and communities, as well as the growth of businesses. It also acknowledges the differences between the rural, coastal, and urban areas of our borough and embraces new development as well as the preservation of our wonderful heritage. Running through the strategy is a desire to tackle those issues that impact on our environment, including water quality, flooding and CO2 emissions, aiming for a cleaner, greener, and better protected borough."

"We will be reviewing the corporate strategy annually. We are committed to consulting and engaging with residents and businesses within our communities, along with parish councils and other partners, to see if we are tackling the things that matter to them and providing the right services in ways that meet their needs. Clearly, this will need to be done alongside careful management of our budget."

"Council's across the country are facing increasing budgetary pressures within rising energy bills and ever-increasing costs of materials. In West Norfolk we have the added impact of the Internal Drainage Board (IDB) levy. Forty-two percent of the council tax income we retain* is paid over to the IDB. Prior to 2013, the Government used to reimburse a portion of this. We don't question the crucial nature of the IDB work, but we are lobbying government for a fairer funding arrangement so that the people of West Norfolk are not disadvantaged by this financial burden."

Chief Executive Lorraine Gore added: "Adoption of the corporate strategy is a major milestone enabling us to focus our budget and resources on the priorities identified within it. Over the coming months we will be engaging with stakeholders and local communities on our budget setting process. This will lead to the production of an annual plan setting out exactly what will be delivered over the forthcoming 12 months. This is a new, more transparent approach which will help residents understand how their council tax is spent locally."

The full corporate strategy can be viewed on the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk's website (<https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/corporate-strategy>). There is an opportunity to leave a comment about the strategy using the link on the webpage. Further opportunities to get involved will be publicised over the coming months.

* Of the overall Council Tax bill, 75% goes to the County Council, 15% goes to the police and the council retains less than 10% after parish precepts are taken.

Norfolk County Councillors accept £600 million devolution deal

County councillors have voted to accept a county deal devolution agreement with the Government, to transfer significant funding and powers to Norfolk.

Government funding will start transferring to Norfolk next summer, if councillors vote in July 2024 to stage the first election for a leader in May 2025. The deal will mean that decisions can be taken in Norfolk, for Norfolk.

County council leader Councillor Kay Mason Billig said: "This deal brings major benefits for the people of Norfolk. It means significant investment and powers to boost our economy, transport, housing, jobs and skills. And we will have a leader, elected by the public, to represent our views to the Government."

"In the New Year, we will talk to the public, businesses and key stakeholders about the benefits of the deal and how we can work together to make the most of it."

The full council agreed the following recommendations:

Council:

- Recognises the work carried out during 2023 to consult with the public, inform Members and prepare plans in relation to the 'in-principle' County Deal brought to Council in January this year
- Commends the work undertaken by the Leader and Officers to secure additional benefits for the Norfolk County Deal and resolves that the Deal should be accepted
- Agrees that the election for the Directly Elected Leader should be held alongside the county council elections in May 2025 to enable the widest possible engagement with the electorate
- Agrees that the resolution adopting the new governance arrangements should be brought to the Full Council meeting on 23 July 2024 to facilitate that election date

For further details go to www.norfolk.gov.uk/norfolkcountydeal.

Background – what would a county deal mean?

Norfolk faces a major opportunity to gain new powers and funding from the Government, through an agreement called the County Deal.

We could make more decisions in Norfolk, for Norfolk and secure investment of more than £600m over 30 years. If councillors agree the in principle deal, it will enable us to invest in areas such as transport, skills and job opportunities, housing and regeneration, tailored to the needs of local people.

A County Deal would mean:

- Having a Council Leader who is directly elected by the public, enabling Norfolk's voice to be heard by the Government
- Targeting funding and resources to Norfolk's own priorities
- Unlocking housing and employment sites
- Investing in the skills we need and attracting and retaining key businesses
- Opening the door to more – further powers and funding in future

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January events - see also <https://townandaround.net/whats-on/january>

Monday 1st

King's Lynn parkrun New Year's Day run.
Meet at the Walks Café at 8:45 as usual.

Best Foot Forward – New Year's Day Walk meeting at St Edmund's Chapel ruins at 10am. 3 mile walk returning to the ruins and Cliff Top Café which will be open. No booking is required, just turn up. There could not be a better way to start 2024!

Further details are at www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/hunstantonevents

Wednesday 3rd

Writers' group at Hunstanton Library 2pm

Saturday 6th

United Services Club Hunstanton HI DEFINITION BAND 60s onwards 8.30pm

Tuesday 9th

Classical Music Rocks concert at King's Lynn Town Hall Rebecca Hepplewhite (Cello) 19:30-20:30, followed by a drinks reception. Subscribe for £7.00 pcm. At the door £12.00. Free to under 21s.

Thursday 11th

Stanhoe and Berwick WI. The Reading Room, Stanhoe. 2pm. Kicking off the year with a talk from Carl Saunders of the RSPCA. Visitors are most welcome. Our charge is £5, which includes refreshments. Please contact Valerie (01485 576261) for further details.

The Arts Society King's Lynn lecture 'Turbulent Times: Russian History as depicted by its 19th Century Realist Painters' Speaker Sir Tony Brenton, diplomat and commentator on public affairs issues. 2pm at West Winch Village Hall where there is ample free parking. Anyone can become a member for just £52 a year or can go along to individual lectures as a guest for £10. www.theartsocietykingslynn.org.uk or to join the Society contact the membership secretary on 01366 328648 or via email at info@theartsocietykingslynn.org.uk.

King's Lynn Community Cinema Club presents a British romantic comedy from 2023 - Rye Lane. St George's Guildhall, King St, King's Lynn 7.30pm £5 cash at the door.

Saturday 13th

United Services Club Hunstanton JOHN CARR Great vocals all eras 8.30pm

Sunday 14th

Jamm'in Joe's 12 hour fundraising musical stint for the RNIB at The Terrace starting with Joe's Jazz Breakfast at 9am followed by two Soulful Sunday lunch sessions and Toe Tapping Tapas in the evening. Book at 075544 7600036.

Monday 15th

Hunstanton u3a. Georgette Vale will be reminding us of the great contributions made by Norfolk people Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe. @pm Hunstanton Community Centre. Telephone 07443763679

Wednesday 17th

The community cinema at the Burnham Market village hall presents ALLELUJAH (2022) Starring Judi Dench and David Bradley. Start time 2.30pm. Certificate 12A £5 on the door or please contact Diana Walker on 01328 738604

Hunstanton Society talk by Ben Colson: Edward VII and his estate at Sandringham. 7.30pm in the Heritage Centre, Hunstanton. Admission £1 members, £4 non-members.

Friday 19th

United Services Club Hunstanton QUIZ NIGHT £50 first prize Up to 4 persons in a team. £4pp including supper 8pm

Saturday 20th

United Services Club Hunstanton TOM BAXTER Superb vocalist all eras 8.30pm

Wednesday 24th

SWAG event 2-4pm at the RBL Hall in Church Road, Snettisham. Free. Contact

joint SWAG organisers Eric Langford, 01485 541515 or June Barrett, 01485 533011 for more details.

Thursday 25th

New Hunstanton Women's Institute. Meeting at Hunstanton Methodist Church Hall at 2.15pm Speaker Sgt. Bob Dye on Scamming. Visitors welcome £5.00. All enquiries to 01485 572027

Friday 26th

Back to Bacharach at the Princess Theatre, Hunstanton 7.30pm

Friday 26th-Sunday 28th

RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch/register>

Saturday 27th

Village Screen Cinema Amy Robsart Village Hall Syderstone presents Book Club: The Next Chapter (12A) A feelgood comedy film, to brighten up a dark January evening. 7.30pm £4 at the door.

Contact 01485 578171

syderstonecinema_ARVH@outlook.com

Showaddywaddy at the Princess Theatre, Hunstanton 7.30pm

United Services Club Hunstanton MOVE IT BAND Rock & roll 8.30pm

Sunday 28th

King's Lynn Community Cinema Club presents The Art of Racing in the Rain a comedy drama directed by Simon Curtis. St George's Guildhall, King St, King's Lynn 3pm. £5 cash at the door.

Jim Davidson – Swimming against the tide at the Princess Theatre, Hunstanton 7.30pm

Wednesday 31st

Snettisham Gardening Club AGM, Quiz and refreshments 7.30pm Snettisham Memorial Hall. Info: Gail 01485 541279 or Addie 01485 544754.

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Seven families who volunteer at the same RNLI lifeboat station will all have their pagers on over Christmas



Some of the crew and family members from Hunstanton RNLI, who will be listening out for their pagers over Christmas RNLI/Chris Bishop

For a mother and her two daughters, three fathers and sons, and three husbands and wives will all be among those on call at Hunstanton in Norfolk throughout the festive period.

They and other colleagues, some of whom can trace their connection to the station back through two or three generations, are all part of the RNLI family, who volunteer their time 24/7, 365 days a year - including 25 December. Clare Kyle is one of the tractor drivers at Hunstanton. Her daughter Louise, 19, crews on both the station's lifeboat and hovercraft, while her 22-year-old sister Elise is part of the shore crew.

Clare, who's planning a traditional Christmas roast with her family, said: 'It's the same as any other day, if the pagers go off, we'll just drop everything and go.' Louise added: 'Even if we're having Christmas dinner, if someone needs us we've got to be there.'

Dave Cleland and his son Lewis are both crew on Hunstanton's inshore lifeboat Spirit of West Norfolk, while Dave is also a hovercraft commander. 'We have to be ready and available all through Christmas,' said Dave, who has volunteered for more than 26 years at the station.

Jenny Butler, whose husband Jon is in the ILB (inshore lifeboat) crew and a hovercraft pilot, said: 'You're cooking the dinner, you're opening the presents and there's always: What if the pager goes off and Daddy's got to go and you don't know where he's going or how long he's going to be.'

Families with two or more members volunteering at the station also include the Espleys, Cravens, Nicols, Smiths and Torrices.

While some of the Hunstanton crew were inspired by grandfathers, fathers or other relations, others found their way to the boathouse via their children.

Roger Smith crews on both lifeboat and hovercraft, while his wife Carol is part of the station's education team. Roger signed up after his then six-year-old son Logan, now 14, raised more than £700 for the RNLI with a sponsored walk on the nearby beach. 'It was a significant amount that he raised and when I found out what it goes towards it just inspired me,' he said. 'Carol then joined as an education volunteer, then my mum, Libby Wood, started volunteering in the station shop.'

It was the same story for Liam Nicol after his oldest son Will became part of the crew. And while father has now followed son, Liam's younger son Elliott also hopes to sign up as soon as he turns 18 in March.

Ryan Darby was inspired by his father and grandfather, who were both part of the crew.

Rowan Greenwood's grandfather Alan was part of the original crew which signed up after the station re-opened in the late 1970s after being mothballed for decades. He said hearing stories as a boy made him want to join up.

In 2022, the charity's volunteers launched a total of 9,312 times, saving 389 lives and aiding a further 16,476 people.

On average, RNLI lifeboats launch over 100 times during the Christmas period every year. Whatever weather winter throws at them, their crews are ready to battle the elements to save lives at sea.

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SAVE THE CHILDREN

Christine Earnshaw, Branch Chair

Our local branch has had another successful year fundraising for children caught up in disasters across the world having raised over £6,000.

At this year's Christmas Tree Festival, we were thrilled that the visitors voted our tree as their favourite. It was decorated with 150+ peg dolls dressed in costumes from countries where the charity has people working to improve the lives of children. This amazing work of art was created by Sandy Duffdick and I think our voters could appreciate the hours of work that went into it but perhaps with some appreciation for the work SCUK does for children caught up in disasters across the globe. Jenny Chapman and Gill Buttle lovingly assembled the tree, but we had no idea until the votes were counted that it would be a winner. People were also generous with their donations in our collecting can, so I hope other charities also benefited as well.

The November luncheon at the Golf Club was well attended raising over £500 and Marie Jarvis has had a good season selling SCUK Christmas cards. The soiree back in February where we were guests of Marie and Howard was also a success which I hope we will be able to repeat. The Princess Theatre is another generous benefactor as they have donated much of their bucket collection to us.

We have welcomed new members to our committee this year, Gill Buttle, Edna Chappell and Pat Stainsby so hope to come up with some new ideas for fundraising in 2024. Thank you for supporting the plight of children everywhere, yes even in the UK.



CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL 2023

Christine Earnshaw, Chair

Thank you to all the people who set up beautiful trees in Hunstanton Town Hall.

Most were decorated in a traditional way while there were several quirky ideas like Smithdon's tree of hands with messages for the world; the half burnt Fire Fighters tree warning us of the need to turn off the fairy lights when we go out. Pink bras decorated the Ladies' Circle tree and the Princess Theatre's had Jack at the top of his Beanstalk with his head lost in a cotton wool cloud. Time for a Yarn had knitted dolls in uniform and countless crocheted poppies collecting money for the Armistice Poppy day. Sadly I can't mention all the trees but it is always lovely to welcome new organisations to join us every year and this year it was Quackhouse Rescue with little fluffy ducks all over the tree, thank you Tracy.



Smithdon tree



Firefighters salutary message

There is a competitive element as you the public vote for your favourite tree which this year was Save the Children's. Decorated with 150+ peg dolls dressed in costumes from countries where the charity has been working to improve the lives of children. It was lovely to welcome 3 choirs, Smithdon School, on Friday, Hunstanton Voices and The West Norfolk Singers on Saturday all adding to the festive season.

This event was organised by Festival 3 By the Sea. (HDFA)

Below left West Norfolk Singers and below right Smithdon Choir





King's Lynn
Community
Cinema Club

King's Lynn Community Cinema Club's will be starting the New Year with two screenings in January. Firstly on Thursday 11th January at 7.30pm they will be showing a British romantic comedy from 2023 Rye Lane. The film is directed by Raine Allen-Miller in her feature directorial debut and received critical acclaim for the performances, the direction, style, and originality. Set in the South London the film stars David Jonsson and Vivian Oparah as two strangers who have a chance encounter, after having both been through recent breakups, and spend an eventful day getting to know each other.



Then later in the month they will be showing a matinee on Sunday 28th January starting at 3pm. The film will be The Art of Racing in the Rain a comedy drama directed by Simon Curtis. Golden retriever Enzo learns through his bond with his owner Denny, an aspiring F1 driver, that the techniques needed on the racetrack can also be used to successfully navigate the journey of life. There will be a post film meal organised for members who wish to join fellow members. See the website or Facebook page for full details about how to book.

Anyone wishing to join KLCCC membership is now available for just £17. This gives free entry to all screenings in St George's Guildhall, King St and access to a range of social events including meals out, trips, film related talks, quizzes and many others. This can be paid in cash on the door at any film or BACs payments for membership can be arranged by simply emailing communitycinemaclub@googlemail.com. Anyone over 18 is welcome to become a member. Alternatively, you can just come along to individual film as a day member for £5. Please note only cash payments can be made on the door.

The Arts Society King's Lynn

The Arts Society King's Lynn, TASKL, will be holding their next talk on Thursday 11th January at 2pm when the topic will be 'Turbulent Times: Russian History as depicted by its 19th Century Realist Painters'. In this talk speaker Sir Tony Brenton will be based on Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century when it was a cultural powerhouse. The novelists such as Tolstoy and Dostoevsky and composers like Tchaikovsky are well known but the painters are not. The period saw a new realist school of art, known as the "Itinerants", which broke violently



with the earlier academicism and, in the run up to the revolutionary twentieth century, ruthlessly depicted and criticised Tsarist Russia with all its flaws. Tony Brenton takes a tour through 'Itinerant Art' and its interactions with the vast, repressed and unruly Russia that it both loved and detested.

The speaker Sir Tony Brenton is a distinguished British diplomat and commentator on public affairs issues. He served for over thirty years with the British Foreign Service and was in charge of the British Embassy in Washington through the Iraq War. He has been a lead UK negotiator on such problems as global climate change and international energy and human rights issues. He has written a well-received book, The Greening of Machiavelli, on international environmental politics. On retirement from the Foreign Service, he has settled in Cambridge and is a Fellow of Wolfson College and a Senior Fellow at the International studies Department. His book Historically Inevitable? on the Russian revolution was published in June 2016. He is also a regular commentator on international affairs on the BBC and in the press.

TASKL meets once a month on the second Thursday from September to May at West Winch Village Hall where there is ample free parking. Anyone can become a member for just £52 a year or can go along to individual lectures as a guest for £10. Anyone interested in finding out more about TASKL can visit their website at www.theartsocietykingslynn.org.uk or to join the Society contact the membership secretary on 01366 328648 or via email at info@theartsocietykingslynn.org.uk.



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Hunstanton Local Businesses Christmas Decorated Window Winners..!

Jan Roomes, Town Clerk 01485 532402 clerk@hunstantontowncouncil.gov.uk

The Mayor of Hunstanton Cllr Michael Ruston and former Mayor Cllr Maureen Howard toured Hunstanton on Thursday to judge the efforts of local businesses in the annual Hunstanton Christmas Window Competition.

The competition run by Hunstanton Town Council was to encourage businesses to join in the Town Events Team's planned Dickensian Christmas theme for 2023.

There were 3 prizes up for grabs, the winner to receive a £50 donation to a local charity of their choice, with the 2 'highly commended' each receiving £25 for their chosen charities.

The Mayor stated: "each year the standard of the Christmas Window displays continues to get higher and higher. All the town centre window displays were viewed as part of the competition and what a hard job we had in deciding the winning three.

I was impressed at both the innovation and sense of style even more this year. Everybody should be extremely proud of the displays they created in making the town look so festive. Picking the winner was difficult and there were several shop fronts being in running for the top slot. Unfortunately, there could be only one winner – The Norfolk Deli – their display was in the Dickensian theme, festive, eye-catching and innovative!"

The 2 'Highly Commended' prizes went to



Winners Mark and Rosie Kacary with the Mayor Cllr Michael Ruston

A J Coggles Funeral Parlour & The Hunstanton Hospice Shop.

The Norfolk Deli is donating the £50 to Hunstanton Food Bank, The Hunstanton Hospice Shop donating to Norfolk Hospice,



The Mayor presents the Highly Commended certificate to the Hospice Shop



A Highly Commended certificate for A J Coggles

and A J Coggles Funeral Parlour are yet to announce the Charity of their choice.

WE ARE IN THE TOP 10

THE SUNDAY TIMES
The 10 best fish and chip shops in the UK



Fishers, Hunstanton

6. Fishers, Hunstanton, Norfolk

There are newer, more fashionable chippies on the north Norfolk coast, but I've eaten at them all, and the best is the shop on the Green that has been serving since the 1950s. Most fryers make a big deal about their "signature batter", but Fishers is the lightest and crunchiest I've tasted this year. There's a charming restaurant, but unless it's raining you'd be mad to use it when you could sit on the Green overlooking the sea, or walk for five minutes up Cliff Parade to find a bench in Esplanade Gardens and watch the sun set over Lincolnshire. Cod and chips £9.70 (fishershunstanton.co.uk)

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Hunstanton Eyecare blog

A Happy New Year to you all, I hope 2024 brings you good health and success. From my point of view I am in a much better position than this time last year, having fallen down the stairs sustaining a broken shoulder and wrist. Our dear Queen Elizabeth hospital did a great job at patching me up and I'm glad to say I'm about 85% recovered. My thanks must also go to my wonderful boss, Mr Ian Leach, our general manager Julien and all my colleagues who covered for me for the four months I was off work. I am so fortunate to have such wonderful friends where I work.

So, to the job in hand, what shall I talk about? Some might say it's not usually a problem! As it is a New Year, I thought it would be good to remind our readers that Hunstanton Eyecare is still an Independent, privately owned company. Over the years, so many independent businesses have been taken over by the big boys, and Ian regularly receives an "invitation to sell" letter. Although Ian has retired from face-to-face practice, he is still very much the hand on the tiller of Eyecare Norfolk, trading as Hunstanton and Cromer Eyecare, and still looks after us all very well. I like working for independent people, if we have an idea, we have a chat, decide what to do and do it. I did work for Boots Opticians many years ago and remember everything had to go via Head Office. One time we needed a rubber stamp for some paperwork, but we had to order the rubber stamp form in order to order the rubber stamp. What a palaver! It seems to me that big companies have too many layers of admin and everything goes round in circles without getting things sorted at all.

Independence means we can choose our suppliers and stock. We have a very good relationship with Essilor for our lenses, they supply everything from the standard single

vision to the most bespoke high-tech precision varifocal. This partnership gives us the accreditation of being an Essilor Varilux Expert and with the new "Visioffice" measuring device we can create the most tailor-made lenses for our clients. Frame stock is perhaps the fun part of specs, fashion often dictates a change, but as I've been in optics for so long it feels like I'm in the eighties again with all the bold plastic frames in vogue at the moment. I tend to choose our frame stock from the companies that give us the most reliable service with good products, and the rep has to be nice too.

We are often considering why people choose an optician. Is it just on cost? or standard of eye exam? what equipment the practice has? what sort of frame stock they hold? or how friendly and welcoming the staff may be? there must be

many factors. If you have any comments, I would be happy to hear them, even if you think we are not getting things quite right.

With best wishes for 2024,

Annette



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Half-term Chess Tournament

Jonathan Reeve

Following the success of last year's event, Norfolk County Chess Association (NCCA) and North Walsham Library Chess Club (NWLCC) are again organising a Chess Tournament for children and adults at North Walsham Community Centre, New Road, North Walsham on the afternoon of Friday 23rd February (during the half-term break).

The event will have two main sections: the Junior Section is aimed at children up to the age of 18 years and the Open Section is aimed at adults and junior players who have significant previous experience of playing tournament chess.

Matthew Perry who is the NCCA Junior Chess Organiser said: "We are inviting players of all ages and abilities to come along and have an enjoyable afternoon playing chess and socialising with other local players."

And NWLCC Club Volunteer Marion Wright added: "We are thrilled to again have this event taking place on our doorstep."

"Hopefully many of our players will be taking part and others will come along to NWLCC after the tournament."

To find out more go to the [www link: bit.ly/nwchess](http://www.bit.ly/nwchess), e-mail: norfolkjuniorchess@gmail.com or phone Jonathan Reeve Tel: 01263-733744



Marion Wright and Matthew Perry watching North Walsham Library Chess Club players.

David Elsey's cryptic crossword

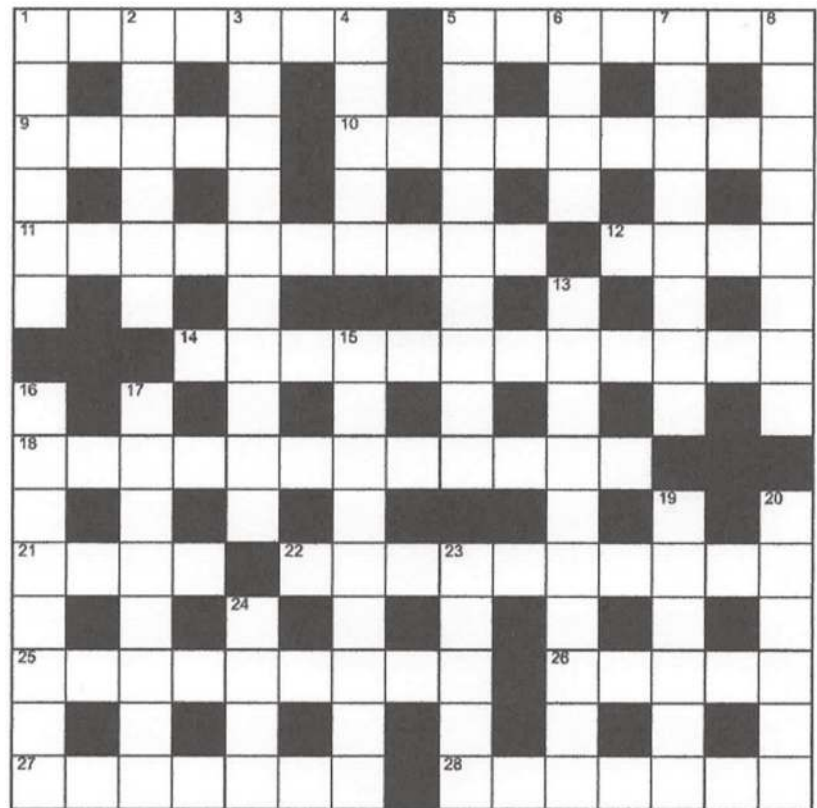
Across

1. Sitting around, daughter calmed down (7)
5. Delighted with casual job at sea (7)
9. Enjoy yourself on early reed organ (5)
10. Newspaper article I tailored to fit (9)
11. One competing in uniform is extremely tense (10)
12. Pipe fitting will restrain flow (4)
14. Pompous twit showing sign of weight gain? (7,5)
18. I entice PR men to dish out brass (12)
21. Unproductive pasture has narrow opening (4)
22. Switch cycles to make collections (4-6)
25. They are ill-defined, dull places (4,5)
26. Window in hospital department is wide open (5)
27. Threatens to get money from old injuries (7)
28. An arrangement of troops, staggered according to rank? (7)

Down

1. Opt for the best (6)
2. Excellent joint – will eat in! (6)
3. They harass people at foot of hill as more follow (10)
4. Rested a while, dead-beat (5)
5. Tell niece about patronising customers (9)
6. Flaps when raising something that could be caustic (4)
7. Insist major isn't in (8)
8. Party? See kiddie rock! (8)
13. Horror movie is on track to making one emotionally unstable (10)
15. Cows just seen entering area of reclaimed marshland (9)
16. Face leaders of organized groups undermining equality debate (8)
17. Someone with an issue over parking, that's clear (8)
19. Call for cheers when crocodile flips over (6)
20. Losing time in tempestuous sea, ships are behind (6)
23. Stick head over top of screen (5)
24. Loud tune is bright (4)

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 12



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WEST NORFOLK GILBERT & SULLIVAN SOCIETY

THE SORCERER

By Andy Hiles (Treasurer, West Norfolk Gilbert & Sullivan Society)

2023 was the Society's Platinum Jubilee year – 70 years of bringing the delights of the Gilbert & Sullivan operettas to West Norfolk. The Society has appeared on T.V., sung on Radio 4, received critical acclaim and won awards (NODA Best Production Eastern Region for 'Ruddigore' in 1997, 'Iolanthe' in 2000) and twice appeared at the International G&S Festival in Buxton (winning the Best Supporting Actress award). In 2024 they bring the magic, fun-filled production of 'The Sorcerer'.

The villagers of Ploverleigh are celebrating the betrothal of Alexis, son of Sir Marmaduke Pointdextre, to blue-blooded Aline Sangazure whose bloodline is in direct descent from Helen of Troy. Only Constance Partlett, seems unwilling to join the happy mood: it transpires she is secretly in love with vicar, Dr Daly. The cleric has been unlucky in love and despite Mrs Partlett's best matchmaking, the middle-aged Dr Daly is unconvinced that a young girl like Constance could be interested in him.

Alexis's and Aline's widowed parents, Sir Marmaduke and Lady Sangazure, are concealing long-held feelings for one another. The ceremony takes place and Alexis reveals to his fiancée his plans for practical implementation of his principle that love unites all classes and ranks. He hires a representative from a respectable London firm of sorcerers. Aline has misgivings about



hiring a real sorcerer. Nevertheless, Alexis instructs the sorcerer, John Wellington Wells, to prepare a love potion sufficient to affect the whole village, except it must have no effect on married couples. Wells mixes the potion which is added to a teapot. All the villagers, save Alexis, Aline and J W Wells, drink the tea and as result experience hallucinations and fall unconscious.

At midnight the villagers awake and under the influence of the potion fall in love with the first person they see. The matches are highly comical and unsuitable, pleasing Alexis. He decides that he and Aline should drink the potion themselves to seal their own love. Aline is hurt by his lack of trust and refuses.

Wells is regretting the results achieved by his magic has and regrets them still more when the fearsome Lady Sangazure fixes on him as the object of her affections. Aline decides to yield to Alexis's persuasion and drinks the potion without telling him. Upon



waking she inadvertently meets Dr Daly and falls in love with him. Alexis appeals to Wells to reverse the spell's effects and it transpires either Alexis or Wells must yield their life. The villagers rally against the sorcerer and Wells, resigned to his fate, bids farewell and is swallowed up by the underworld. The spell broken, villagers pair off according to their true feelings to celebrate with another feast...

Now for the muffin and toast, now for the gay Sally Lunn'.

'Now for the tea of our host, now for the rollicking bun.

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What Goes Up Must Come Down!

John Maiden

This should be the penultimate instalment in the history of Hunstanton's non-pier, but the borough council has yet to inform council taxpayers that soon they will no longer have to subsidise the 'Hangar' on The Green. This is what should have happened in 2007, when council regeneration plans included the reinstatement of Hunstanton Pier! Presumably this is what prompted Clive Sillis to sell his non-pier to Henry Moreton, who promptly demanded to be released from an obligation in the 999-year Pier Lease to provide a Pier at Hunstanton.

Unbelievably, the council's own solicitor published a report (prior to its consideration by the council cabinet) supporting Mr Moreton's demand, prompting Town Mayor Richard Bird to hold an extraordinary town council meeting at which the proposal was heavily criticised! As a result, borough policy was changed, so that any concession would have to be in the council's best interest! Whereupon Mr Moreton took legal action, which saw the council solicitor needlessly give Mr Moreton everything he wanted; whilst denying me my day in Court, as an "Interested Party with a distinct perspective on the issues involved" (so said the Honourable Mr Justice Blake).

A year has passed since Hunstanton's non-pier changed hands again, but until I asked for its removal the following statement was still



on the internet:

"Rogers and Norton Commercial Team have recently assisted MD Abbott Holdings Ltd with the purchase of Hunstanton Pier Family Entertainment Centre. The transaction involved a multi-million pound purchase of the entire issued share capital of CHS Amusements Ltd from Cornshire Ltd. CHS Amusements Ltd is the sole shareholder of the Hunstanton Pier Company, which owns Hunstanton Pier." It was at this point that I realised Mr Abbott might have been misled into parting with millions of pounds for a structure that is already overdue for removal from Hunstanton's unique Conservation Area.

If CHS is the sole shareholder in the Hunstanton Pier Company (HPC) that company cannot possibly own Hunstanton Pier, because the statutory HPC has to have at least three directors and, although it built the



original Pier, the Pier belonged to the le Strange Estate, together with land covered and occupied by the said Pier. A Hangar, masquerading as Hunstanton Pier, cannot be permitted by the Council (as successor to the le Strange Estate) to remain any longer, occupying land on The Green and promenade, whilst in breach of a legally binding covenant (1955) and a deed (1954) together with a bylaw and planning policies intended to protect and enhance the character and appearance of our Conservation Area. Dismantling the Hangar should be easy. It went up like a giant Meccano set and what goes up must come down!

New Labour leadership reaffirms support for Independent administration

The newly elected leadership team of the Labour Group for King's Lynn Borough Council have reaffirmed their support for the new administration and pledged to work constructively to deliver for the people of West Norfolk.

In a statement issued following his election as the leader of the Labour Group, Councillor Francis Bone (St. Margarets with St. Nicholas Ward) acknowledged the prominent roles Labour councillors had been given by the council's independent group administration and expressed the Labour group's commitment to doing "all it can" to support local people through the Tory housing and cost-of-living crises.

Councillor Bone also praised the hard work, dedication and professionalism of council officers and staff.

Councillor Francis Bone, Leader of the Labour Group, said: "The people of West Norfolk continue to be hit hard by the cost-of-living crisis, housing shortages and lack of urgently needed dental services. The Labour Group will work constructively with the new administration to do all it can to support our residents and businesses through these challenging times.

"I want to thank the administration, under the leadership of Councillor Terry Parish, for giving Labour the opportunity to play a full role in council business. With Labour councillors appointed to key positions, committees and panels, our group can more meaningfully represent the needs and views of the people we serve and bring forward policies to bring about real change.

"My team and I want to extend our thanks to the council officers and staff for their hard work, professionalism, and dedication to serving their local community. We look forward to working together to make a difference to the lives of local people."

New Leadership Team



Cllr Francis Bone
Leader



Cllr Alexandra Ware
Deputy Leader

The Labour Group for Kings Lynn Borough Council held its Annual General Meeting on 11th December and saw the following appointments:

- Leader of the Labour Group - Councillor Francis Bone
- Deputy Leader of the Labour Group - Councillor Alexandra Ware
- Chair of the Labour Group - Councillor Micaela Bartrum
- Whip of the Labour Group - Councillor Deborah Heneghan
- Secretary of the Labour Group - Councillor Joshua Osborne



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NEWS FROM BRANCASTER VILLAGE HALL

Geoff Wingrove

WINTER FAIR

This year's Winter Fair on 25th November was a huge success and attracted very large numbers of people to enjoy the interesting stalls, delicious nibbles and lashings of mulled wine. There was a riveting performance from the village choir, and the event raised over £1000 for charity. Many thanks to those organisers who gave so much of their time to ensure the event was enjoyed by all and again brought the whole village together.

Christmas is coming, and the tree and decorations have appeared in BVH, as Noddy Holder memorably yelled "It's Christmaas!"

QUIZ NIGHT

The Quiz Night held on 16th November produced a record turn-out, when contestants of all ages came together to demonstrate an amazing breadth and depth of knowledge; this event is proving a great success.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Management Committee is working hard on organising a series of events for the year ahead, and on New Year's Eve the group "The Forbidden" will be serenading us into 2024.

The Hot Lunches will continue monthly on Fridays – don't forget to book a place in good time!

REGULAR GROUPS

Yoga, Baby and Toddler, Coffee Morning, Fitness, Beginners' Pilates, Scottish Dancing and Mobile Library continue: check our website for holiday timings.

BAR 71

A full programme of Darts, Pool and Table Skittles is on offer.

BRANCASTER VILLAGE STORES AND POST OFFICE

You will be sure of a warm welcome in the Shop/Post Office, which continues to go from strength to strength: Christmas opening hours are available to view online.

For full details of all events and activities, please visit our website: www.brancastervillagehall.co.uk and for enquiries: brancastervillagehallcommunitybookings.co.uk

FROM THE BRANCASTER VILLAGE HALL ARCHIVE:

EXPERIENCE OF THE WARTIME EVACUATION 1939-1945

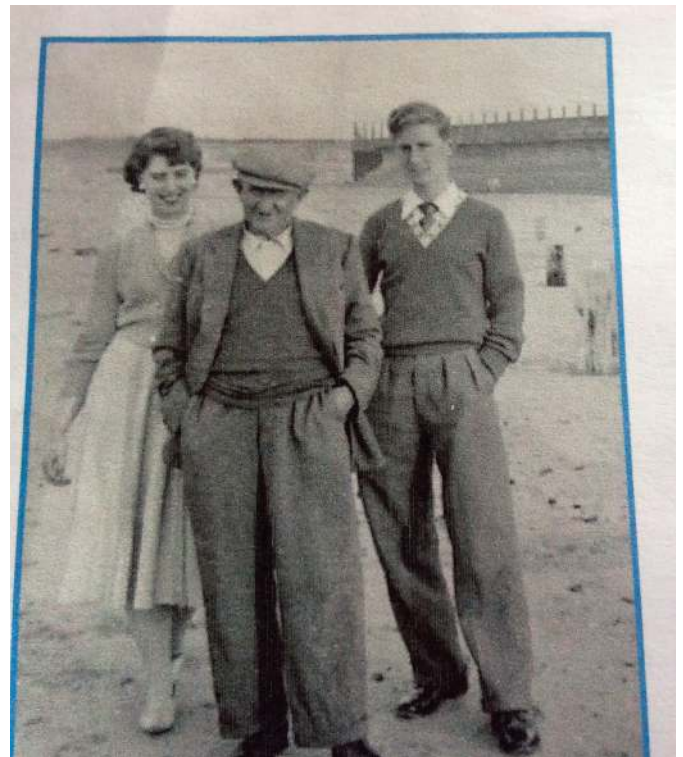


When World War Two broke out in 1939 many women and children were evacuated from the cities to rural areas in order to be safe from anticipated air raids. In Norfolk the evacuation took effect very early,

with 20,000 children arriving in Norwich over four days, with others coming in at Norfolk ports. (See picture of children arriving in Norwich: note they are all carrying gas masks). Initially evacuees were housed in schools and given medical checks before being moved to their billets in Norfolk villages across the county. Many of the children arrived without warm clothing to face the Norfolk winter, and some had no idea about table manners or basic hygiene. These lacks caused some distress to rural village families who were recipients of the evacuees.

At the start of the war people in Norfolk tried to retain as many elements of their pre-war lives as possible. Cinemas and theatres continued to run and popular films included stars such as George Formby and Robert Donat. The radio was, of course, the main source of entertainment and information; "ITMA" with Tommy Handley was hugely popular. Songs by Flanagan and Allen and Vera Lynn were all the rage and helped keep up people's spirits.

In the coastal villages of Norfolk the threat of invasion meant that people were evacuated, or chose to leave. There were increasing numbers of troops stationed in the area and most beaches were declared out of bounds, with pillboxes and barbed wire much in evidence. By 1941 Norfolk coastal towns had lost about half their populations, causing severe problems for councils and local businesses. At the height of the Blitz in London more evacuees arrived in the small rural villages. In some areas the initial enthusiasm of villagers to help began to pall with the numbers to be coped with. Many evacuees were treated with understanding and kindness; others, however, were less fortunate and were faced with awful conditions and poor food. Food parcels sent by family members were sometimes stolen, and a minority of evacuees had a tough time. Many evacuees of all ages found work on local farms or in local businesses. The importance of food production meant that all hands were required at harvest time.



One evacuee who came to Brancaster from London was Stanley Brett; he was lodged with Bert Ellis in a small cottage next to the Post Office. Stanley was in Brancaster for the whole of the war and stayed on afterwards, until shortage of work forced him to return to London. (See picture of Stanley on Brancaster beach with Bert Ellis and

Stanley's girlfriend, Daisy Townshend). Stanley wrote many poems about his experience in Brancaster; one entitled "Wartime Evacuee" is set out below:

WARTIME EVACUEE

I caught the train from London, with many thousands more. First of September '39 as the world prepared for war,
I came to escape the havoc that was very soon to start, and changed from a Cockney, born and bred, to a Norfolk boy at heart.

When I arrived at Brancaster to a future then unknown, A homely couple sheltered me, treated me as their own,
They clothed and fed and gave to me a new and safer start; the atmosphere transformed me to a Norfolk boy at heart.

And every year at harvest time, I'd follow the binders round, till rabbits broke from cover, when I'd try to run them down.
I learned to holler "Hold ye" – and lead the barley cart: great fun and a great experience for a Norfolk boy at heart.

I spent long hours out on the farm and learned the farming ways - topping swedes and sugar beet and turning sun-bleached hay,
I served the straw for thatching, long since a dying art, but vividly remembered by a Norfolk boy at heart.

I played in local football teams and sang out in the choir: newspapers, milk and telegrams were delivered when required.
I entered into village life and played a fulsome part; completely integrated was this Norfolk boy at heart.

I took up with a village girl when we were both sixteen: no modern promiscuity, no pill yet on the scene,
Together over thirty years, me and my first sweetheart: marriage vows are sacred to this Norfolk boy at heart.

When I returned to London, among the City boys, I had to shout to make myself heard, above the incessant noise.
Then they'd laugh at me and say to themselves "wass 'e torkin' abart", but their accent was foreign to this Norfolk boy at heart.

And now I visit Norfolk each time I get the chance - a wedding invitation, a garden fête or dance,
And I feel a tinge of sadness each time that I depart: a feeling that seems natural to a Norfolk boy at heart.

The Townshend family have been long term residents of Brancaster. Stanley married his girlfriend Daisy, whose brother Alan still lives in the village. Alan married Arline (née Ayres), whose family managed the village shop from 1946. Arline has informed me that Stanley, who has a memorial bench on the village green, wrote a good many poems which are contained in a book; I shall be using some of these with her permission in future features. Could I thank Alan and Arline for their help in writing this article.



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Hunstanton Society

The Committee wish all our members and supporters a Happy New Year and trust that we are all looking forward to a prosperous and healthy 2024.

TALKS

Our talk last month held in the afternoon of 15th November was given to a full house thus proving the attractiveness of afternoon talks. Dr Somerville gave us a brilliant overview of the history of medicine from very early times (Before Christ indeed) up to the modern day showing his audience some of the very early methods of treatment – just glad we live in the modern era with all the pain relief that we enjoy and the successful treatment we now have.

On Wednesday, 17th January at 7.30pm, we welcome back Ben Colson to talk about Edward VII and his estate at Sandringham. For fifty years he worked in the bus industry, lastly and best known to us in this area, as the owner of local company Norfolk Green which also ran the Coasthopper route. Ten years ago last month he sold Norfolk Green and “swapped hats” to become a Guide at Sandringham House, from which he duly progressed to the position of Senior Guide. Sandringham is the only tourist location in East Anglia to have been awarded Visit Britain’s prestigious Gold Award for 2024 following an appraisal which commented that the mystery shopper visit to the House concluded that the “tour exceeded expectations”. But Ben will not be talking about the House as it is today, rather as it was in Edward VII’s time, and especially in his period as Prince of Wales. His 55 minute talk will open up a window on the character of Prince, and then King, Edward including things which are not widely known.

Ben will be accompanied by June Cook, also a senior guide at Sandringham and we are sure this talk will be very interesting to listen to.

HERITAGE CENTRE



Our last opening session of the season took place at the Dickensian Christmas Festival on Sunday, 26th November. Many of our members and volunteers worked hard in creating a very Christmassy and Decorative Heritage Centre including a number of trees, one particularly destined for the Christmas Tree Festival at the Town Hall the following weekend. A number of our willing members and volunteers did dress up to bring some Christmas cheer to the proceedings and also manned a table in the back room to help quite a number of children to make Christmassy Craft items. This seemed to be a huge success and word quickly got out to other areas around town that we were definitely a place to visit. The result was that over the almost six hours that we were open, a total of over 330 people came through our doors. This must have broken all records of attendance in one day since we first opened in 2013. A popular Lucky Dip also was a big attraction the proceeds from which, along with donations in the jar, made us over £200 that day. Well done everyone involved. Comments from visitors were very complimentary and particularly

from a number of local residents who discovered us for the first time and were pleasantly surprised at what a brilliant Heritage Centre this town has. We hope that when we reopen on 14th February 2024 that we may start seeing a lot more interest in what we have to offer particularly from our local residents.

BRIAN HOLMES – IN MEMORIAM

We are delighted to report that between the Holmes family and our supporters a total of over £3,400 has been donated to the Heritage Centre in memory of Brian. This we are ring-fencing so it can only be spent in the Heritage Centre.

WEBSITE and FACEBOOK PAGE

The new website at <https://hunstantonsociety.wixsite.com/hunsoc> is still growing, so please ensure that you are registered to receive notifications of updates and access to the members area.



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WREN takes over Helm at RBL Branch

Eric Langford

At their recent Annual General Meeting, members of the Royal British Legion, Snettisham Branch, voted unanimously for Mrs June Barrett to be appointed as chairperson for the Snettisham Branch.

As a former WREN June served in the Royal Navy for 9 years as part of the Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service. June has been a member of the Royal British Legion for over 35 years and has over the years carried out various RBL branch roles including lead responsibilities for care and welfare and as poppy appeal organiser to name but a few. June is also a joint organiser for the Snettisham Branch monthly project SWAG event, successfully helping to address the issues of loneliness and isolation within the local community.

The Snettisham RBL Branch will be celebrating 100 years of existence in the village next year.

Plans are being developed with others to celebrate this centenary during the community "D Day" celebrations being scheduled for the village in 2024.

What a good time to attract and welcome new members (male and female) to join the RBL Snettisham branch. You do not need to have been a serving member of the Armed Forces to be entitled to join you just need to share the basic core values of care and support across our local community.

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm at the iconic RBL Hall, Church Road, Snettisham.

Why not pop along and have a chat to find out more.

For more information phone June Barrett on 01485 533011

A recipe from the Prudent Pensioner

I thought a nice simple recipe would be ideal after all the festivities.

Leek and Red Lentil Soup

Makes approx. 800ml.

Approx. 230g Leek
Red Lentils (dry) approx. 70g (see note)
1 medium size Onion or Shallot
1 stick of celery
Chicken or vegetable stock cube.
Salt and Pepper



Rinse lentils well in cold water then place them in a large pan (They do froth up when boiling) and add 500ml of cold water. Bring to boil and boil rapidly for 10 minutes, stirring often to prevent lentils sticking to base of pan.

Meanwhile trim off ends of leek and any discoloured parts. Slice leek thinly and chop a little to break it up. Place in colander and rinse well.

Peel shallot/onion and slice thinly.

Trim ends from celery, clean as necessary and cut into small pieces

Remove pan from heat, place the stock cube in a jug and strain off most of the liquid from the lentils into same jug, top up jug with hot water to reach 400ml and stir well to dissolve stock cube. Add stock with all vegetables to pan. Stir and mix well. Increase heat and bring to boiling point. Reduce heat and leave covered, simmering gently, stirring often for a further 10-15 minutes when vegetables should be fairly soft.

Strain off most of the liquid into a jug, put aside while you either put vegetables into a liquidiser or use a hand blender and whizz until pureed.

Carefully return liquid to pureed vegetables in a saucepan, stirring gently to mix well.

Season to taste. Reheat stirring gently. Turn off heat, serve and enjoy.

Note: Boiling rapidly for 10 minutes was in accordance with instructions on the packet.

My updated book "Less Waste more Soup" 45 easy, budget friendly recipes for nourishing soup is available from Ridouts Bakery in Heacham, Docking Farmers Market, By The Book in Hunstanton and

Hunstanton indoor market and Robert & Christine home shopping. It is available from Amazon. A search for Doreen Reed will find it (together with my books of light hearted poems & tales)

Copies are available to borrow from Heacham Library & Hinckley Library. See lots more recipes on The Prudent Pensioner Facebook page. Email: pru.pensioner@btinternet.com

New Year's Day Birding Booster

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Sporting corner with Tim Keogh

Football report

In bygone years, probably up to as recently as the 1990's, almost every village had a football team. Cricket team as well. Local derbies, people who didn't really play sport, roped in just to make the numbers up, to fight for the cause. Village rights to defend and feuds to be resolved. It was important in them days, bragging rights meant a lot. Milkmen, postmen and farmers cajoled into playing at full back because they were physically strong. In fact, farmers roped in to play anywhere because they tended to have a good left hook too. Even Dick Melton was believed to have played once, massive boots apparently.

People used to play both Saturday and Sunday football, but Sunday village football was really what it was all about locally in those days. No friends on the pitch, but best mates off it. Serious stuff. Regardless, it was always a case of a beer after the game, "no offence intended mate, sorry about that punch or elbow in the gob, you are a good lad really, let me get you a pint pal". Alas, a different world exists today and village teams are few and far between. Ingoldisthorpe FC are one of the local clubs to have bucked that trend.



Back row from left, Jake Ess, Dylan Ess, Harry MacGowan, Matthew Herbert, Josh Andrews, Aaron Herbert, Shannon Herring-Blatch, Alan Kitchener (manager).

Front row from left, Connor Leys, Ashley Collop, Kieran Herbert, Iont Pintea, George Patience, Martynas Rope.

Ingoldisthorpe FC welcomed Attleborough Reserves in the 3rd round of the CS Morley Cup on Saturday, 2nd December.

Ingoldisthorpe are playing in the Mid Anglia Combination Division Five (North) this season, with aspirations of a promotion in their debut season in this League and a good cup run.

On a very cold frosty afternoon, this match proved to be the only one that beat the weather in West Norfolk. Close knit passing was the order of the day as the ball skidded about across the surface, although the soft undersoil proved ideal playing conditions as it turned out.

Despite the arduous two and half hour round trip, it was the away side who started the brighter, taking the game straight to their hosts with two early chances. Ingoldisthorpe then settled and nearly took the lead, but the lively Dylan Ess shot wide. The away team opened the scoring after 15 minutes as Alfie Williams punished some slack defending. Ingoldisthorpe rallied and the busy Ess was put through after 25 minutes, finishing well to level the scores. Back came Attleborough, as Carl Sturman found space in the box and deftly guided a cross over the head of the home keeper. Again, Ingoldisthorpe responded. Aaron Herbert was growing more and more into the game and it was he who reacted first to a cross and steer the ball into the net as the teams went in level at half time. The second half started briskly, with Herbert starting to run the show. On 49 minutes, he found some space before unleashing a 25 yard pile driver that flew into the top



First Ingoldisthorpe goal scorer - Dylan Ess

corner to give the hosts a 3-2 lead. Both teams knew the next goal would be crucial. On 78 minutes, Connor Leys virtually settled the tie with a sublime finish before the home side saw the game out, securing a Quarter Final berth. This was an excellent advert for Division 5 Anglian Combination football, as both teams tried to keep the ball on the deck and play football.

30 hardened spectators were counted, braving the cold weather to cheer on their local team. The game was well marshalled by King's Lynn referee, Ray Venimore, who only required the use of his pencil twice with minor bookings for each side.

Despite a couple of recent defeats, the 'Thorpe are well placed in the league with promotion still in their own hands. Based on this all round solid team performance, the local side can expect a successful season.

Chairman, Eddie Herbert, was delighted with the result saying, "a good cup run can only help us in the league. We have aspirations to take this club forward, as far as we can, with promotion our priority this season". Compulsory ground improvements made at The Drift have enabled the club to progress to this level and, hopefully, to go even further. This doesn't happen without a dedicated backroom staff, team and leadership. So, one of the smallest villages in Norfolk with a football team, possibly even England, continue to defy the odds. Long may it continue.

Local Football Round Up

Heacham FC continue to battle away in their debut season in the Thurlow Nunn Premier Division. Having lost top striker, Fletcher Toll, to Downham Market, Heacham have continued to grind out some decent results of late to steer themselves away from relegation and towards mid table security. Heacham are still in the League Cup where, interestingly, they face Downham. Heacham will hope to replicate their

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Sedgeford, Norfolk

excellent 2-1 league win there in October. They still hold aspirations in the Senior Cup too, where they travel to King's Lynn Reserves in January.

Dersingham Rovers, competing in the Mid Anglia Combination Division 2, are replicating Ingoldisthorpe's development. Progress of these two teams as well as teams in the lower leagues are key to ensuring North West Norfolk's impressive football pedigree and progress in recent seasons is maintained. At the time of going to print, Dersingham sit 5th in the table. Having played fewer games than all the sides above them, their fate is very much in their own hands.

In the West Norfolk League, a feeder into the Anglian Combination, Docking Rangers are well positioned for a promotion push in Division One, whilst Dersingham Rovers Reserves and Ingoldisthorpe Reserves are performing well in the same division.

Armchair Sports Trivia

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QUESTION: In tennis, the Australian Open starts on 14th January. What is unique about this event in 1986 that has never happened before or since?

ANSWERS TO: editor@townandaround.net or by post to: The Editor, Town & Around, 18 Tapping Close, Snettisham PE31 7FF

Please note we do not accept entries via any social media channels or text message. CLOSING DATE: 15th January 2024.

Last month's question was: The Suppression of Unlawful Games Act of 1541 banned all sports in England on Christmas Day, except for one. Which sport was it?

The correct answer was Archery, and the lucky winner was Judy Jackson of West Winch.

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Sporting corner with Tim Keogh

Over £7,000 raised for Prostate Cancer UK and The Throat Cancer Foundation

A Memorial Day in memory of Jack Thulborn, who succumbed to cancer at the age of just 16, has raised over £5,500 for Prostate Cancer UK.



Dave Cox (Searles Club Captain), Trudy Boon, Trudy Hill, Andy Boon, Ray Stocker (Searles Golf Professional)

His mother, Trudy Hill, and husband, Dan, have already raised over £200,000 for a number of charities since Jack passed away.

Dan and Trudy held the golf event in his memory. Golfer, Andy Boon, who was diagnosed with Prostate Cancer in 2016, helped organise the day, keen to raise money and repay the wonderful treatment he has received in containing the illness.

Various events throughout the day added to the fund, with Searles Captain, Dave Cox, organising a race night, whilst the club donated all funds raised from an evening function.

Andy is keen to get a simple message across, "please get yourself checked up for Prostate Cancer. People of all ages can get this cancer and, in most cases, a simple blood test can identify any risk". Andy didn't have any symptoms and the cancer was only picked up by chance when he visited hospital regarding a separate matter.

Dan and Trudy hope to make this charity fundraiser an annual event.

Local man and well known golfer, Dave Bodimeade, was a Norfolk Traffic Police Officer who sadly passed away to cancer in 2022.



Stuart Ashley, Joe Sarsby (Searles), Aubrey Thomas, Debbie Bodimeade, Andy Ashley

A Memorial Golf Day was held recently at Searles Golf Club in aid of the Throat Cancer Foundation with funds also raised to purchase a memorial bench in David's memory.

Organisers were Bill Tarling, Steve Holmes and Aubrey Thomas, along with the support of Linda Holmes (taking on the role of Treasurer on the day). David's wife, Debbie Bodimeade, and daughter, Becky Sheldrake and family, were also in attendance.

Nearly 50 people turned out to participate. Various competitions, forfeits and an auction, as well as donations on the day, meant over £1,500 was raised, something Dave would have been very proud of.

A proud and emotional Debbie said, "Dave had requested that any donations at his funeral were donated to the Throat Cancer Foundation. So, when his friends decided to organise a Golf Day in his memory, it was agreed all funds would be donated to this cause". Aubrey added, "A really successful day, thanks go to all the participants, Searles Golf Club team and the Fountain Bar staff.



Due to the amazing turn out in memory of Dave, we aim to make this an annual event".

A bench will be erected on the fourth tee in the Spring to commemorate Dave.



Rob Hills (winner of whackiest outfit) next to the Throat Cancer Foundation banner

For more information on these charities, please visit www.prostatecanceruk.org and www.throatcancerfoundation.org

Copy date for the February edition of Town and Around is 12th January



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Sporting corner with Tim Keogh

Naked in a bedroom with a young woman

Ian Smith is a former international Scottish Rugby Union player. He was also a well-travelled Army dentist before setting up the Grange Dental Practice in Snettisham. He has already written one book and is due to release another in 2024. He is now retired and still lives in Snettisham. Ian has been giving Town & Around's Tim Keogh insights into his fascinating life.

Whilst rather hoping the title might attract your attention there is rather more to the headline than meets your eye!

In 1970 I was selected to tour Australia with the Scottish Rugby Team and, although it meant leaving my 3-month-old son Simon for a month, my wife Maureen encouraged me to go. The problem about refusing such an invitation is that competition for places is so hot that the chances of being picked again if you don't travel is more than likely.

It was an incredibly exciting prospect. Being the only player in my position it meant I was likely to play in all the matches, and that was awesome.

Sadly, the reality did not live up to the expectation. Our first match, on a Wednesday, was against the state of Victoria in Melbourne. Shortly before the end of the match, as I raised my open hands to catch a high kick, I was felled when my opponent, jumping high in the air, hit my arms and my face with his knees, effectively knocking me out and, to all intents and purposes, breaking my wrist as well. A definite red card offence today, but then it apparently didn't even get a warning never mind a penalty!

X-rays followed and the doctors I saw at the hospital were undecided as to whether or not there was a fracture of my extremely painful wrist. The vote I think was 3-2 for a fracture, but they wanted me to return the next day declaring a diagnosis was going to be more certain.

I wasn't going to be there the next day as we were travelling to Sydney to play New South Wales, so it became a question of bandaging the wrist and hoping for the best.

Incidentally there was no concussion protocol so I was playing again three days later.

Disaster happened again. After about twenty minutes whilst desperately stretching to tackle one of their players I tore my hamstring muscle at the back of my thigh. When you tear it, I can tell you, it is more painful than a fracture. Heartbroken because, apart from the pain, these injuries take weeks to heal so that was my tour effectively over as I hobbled off the pitch.

Suddenly this local man appeared and told me I could be fit to play again soon, but I would need to follow his instructions to the letter. He told me he couldn't personally fix me because he was going to Mexico to ensure the England football team in the 1970 World Cup remained fit and able to play. He also asked me if I remembered Peter Radford an Englishman who won a bronze medal in the Rome Olympic 200 meters. He said that Radford had had a similar injury 10 days before the event, and he had got him fit.

His methods were revolutionary, because rest and heat and short-wave therapy had been the treatment at the time. He told me that the injury itself was no more than a thumbnail in size, and what had happened was everything around the injury had contracted to protect the injury.

He sat me on a huge ice bucket full of tins of beer and ice to restrict the bleed, and as if that wasn't agony enough he then got his thumbs into the injury and proceeded to break down the contraction, which was even more painful.

The final instruction was to start jogging the next morning, which I thought was a joke, as I had to be helped onto the team bus. He handed me an address with the instruction to be there at 10am the next morning and he would get my treatment underway.

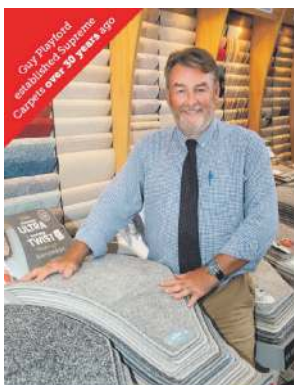
I duly turned up at his house on the North Shore in Sydney the next day, and my goodness what a house it was. It even contained a small opera theatre where he used to entertain friends with visiting orchestras. He ushered me into a bathroom, told me to take off all my clothes, wrap myself in one of the many towels and to go through a door into the treatment room.



This I did, and there lying on the floor was this very attractive young lady wearing only a towel as well. Seconds later the gentleman appeared and introduced us. Her name he said is Raelene Boyle and she is going to win gold medals in the next Olympics. As things happen, she didn't but she won two silvers in the sprints, and in her career won 7 Commonwealth Golds.



Anyway, that's my story and I'm sticking to it!



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Phil Hoyles

Phil Hoyles is playing Dame Trot in this year's Princess Theatre Christmas production, Jack and the Beanstalk. With a wide and varied career in the Entertainment Industry, Phil is also well known for his tribute show, The Tommy Cooper Experience. Directed by Simon Callow, Phil was understudy to lead, Jerome Flynn, in the West End and during the tour in the UK and abroad.

Name: Philip Steven Hoyles
Age: 47
Star Sign: Aries
Where born: Grimsby
Where live: I spent many years in Kent, now Stratford upon Avon
Occupation: Actor
Family: Mum and dad, sister
A Cats or dogs person: Dog
Sports Team Support: None
Biggest Break: Getting the gig with Simon Callow - although I was only an understudy, it opened a few doors.
Worst injury: During one show, I had to run backstage, but tripped up on stage. In agony, the audience thought it was part of the sketch and applauded.
Funniest memory: It has to be when I was working on holiday parks as a resident entertainer. We had one night when we lost power in the clubhouse. The whole area was out but we had 300 people in the place wanting entertainment, so we just improvised a singsong with them all until the power came back on. They loved it.
Hero: Tommy Cooper, Morecambe & Wise, Laurel & Hardy, basically old school
Hobbies/interests: I read a lot, mainly autobiographies from show biz. Gym.



Best memory: Once a year my family and relatives went away in a minibus. Devon and Cornwall is a fond memory. I also remember doing impressions as a young child which is where it all started. Seeing Les Dawson at Great Yarmouth was where my love for Norfolk began.

Favourite international meal/cuisine: Italian, especially lasagne.

Favourite drink: Rosé, and after tasting my first Guinness in Hunstanton...Guinness!

Favourite holiday destination: Devon & Cornwall, anywhere in the UK really.

Three items for a desert island: Blow up Dinghy, paddle, multi pack of baked beans.

Favourite band/singer: The Shires, 90's music.

Favourite Actor/actress: Norman Wisdom, The Carry on casts... basically old school again.

Worst habit: I punish myself too much if something goes wrong, so being too much of a perfectionist.

Pet hate in others: People not listening or with bad attention levels. Also, poor customer service.

Biggest achievement in life: Doing what I am doing now, it's a big achievement. Love Hunstanton.

Best advice ever given: Jimmy Tarbuck once told me to take your time, learn your craft, it's not a sprint it's a marathon. He also said if anyone puts you down, get up and carry on. Wise words in this Industry.

What would you change in the world: All nastiness and wars and for everyone to get on.

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West Acre holds its inaugural West Acre Wild 10K Run

Gary Walker

A crowd of runners gathered on a chilly damp morning in November to take part in the inaugural West Acre Wild 10K Run.

The run was the idea of local farmer Alex Birbeck, who is a keen advocate of rewilding and having already completed a large area of rewilding, decided it would be good to open it up to the wider public by holding a running event, with the alternate objective of raising money for charity.

Not being a runner himself, he initially engaged the help of local Tri Club member Geraldine Jordan and King's Lynn parkrun Event Director Gary Walker, to help with the organisation with the Team quickly expanding to include other volunteers with backgrounds in running and cycling.



The course, which started and finished at the village pub The Stag, followed a route along existing bridle paths and newly prepared woodland paths, through rolling Norfolk countryside. As the course was more



of a cross country than a road race, it was also decided it would be good to add a few obstacles for the runners to tackle on the way round including, just before the finish, the West Acre fords!

The run attracted a lot of interest although as this was the first such event entry was limited to 150 with runners signing up from across the county, including a large group from the Sandringham Barkrun Cairncross dog runners' group.

The event was also being supported by a keen group of local volunteer marshals, who ensured all those attempting the obstacles did so safely. In the end it all went very well with some very good course times being achieved



First Ladies

despite the undulating nature of the course and the obstacles.

The run finished with coffee and cakes at the finish, with all runners also receiving a very handsome West Acre Wild Stag medal.

A presentation was also made the nominated charity, Goodgym, which was set up with the purpose of supporting people by promoting good citizenship by offering opportunities to combine physical exercise with volunteering, in particular assisting local community projects with physical tasks and providing ad hoc and on-going support to isolated, lonely and older individuals.

Best Foot Forward in 2024

The 2024 events programme kicks off on the very first day of the year with a walk organised by West Norfolk Walking for Health. So, if you are at a loose end on New Year's Day, why not come and blow the cobwebs away with a gentle and sociable New Year's Day walk?

It will start at 10.30am (meet at 10.00 please) at St Edmund's Chapel Ruins, near the Old Lighthouse. It will return to the Ruins having covered approximately 3 miles. Everyone is welcome, all levels catered for, so no one ever gets left behind. Under 18s with an adult please. Dogs are welcome on a short lead. The Cliff Top Café will be open for refreshments afterwards.

West Norfolk Walking for Health is a charitable trust organising free, short walks throughout West Norfolk. The walks are friendly and sociable occasions and are conducted at a pace that works for everyone. Why not come and join us on New Year's Day. No booking is required, just turn up. There could not be a better way to start 2024! Further details are at www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/hunstantonevents.

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Everyone is welcome; U'18s with an adult please. Dogs welcome on a short lead. The event is free of charge, but donations to West Norfolk Walking for Health are welcome. Cliff Top Café open for refreshments afterwards.

We look forward to seeing you!

Find out more at west-norfolk.gov.uk/hunstantonevents




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GLEBE HOUSE SCHOOL & NURSERY UPDATE

The year has certainly flown by here at Glebe. It's no wonder with all our school life entails. Take a read to see what we've been up to.

Bonfire Night: A Dazzling Success!

Our rescheduled Annual Fireworks Night on November 7th was a resounding success! Organised by the Parents' Committee and supported by the wider school community, the event brought parents and children together for an eagerly awaited fireworks display. Under a clear night sky, families enjoyed hot dogs, mulled wine and treats, including the ever-popular Glo Sticks. A large bonfire warmed the evening, leading up to the highlight—the expertly managed fireworks display by parent, Dan Neidle.

Cross Country – making an appearance in the Norfolk Finals

November was a big month for Cross Country here at Glebe. Starting with our Inter House Cross Country on the 9th November when Divisions II to VIII competed for the 2023/24 Cross Country trophy. Despite the incredibly wet afternoon, the children showed immense resilience and all completed the course. We were also very impressed with the number of parent spectators who braved the elements! The winners will be announced in our Collections Assembly at the end of term.

Our Cross Country activity continued away from Glebe as pupils from Divisions III to VI competed in the West Norfolk finals. We were very proud of all our competitors, who all ran their very best races. Big congratulations to four of our pupils, Henry, Lara, Harriet and Giovanna who all went on to represent the school at County level.



Remembrance Sunday

On Friday, November 10th, the entire school, from Reception to Division VIII, gathered in the Hall at 10:45am for a poignant Remembrance Day assembly. Led by Head Adrian Stewart, the solemn half-hour provided a safe space for reflection on the day's significance. The School Hall was rearranged to focus on Remembrance boards listing Old Aquilians who served in World Wars I and II, as well as Lance Corporal Benjamin Whatley, lost in Afghanistan. Pupils, smartly dressed in school uniforms with poppies, observed a two-minute silence, and activities throughout the week included Free Choice Poppies and the creation of beautiful red and white origami poppies and peace doves by the Ninja-ami club. On Remembrance Sunday, school representatives attended St Mary's Church in Old Hunstanton to read the remembered names.

Anti Bullying Week

We fully embraced Anti-Bullying Week across the whole school and engaged in a week-long programme of fun and informative events and activities. From wearing an array of odd socks on Odd Socks Day and painting our nails blue on World Diabetes Day, to writing a positive note about a classmate on Positive Affirmation Day and working collaboratively in the inaugural Great Glebe Duck Hunt! It was a week to remember - a time when our whole community came together to focus on this very important topic.



Purfleet Trust Reverse Advent Calendar

Throughout November we proudly supported the Purfleet Trust

Reverse Advent Calendar. As one of the drop off locations for donations, we enjoyed meeting local people when they popped in as well as safely storing all the donations brought in by our families. Ms Stowe, our Office Manager, was excited to be able to pass on so many donations at the end of the month. Thank you to all who contributed to this excellent cause.

Inter House Rugby

This month also saw our Inter House Tag Rugby and the efforts of the children certainly did not disappoint. There was some great rugby on show from our pupils, both from our girls as well as our boys. The event was well supported by parents and everyone enjoyed seeing the children doing their best for their house. As for the winner, we again must wait until collections at the end of term!



Top Spot in National Maths Challenge

Ten children from Divisions V and VI took part in a national Maths Challenge this month. Covering a range of mathematical topics, some of the questions were certainly a challenge, but everyone gave it their best shot. A particular well done to Florence who finished in top spot!



Out and About to Langham Glass



Division II has been studying different types of materials in their Science lessons and saw theory put into practice during a visit to Langham Glass in Fakenham. It provided an excellent opportunity for the children to see learning in the classroom applied in real life. During their visit, the children explored the world of glass production, discovering the art of crafting glass and marvelling at the creation of a beautiful snowman. At the end of the trip, each child was given the chance to create a personalised glass tealight holder to bring back home.

Open House

Towards the end of the month, we enjoyed welcoming families, current and prospective, to our second Open House this term. Our children always enjoy the opportunity to share their school life with others and of course we enjoy the chance to meet new families and pupils! We have two further Open Houses planned for next term, so do come along if you are interested in seeing Glebe in action!

Come and see us!

As always, we really hope you enjoyed catching up with our latest news! If you would like to find out more about life at Glebe House School & Nursery, please don't hesitate to contact us. We have our next Open House on Friday 8th March, why not register to visit? We would love to meet you!

Did you know we offer a comprehensive after-school programme providing care until 6pm? And that we provide school transport from many convenient locations across North West Norfolk?

Please contact Mrs Fraulo on 01485 532809 or email tjf@glebehouseschool.co.uk to register your interest!

Brancaster School

News from Samphire Class



KS2 have spent a lot of time this term looking at The Roman Empire. We liked finding out about how they organised their armies. We made some shields painted with things to scare our enemies and made 2 of their formations: The Wedge and Testudo (which means tortoise). Everyone protects each other by creating a shell around everybody. We were able to go on an amazing trip to Norwich Castle Museum where we found out all sorts of things about the Romans and were even able to handle real life artefacts from 2000 years ago. It was incredible to see some of the torcs and other treasures discovered in Snettisham on display in the museum - although sadly we were only allowed to look at those in their display cabinets! Whilst we were there, we had to help an Iceni tax collector decide whether he should go to the Romans or the Iceni for help when the peace between them began to break down.



KS1 have been having some fun times in their classroom too. They have made mince pies and iced Christmas cakes and gingerbread. Last week they invited parents in and made decorations too. The children have been enjoying taking home our nativity bag each evening and we have had lots to discuss.

It is almost Christmas now and we have been rehearsing our nativity "The Magical Christmas Journey". It has lots of catchy songs and sheep dancing to tango music! At the time of writing this, we still have a visit to the Panto in Kings Lynn to look forward to as well as our Christingle service and our Christmas parties.

Finally, Brancaster Primary Academy would like to wish each and every one of you a very Happy New Year!

Term finished on 20th December and we start back on 4th January.

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Hunstanton and District Inner Wheel

Coral Campbell
100 For 100!

What does it mean? Well, 2024 is going to be a very special year for Inner Wheel throughout the world because in May we are going to celebrate 100 years of our organisation. IW was started by a lady called Margarette Golding and she opened the first club in Manchester. We are very privileged that our International Convention 2024 is going to be held in Manchester – our birthplace.

Our Association President has set all clubs in GB & I the challenge of 100 for 100. The task is to carry out 100 things in our community which can raise funds for charity, but it is not essential. Our club in Hunstanton has sold 100 soft toys at events and raised £100 for charity. Throughout the year we are serving 100 cups of coffee over 10 coffee mornings sharing friendship which is one of our objectives. As a group we are aiming to dance 100 hours collectively after our meetings – keeping us fit! Members are trying to collect 100 used stamps which will be donated to The Air Ambulance. We have just donated 100 items to Baby Basics. Instead of having our usual Secret Santa for members at our Christmas Party, we decided to give luxury items suitable for the mums as a treat. We also donated toys to the Salvation Army for their Christmas Appeal.



Our members would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year. 2024 is going to be an exciting year for Inner Wheel.

New Website Launch by Hunstanton & District Rotary Club

Hunstanton & District Rotary Club is excited to announce the launch of its newly redesigned website at www.hunstantonrotary.co.uk. The revamped website features a streamlined and simplified design, improved functionality, and enriched content areas to inform our local community and the wider public in general, about our club and its activities.

We invite you to visit our new website and if you have any feedback or suggestions then please let us know; we would love to hear from you.

Why not join us

Do you feel like you could be doing more to help communities, locally, nationally and around the world? Especially in the current climate? Hunstanton & District Rotary does just that. We're dedicated to making a difference for people through fundraising projects that can

change lives for the better. If you're looking for a fulfilling, lifelong experience then joining Rotary might just be the place for you. Find out more on our brand-new website www.hunstantonrotary.co.uk. Or simply search for Hunstanton Rotary Club, and we look forward to meeting you soon.

Contact us at info@hunstantonrotary.co.uk

Local Rotary Clubs seek teams for their next Swimathon



Priory Rotary King's Lynn and Hunstanton and District Rotary are joining forces to extend their highly successful annual Swimathon charity event. In 2024 it will take place at both the St James pool in King's Lynn and Oasis pool in Hunstanton on Saturday February 10th.

The Swimathon involves teams of up to six swimming against each other in relays, for as many lengths of the pool as they can in their 55 minute slot. It is open to all ages and abilities, and entry is free! The aim is for the swimmers to have fun while raising money for local charities by obtaining sponsorship for their efforts.

Teams can be from schools, businesses, charities, youth organisations, sports clubs, families or just groups of friends – anyone who would like to take part and raise money for good causes. Entries are already coming in, and anyone who would like to enter a team should make contact as soon as possible to book their chosen time slot.

Local companies are also encouraged to get involved by either signing up to sponsor the event or entering teams to take part.

In 2023 the Swimathon raised over £14,000 and supported a wide range of local charities, and the organisers are hoping to exceed this total in 2024.

For more information go to www.prioryrotary.org.uk.

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Rotary Youth Speaks Competition

Five teams recently took part in the local round of this public speaking competition organised by the Rotary Club of King's Lynn – Marshland High School, Sheringham High School, Smithdon High School, Springwood High School and Terrington St Clement's High School. The debates covered topics relating to private education, the NHS, university tuition fees, zoos and wildlife parks and the lack of parity between men's and women's sport.

For the second year in succession the winning team was that from Sheringham High School. Poppy Gale proposed the motion, UK zoos and wildlife parks should be closed to the public and only maintained for scientific purposes. The opposing arguments were presented by Lara Evans and the team was chaired by Grace Posthill. They go forward to the District round of the competition to be held in the spring. There are also Regional and National rounds.

The Rotary Club is very grateful for the continuing support and expertise of the judges - Dr Bob Rogers, Mrs Theresa Banks and Mrs Cynthia Youngman, Springwood High School, for hosting the event and also to the school staff involved with the teams.



Photograph: Poppy Gale, Grace Posthill and Lara Evans.

Young Carers' Christmas Party and trip to the Panto for Nelson's Journey

Michael Walker

Each year the Rotary Club of King's Lynn organises a Christmas party for young carers in the King's Lynn area. On Wednesday 6 December some 50 young carers were entertained by Adelia (from Umbrella Parties) and Father Christmas was there to give each of them a present. The sandwiches, sausages, crisps, jellies and cupcakes disappeared in no time. The children all had a wonderful time. The Rotary Club is grateful to Morrison's for donating chocolate selection boxes and for allowing us to hold a collection, to the West Norfolk Rugby Club for hosting the event and to all those members of the public who make contributions to our supermarket collection. In addition, on Saturday 9 December some 18 bereaved children supported by the charity, Nelson's Journey, were taken to the Corn Exchange to see Dick Whittington which was thoroughly enjoyed by the children and their helpers.

Donations of food and other items are being taken to the King's Lynn Night Shelter and the King's Lynn Food Bank, along with cheques to each charity of £250. The Club intends to provide further donations in the New Year.

Photo (right): Adelia entertaining young carers.

Rotary Support for the Food Bank and the Night Shelter

Members of the Rotary Club of King's Lynn have provided food parcels for both the King's Lynn Foodbank and the King's Lynn Night Shelter. These were delivered by the President of the Club, Mel Robson. In addition she handed over cheques for £250 to each charity. Further donations will be made in the New Year.

The Food Bank is on target to provide more food parcels than in 2022 which were themselves much higher than the average for 2018-21. In November this year some 478 parcels were given out which illustrates how severe the economic problems are for many families.

Supplies of food and other essentials donated by members of the Rotary Club



Above: Mel Robson and Jenny Langley, Night Shelter support worker
Below: Helen Gilbert of the Food Bank with Mel Robson



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Behind the scenes

Welcome to the first edition of 2024! We'd like to say a big Happy New Year from us at the theatre, and we hope that you have had a wonderful Christmas. We're very excited to commence this year at the theatre as we have so many acts to entertain you; there's something for everyone! In this edition we will quickly reflect of the latter part of 2023 and have a look forward at what you can expect from here on.

Towards the end of November, as part of Hunstanton's Christmas Cracker, the Princess held its annual Christmas event. This entailed mince pies and mulled wine in the busy Sunset Wine Bar with DJ Zola playing some great soul classics on our packed terrace, that was full of people enjoying the music and having a dance. Plus, we had a visit from the man himself – Father Christmas, when the Panto cast from Jack and the Beanstalk came down to greet those waiting for their visit with Santa. This was the start of our Christmas season, continuing through to the run of our wonderful pantomime, *Jack and the Beanstalk* that commenced on the 2nd of December.



'Jack and the Beanstalk cast with Father Christmas at the Princess Theatre.'

However, now it's time for the theatre and its team to take a well-earned rest. We will be closed from the 2nd of January and will return on the 22nd. Please remember that online orders will be available 24/7. On our return, we come back with not 1 but 3 shows in late January: *Back to Bacharach*, *Showaddywaddy*, and *Jim Davidson - Swimming Against the Tide*!

Continuing, February too includes an array of unmissable performances. The return of the brilliant *Totally Tina* with Justine Riddoch is guaranteed to be a night of fantastic music and celebrations so please get your tickets soon as they are selling quickly. For fans of rock, we have the return of both *The UK Rock Show*, and *The Story of Guitar Heroes*. Both nights are a must for lovers of classic rock and awesome guitar solos. Furthermore, for those fans of Glam Rock and 70's hits, we have *Telegram Sam* which features the big hits of T Rex. Last year I attended *The UK Rock Show*, and the atmosphere was



Gemma

electric! Another genre to be celebrated is Soul music – with *Soul Kinda Wonderful*. Also appearing we have *The Foundations* as well as authentic artiste tributes, such as *The Elton John Show* and *5-6-7-8 The Steps Experience*.



'The Story of Guitar Heroes'

An exciting February sets the tone for the rest of the year, with a packed programme already in place, and more to come, we look forward to presenting acts that have been with us before, and ones that are brand new. Get ready for people such as, Strictly Singer Tommy Blaize, Henry Cole, Paul Young, Albert Lee, Derek Ryan, Steve Harley, Shaun Ryder, and more! Plus, a variety of music genres celebrated throughout a number of performances dedicated to some of the most influential decades of music. Not forgetting our younger audience, there's family fun with pantomimes such as the *Wizard of Oz* and *Cinderella*. February sees the start of our Film Screenings for 2024, when we have a great selection lined up, including the much-anticipated film of late 2023 - *Oppenheimer*.

That's all from me with our first entry of 2024 – thank you for reading and thank you for a brilliant 2023. We can't wait to open our doors again in late January and look forward to seeing you all again soon, as you experience some great shows whilst making some happy memories. Please take a moment to look on our website or grab a programme to see our full line-up for the year so far. But until next time, break a leg!



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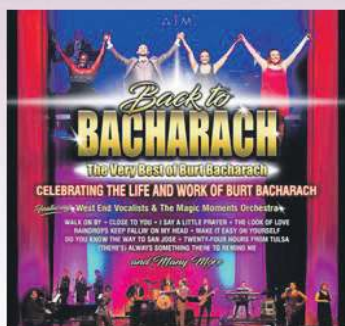
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Online sales will still be available 24/7.



Jan Friday 26th



Jan Saturday 27th

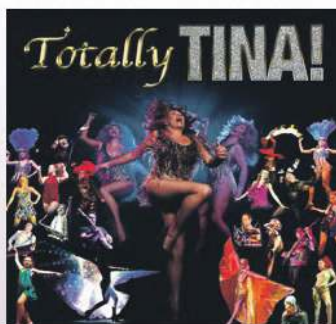


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