

# TOWN and AROUND

NEWS FROM  
NW NORFOLK  
FREE

ISSUE 185 MARCH 2021

PRICELESS!



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

# First word

Spring is just around the corner as you can see from our cover photo of Trevor Walters with a lamb at Snettisham Park. What a wonderful sight after such a challenging winter.

Our gardens may be too wet to do much with at the moment but from the comfort of your armchair plans can be made for the longer, and hopefully drier, days ahead.

Your March edition is crammed full of information and articles and local advertisements and I thank everyone who has contributed to this issue.

It is with sadness that I have to tell you that Robin Limb has passed away. Robin was our agricultural correspondent for many years and a true gentleman. He will be greatly missed. His articles always stimulated debate and on this month's letters page you will see a response to his January article. Next month we will publish his final contribution.

We continue to serve our community as best we can with local news and information and as we are still in Covid times, T&A distribution is currently through food outlets including supermarkets. If you would prefer to have a copy posted to you we offer this service for the postage-only cost. Just get in touch. In between editions stories are posted to our website [www.townandaround.net](http://www.townandaround.net)

Until next month....

## 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](mailto:editor@townandaround.net)  
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# Village says thank you to Tim and Cathy

Tim and Cathy Roberts are looking forward to retirement having served their community from their Ringstead Village Store for almost a quarter of a century without a holiday.

At a surprise presentation on 3rd February, Bill Jacobs, Vice-Chairman of Ringstead Parish Council, said: "We all very much appreciate everything you have done over the years, you are a vital part of the landscape and history of Ringstead - our village hub."

"Lots of village shops have disappeared, but you have done a marvellous job, expanding and diversifying the product range while being kind, helpful and generous, particularly over the past year, and the number of people who have turned out today is a testament to how much you are valued."

Over a thousand pounds was raised for Tim and Cathy in a campaign organised by St Andrew's Church and the Ringstead Parish Council.

The 3rd February marked exactly 24 years since the couple took over the shop and it was meant to be their last day of trading, however, there was a last minute hitch with the new owners so Cathy and Tim will carry on for the time being.

Cathy Roberts thanked everyone who had turned out for the presentation and said she and Tim would be leaving shortly.

"We didn't know anyone when we moved here, and now it will be the community that we miss - we are on first name terms with ninety per cent of the village."

"The new people are really excited to be coming and I hope that you will support them as you have supported us."



## Hunstanton community project brings the seaside into people's homes during lockdown

Although people cannot visit West Norfolk during this time, they can still enjoy our fantastic coastline thanks to a new community project that has been launched in Hunstanton.

Hunstanton Webcams has gone live with its first video stream covering the town's South Promenade and main beach to allow people to virtually visit the seaside town while remaining in the safety of their own home.

The idea is the brainchild of Hunstanton resident and businessman, Glen Piggott who runs Norfolk Coast Web Design. Glen said "I noticed on the local Facebook groups how people were sharing their photos of Hunstanton and saying how they wished they could be there but couldn't because of the lockdown or they have been isolating. So, I was trying to think of a way that we could bring Hunstanton to them. As a result, Hunstanton Webcams was born".

Hunstanton Webcams is a community project involving a small number of the town's businesses and organisations working together. The equipment and website have been provided by Glen at Norfolk Coast Web Design with the Waterside Bar hosting the first camera location. Hunstanton Sailing Club has also included their already established webcam in the project and additional future camera locations currently in the pipeline include The Princess Theatre and Hunstanton Ski Club.

Glen continued, "With everyone's mental health being so important

right now, if this project can positively help people by getting their 'Hunstanton fix', and at the same time promote the town during this staycation period, then that can only be a good thing for everyone."

Hunstanton businesses are currently preparing for what is predicted to be a busier than normal summer season for the popular West Norfolk resort, once restrictions are lifted, with most people choosing to stay in the UK for their summer holidays this year.

You can view the live webcams by visiting the website at [www.hunstanton.webcam](http://www.hunstanton.webcam)



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# A challenge during lockdown number 3

Yvonne Bridger

None of us could fail to be moved by what the late Captain Sir Tom Moore achieved in the last year of his life in particular.

The amount of money he raised for NHS charities was nothing short of epic, phenomenal and a range of other adjectives which I simply do not have at my disposal.

There are no words to describe what he did and the manner in which he did it.

He walked, walked and then walked some more in the 100th year of his life.

And always in a calm, focussed, humble, unassuming, gentlemanly manner - full of determination. Captain Tom struck a chord in the hearts and minds of us all.

Having learnt of his death in early February, I asked myself "What's my excuse for not walking and doing something to honour the memory of the remarkable, plus, plus, Captain Tom?"

The answer was that I did not have an excuse really. I am, thankfully at the moment, fit, active and mobile - so all I needed to do was to get my thinking cap on.

As I fell asleep one night, my brain was trying to come up with an idea.....and, after a while, it came to me.

I am going to hit a milestone birthday which starts with 7 this year and I wanted to use the number 7 in my idea.

So.....on Sunday February 7th, I began a challenge to walk 700,000 steps over 70 days, with my goal being to not only honour, in a very small way, the memory of the late Captain Sir Tom but also to raise funds for the Covid-



Yvonne stepping out on the Promenade 09.02.2021

19 Unit at the QEH, King's Lynn.

I have never done any solo-fundraising before - so there is a first time for everything!

My target is to raise seven thousand pounds.

I have set up a GoFundMe page - just open up GoFundMe, put my name in the Search.....and the rest is plain sailing.

For all of the kind and generous GoFundMe donations received so far, even if I said "thank you" a million times over,

it would not be enough.

That said, I am aware that some of us do not do financial transactions online and yet would still like the opportunity to donate in memory of Captain Sir Tom and at the same time raise funds for our local hospital and the Covid-19 Unit in particular.

Please call me on 01485 533896 if you would like to make a cash donation or to send a cheque. I will then give you my address, details etc. A receipt for

all cheques and monies donated will be issued and put through your letterbox when I have done the necessary banking.

Let's not forget, in the words of Captain Sir Tom "tomorrow will be a good day" and if you could make it "good" by donating whatever you feel able to give, you will know that you too have honoured the memory of Captain Sir Tom in your very own way and at the same time supported the work of all of the Staff of the Covid-19 Unit at our Queen Elizabeth Hospital, who, day after day, for almost a year now, have put their lives on the line for the sake of our loved ones, our nearest and dearest.

These are my step count totals so far since February 7th:

7th - 15,339  
8th - 14,394  
9th - 15,417  
10th - 16,451  
11th - 15,563  
12th - 15,748  
13th - REST DAY  
14th - 16,377  
15th - 14,255  
16th - 13,079  
17th - 12,277

On bad-weather days (and there have been a few of these!), I do indoors walking workouts from You Tube. No point falling over in the snow or on the ice and then not being able to walk at all!

I do post my daily step counts on my GoFundMe page if you want to track my progress towards my goal.

I think of all of the kind donors as I put one front in front of the other each day!

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

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# Taboo?

By Miranda Marshall, Director, Hayes + Storr

It is oft said that the Victorians were obsessed with death, but would not talk about sex, and that, in contrast, the western world of the 21st Century is obsessed with sex but will not talk about death. The pandemic is changing that, somewhat.

The euphemisms of death are often hilarious. When I first started out as a private client lawyer, people would talk about 'losing your mother' which made me think of the 'departed' (there we go again!) rather like a toddler who had wandered off. In his book of the same name, Evelyn Waugh in the 1940s made fun of the term 'The Loved One', which has now entered mainstream language, even to the extent of being uttered without a hint of irony by Boris Johnson. In our modern fluid and blended society, the term is useful, rather like actors who call everyone 'darling' because they can't remember names.

In 2011 the first 'Death Café' was held in the UK to provide an opportunity for people to 'gather to eat cake, drink tea and talk about death' in a positive way and now there are 10,000 such 'cafés' around the world, including online. A bit of a niche for most, probably.

Making the right plans now to manage 'the inevitable' gives peace of mind and setting out your wishes makes it easier 'for those left behind' 'when the time comes'.

Unsurprisingly, in 2020-1 there has been a big increase in Will-making. Ancient Romans considered the success of their life to be measured by the respect and love with which they were remembered posthumously and put much effort into preparation. It was an anathema for them to die without a Will, for that very reason.

Why therefore do some people take the line that 'They can fight over it all when I'm gone, because I won't be here to see it!'?

Making a Will is the best way to think about the legacy (in the widest sense) that you will leave and how your worldly wealth will be settled – well or badly, it's your choice.

Please choose the right executors: they should be people you trust and whom you can rely upon to do the job, and to do it well. They should get on, but need not be close. Best ask them too, so it doesn't come as a surprise from which they recoil, leaving no one to do the job.

Your funeral, sadly currently a shadow of pre-Covid, too needs careful thought. The Victorians would have been mortified at the utilitarian process of the last year; certainly, no paid mourners, as in *Oliver Twist*.

Think about whether you want cremation or burial. The former requires two doctors to certify your death as there are no remains to be dug up later (maybe, I have watched too much 'Silent Witness' and other police dramas?). Organ donation rules have changed and there is now an opt-out (rather than an opt-in) system. Transplant surgeons want healthy young organs, so those of octogenarians are generally surplus to requirement.

Prepaid funeral plans mean that no one can

skimp on your funeral and pocket the funds after your death. There are usually extras and someone makes money out of selling them but they have their appeal. Make sure you go to a reputable independent undertaker to get yours!

Digital assets can easily be overlooked. Keeping paper records is considered safer, generally, than electronic data; so, hand a sheet with the information including passwords, to your solicitor to be stored with your Will. Regular updating is important.

If it could be a problem, rather than ignore the risk of a claim against your estate, grasp the nettle and discuss it with your solicitor. Careful noting of your thinking and background are all useful defensive ammunition, should a dispute arise. Making a Will with a good and specialist solicitor is eternally fundamental, but especially where there is an inheritance dispute waiting in the wings.

And remember, in the meantime, enjoy your time on earth!



Miranda Marshall  
Director - Hayes + Storr  
[miranda.marshall@hayes-storr.com](mailto:miranda.marshall@hayes-storr.com)

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## Town Council promotes less wasting, more sharing with Hunstanton Community Fridge proposal

Community Fridges were first tested in Spain and Germany where they are often called 'solidarity' or 'honesty' fridges. They give local businesses and residents the opportunity to donate surplus perishable food which is then available for anyone in the community who needs it to take. Referrals are not required and the fridge provides access to fresh food without any stigma.

There are currently fourteen Community Fridge projects operating in Norfolk and the Town Council in Hunstanton sees this as an opportunity to help tackle food waste and to assist residents who are in need.

It is a shameful fact that in the UK we throw away far too much, the average family throws away £60 worth of food every month. That's a whopping £720 per year! However, at the same time, and especially during the current pandemic, some people in the east of England are really struggling financially. The survey consultants, Censuswide, on behalf of Hubbub\* reported in April 2020 that 26.7% of families said they were having to restrict the amount of snacks children eat so they don't run out of food, 22.2% reported shortages of fresh fruit and vegetables and 41% shortages of eggs.

The council is hoping to recruit volunteers who have a few hours a week to spare and would like to help out the local community. Activities would include recording food coming into the fridge, checking and keeping the fridge clean, maintaining temperature check records and assisting members of the public. Full training would be given. If you would like to volunteer for this project please contact the Town Clerk (contact details below).

Of course food donations are key and the council is asking local businesses and retailers within the food industry who would be interested in donating food for the community fridge to please get in touch with the Town Clerk.

"We need the support of local businesses to make this idea possible, especially the larger supermarket chains," said Cllr. Amanda Knight who brought the proposal to the council having been in contact with Hubbub.

If there is sufficient interest within the community it is hoped to have the fridge open in late Spring, or when current COVID restrictions have lifted to a level where the safety of volunteers and those involved can be assured.

Mayor Tony Bishopp said: "As the UK rebuilds from the impact of COVID-19 community fridges are evolving to help the UK meet a range of financial, social and environmental challenges including cutting food waste, promoting healthy eating, supporting people facing financial challenges and tackling loneliness.

The hope is that the Hunstanton Town Council community fridge will pave the way to a more sustainable approach to food insecurity, as well as being a gateway to other community services and activities that the council can provide."



\*Hubbub says: "We believe that to create positive environmental change at the scale and speed needed, we need to get everyone on board. That's why since 2014, we've been designing campaigns that inspire ways of living that are good for the environment."

To help households cut food waste Hubbub has also joined forces with Norfolk and Suffolk councils to launch #FoodSavvy, a campaign to promote the simple and easy things that we can all do to make sure that food avoids the bin. The ambition is to cut waste by 20% by 2025 in alignment with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

The Town Clerk's contact details are: 01485 532402 or email townclerk@hunstantontowncouncil.gov.uk

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# Round the bend with Dean Baker

'Spring is just around the corner' or 'that's private'

I really can't think of what to write in this month's article. To make matters worse it's already 2 days late. Which means it's Valentine's Day.

Instead of making the current Mrs B copious cups of tea, stoking the wood burner and occupying the littles while we watch 'Brief Encounter' I am gazing listlessly into the laptop screen.

I ask Mrs B if she has any ideas for this article. She flaps her arms wing like, before alighting on the remote and pausing the film.

"What is it???"

"Would like another chocolate?"

"No because then I won't have any room for my cake!"

"Any water problems you'd like to discuss?"

"Rude!! you should never ask things like that. NHS 111 or ask the pharmacist if you need advice."



Which I definitely don't. Now - please go away, it's the bit at the Station."

Oh dear, I think that's an ongoing communications dichotomy! I meant to ask if there were any particular plumbing problems Mrs B could think of during lockdown.

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servicing, if it's been 12 months or more. Of course, if it's an emergency you should call. And if it's not an emergency but a plumbing problem is making your life that bit harder then do call. We need all the help we can get right now!

I hope that by the time you read this Spring has arrived and the world has lifted even just a little.

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## HEADS UP!

Daniel Sharman, DNS Computer Services

This month we are highlighting yet more online scams which seem to be doing the rounds. Many of the scams we have seen recently are attempting to exploit the current coronavirus situation in various respects.

Please read through the following list, and if you see anything similar hit your inbox, you will be ready to delete, ignore and spread the word.

1: HMRC Coronavirus income support loans/grants.

We have seen quite a few examples over the past few weeks of emails claiming to be from the government/HMRC etc, offering loans and/or grants to support individuals and businesses during the Coronavirus pandemic.

If you receive an email like this, it is a good idea to treat it with caution. The chances are, it will be a scam. And whilst the HMRC income support scheme does involve some email communication, it will always refer you to the proper gov.uk website for any procedures.

If you are in any doubt, and feel that it could be a legitimate message, It is always best to call them before doing anything.

2: Vaccination offers.

With the fantastic progress in vaccination picking up pace across the U.K., it has become a hot platform for scammers.

We have seen many emails, professing to be from the NHS or the WHO, which say that your vaccination is ready for you and that you need to 'Apply Here'

This is not how the vaccinations are booked, so if you receive such a message, whether it be via Email, Text etc, it is highly likely to be a scam, which in due course will request personal information to be entered.

3: Post Lockdown Travel offers.

With the vaccines being rolled out and the thought of lockdown being relaxed at the forefront of our minds, one of the most enticing topics is holidays. Sadly, the scammers have also cottoned on to this and there are currently lots of spoof websites and emails going around offering great deals and availability on various holidays. They can look very convincing and are very hard to distinguish from the real thing.

Our advice is to contact a reputable travel agent on the phone, they will be able to tell you what you need to know without the risk of stum-



Daniel Sharman

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Tapping Close, Snettisham

bling across a scam site, once you have spoken with them and they have verified their website address and you are happy that it is genuine, you can then carry on online.

4 'Pets for Sale' scams

Another area which has been exploited is pet sales. We have been informed of numerous attempts, via spurious websites, to get people to buy a pet, when the pet doesn't actually exist. Generally the advert will say that viewings in person are not possible due to coronavirus restrictions, and will also require a deposit, which is lost when you realise that there is no pet and that it was a scam. Again, always seek to talk to a reputable breeder over the phone before parting with any money.

5 TV License renewal scams

Lastly, and not related to corona virus, are TV license related scams.

These emails were rife a few years ago, but have suddenly taken off again and have become very common. Usually via your email inbox, a message will come through from 'TV Licensing Authority' or similar. Usually stating that your TV license is about to expire and that you can renew it easily using the following link... again, these are a scam and are designed to get you to hand over information.

If you have any questions about any of the above, or would like to know more about maximising your security online, please contact Dan or Carrie at DNS Computer Services on 07554 018307 or email [dan@dnscomputerservices.co.uk](mailto:dan@dnscomputerservices.co.uk)

## A seasoned mortgage adviser's top tips when buying new or moving home

### Allen Tomas & Co

Whether you are looking to purchase your first home or move to another property, Rachael Smith our Senior Mortgage Adviser here at Allen Tomas & Co Financial Management, would recommend speaking to a professional as early in the process as possible. Taking advice at an early stage could save you a lot of headache, and money, down the line.

The first part of the process is to look at your financial situation and complete 'affordability checks' to work out the maximum loan amount available to you. This is essential when assessing your property budget. There are many variables to consider here such as; dependents; credit commitments; the income you receive; and, how different lenders may assess the varying elements of income.

If you are moving home, a great starting point is to complete a 'cost of moving analysis'. This considers the equity in your current property, calculates an estimate of costs involved and establishes how much you could have available as a deposit towards your next home. Costs to be considered include: estate agency fees for selling your current property; solicitor costs for both buying and selling; and, any stamp duty due on your next home.

Getting your house on the market as quickly as possible is also key, as estate agents

are highly unlikely to accept your offer on a property until you are 'positioned to buy'. This may mean having the funds in place ready to go, or having an offer already accepted on your own property and it being marked as 'sold subject to contract'. It is a common misconception that looking for your next property before listing your own is the natural order to follow, and this is often the reason a dream home slips away.

Once these steps have been taken then comes the time to begin the property search in earnest. A good Mortgage Adviser should have a sound knowledge of the estate agency sector and be able to assist with assessing and implementing your mortgage needs as well as providing invaluable tips on how to negotiate and get the right property for you.

Once you have found your new home, completing your mortgage application quickly follows. Having an experienced adviser makes this process much easier, and an independent adviser, like Rachael, is not restricted in any way to specific lenders and will have access to the whole market, getting the best deal for you. They will know what each lender is looking for, assuring your application can pass through the underwriting stage a lot smoother.

If you are looking to move home or purchase your first property Rachael, Senior Mortgage Adviser at Allen Tomas & Co can



help you. We offer an initial meeting with no charge and no obligation to proceed. Call or email her on 07957357212 or rachael@allentomasfinancial.co.uk



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# Dates & Deadlines! A NEW TAX YEAR

Supplied by Kathryn Gigg, Chartered Accountants, Hunstanton  
FROM MARCH INTO APRIL 2021

## 1 March 2021

**VAT:** domestic reverse charge introduced for the construction industry

## 2 March 2021

**Self Assessment:** 5% penalty imposed on 2019/20 income tax, CGT and Class 2 and 4 NIC not paid by today. The penalty can be avoided if a time to pay arrangement is agreed in advance.

## 31 March 2021

**Capital allowances:** first-year allowances for low-emission cars expire.

**VAT:** businesses that deferred their VAT payments in the period from 20 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 must pay the accumulated VAT by this date if not opting into the VAT deferral new payment scheme.

**Company tax:** final date for reclaim of tax paid by a close company on a loan to a participator if loan repaid during the financial year ended 31 March 2017.

**Corporation Tax:** returns for accounting periods ended 31 March 2020 should reach HMRC.

**ATED:** deadline to amend returns and pay any outstanding tax for the year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

## 1 April 2021

**Employers:** new national minimum wage rates apply.

**Stamp duty land tax, land and buildings transactions tax and land transaction tax:** residential thresholds return to normal.

**VAT:** rate returns to 20% from 5% in the hospitality industry.

**MTD for VAT:** digital links required in first VAT return period starting on or after 1 April 2021.

## 5 April 2021

**NIC:** deadline to pay voluntary Class 2 or Class 3 NIC for 2014/15.

**Last day of the 2020/21 tax year:** various tax claim and elections deadlines:

**Personal tax:** deadline for electing to transfer (part of) the married couple's allowance from husband to wife, or withdraw such an election, for 2021/22.

**CGT:** last day to make disposals to use the 2020/21 CGT exemption.

**CGT:** deadline to claim that an asset became of negligible value or a loan to a trader became irrecoverable in 2018/19.

**IHT:** deadline for utilising Inheritance Tax exemptions for 2020/21 (and any excess from 2019/20).

**NIC:** deadline for claiming exception from Class 4 NIC for 2021/22 where the same earnings are subject to Class 1 NIC.

**NIC:** deadline to reclaim Class 1 NIC mistakenly paid in 2019/20 on earnings that should have been categorised as self-employed.

**Pensions:** deadline to make a contribution to qualify for tax relief in 2020/21.

## 6 April 2021 FIRST DAY OF THE 2021/22 TAX YEAR

**Employers:** van benefit charge reduced to zero for vans that produce zero carbon emissions.

**NIC:** National Insurance holiday introduced for employers of UK Armed Forces veterans in their first year of civilian employment.

## 8 April 2021

**VAT:** from this date HMRC will no longer accept VAT returns through eXtensible Markup Language (XML) software.

## 19 April 2021

**Employers:** deadline to make a final payroll report for 2020/21 using either a full payment submission (FPS) or employer payment summary as appropriate. After this date, a year-to-date FPS is used to report payments from the 2020/21 tax year.

## 30 April 2021

**ATED:** deadline to submit returns and pay the tax for the year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. If a relief applies, this is also the deadline to submit a relief declaration return.

**Corporation Tax:** returns for accounting periods ended 30 April 2020 should reach HMRC.

**Self Assessment:** further late filing penalties apply to outstanding



2019/20 tax returns. For returns filed online after today, automatic £10 daily penalties apply. For returns filed on paper, the further penalty is the greater of £300 or 5% of the tax showing on the return.

**Mrs K H Gigg FCA**

**N.B. Article written in February 2021**

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

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# A Page from the Sage

Well, here we are again with some fact, fiction and squite from the Sage, for the March 2021 issue of Town and Around.

## The Black Horse

As many of you know, I like writing stories about local public houses. This little story is about a public house that stood by the road between Burnham and Ditchwell (Titchwell), it was called the Black Horse and was owned by Bullard's of Norwich, as well as the public house there was a stable and out offices, also a general retail shop, butcher shop and barn. The first landlord was Cornelius Bull from 1831 to 1841 then I cannot find the name of any other landlord until William Potter took it over in 1865; he was accused on Monday the 28th of August 1865 of having the house open at illegal hours, evidence was so contradictory that perjury must have been committed by one side or the other, the case was adjourned for the production of other witnesses.

Then again on Monday 4th of May 1866 William Potter was back in court again, and he was committed to one month in prison for stealing a basket of cockles, value one shilling the property of Isaac Whiting.

Robert Tuck who was a bricklayer took over the Black Horse from 1879 to 1904, Henry Southerland was there in 1908 followed by Emma Southerland, a widow who was born in Victoria Australia, then another Henry Southerland took the pub on till 1925 followed by Arthur Pointer in 1925, William Gyton 1929, George Playford took it over in 1933 and the Black Horse was then listed as teas, refreshments, shopkeeper and apartments. By 1949 Sidney Elderkin was the landlord, then on the 13th October 1958 the Black Horse was closed down and the building was then sold.

The Black Horse over the years seems to have had different locations, in 1841 its location is High Street, in 1891 the location is Main Street; I take this to be locations in Staith where the street names were changed. I would just like to thank 'Norfolk Public Houses' for this information.

## Swimming Pools

Once again I see where a school swimming pool has been closed down and is to be used for another purpose. It is not long back when the pool at Smithdon was taken out of use; all children should be taught to swim, at one time many schools had their own swimming pool though some were small and others had outdoor pools. When I was eleven years old I went from the primary school at Dersingham to the St George's Secondary Modern School at the top of Dods Hill Dersingham. During the summer term each class would be taken by bus (Houchens) once a week to be taught to swim in the Blue Lagoon swimming pool at Hunstanton. It was a large pool, I am not sure

by  
*Dick Melton*  
01485 535658

of the length or breath but I am sure someone will tell me; there were diving boards one end and a water slide, paddling pool and a water fountain the other end. The changing rooms had a flat roof which you could get up to and sunbathe. I could already swim when the school started taking us as I like many others had learned to swim in the Wolferton and Snettisham shingle pits, but when you went with the school you got your swimming certificates and I still have mine.

The Blue Lagoon was opened in 1927 and was demolished in 1967 due to lack of maintenance, it was only forty years old. In 1984 the Oasis was built but it was nothing like the Blue Lagoon that was sadly missed. I say again, every child should have the facilities to be able to be taught to swim.

## Fishermen

Next are tales from old fishermen. A few years back when there was still a lot of the old fishermen about, it was a dark September night on the beach and Fred Turrell and Percy Richardson were drawing the shore for sea trout (the salmon as they called them), they once caught over one hundredweight of trout in one night, Percy's family had fished the beach since 1775 and he could smell the fish. The trout came on the beach to roll in the shingle and rid themselves of sea lice, they never knew one to be caught on a rod and line although feeding on sand eels, whitebait and the like.

After dark 150 yards of net would be loaded into the boat shot of the stern and then rowed round in a semi-circle and hauled ashore. Trout up to twelve pounds, flat fish, mackerel, tope, anything might be in it, but more often nothing, and when the net was dragged ashore, the fish shinning white, it was worth every minute of it, cold hard work, fishing the flood up, the ebb down.

Rowing back in the dawn, Barney Pells worked a 300 yard long net by himself and caught a 32 pound proper salmon off Brancaster in daylight. Breachloader Riches was the coxswain of the lifeboat, the Licensed Victualler, he took parties across the wash to



Skegness in his own boat. Having capsized in a thunderstorm he married a charming survivor.

Whisky was two pence a tot in those days and the pubs opened at 6.30am. The mussel scalps were inhabited by crabs in the summer, black duck and Brent geese fed there in winter. The days of oyster lays had gone, crabs came by the hundreds into the holes in the scarves at Holme and Titchwell, an occasional lobster under the engine of the crashed Wellington - the barley boat lies at the original entrance to Thornham harbour; coal was brought from Lynn and grain was exported from here. A floating mine after the First World War deterred her captain from further voyages.

On Titchwell beach, the brig 'Lord Caradon' came ashore with her topsail set and the fire ship burnt. Ringer used to draw the beach with a net drawn by a cart horse, the Normandy Landings were also rehearsed here.

Off Brancaster the terns screaming and diving for whitebait pursued by the mackerel shoal - 83 in two hours with a rod and line and silver paper wrapped round the hook, they were sold at one shilling each in a pub at Thornham; good sport, good pocket money. Some of them weighed two pounds and ought have made one shilling and six pence.

## Snow

Two or three weeks back we had a fall of snow on a Saturday morning, by the late afternoon on that day most of it had melted away for many young children it was the most snow they had ever seen. And in early February we had a lot of snow that lasted several days. I think the most snow I have ever seen was in 1947 when we had snow frost and blizzards nearly every day from the end of January to the beginning of March then when the snow melted a lot of people got flooded out, especially in the fens where rivers burst their banks. One thousand men were employed to close a breach in the bank of the Little Ouse near Hockwold. Thousands of acres of good fen farm land was flooded.

I lived at Dersingham in 1947 and the roads all around the village were blocked with snow drifts, so the farmers came out with their tractors and horses to pull snow ploughs so to keep the village roads open. I was only seven years old but with the help from parents and older children I never missed a day off school and those days we had to walk home and back for lunch as there was no school meals then days, it was one mile there and back to school. The next bad winter we had was in 1958; it started in February on a Tuesday morning, I drove an Austin 8 van for a butcher in Dersingham and when I started my round it was just sleet but then it turned to snow with a very strong wind. I was on my way to Anmer when I got stuck in a snow drift, so there was only one thing to do and that was to walk back

to Dersingham; I shall never forget that big bowl of boiling hot soup that the boss gave me when I got back! Next day we borrowed a tractor and towed the van back to Dersingham; the meat in the van was okay as it was all frozen.

From just after Christmas 1962 till March 1963 we had the coldest winter since 1740. We had a lot of snow but the worst thing was the sharp frosts. The frosts started in November 1962 then after Christmas we started to get snow and then the frost, the frost got very severe and at Heacham and Hunstanton the sea froze and people were walking out on the ice to pick up fish and lobsters that were frozen in the ice. In February 1963 when the water on the new cut froze a few enthusiasts cleared

away the snow on the river and organised an ice hockey match, the ice was on the water from Boxing Day 1962 till March 1963, when one of the heavy buoys went through the ice. A man measured it and it was 18 inches thick. We here in west Norfolk as you can see had a few bad winters with ice and snow, but 1947 was by far the worst.

### Staff Sergeant Freeman A Kilpatrick

In the Lynn News John Maiden suggests that one of the footpaths in the Esplanade Gardens should be named after Staff Sergeant Freeman A Kilpatrick USAAF who lived down South Beach Hunstanton with his wife and young son. During the devastating sea surge on 31st

January 1953 he rescued 18 people who lived around him. He, like Reis Leming, received the George Medal as did Fred Sadd from Great Yarmouth. There were also many other people who risked their lives that night; 19 years old Peter Beckerton who lived down Snettisham Beach with his mother and father and the rest of his family who went out in the height of the storm to rescue some neighbours and got drowned, he was awarded the Albert Medal (posthumous). As John Maiden rightly says none of these people who risked their lives and received a medal or those that sadly lost their lives on that tragic night should ever be forgotten.

That's it for now, keep safe.  
ALL THE BEST!

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## Hunstanton EyeCare blog

WE ARE OPEN! A phrase that many businesses are eager to shout. It's spring, and we are looking forward to new life in our beautiful countryside, and hope for a much healthier year in body, mind and spirit. So how can **Hunstanton Eyecare** give you a much needed boost?

### New Promotion for 2021

**Multiple pairs of spectacles are more affordable than you think**

We do tend think that our one pair of spectacles are expected to do everything perfectly. Although Transitions, light adapting lenses may be great for most occasions, a polarising lens for summer by the sea and sunny day driving will be far more effective against the glare. Recently, many of us have spent more time engrossed in books or on laptops, spectacles just for close-work can be more comfortable especially for digital gadget use. Sometimes we just want a colourful funky frame as well as the sensible look! But it's the cost, I hear you cry, and I don't disagree, but then there aren't many things we wear all day, everyday and are so essential to our lives as our specs.

We use Essilor for our lenses, almost exclusively, they invented varifocals over sixty years ago and are at the forefront of research and development in lens design and manufacture. I often compare spectacles to cars, you can get the top of the range, super shiny, super comfy, goes very fast, got all the gadgets model, or the standard model with choice of three colours, but they both get you from A to B. So we have choice in spectacle lenses, from the tailor-made varifocal, to the standard version, and everything in between, so come and see us. The promotion offers outstanding value for money, a flat fee for a second pair of varifocals and 50% off a second pair of single vision lenses.

As we hopefully emerge from lockdown restrictions, we can once again welcome all who need to see us concerning their eyesight, and those who need to replace or update their spectacles.

We look forward to seeing you soon

**Annette**



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# The cost of death: lifting the lid on funeral costs 2

**Richard Bird**

I don't often do follow up articles but as promised in T&A February edition and as expected a lot of people made themselves known and sent some of their comments and findings. These are just a few. There were so many contributions there will have to be a third article on this and associated matters.

## Firstly, a letter from David M

Further to your article, on 18th December 2020 the Competition & Markets Authority published a Final Report on its 'Funerals Market Investigation'. The full report can be read online. The CMA undertook this investigation due to 'serious concerns about the sector', which is unregulated.

At the root of the CMA's conclusions is the observation 'that most customers, unsurprisingly, find it extremely difficult to engage with the process of purchasing a funeral. This is not only because of the emotional vulnerability that will affect many in the period before and following the death of a loved one, but also because of numerous other factors that conspire against their ability to exercise choices in the way they would normally do when faced with such an important purchase'.

The CMA have recommended a number of 'sunlight' remedies 'which will support consumers when choosing a funeral director or crematorium and send a clear message to the sector that we consider its behaviour and activities should continue to be scrutinised'.

These remedies include:

An obligation for all funeral directors and crematorium operators to disclose prices in a manner that will help customers make more informed decisions.

That information must be provided in advance of a customer committing to purchase a service so that people know the price they will be charged and the key terms of business - for example if a deposit is required.

That customers should be made aware of any relevant business, financial and commercial interests of the funeral director, and that certain practices - such as payments which may incentivise hospitals, care homes or hospices to refer customers to a particular funeral director - will be prohibited.

A recommendation to government to establish an independent inspection and registration regime to monitor the quality of funeral director services as a first step in the establishment of a broader regulatory regime for funeral services.

From my own recent experience, I recommend the following.

Use a local and independent Funeral Director.

Arrange a meeting at their office to discuss the funeral arrangements and costs.

Itemise costs to understand exactly what is being paid for, affordability and relevance. "



Do not leave until you have a written quote for the agreed arrangements and costs.

After the funeral, if the arrangements were not as agreed or the service was below the stated standard, contact the Funeral Director to discuss.

If the invoice is different from the written quote contact the Funeral Director to discuss.

If you cannot achieve a satisfactory result, submit a formal written complaint.

In summary, acknowledging Funeral Directors provide an essential service, you are paying a lot of money and, like any major purchase, should ensure relevance, affordability and value for money

David M has made another worthy contribution regarding his local experience with Solicitors. This will be in another follow up story.

## Mrs M wrote this comment

I have read your article with interest and would like to add a few comments from my own experience. Please google David Bowie and how he arranged his own cremation, the company's that will arrange for collection of deceased, unattended cremation and arrange with family the collection of ashes. (Cost in 2017 £1500). It's also worth noting that the scattering of ashes is regulated. I chose the lifeboat association for a service they provide at sea with a short service which the family can observe and hear via walkie talkie, you give them a donation for this, and it is pre booked to coincide with tide table and their Sunday exercises/practise runs.

I have a pre-paid plan which means I choose how many funeral cars, hymns etc. I have ensured the provider, in my case Dignity, are registered with the FPA regulator which means that if my funeral plan provider goes bust, they will cover the cost not just of what I've paid but up to date cost when the time comes. Don't be one of the 90%+ that have not planned, get it right.

## Andrew M wrote

The article in the February magazine by Richard Bird set me thinking. Most people consider a funeral to be a necessary expense, but I am not so sure.

There is a lot of talk about being green, not being wasteful, re-using and recycling. It is probable that most of your readers will have signed up for all or some of their organs to be donated if a sudden tragedy befalls them.

When death occurs, the body is no longer of any use to that person, but it can still be a valuable resource in medicine for teaching, training or research.

The study of anatomy is one of the first, most basic and most important subjects studied by medical students. In the age of advanced computerised imaging techniques, it is as critical as ever for doctors to develop an understanding of the real anatomical relationships present in such images.

If you wish to bequeath your body for anatomical examination, you must make your wishes known during your lifetime. It is not something that can be done by your next of kin or executor.

For the PE postcode areas, the contact is The Designated Individual at the Human Anatomy Centre, Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience, Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3DY. Telephone 01223 333776. For Norwich postcode areas, the contact is Helen Sayer, Bequeathal Secretary, Anatomy Department, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ. Telephone 01603 591104

The procedure is covered by the Human Tissue Act of 2004 [www.hta.gov.uk](http://www.hta.gov.uk)

The donor needs to sign a form in the presence of a witness and should discuss the matter with their relatives and family doctor.

Whether or not the medical school is able to accept the body depends on a number of factors and there is no guarantee of acceptance. If the body is accepted, the Human Anatomy Centre is responsible for its preservation and safe keeping during examination and for the eventual cremation or burial.

Donation of your body is possibly the last act of a lifetime of generosity and may avoid the expense of a funeral. Something worth a consideration.

## In conclusion

In conclusion remind yourself of all the 'P's Poor preparation promotes poor performance.

We plan our education, careers, holidays, families. We try to prepare for many things in life. However, there is one thing that's certain to come and cannot be avoided its Death, don't be one of the 90%+ that have not planned.



# On the turf with Charles Joyce

There has been controversy in Ireland following the suspension of Charles Byrnes who's Solwhit locked horns several times in Grade 1s with Hurricane Fly, but when stepped up in trip went on to win the Stayers Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival in 2013. It seems the trainer had left his horse unattended in racecourse stables. The horse was subsequently laid on Betfair not to win the race, and duly was well beaten. Following the race where he was ridden by Kevin Broader who at the time was an inexperienced jockey claiming 7 lbs Viking Hoard tested positive for a banned substance, acepromazine. What surprised me was the fact there was no CCTV watching the stables at the racecourse when many studs have CCTV to assist the groom when a mare is foaling. And for the relatively small amount of money involved, someone was willing to put the life of a young inexperienced jockey at risk for just over £3,000. The authorities in Ireland the Irish Horse Racing Board have been forced to act and are to insist CCTV is introduced at all racecourse stables.

There are several similarities between this incident and the charges brought against Michelle Lugeon in a court in Brighton. Horses were doped including the 1961 Derby favourite, Pinturischio, trained by Noel Murless. In 1957, the then master of Warren Place at Newmarket had won the Oaks with Carozza for HRH Queen Elizabeth II. The gang were also involved in doping horses trained by Peter Cazalet among them some owned by the late Queen Mother. As no more than coincidence Miss Lugeon was in the dock the same day Mandy Rice Davies uttered the immortal words of "Well he would, wouldn't he" when responding to being told by defence counsel James Burge, Lord Astor had denied having sex with her. James Burge is said to be the inspiration for John Mortimer's Horace Rumpole in Rumpole of the Bailey.

Miss Lugeon was the mistress of Bill Roper. Around 30 years her senior Roper was himself a bookmaker and a gambler. The method used was for Miss Lugeon to arrive at the stables in a chauffeur driven car claiming to be a well heeled owner from France ( she was in fact Swiss so had no need to concoct an accent ) looking to place horses in England. She would ask for a stable tour which would usually be agreed and walk around the stables accompanied by either "chauffeur" Roper or another accomplice. The "chauffeur" would take careful note of the stable in which the target horses was kept. Usually the night before the race other gang members would break in and give a powerful sedative to the target horse, most often a favourite. Come the day of the race Roper ( he was a bookmaker ) would either offer higher odds against the horse winning or the gang would bet another horse in the race. Other times the gang approached stable lads. It's long been the case stable staff are usually poorly paid. The gang were not always successful. Trainer Fred Rimell had shown Miss Lugeon around his stables, noticing she had taken special attention of the stall where a grey horse was boxed. Afterwards Rimell saw her at a racecourse with people who he was unhappy with. As news was doing the rounds about a doping gang Rimell decided to act. He replaced the grey horse with another grey horse. The ringer grey was doped, but Nicolaus Silver won the 1961 Grand National beating the previous year's winner and well fancied Merryman II. No one was ever charged with the doping of Pinturischio, but it has long been held the gang were involved, not once but twice. Snuffy Lawler was a stable lad at Noel Murless's yard. He was asked to dope St Paddy, but refused and the horse went on to win the Epsom Derby. Later Lawler turned Queen's Evidence against the gang.

The gang got above themselves when in the last race at Lewes on 11th August 1962 Lucky Seven won a 3 horse race confined to three year old fillies that had not previously won a race. The opening show at the track had Countess at 4/6. She had finished 2nd in her previous race at Kempton ( it was a turf track at the time ). There was strong support for her from the racegoers, and she started the race at 4/11 as money was placed on her to win. Lucky Seven had an opening show of 7/4, but drifted in the betting out to 11/4. The other runner was Dear Jack who was 20/1. Dear Jack set the pace until around 300 yards from the finishing line when Lucky Seven took over winning easily by four lengths. The favourite Countess was said to look sleepy making no show trailing in last of the 3, another 10 lengths behind Dear Jack. Although Lucky Seven drifted on course there were some hefty bets

placed on her to win. A journalist from the Sporting Life enquired as to who had placed these hefty bets against the favourite who was well backed on track. It turned out it was Roper. The ruling body at the time was the Jockey Club. Patrician in their outlook the Jockey Club took some time to act on the information. It was as though the sport was for gentlemen and gentlemen would not cheat. The outcome was Roper and accomplices went before the Lewes Assizes on the day of those immortal words. Fortunately many stables now have CCTV. For the integrity of horse racing CCTV is now at UK racecourses and is to be introduced at all Ireland's racecourses.

More recently in the UK, Bryony Frost has been in the news for standing up to some of the male jockeys and trainers who were concerned over her riding against horses with which they were involved. Following one incident in September after was has been described as a heated exchange Bryony referred the matter to authorities the British Horseracing Board. This itself was a cause for upset to some with the comment what happens in the weighing room stays in the weighing room. Racing can be high octane and no doubt there will be times when something is said that would be better left unsaid, but it does seem that old habits die hard. Female jockeys are still looked upon as a liability causing many punters to avoid betting on horses they ride. Hayley Turner and Hollie Doyle were both champion apprentices riding against all comers and have each won Group 1 races. Rachel Blackmore has ridden Grade 1 winners. Julie Krone rode over 3000 winners in the USA and Michelle Payne won the top race in the Southern Hemisphere, the Melbourne Cup. The other reason some are against female jockeys is they are too "horsey". I am sure Lester Piggott would never have been judged on how he looks. But I don't know many lads who would turn down a date with Lizzie Kelly or Megan Nicholls, and don't let the missus catch you googling images of Leonna Mayor. Whatever the reason don't let the sex of the jockey put you off a horse, because If the horse is good enough the sex of the jockey will not stop it winning.

The Cheltenham Festival is upon as Willie Mullins has a host of "certs". It will mean the Irish horses, jockeys and stable staff being allowed to travel. As for the certs I can remember Willie Mullins having 4 good things one year. The first 3 duly won with Annie Power leading to the last hurdle where Ruby Walsh emphasised his nickname of "last fence Ruby", because it was at the last hurdle Ruby and Annie went their separate ways saving the bookmakers millions of pounds in accumulator liabilities. This year, the first race favourite is Appreciate It. He is a very good horse, but at a short price he looks one to take on, especially as he is a seven year old and only 2 of his age group have won this race in 50 years. I'll be looking for a 5 or 6 year old that won its last race. Shiskin is likely favourite for the Arkle Chase. I'd be inclined to keep him on side, but maybe look for an each/way bet with maybe Allmankind. The Champion Hurdle looks very interesting as unbeaten Honeysuckle puts her reputation on the line, taking on last year's winner Epatante. This does look like a duel between the 2 mares. A likely outsider maybe Song For Someone. The Mares Hurdle was once the preserve of Willie Mullins as he won the race 8 years on the bounce, but others are challenging him as he has won once in the last 4 years. The last race on Tuesday is the amateur race. This could be most in doubt as amateurs do not seem to qualify as elite sports men and women. On Wednesday, the three mile plus novice chase has Monkfish as a short priced favourite. His opponents are more difficult to assess. Royale Pagaille may give Willie Mullins's favourite a run for his money if he turns up, but he is more likely to take on the more experienced chasers in Friday's Gold Cup. Envoi Allen is another that should give a good account of himself, if he shows up. But he is likely to wait for Thursday's novice chase where Shan Blue could run take him on. The two miles Champion Chase looks another Willie Mullins benefit with Chacun Pour Soi, but Nubra Nege could make the places. The last race on Wednesday is the bumper. I'll be looking for a five year old trained by Willie Mullins that won its last race, and will include Eileendover. Pam Sly's filly is a granddaughter of her 1,000 Newmarket Guineas winner, Speciosa. On Friday, Al Boum Photo goes for the hat trick, hoping to be the first horse to do it since Best Mate with only Arkle, Cottage Rake and Golden Miller having done

the treble since the inauguration of the Gold Cold in 1924. Willie Mullins runner has a good chance to complete the hat trick. If I were to take him on I'd be looking at A Plus Tard for Henry De Bromhead. There has to be a doubt about whether he will run here or earlier at the meeting, but he did win the big chase at Leopardstown over Christmas which has been a good trial for the race. Other than Native River who won in 2018 only Kauto Star who remains the one horse to regain the Gold Cup no horse that has been beaten in the Gold Cup has won the race subsequently for more than 25 years. Come the day of the race I'm reasonably sure I'll have a small bet on Bryony of Frodon and whatever Rachel Blackmore is on. But this is not a race where double figure price winners are abundant with just Lord Windermere @ 20/1 in 2014 and Al Boum Photo @ 12/1 in 2019 winning this century.

Whatever, happens remember the golden rule of punting. Pay the bills first and under no circumstances bet if you can not afford to lose, because even the best professional punters lose more often than they win.

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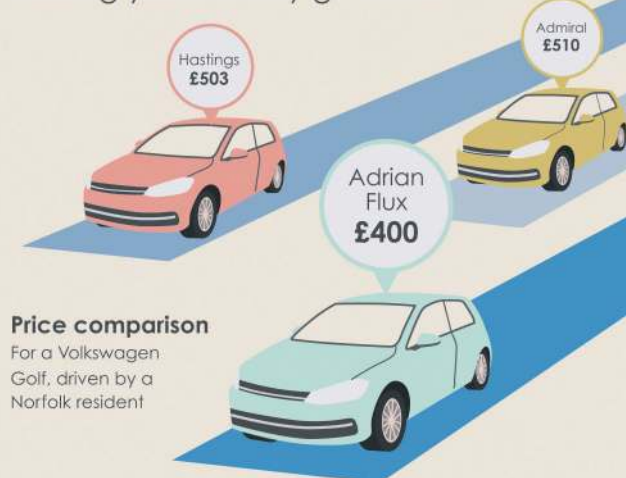
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# CONSULTATION ON WHITE-TAILED EAGLE REINTRODUCTION LAUNCHED IN WEST NORFOLK

A public consultation is being launched by a West Norfolk farm regarding the possibility of reintroducing White-tailed Eagles to the area. The consultation is seeking the views of local people and interests to assess whether the proposals are feasible.

The proposals form part of national efforts to reinstate White-tailed Eagles to England, which began with the release of birds on the Isle of Wight in 2019. Under the proposed plan, 6-12 juvenile birds per year would now be released in Norfolk over a five year period with the aim of establishing a breeding population sometime between 2026 and 2029.

A viable population on the East coast centred around West Norfolk would complement existing populations in Scotland, Ireland and the South of England, as well as the thousands of birds in Europe, including in the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany.

Also known as the sea eagle, the White-tailed Eagle is a native bird of prey, and the UK's largest, with a wingspan of 8ft (2.4m). It was hunted to extinction in Britain in the early twentieth century.



*Photo credit: Nick Edwards*

The reintroduction proposals are being brought forward by the Ken Hill Estate and the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation, a conservation charity also involved in the ongoing South of England reintroduction project centred around the Isle of Wight.

Dominic Buscall, manager at the Ken Hill Estate, explained the motivation for the project. "We are bringing forward these proposals not only to reinstate this native bird to its former range, but also to inspire people with nature and drive wider nature recovery in East Anglia".

Roy Dennis who has been instrumental in the recovery of the species in the UK, said, "This is the next logical step to restore this magnificent bird to England and compliments efforts across Europe to help the species. The initial results from the Isle of Wight project, and evidence from across lowland Europe shows that this is a bird that can live successfully alongside people".

Ken Hill and the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation have engaged significantly to date

with relevant landowners, farmers and countryside organisations and are now also seeking to hear the views of local people.

Dominic Buscall said, "It is vitally important that we give local people and interests a meaningful opportunity to have their say on these proposals - that is why we are launching the public consultation and asking people to learn more about the project and take our survey".

For the reintroduction to go ahead, the project must receive approval from Natural England, the Government's wildlife licensing body, which will assess the views of local people and interests alongside the environmental merits of the proposal.

Over 20 landowners, farmers, and countryside organisations have already given their support for the project. Including Norfolk's leading pig farmer who said "we support Ken Hill's White-Tailed Eagle project and hope it goes ahead."

Steve Rowland, Area Manager at the RSPB for Norfolk and Lincolnshire, said: "The RSPB are strongly supportive of the principle of restoring White-tailed Eagles to their former range and so we welcome this proposal by the Ken Hill Estate and the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation to investigate the feasibility of a reintroduction to west Norfolk and this public consultation is an important next step in the process".

The feasibility of a reintroduction in Norfolk is increased by the ongoing work on the Isle of Wight project, where the birds have not troubled livestock or fisheries as once feared by some, but instead remained elusive, often preying fish in The Solent. This corroborates evidence from the continent, where thousands of sea eagles live alongside people, and often around farming systems.



*Photo Credit Ainsley Bennett*

The Isle of Wight project is being run by the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation in partnership with Forestry England, and had backing from the RSPB as well as then Secretary of State at DEFRA Michael Gove. A majority of local residents supported the project, with 76% in favour.

Sea eagles are opportunistic predators with a preference for fish, waterbirds, and for carrion. A juvenile sea eagle released on the Isle



*Photo credit: Wild Ken Hill*

of Wight spent over five months in west Norfolk since August 2020, as recorded by its satellite tag. The bird was recorded feeding on gulls and from deer carcasses and other carrion, and there were no recorded instances of it preying livestock.

Ken Hill was chosen for the proposed reintroduction because of its coastal location as well as its quiet woodlands, which provide ideal nesting spots. Evidence from previous reintroductions, including the ongoing Isle of Wight project indicates that the young birds would explore widely in their first two years and then settle to breed within 50 km of the release site in West Norfolk once they are at least four-five years of age.

The Roy Dennis Foundation tweeted on February 8th 2021: "Exciting news - 2019 male White-tailed Eagle, G393, returned home to the Isle of Wight this afternoon after exactly 17 months away. Here is a map of his travels, during which the satellite tag has logged 71,036 GPS points and he has flown a total of 4904 km."



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## Thaxters plant of the month

Wendy Warner  
Grow Your Own Tomatoes

Tomatoes are one of the simplest crops for "Growing Your Own" at home and you should be thinking about starting them off now. Just a couple of plants will reward you with an abundance of sweet-tasting fruits in the summer, and you can choose from various colours, shapes and sizes which can be appreciated by children and adults alike. Some will grow in a greenhouse or tunnel others outside and some varieties need staking and tying whilst bush varieties need no support and can even be grown in hanging baskets.

Tomatoes will germinate quite easily from seed. To grow from seed, they will need to be started indoors on a warm windowsill in pots or trays of seed and cutting compost. Transplant into individual pots when the seedlings are about 4-6" tall. If you are only intending to grow a couple of plants, you will now be able to buy tomato plants in small pots to grow on. In unheated greenhouses, planting can usually take place in April or early May. For outside growing, plant in the ground or in pots in early summer. Grow plants at least 40cm (16in) apart and water in well. Tomatoes will always benefit from the warmest spot you've got.

All tomatoes like a good depth of soil to grow in, so use at least a 10" pot, this can be either plastic or terracotta. If growing in a grow bag, use tomato growpots; these are a pot that you cut into the top of the growbag and then fill with additional compost to plant the tomato in, allowing them to grow longer roots. I would never recommend growing tomatoes directly in a growbag, especially not the budget ones – it would be like putting them on a diet for their lifetime!

Tomatoes should be kept moist but never waterlogged and require good ventilation. Pots and grow-bags require frequent, consistent watering. If you allow the soil or compost to dry out and then flood it the change in water content will cause the fruit to crack; always aim to keep plants evenly moist. All tomato plants will benefit from regular feeding, using a high-potash tomato feed such as "Tomorite" once the first fruit start to set.

Pruning and training depends on how your chosen tomato variety naturally grows. Cordons will require support with a cane and then tying the central stem to this as it grows taller. Pinch out sideshoots that appear between the leaf and main stem.

Bush varieties need less maintenance, just tie plants loosely to a small cane, don't remove side shoots as this will reduce cropping. Bush tomatoes produce compact plants with numerous short sideshoots that terminate in a cluster of flowers. Start picking when the fruit is ripe and fully coloured with the stalk still attached.

Here are just a few varieties of tomato plants which will be on sale at Thaxters Garden Centre this Spring: Shirley: Cordon variety, high yielding, good flavour, good disease resistance. Moneymaker: Cordon variety, early fruiting, high yield, good outdoors. Alicante: Cordon variety, heavy cropping, good flavour, good outdoors. Gardener's Delight: Cordon, cherry variety, high yielding, good flavour, good outdoors. Sun Baby: Cordon, golden cherry variety, high yielding, good flavour. Super Marmande: Semi-bush, beefsteak variety, good flavour. Sweet 'n' Neat: Bush, cherry variety, very compact suitable for windowboxes and small pots, sweet flavour. Tumbler: Bush/cascading, early, cherry variety, sweet flavour, high yielding. Plant tomatoes this Spring and enjoy as part of your five-a-day throughout the summer!



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# Nature Notes with Roger

## Signs of hope and healthy hedges

I am writing this on Candlemas Day, the day in the church calendar which marks the dividing point between the season of Christmas and that of Lent and Easter. Traditionally on Candlemas, candles are brought to the local church where they are blessed and then used for the rest of the year; for Christians these candles can also serve as a symbol of Jesus Christ, who referred to Himself as the Light of the World. It also happens to be the time of year when snowdrops may first appear – hence they are sometimes referred to as Candlemas Bells. It seems most appropriate therefore that some early snowdrops and aconites have appeared in our local churchyard; a small patch against the west wall facing the early morning sun. These could be seen themselves as a symbol of light and hope in the rather dark and difficult times we are experiencing at the moment.

I have noticed other early signs of Spring recently. Small leaf buds have begun to form on the Beech trees, Great Tits have started their two tone “tee cher”, “tee cher” calls, and hares are busy chasing each other around the fields. On one of my local walks, four Skylarks rose from the ground and proceeded to chase one another in a fast aerial flight, while one began a small snippet of song. It was not a full spring rendition, just a short practice run, a bit like an orchestra warming up before the full performance is given later on. Many birds will do this, as if they are aware that come the spring their vocal chords may not be at their best so need a few weeks trial. The local Robin, however, has been singing most of the winter, as these birds can be heard right through the year, except maybe in late summer when they are busy feeding young and beginning their moult. The winter song, however, is a pale reflection of the full-throated spring one delivered on the top of some song post, being a rather sad muted version often coming from the depths of a bush.

This is also the time of year when mechanical hedge cutters have been busy. Most of the hedges I have seen on short drives around have been trimmed neatly, but on one of my usual walks along the edge of a field, the hedge boundary had been “attacked” by the cutter, leaving the larger branches splintered and jagged, the smaller ones torn and shaved so roughly that they stood at odd angles with bare ends, and all the cut branches left on the ground. It looked distinctly like a severe case of vandalism. This made me think not only about the importance of hedgerows in our countryside, but also about the importance of their management.

Hedges are a haven for wildlife, providing food, shelter and nesting opportunities for many woodland and farmland birds, as well as for numerous mammals and insects. They also act as rural highways along which the wildlife can travel, link up and spread out to form other populations. All this can happen best in hedges with a wide diversity of species, which will be the case with our older ones. A hedgerow acts as a wind barrier reducing soil erosion and water run-off, and also encourages natural pest predation. Hedges are a link with our past; there are very few ancient hedges left now, but some can be quite old. In the 1970’s Dr. Max Hooper devised a fairly reliable formula for ageing a hedge. They can be roughly dated by counting the number of tree and shrub species found in a 30 metre stretch, that number being the age of the hedge in centuries. I have walked footpaths alongside hedges with field maple, hazel and ash trees, along with blackthorn, wild rose and hawthorn, so these could be up to 500 years old. They make me wonder what the landscape was like at the time and who walked the track all those years ago – a visual present line to my past imagination.

Between the 1950’s and 1980’s approximately 250,000 miles of hedgerow were grubbed up in a drive to enlarge fields or join them together in order to maximise the acreage of crops that could be grown. Thankfully in 1997 regulations came in to protect older hedges, and more and more landowners and farmers have since planted many miles of them, often with incentives to encourage them to do so. It is important, however, to maintain and manage hedgerows, and to achieve diversity they should be trimmed in rotation and no more than



Photo: Town and Around

once every two to three years at varying heights. The Norfolk Wildlife Trust and Norfolk Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group have come together to promote the value of our hedges and their best practice management, aiming to help farmers and landowners by providing free management advice on how to have healthy hedgerows which will focus on their value to wildlife but also benefit the environment and provide financial benefits to farmers.

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# Ringed Plovers at Snettisham and Titchwell – Plovers in Peril

Hayley Roan, Senior Sites Manager, RSPB North West Norfolk reserves.

The much-loved North Norfolk Coast has some of the largest areas of undeveloped coastal habitat in Europe, making it incredibly rich in wildlife throughout the year and protected at national and international level.

In the Spring and Summer many of our local beaches, including RSPB Snettisham beach, the beach between Snettisham and Heacham and the beach at RSPB Titchwell Marsh, are home to birds that nest on the ground. Ringed plovers are one of these species and are sadly suffering from significant population declines. The Norfolk ringed plover breeding population has declined by 70% in just 30 years with just 123 pairs recorded in 2018.

Ringed plovers do not make a traditional bird's nest of twigs and vegetation in trees, scrub or grassland. Instead they make a shallow scrape in the sand or shingle on the beach to lay their eggs. Their eggs and chicks have evolved to camouflage with their environment making it difficult for us to see them. This can make eggs and chicks vulnerable to being trampled. The birds are also easily disturbed and, with more people using the beaches, it's important we all know what to look out for to help give these birds the best possible chance of breeding success.

On the beaches at RSPB Snettisham and Titchwell and, thanks to funding from King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council and with kind permission from the Ken Hill Estate, at Snettisham beach to Heacham South Beach, you will see post and rope cordons from March to August while the birds are breeding and raising their young. These cordons protect nests and provide protected space for birds to settle and lay. You will also see signs letting you know where to walk, fly a kite or let your dog off the lead, for example, without causing disturbance. Additionally, (and subject to Covid-19 guidance) our staff and volunteers will be out on the beaches talking to visitors about these special birds and keeping an eye on their nests; do come and say hello!

### What can you do to help?

With your help we can ensure these beach nesting birds rear their next generation. These birds need space to breed undisturbed so a few simple changes to our behaviour could make all the difference:

1. Pay attention to the signage located along the coast signalling beach nesting birds are present.
2. Keep away from the cordons on the beach; they are there to protect beach nesting birds from being trampled.
3. Walk along the water's edge or, even better, on the coastal path



Ringed plover chick - credit Les Bunyan

where it exists.

4. Beach nesting birds use camouflage to keep eggs and chicks safe – watch where you place your feet!
5. Be aware of the birds' activity – do they appear agitated? If yes, carefully move away, retracing your footsteps to avoid trampling a nest.
6. Please keep dogs on leads and under close control. Dogs are very frightening to ringed plovers and a bird will leave its nest if it sees a dog approaching.
7. Please don't leave or bury rubbish or food scraps on beaches as this may attract predators, or birds can become tangled up in rubbish.

If you think you can help further, we are looking for friendly people to join our volunteer Roving Rangers team (subject to Covid-19 guidance), particularly between Snettisham and Heacham. If you love talking to people about wildlife and would like to help us keep ringed plover nests safe in North West Norfolk, drop us a line at: [snettisham@rspb.org.uk](mailto:snettisham@rspb.org.uk).

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## Mudpies & Butterflies

with Louise Barby, Balanis Garden Design

*"It was one of those March days when the sun shines hot and the wind blows cold: when it is summer in the light, and winter in the shade."*

- Charles Dickens

With the cold winds and snow last month, you may not have been inspired to get out in the garden. Lets hope for some dry, sunny days to motivate us.

### Bare root plants & perennials

March is the last opportunity for bare root purchases, including trees, roses and hedging. These can be purchased very frugally and planted out on a dry, frost free day.

With existing plants, if you start to see a bald spot in the centre of a

clump of perennials, lift the whole clump, tease apart with two forks placed back to back. Take only the strongest and healthiest divisions.

### Weeds

If you haven't been out in the garden this year, make this month the big clear-up. Dig out weeds by the root or hoe small seedlings. Cut perennials close to the base. A bit of work now will save so much time through the summer months.

### Mulch

Once you've cleared the weeds, mulch the area with a good mix of compost and manure. Or if the soil is good quality already, try a bark mulch. This will suppress weeds, but also ensure the ground does not dry out too readily in late spring and summer.

### Shady borders?

A lot of us have a shady area to our garden or terrace. It can be hard to know what may suit the area best. Try some shade loving bulbs, such as bluebells and snowdrops. Shrubs such as *fatsia Japonica* and *skimmia*, will add colour and structure, with mop head hydrangea adding the wow factor in mid summer.

### Sowing time

There is lots that you can sow directly in the ground or in small pots if you prefer. Assuming the temperature is above 6 degrees, try some annuals like cornflowers or annual climbers such sweet peas, purple bells (*rhodochiton astrosanguineus*) or morning glory (*ipomoea*), all look amazing mid summer on an obelisk, or simply grown up a 'wigwam' of pea sticks. Don't be put off by the exotic sounding names. These climbers are really easy to grow from seed and their beautiful flowers will bring you such joy over the summer months.

What ever you decide to do in your garden this March, do something that you know will make you smile, lifting your spirits when it grows and flourishes.

Happy gardening !

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by Steve Penn



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# A good time for new property sign ups

This month I would like to start by thanking property owners who have been in touch. We are delighted to see so many of you have decided to join us here at Pass the Keys to fully manage your second home or investment property. With West Norfolk seeing an exceptionally well run vaccine roll out, we are sure that we will soon be in a position to welcome tourists and share with them the outstanding natural beauty of Norfolk. This confidence and optimism is shared too with our visitors, over the course of February we have seen a big increase in booking enquiries ready for stays later in the year. Now is proving to be a good time too for new property sign ups, by ensuring listings are live and ready to go for when lockdown is eased.

The question I am asked more often than not is, no surprise, How much is my property worth on the Holiday let market? With holiday letting it isn't always a straightforward answer. Factors to consider during pricing a property include location, size, beds, leisure space, level and quality of furnishing and fittings and most importantly previous guest reviews. Having strong 5 Star reviews can



considerably alter a property's holiday let valuation. This is just one reason why here at Pass the Keys we have a 24/7 Guest support team. They take on all tasks relating to the guest experience, answering enquiries, vetting guests, being on hand night and day in case your guest requires assistance and even chasing reviews for you following a guest booking. By providing this level of guest support we are well situated to deliver you your strong guest reviews and to in turn maximise the revenue potential of your

*Advertorial*

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# Wild in Westminster & West Norfolk

It's not considered very British to talk ourselves up. But the Covid vaccination programme is the biggest the NHS has ever run and hitting the target to offer first doses of vaccines to the top priority groups by mid-February is a significant achievement. Huge credit is due to everyone involved at Snettisham Surgery and the other coastal practices who helped deliver it, as well as the teams at St James Medical Practice, QEH, and the mass vaccination site at the Corn Exchange. More community and large-scale sites are planned including in North West Norfolk.

At the time of writing the Prime Minister's plan for the gradual easing restrictions is due to be published very soon. Even with the vaccine success there are still many priority groups to vaccinate as well as second jabs and we must avoid a stop-start approach. I hope that schools will reopen for all as the impact on education and wellbeing of closure is very significant. As the vaccination rollout continues, it is also important that our hospitality sector is given the certainty to plan for welcoming customers back in a managed way. Rest assured, I continue to make the case for the VAT cut and business rates holiday to be extended in the budget.

Parish Council meetings are something of an internet sensation thanks to Jackie Weaver and Handforth. In February, I joined Burnham Overly Parish Council's meeting (which was a well chaired and harmonious session I hasten to add) to talk about council tax and holiday lets as well as flooding.

The level of rainfall since Christmas has led to large scale flooding as the drainage systems have been unable to cope. This has led to deeply distressing situations for many people as the pressure on the sewer network has led to sewage bubbling up from manhole covers, getting into homes and gardens, and left them unable to use toilets. I've raised many constituent's cases with Anglian Water and the Environment Agency has allowed water to be pumped away. This is a last resort and rightly so given the impact of such action on our precious chalk streams.

Under the existing rules, second homeowners are generally liable for council tax, however, if the property is available for letting then it will be assessed for business rates. Around 96% of such properties qualify for Small Business Rate Relief which means they pay no business rates – and no council tax.

For genuine businesses this is fair enough. However there are concerns that some owners of properties are not genuine businesses and may be reducing their tax liability by declaring a property is available for let – it should be available for at least 140 days a year – but make little or no realistic effort to actually let it out. Councils then miss out on income and, importantly, parish councils are missing out on precept to support village activities.

In November 2018 the government consulted on proposals including requiring that property was actually let for a minimum number of days, rather than just being available. Strengthening the rules would help



**James Wild MP**

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

[james.wild.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:james.wild.mp@parliament.uk)

[www.jameswild.org.uk](http://www.jameswild.org.uk)

@jamesowild

ensure that only owners of properties that are genuine business are subject to business rates, rather than having to pay council tax.

Covid-19 has brought this issue once again into focus as those businesses will have received £10,000 cash grants from the government. A recent parliamentary question I asked revealed that the government is still considering the consultation. While it is understandable that Covid has put some issues on the backburner the grants paid out underline the need to bring forward changes.

Finally, while I am missing the Hunstanton Park Run and walking on the beach at least the new Hunstanton webcam means I can see it until once again I can enjoy the views.

## Borough Council News - Heacham, Sedgeford and Fring

Leader of Independent Group (now 16) Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

Spring is here again and all thoughts turn to budgets, personal, Parish, Borough, County and National.

I hope yours balances. It is becoming less likely for the last three above. As things stand, and at the time of writing, the Borough predicts a shortfall well in excess of £3million pounds in 2024/2025. The reasons are numerous, some are historical, pre COVID-19. Some are linked to COVID-19 though government has funded many losses. Some are delays and lack of clarity in government intentions about future funding for local government.

The Borough has three principal income streams. Fees and charges bring in over half of revenue, most of that is car parking charges. Over a quarter is from business rates retention which is due for reform. Council Tax brings in just 19%.

It is worth noting that most of the Council Tax you pay does not go to the Borough. 76.5% goes to County, 14% goes to the police, 2.8% to Parish Councils and around 7% to the Borough Council. The total will likely amount to £134.87 / month to an average band D tax payer and, of

this, £55 will have to be taken out to pay the Internal Drainage Boards for their work.

At present, to raise funds, Council Tax can go up – which it will within permitted limits year on year. Fees and charges can go up. Some of these will but not, at the time of writing, car park charges – it is felt by Cabinet that economic recovery would be hindered by increasing those.

The budget will be voted on, at Full Council, on February 25th so, by the time you read this you will know, perhaps, what is what. (Note. Figures given above may be incorrect, are based on proposals not agreed at the time of writing, and are subject to change – the broad picture is correct). The Independent Group is seeking ways to change how the budget can be managed differently in forthcoming years.

Watch the news for the Battle of St George's Guildhall. The Shakespeare's Guildhall Trust are akin to Robin Hood. The Borough is the Sheriff.

Planning news: Heacham again I'm afraid: The long-awaited major development between Cheney Hill and School Road is now supposed to have plans ready for May. AT SCHOOL ROAD itself, the developers who caused so



much distress a few years ago appear to have emerged from whence they were cast and are investigating whether to submit another application. Better news, new toilets at South Beach are still on the agenda.

Keep smiling, buy local and dust off the placards.

# Linking up

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

At the time of writing, flooding has temporarily knocked COVID from the top of people's concerns in my Division, particularly along the coast from Holme to Burnham Overy and inland to Burnham Market, Burnham Thorpe, North and South Creak. I have visited homeowners devastated by the damage to their properties and horrified by sewerage in their front rooms and gardens. At core, the problem is the same one that bedevils so much of local government: a steady salami-slicing of roles over the past 30 years so that it is difficult to determine who is responsible for specific issues. NCC is LLFA, or Local Lead Flood Authority; however, we have no real teeth, merely the job of cajoling a whole range of entities to co-operate. In Norfolk, there are 36 different bodies with some degree of responsibility for floods...Yes, 36! Additionally, of course, there are thousands of riparian owners who have responsibility for making sure water does not spill from their land.

So I am very pleased that we moved on quickly to appoint General The Lord Dannatt GCB CBE MC DL to chair the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance. To start with, there is a critical need to revisit Norfolk's Flood Risk Management Strategy to strengthen partnership working amongst the many organisations with responsibilities for flood risk management in Norfolk. There is a strong political will to help protect Norfolk better from future flood events which we must move now to capitalise on. It is at this level



that we will work to tackle the serious issue of sewerage entering the system so easily; as many people suggested to me, the problem would seem to be a continuous underinvestment in infrastructure by the Water Authority. At the same time, however, there is much we can do ourselves. As many of you will know I have helped form groups on a by-parish basis to create a sustainable water management plan for each village in my Division. Tasked with capturing local (fast disappearing) knowledge and mapping watercourses, culverts, drainage pipe networks and covers, together with ownership or responsibility for all relevant assets (weirs, sluices ditches for example) we will be able to mitigate flooding the next time it happens.

As I write the news that we have vaccinated 15,000,000 people is making headlines. This is fantastic news and it would seem we are

well on course to seeing our way through this. Looking ahead, however, we will shortly be host to a surge of visitors, thankful to escape from of lockdown. At one level, NCC will be working with Districts to ensure that the latter have a co-ordinated plan along the coast to deal with this pressure. However, as with flooding, I think there is much we can do within villages. Therefore, I have set up a Coastal Parking Group to co-ordinate actions by individual parishes, the police and highways to try to make things work as smoothly as possible.

Finally, as you know, many of our houses are bought as second homes for families: the clue here is in the name: they are second homes, and the contribution to the local economy is huge but also, I find, to the local community as well. Increasingly, however, the total percentage of houses owned as a buy-to-let business has increased dramatically. Again, their contribution to our economy, (but less to our community) is significant. All too often, however, these houses are registered as businesses, which means they pay no Council tax (in most cases). In theory, businesses are supposed to pay for a 'blue bin' for which they would be charged £300 pa; few do. However, a great many did take advantage of the grants offered to businesses by the government and distributed by the Borough. Therefore, I am very pleased to support the initiative taken by two parishes in my Division, and now supported wholeheartedly by James Wild MP, to lobby for a change in the legislation to make Council tax payable on a wider basis: this would be significant in our local area.

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## OLD HUNSTANTON PARISH COUNCIL

### PARKING/SPEEDING

We have approached the highways department to ascertain whether any of Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's), that we are proposing to submit this spring, will have any chance of succeeding before we commit the large financial outlay required. I will report all developments on this subject through this medium and through all the other outlets normally used by the Parish Council.

### VACANCY FOR PARISH COUNCILLOR

We still have a vacancy for a Parish Councillor to be co-opted to occupy the position recently vacated. Please contact the PC Clerk, email below, to apply for the position. It's not as exciting as Handforth PC, recently reported on the news outlets and YouTube but it can be rewarding!!

### PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

As a reminder, our meetings are still being held online via Zoom. Please contact the PC through the Clerk (details below) if you wish to attend and/or speak at the meeting, to give us your views on the above or anything else you think we should know or do something about. The next Parish Council meeting is the 18th March at 6.00pm.

Thank you all for helping the village through this pandemic and, hopefully in the same vein, continue until the virus is under control.

Email address, [clerk.oh@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.oh@gmail.com) Tel: 07917 757328

**David McLeod**  
Chairman OHPC

## HUNSTANTON TIC

This should be our last-but-one regular article related to the reinstatement of a staffed TIC facility for Hunstanton and the surrounding areas.

For eight months now, we have thrown hours and hours of work, time, energy and effort into doing our very best to restore to our community a facility which was removed from 'the face' of Hunstanton by Hunstanton Town Councillors in the presence of BCKLWN representatives, without any democratic communication or consultation whatsoever.

We have met on a number of occasions now with our two Borough Councillors and with our County Councillor. We have lobbied our MP. With the support of the Lynn News, Eastern Daily Press, Your Local Paper and Town and Around, the story has remained in the public eye. We organised, planned and held an amazingly successful Petition Day on The Green on Saturday September 5th 2020. We have compiled and collated data from comments made by residents and business owners – together with comments from tourists and visitors too. We have carried out substantial research into professional tourist organisations such as Visit Britain/Visit England and Tourism Alliance. Additional research also has been carried out into TIC facilities offered by seaside and coastal towns in the UK, based on a survey of 104 seaside towns in Britain, published by Which? Magazine in August 2020. This work shows that the vast majority of the most successful resorts all provide Tourist/Visitor Information Centres with face-to-face interaction.

All of the evidence and material gathered above has been placed into the hands of Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds, Deputy Leader of BCKLWN and Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health. Indeed the vast majority of the evidence gathered over the past eight months has been placed into the hands of all 55 Borough Councillors.

We, and 2,233 people who engaged with our petition strongly believe that Hunstanton/the whole country is not yet ready to go 100% digital for the provision of all tourist information, although it is obviously important to provide tourist information via the internet.

The solution, going forward, we believe, is a blended mix of digital, plus local Tourist/Visitor Information Centres providing face-to-face advice, information on events/services and an offering of carefully selected local merchandise.

To sustain this case, we have undertaken, as has already been mentioned, a survey of the top twenty seaside resorts identified by the Which? magazine survey published in 2020.

For information, out of the 103 seaside towns listed in the survey, Hunstanton was in 81st position.

The number of resorts in the top twenty UK seaside towns with face-to-face TIC provision, before the first national lockdown was announced in March 2020, was 15.

So.....where are we now? Well.....

We are now into the last lap of the race, as it were.

The key event in the last lap of the race is the planned review of the Hunstanton TIC situation, as pledged by Cllr Long and Cllr Nockolds, Leader and Deputy Leader at the BCKLWN Council meeting of January 21st 2021.

We have remained – and remain – committed and dedicated to the voices and views of all who expressed their opinions in support of the return of a staffed TIC to Hunstanton, the only seaside town in the Borough's portfolio.

We have the written and vital support of six neighbouring Parish Councils – Dersingham, Heacham, Ingoldisthorpe, Old Hunstanton, Sedgeford and Snettisham. We are very grateful for this high level of support.

All of this said, we are not the decision-makers and we do not hold the purse strings.

We look forward to hopefully being invited to take part in the planned review to be held in March 2021 and to a resolution of the staffed TIC matter.

We, the TIC Action Group members are all hopeful for a positive outcome to this situation and will remain so.

Please wish us well and feel free to make YOUR voices heard at Borough level, at Town Council level, on social media and in the local papers (EDP/Lynn News/Your Local Paper) during the remainder of March 2021. If you would like to copy any of your correspondence to us, we would be happy to receive it. Please either put a paper/hard copy through the letterbox of the Heritage Centre in Hunstanton or email it to any of the addresses given below our names.

Stay safe and well.

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

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# How you can help get our railway back

Howard Johnston

Local businesses and residents can play a big role in deciding whether Hunstanton and several major communities along the North West Norfolk coast get a railway link to King's Lynn, Cambridge and London.

They are being urged to write letters and send e-mails of support to help secure a £50,000 government grant to push the project forward. The strict deadline is March 1st.

"Just a hundred positive words from everyone could be a real game changer. You can help improve all our lives and those of future generations," says Norfolk County councillor Andrew Jamieson. "Please do it now - our chance of success will be so much greater if we all work together".

The campaign to get our railway back faces stiff competition to be recognised by the Department for Transport (DfT), which has allocated £500 million nationwide to its Restoring Railways Fund. The fund supports areas that are losing out because of poor public transport.

It has already selected 25 schemes for £50,000 kick-start grants, and has warmly encouraged us to take part in the third and final round of the competition.

West Norfolk MP James Wild is also fully behind the scheme, which is designed to boost the economies of Hunstanton, Heacham, Snettisham and Dersingham. All of them had railway stations until May 1969, and a petition has been signed by 6,200 people to win them a new fast rail link.

Its advantages are very clear, it would get our young people to

employment in Cambridge without them having to move home, and our elderly and the sick could get to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in a much faster time. Tourists, so vital to our economy, could visit us without constantly jamming up the A149 road in their cars. People moving to the area would also be better served (the recent explosion in new housing shows no sign of slowing down).

There was a major breakthrough last year when Norfolk County Council commissioned their engineering consultants, WSP, to conduct a high level desktop study. With significant input from the King's Lynn-Hunstanton Railway Campaign (KLHRC), this has formed the basis of the DfT application.

Howard Johnston on behalf of the campaign group said 'It is far too early to decide exactly where the new track would be laid because several original locations are blocked by new development'. There are two ways of accessing the present King's Lynn station, via the docks and re-opening the level crossing on John Kennedy Road; or using the existing 'sand line' towards Middleton and east of the A149 close to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Both options need further analysis.

Initial assessments have already considered flood risk, environmental sensitivity, proximity to ancient monuments, safety and the need for level crossings or bridges.

To add your support to the bid - please send letters to KLHRC at [hunstantonrail@outlook.com](mailto:hunstantonrail@outlook.com) - and if you are not one of the 6200 people who have already signed the on-line petition of support, please find it on our website at <http://www.hunstantonrail.org.uk/>

## Thornham Parish Council news

The February meeting proved to be a marathon rather than a sprint reflecting a number of serious issues with input from parishioners welcomed to broaden the debate.

Flooding was one such issue. While there was general recognition that Thornham had not been as seriously affected as some other local villages there was nonetheless cause for concern, with Church Street particularly badly impacted. Residents explained their particular problems and County Councillor Andrew Jamieson was able to give information from the strategic county perspective. Lord Dannatt will lead the county response to flooding problems but as this requires input from thirty-six separate organisations. Inevitably it will be a time-consuming process.

Cllr Needham, who leads for Council on issues of drainage and ditches, was able to provide practical guidance. He noted the need to ensure that the drainage routes onto the marsh were maintained and has spoken with grounds contractors re the work necessary to ensure this, though it is recognised that the ground surface is too wet to allow this work immediately. Cllrs Needham and Venes will meet with Cllr Jamieson to investigate further.

Relief work will be commissioned as soon as practically possible within the budget constraints and additional funding opportunities will be investigated for possible longer term strategic work if required. Work will also be undertaken to map the position of the drains/sewer network that serves Thornham. The possibility of a Working Party to address drainage and waste water management in the village was noted for the future.

The planning application for the Orange Tree was also an item of wide interest with input from parishioners and Mark Goode of the OT. Following a lengthy discussion Council voted to support the application while recommending restrictions re parking and noise. The final decision rests with KLWNBC.

Council had previously agreed that Cllrs Venes and Chesterman should begin discussion with local land owners and interested parties re the possible provision of extending seasonal parking. This is a pragmatic response to last year's Staycation boom and some of the problems it generated for the village as a whole. While uncertainty

remains re what national government may decide regarding travel and tourism plans for this summer, it does seem likely that a repeat of last summer's Staycation is highly probable and so action to alleviate parking problems is necessary.

Council agreed to lobby James Wild, our MP, to press government to extend the emergency legislation which expires in May that allows for remote/virtual meetings to take place. This has allowed Council to continue to operate at a difficult time and is a most helpful fall back as the recent weather also indicates. It was also agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting should be deferred to as late in May as legally possible in the hope that it could be a face-to face social meeting. Council agreed the Schedule re Grasscutting and the Clerk will now proceed to seek tenders for work. Full minutes of the meeting will be available on the web-site [www.thornhamnorfolk.co.uk](http://www.thornhamnorfolk.co.uk)

The next meeting will be on Zoom and is set for Wednesday 10th March at 7.00pm. Contact details from Sarah Bristow, Clerk, e-mail [thornhampc@gmail.com](mailto:thornhampc@gmail.com)

Colin Venes



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\*According to figures from campaigntoendloneliness.org

# Pride in our Neighbourhood - 54

Cllr Andrew Murray

On 30 January, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), published a number of documents and initiated an eight week consultation period for some of them. One of the publications is the Government's response to the 'Living with Beauty' report from the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission. They made 45 policy propositions. This was an independent body set up to advise the government on how to increase the use of high-quality design for new build homes and neighbourhoods. The commission was responsible for developing measures that will help ensure new housing developments meet the needs and expectations of communities.

The Commission had three primary aims: to promote better design and style of homes, villages, towns and high streets, to reflect what communities want, building on the knowledge and tradition of what they know works for their area; to explore how new settlements can be developed with greater community consent; and to make the planning system work in support of better design and style, not against it.

The main features of the report are to ask for beauty, to refuse ugliness and to promote stewardship. Everyone should be encouraged to take a longer term, sustainable view of communities as places that must grow and evolve, in a way that works well for people.

Beauty includes everything that promotes a healthy and happy life, everything that makes a collection of buildings into a place, everything that turns anywhere into somewhere, and nowhere into home. It is not merely a visual characteristic, but is revealed in the deep harmony between a place and those who settle there.

The Prime Minister also recently set out his ten point plan for a green industrial revolution, which will create, support and protect hundreds of thousands of green jobs, whilst making strides towards net zero by 2050. This includes plans to make cycling and walking more attractive ways to travel, making our homes, schools and hospitals greener,



warmer and more energy efficient and protecting and restoring our natural environment, planting 30,000 hectares of trees every year, whilst creating and retaining thousands of jobs

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to be up dated to ensure that high quality design is the usual outcome from the planning system and it will reference beauty for the first time in its history.

A draft National Model Design Code has also been issued which articulates key design principles and empowers communities to set out the detail of what beauty means in their areas. The code includes a model community engagement process. Local planning authorities will be expected to produce local design codes using the guidance provided in these documents. These local codes should be living documents, able gradually to evolve, informed by ongoing engagement with residents on local preferences and desires. We should aspire to pass our heritage to our successors, not depleted but enhanced, and that we oversee a profound and lasting improvement in our built environment.

## Mayor's Awards 2021

The Mayor of Hunstanton, Councillor Tony Bishopp is pleased to launch the 2021 Mayor's Community Awards to acknowledge the outstanding contribution and commitment of groups and individuals in the Hunstanton area.

Hunstanton Town Council wants you to nominate your worthy local individual or group. The five award categories up for grabs are:

**Neighbour of the Year**

**Carer of the Year**

**Young Carer of the Year**

**Business of the Year**

**Group or Organisation of the Year**

The Mayor Cllr Bishopp stated "It is important that as a council we publicly recognise the valuable work of volunteers, paid workers and community-based organisations across our communities who have worked selflessly throughout the past year, especially more so since the Covid pandemic began, in assisting residents of Hunstanton".

"These awards deliver a strong message about the value of helping others and how it helps to strengthen Hunstanton – to connect

residents and communities, reinforce community spirit and create a more cohesive and inclusive society for everyone".

Please take the time to nominate those, you feel, go that extra mile to help others and allow us to recognise their efforts. The council will accept nominations until 28th March 2021 so don't delay, get your nomination in today. I thank our community and voluntary sectors for their work and wish all nominees every success."

Nominations will close on 28th March 2021 at 4pm. Judging will take place in early April 2021 and the Awards will be presented at the virtual Town Meeting due to take place 28th April 2021.

Please note that self-nominations will not be accepted.

The judging panel will comprise of the Town Mayor and Chairman of Hunstanton Town Council Cllr Bishopp, Cllr Maureen Howard the Chair of the Community Engagement Working Panel, Cllr Robert Corby the Chair of the Youth Working Panel and the Town Clerk Jan Roomes.

For further details on how to nominate someone please visit the council's website: [www.hunstantontowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.hunstantontowncouncil.gov.uk).

## OLD HUNSTANTON FLOWER FESTIVAL 2021

This is to confirm what has become increasingly apparent for the last few weeks, that the Flower Festival will sadly have to be cancelled for the second year running.

It may be possible to run smaller fundraising events later in the year, but unfortunately there is no way that can be predicted or planned at this stage.

Hopefully we will all be able to get together again and hold an even better Festival at the end of July 2022.

**Chris Guest (on behalf of the FF Committee)**

## U3A Hunstanton

Our March Zoom meeting will be on Monday 15th March at 2.00 pm

Black Cats, New Moons & Ladders by Sandy Leong.

For details on how to join and how to obtain the link for this talk please go to the u3a Hunstanton site where information is available.

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## West Norfolk Deaf Association news!



The WNDA has appointed Anna Pugh to manage the charity, based at the Deaf Centre in Kings Lynn. Anna is a Hearing Therapist Audiologist with decades of experience of working alongside people with hearing loss and supporting the Deaf community.

WNDA offers a range of support and enabling services for adults and children in the community from Deaf Advocacy and children's social groups to a repair service for NHS hearing aids and our fabulous Bookshop in Downham market.

We also work with the LILY service (West Norfolk and Kings Lynn Borough Council) to "combat loneliness and social isolation in adults of all ages"

Anna says "I'm delighted to be joining WNDA at this crucial time for local charities, and look forward to building on the work of the dedicated staff and volunteers of this much-loved association"

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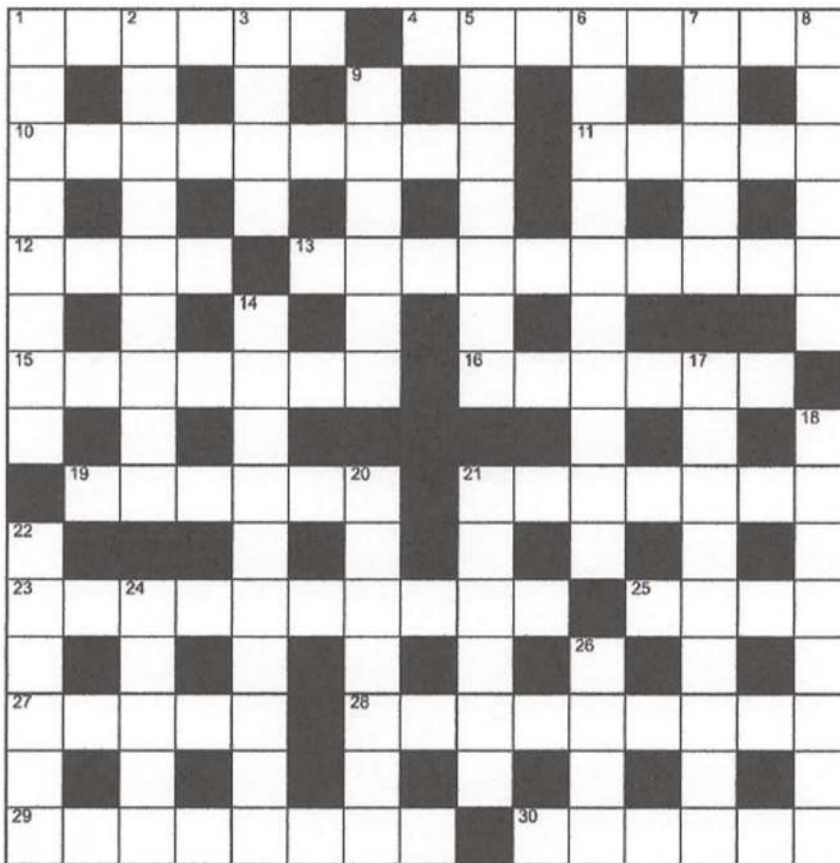


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# David Elsey's Cryptic Crossword

## Crossword Clues Across



Crossword solution on page 43

1. Broadcast as vessel went down (6)
4. Took off in low temperature and levelled out (8)
10. Put on air a No.1 single recorded illegally (9)
11. In an unfriendly way one's accepting around fifty yen (5)
12. Bill could be on the bench (4)
13. Add salt to mixture for dispensation (10)
15. Comfort prisoner facing solitary (7)
16. Tan at the best of spots (6)
19. Entrance younger gathering with spin (6)
21. Used saw to make a shape like a guitar (7)
23. Stressed record fine should be overturned (10)
25. Too involved in musical soirees (4)
27. African people stop you in Paris (5)
28. Lock bad-tempered Yankee away as a means of atonement (4,5)
29. Put down four inches of tar (8)
30. Reluctant to go in sea – it's funny (6)

## Crossword Clues Down

1. Pull together before other side becomes a problem (8)
2. It puts one in charge of ground capacity with no introduction needed (9)
3. Work for auditor before noon (4)
5. Using up cheese that's dated is understood (4,3)
6. Passing remarks reported in the press? (10)
7. Story the idiot count dismissed as fiction (5)
8. Fellows investing in the old masters (6)
9. Settled team ... (6)
14. ... in which players are highly ranked (5,5)
17. Satisfy large couple one has the cover for this type of dish (9)
18. Deftly dry tail and head of old mongrel (8)
20. Apply finish to fine art over layer of clay (7)
21. Rank the opposition over time – I would (6)
22. Backing over pit, dug deep (6)
24. One is working, in charge of column relating to Greek architecture (5)
26. Withholding order while getting over unpleasant smell (4)

## Ray Butchers Su Doku

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## Letters to the Editor

### Robin Limb

I was shocked to learn that Robin Limb had passed away, aged just 62, on 8th February.

Robin was well known in Hunstanton where he lived with his family especially at the United Services Club in Homefields Road where Robin and his wife Wendy would come to on a Sunday evening to listen and sing on the karaoke.

Robin was born and brought up on the family farm in Nottinghamshire; after he left school and got himself a degree in agriculture he went to work for British Sugar at their plant at Wissington near Downham Market where he became a British Sugar business manager.

Robin was very knowledgeable, not just about sugar beet but many other subjects, he will be sadly missed by his family and his many friends.

### Dick Melton

### The Wash Barrier

Sir, your recent article on a wash barrier misses the key aspects of the project.

First and foremost, is the flood protection from a North Sea storm surge. The Cambs, Lincs and Norfolk fens by value grow over half of the UK's food.

Second is the protection of the world significant Wash eco-system. By operating the barrier to maintain the current sea levels, we can ensure the Wash birds can survive.

Third, The barrier can provide energy storage, of a scale greater than all the batteries in the world put together. This storage is essential for us to be able to use the maximum amount of wind and solar energy.

Fourth, the barrier could provide a deep-water port to service the East Midland and possibly compete with Rotterdam.

Building a road along the barrier provides little value. Who in Hunstanton want to go to Skegness? (And vice versa) By not putting a public road on the barrier one would save 30% of the cost you quote.

The value of the energy storage to the economy more than pays for the building of the barrier, indeed 20 years ago I had a "sovereign wealth fund" willing to finance the barrier. (But not the cost of getting the permission to build it.)

Sadly, I concluded that the politicians will only consider the barrier after the Fens have been inundated by the North Sea, with the likely loss of many lives.

### Dr Peter Dawe OBE

Founder: Wash Tidal Barrier Corp plc

© 2021 Peter Dawe

(Permission to print as a whole granted)

### Fishing in the Wash

My family has fished the Wash for centuries, it's hard enough being a fisherman. But everyone wants to interfere with nature. And cut our fishing ground down. Now there is silly ideas that will cost billions, and interfere with the natural tidal flow of the Wash. And a major detrimental impact to the Lincolnshire coast and north Norfolk coast. The damage this will do will be irreversible. As it is not bad enough that the whole of the North Sea, is slowly becoming JUST a wind farm. So once again the fishermen suffer; ie there won't be any fishermen. I am not JUST speaking for myself but all other fishermen.

### Gary Castleton

### Feeding the birds

In Nature Notes in the February edition of Town and Around, Roger lists a number of food types you can put out for the birds. What he omits to tell us is that the most important item at this time of year is water!

Water is essential for the birds, not only for drinking but also for bathing and after a hard frost can be in extremely hard for them to find. During this cold snap some of the best sightings in our garden have been in and around the bird bath. In fact earlier this week we were entranced to watch a female Sparrowhawk preening herself for over five minutes.

### Ian Bell, Hunstanton

**Editor's note:** Letters for the April issue should be sent to me at the address on page 2 by 12th March (preferably by e mail).

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# Heacham and Hunstanton at Night

Terry Parish

Time is a strange beast. It seems only a short while ago I was telling you about darkening skies and looking forward to winter. Now Spring is looming and nights will rapidly become shorter. Perversely, they will no doubt become clearer. Winter skies have, once again, been a disappointment.

On March 20th it is the Spring Equinox. Set your personal compass by lining up something in your surroundings with the rising and setting Sun which will be due East and due West respectively.

During the day the Sun will always be in the South, due South at noon. It will be around 50 degrees high in the sky. As each day passes it will be a tad higher, reaching a peak of over 70 degrees on June 21st.



Internet

At the Equinox, night and day are almost the same length but not quite. Due to several factors, including the size of the Sun in the sky and refraction - the bending of light by the atmosphere - day length is about 8 minutes longer.



March 20th is the start of astronomical Spring though meteorological Spring starts on the 1st. The 28th March is when the clocks spring forward to British Summer Time and this will have a very significant effect on the apparent length of the night.

In the UK the clocks go forward 1 hour at 1am on the last Sunday in March, and back 1 hour at 2am on the last Sunday in October. The period when the clocks are 1 hour ahead is called British Summer Time (BST). There's more daylight in the evenings and less in the mornings (sometimes called Daylight Saving Time). When the clocks go back, the UK is on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

www.gov.uk

The planet Mars sets around 1am so is visible throughout the evening. It will fade over the month so take a look at it and remember the spacecraft I wrote about last month. The UEA and Chinese probes are safely orbiting. The new NASA Rover was due to land at Jezero crater last month and, hopefully, will be sending back data as you read this.

Look South and the red planet will be close to the Pleiades early in the month. On the 19th it is just to the right of the crescent Moon. The Pleiades will be further to the right whilst the Hyades will be below the Moon and a tad to the left. (I wrote about these two-star clusters last month).



NASA. Jezero crater is an impact crater within another impact. Geology is disturbed. Evidence it was once a lake sourcing rivers. An interesting place to explore.

Above the Hyades is the bright star Aldebaran in the constellation of Taurus. It is the red eye of The Bull, 44 times bigger than our Sun but cooler. It is 65 light years distant so I see it as it was when I started junior school. It is a little variable in brightness and believed to have a large planet orbiting it.

Blue-green Uranus sets about 10pm and is a good binocular object if they are held steady. The first half of the month before 8pm is probably best. It will have half the altitude of Mars and be further West.

To see Jupiter, Saturn and Mercury, you will need a good ESE to East horizon and clear skies at around 6am. On the 5th, Mercury is very close to Jupiter some way to the right and a little higher in the sky.



Internet

Looking North, from around 10pm, there are several star patterns, asterisms, that are easy to pick out. Highest in the sky is the Plough or Saucepan, part of the Great Bear, Ursa Major. Below that is the Little Bear or Dipper, part of Ursa Minor. Two stars in the Plough point the way to Polaris, the Pole Star, which is the tip of the tail of the Little Bear, or end of the handle if you prefer Little Dipper.

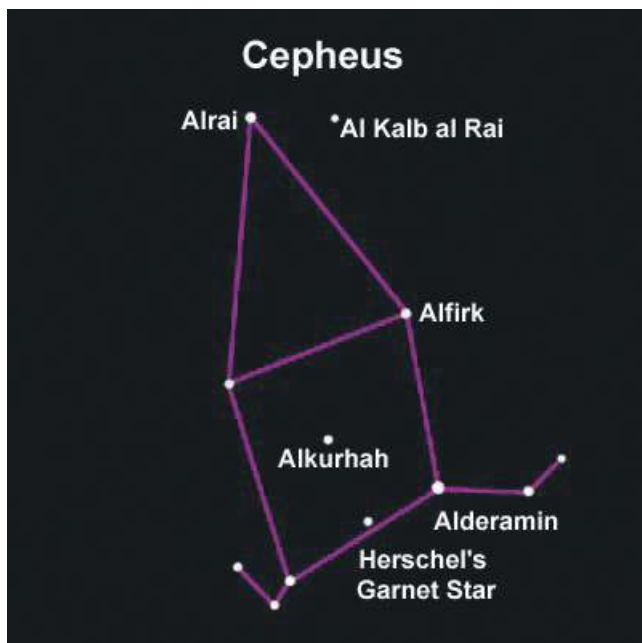
Where the handle of the Plough bends is the star Mizar. This is a visual double star which good eyes can separate but most will need binoculars or a telescope. Mizar itself is a group of 4 stars which are gravitationally attached.

Polaris, in the Little Bear, is our current North star as it is above Earth's northern pole and, consequently, remains fixed whilst all other stars appear to rotate around it (it is the Earth actually rotating).

Polaris has been used to aid navigation from medieval until modern times. A thousand years ago it was not as close to the north celestial pole and the whole pattern of Ursa Minor had to be used for navigation.

Polaris is a triple star system with the principal star being a yellow supergiant. It is a Cepheid Variable. Data from the Gaia space observatory has accurately determined Polaris's distance as 447.6 light years. (Gaia was launched by the European Space Agency in 2013. It was tasked with constructing a 3D map of 1 billion stars and other objects in our Galaxy. The camera sensors were made in Chelmsford, England). The period of pulsation of a Cepheid variable is directly related to its absolute brightness. From a comparison of this actual brightness (as it would be seen from close to) with its apparent brightness (as it is seen from an observer on the Earth) the distance of the Cepheid variable, and stars around it, can be determined. Polaris is close enough to have this calculation checked and allow it to be used for more distant cepheids, including those in other galaxies.

Back to star patterns. Still looking North but closer to the horizon find the distinctive W of Cassiopeia. A little to the East of this is a pattern which looks like the gable end of a house. This is part of Cepheus, just below the centre of the house's base is another red star, the Garnet Star. This is 2,400 times as large as the Sun and would extend beyond the orbit of Saturn if it replaced it.



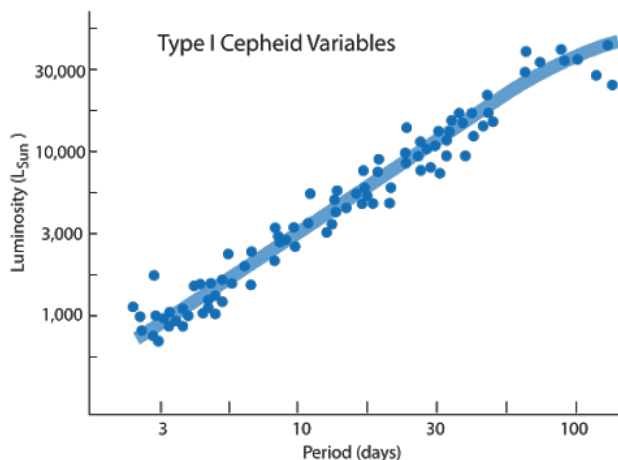
*Internet.*

Close to the bottom left corner of the house is delta cephei, the first of the class of Cepheid variables which led to them becoming a 'standard candle' for measuring immense distances.

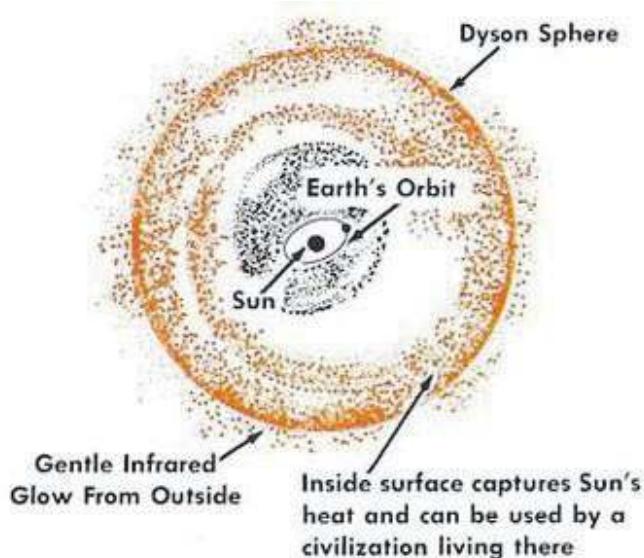
Whilst you are looking at Cassiopeia and Cepheus, scan your binoculars around them. You should see many stars appear as you are peering into the Milky Way, our Galaxy.

During COVID-19, the question of life around other stars is being robustly addressed, probably because much other research has been closed down. On one side of the argument, the number of stars which

might, possibly, have planets which can support life is being drastically reduced. Far more stars have been found to be significantly variable or parts of multiple systems. Both traits are not seen as conducive to life. Meanwhile odd signals have been received and not yet sufficiently explained by physics. Searches are underway for alien megastructures – huge arrays in space to capture energy – and for extra solar planetary systems which reveal, through spectroscopy, that they are polluted.



*Internet. Graph showing the linear relationship between the period of the visual oscillation of cepheid variables and their absolute luminosity, brightness.*



*A megastructure around the Earth's orbit.*

*The Dyson Sphere has long been postulated as the inevitable requirement for an energy hungry race. It would be detectable around other stars.*

It is to be hoped that alien eyes, if they exist, looking our way in the next hundred or so years, don't see a planet in a runaway decline – increasingly hot, with extreme weather conditions, and an atmosphere burdened with pollutants.

As I write this it is the sixth day of cold, snow, and ice. Many areas, local and national, are suffering from flooding. My prediction for Summer is very hot, frequent winds, and a drought! Just as long as the skies are clear.

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# TAX PLANNING TIPS PRE 5 APRIL 2021

By Kathryn Gigg Chartered Accountants, Hunstanton

**Y**ear-end tax planning has, historically, been fairly straightforward with changes often announced in the autumn financial statement, to take effect from the beginning of the new financial year in the following April.

The combined effects of two general elections, Brexit and Covid have interrupted the process somewhat, and apart from a curtailed "Covid Budget" in 2020, there has not been a full reappraisal of tax and spending since autumn 2017. We are now in the position that public spending has ballooned to wartime levels as a result of the pandemic, the 2020 deficit is set to reach £400 Bn and the question to be faced is not whether taxes will rise, but rather when and how that will happen.

All this makes 2021 pre year-end tax planning more difficult. The Chancellor's room for manoeuvre is restricted by the "triple lock" promised at the election, which undertook not to raise VAT, Income Tax or National insurance. Since these are the largest taxes by far, the options seem to be either raise capital taxes in some way, perhaps by reforming Inheritance Tax (IHT) or Capital Gains Tax (CGT) or simply making minor tweaks to the system and sorting out the problem later. By the time this article is published, we should know which it is to be!

We can reasonably suppose, however, that there is not likely to be any reduction in capital taxes and in the interests of using existing reliefs "while stocks last" (and assuming no Budget changes are announced "with immediate effect"), based upon the legislation as it stands today the following planning points could be considered:

1. People often prefer not to think about Inheritance Tax (IHT), but despite quite generous reliefs it can still catch estates worth as little as £325,000. In the longer term there is no substitute for a proper Will planning exercise, but if nothing else it makes sense to utilise the annual exemption of £3,000 per donor (or £6,000 if the exemption was not used the year before).
2. There are also exemptions for gifts on the occasion of marriage, small gifts under £250 to any individual and regular annual gifts out of income. While these amounts don't seem to amount to much, they can soon add up, particularly for those with several children or grandchildren. Using both types of allowance, a couple with two children and six grandchildren could, for example, pass over £9,000 tax free every year, saving £3,600 on the ultimate IHT bill.
3. Any gifts in excess of the annual allowances will not currently attract an immediate tax charge but will be cumulated and held on the "clock" for seven years. It goes without saying that where such gifts are contemplated, the sooner they are made, the better. Be aware, however, that if a gift is made where the donor "retains a benefit" it may not be effective for IHT purposes. Sometimes circumstances are such that making a gift into a trust gives the required flexibility – a simple trust should not take long to set up, and for some, this option is worth considering.
4. A further relief is given for regular gifts "as normal expenditure out of income". A claim for this relief will, after death, need to be supported by evidence that normal living expenses were covered from income whilst leaving sufficient "free" money to make the regular gifts. It will need to be supported by evidence, so those going down this route should ensure a sufficient "paper trail" is created.
5. Capital Gains Tax (CGT) is also now at relatively low levels, with the tax charge varying between 10% and 28% depending on the personal tax rate of the individual and the type of asset being sold. Each taxpayer currently has an annual allowance of £12,300, and if unused that allowance is completely lost. It is well worth reviewing share portfolios in particular to see if the allowance can be used, but even where property is involved there may be ways of crystallising enough gain to use annual allowances – perhaps as a side effect of an IHT exercise.
6. For those with a business, Business Asset Disposal Relief can bring the CGT charge down to 10% only. The rules are fairly complex and professional advice is definitely needed, but if one is contemplating retirement sooner rather than later, this relief needs to be considered. This article was written in February, and therefore needs to be considered in the light of any announcements made within the Budget



on 3 March 2021. As always, professional advice should be taken personally before any action is taken in following through any of the above "tips". For further advice please contact Kate Gigg or her assistant, Nicola Tarry FCA at Kathryn Gigg Chartered Accountants, Hunstanton on 01485 534800 or [kate@kathryngigg.co.uk](mailto:kate@kathryngigg.co.uk).

**Mrs K H Gigg FCA**

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

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## Freedom from lockdowns and tiers... .....but fresh tears on the horizon.....

We know everyone is desperate for a holiday, but for some who love their foreign travel they may have to wait a while.

But if we are desperately wanting a break why are we now paying so much for holidays in this country? The Daily Mail reported on 26 January that Easter holidays for families planning 'staycations' are facing tremendous price hikes in comparison to the previous non holiday weeks. Centre Parcs were charging a 155% rental increase from £978 to £2498. You would expect an acceptable increase for the holidays but not one so monstrous. Some weekly charges from other 'big boys' were increased by 375%. Examples are Butlin's, Haven, Airbnb who are all guilty of the same extremes. Plus they are telling the media that they are doing well on bookings. More fool the people who have booked, that is all I can say. Money to burn perhaps? Oh yes, I forgot, there is the 'flexible friend' too to lighten the pocket bit by bit and not burn a hole in it.

We are pleased to say that our bookings are going well for the summer, pending lockdowns and tier restrictions of course. Why pay huge prices when we offer, quality holiday homes at competitive prices at any time of year in Norfolk. A corner of the country which has so much to offer. So if you have family you have not seen for a while, get them to visit. Treat them to a holiday rental near to you. No price hikes, vast areas of outstanding natural beauty, wide open beaches, plenty of fresh air with loads of walks to blow the lockdown cobwebs away and to avoid that annoying Covid 19 germ. No need to mix with other people apart from safe distancing from them when necessary and the family of course. At least you will see them – they will be just escaping their house, enjoying the fresh air and just be glad to visit. They will have their space and you will still have yours.

A holiday can help mentally, improve sleep (all that fresh seaside ozone!), and make everyone feel so much better – family and visitors. Even if it is just for a few days. Those grandchildren will have grown since their last visit and there will be so much new to catch up on. And of course, no high prices. So if you are reading this on line from a distance, think about chilling out in and around Hunstanton. 'Staycation or Nearcation' if you are not too far away. A change is as good as a rest. If you are grandparents or parents who have children living away, treat them to a stay (remember you don't have to see or entertain them every day!), or if you are reading this and have friends at a distance why not suggest they come and have a break and a catch up. Perfect times to relax in the garden with a cuppa or your favourite tipple and share a few happy and sad tears.

We have properties to suit everyone. We know all of them personally. We are local so we are handy to deal with. Breaks can be weekends, mid-week, full weeks or more. Longer stays also possible for those on contract work, between houses, writing a book or need somewhere to use as a base for a hobby. Theatre artistes and

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film companies have also contacted us for accommodation or maybe accommodation is required for recuperation. We have had the pleasure of thousands of different people over the years.

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All properties are cleaned to Covid 19 protocol and we ask that guests follow Covid 19 rules when they are allowed to travel again as they would at home and as per Government rulings.

Our office is closed but we are still here taking bookings and answering queries.

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# Positive Thinking

by Jenny Beake

Well it's March and I've just finished eating the chocolate from Christmas, just in time for Easter. It's been a really tough year for everyone due to Covid. It's affected every person in some way. It's important to maintain positive thinking and I listen to the words sung by Morecombe and Wise; "When you feel down, try positive thinking...trust what tomorrow may bring."

Great song lyrics and two great performers that help to bring the sunshine in to an otherwise crazy world. It's good for the soul - sunshine - and in these January days it's always a pleasure to have a bright sunny day. I've ordered a vat of vitamins to provide temporary supplements.

Self Care is a positive way to get through the turbulent times we've all experienced so I thought I'd share some ways I feel are beneficial in improving outlook, physically and mentally based on the Eric and Ernie sentiment of positive thinking.

"Treat every season as Spring"...we are approaching Spring which signals renewal in nature and in ourselves. The newness of the season is a good reminder to try something new. A new hobby or renewal of a childhood passion. Mine is to start roller skating - what could possibly go wrong?! A broken ankle perhaps.

"No glancing back"...nostalgia is good but it's sometimes not

advisable to stay focused in the past. Having a tendency to look at things with rose tinted glasses prevents enjoying the present day. I try to only look back to see how far I've come along.

"Laugh at your troubles instead"...my late Dad always said I should have a good sense of humour 'cause with the face I have got I'd need one. Outrageous. The ability to laugh at myself is actually always a good thing and to see the funny side of life helps make sense of difficult times.

"With your confidence shrinking"...there are many positive changes that start with a small step. Usually we procrastinate and say I'll start on Monday but I see the value in making a decision and starting right away - healthier eating, breaking some habits that are impacting negatively - start it now. A short walk or run starts with that first step and leads on to a healthier lifestyle long term.

"On hope so much depends"...hope and kindness are real antidotes in difficult times. Being kind is an action and makes a massive difference - a smile to a stranger, buying a coffee for a work colleague. Small acts of kindness remind people that there is hope and a light at the end of the tunnel.

"When you feel down"...most of us will have experienced some form of feeling lonely or despondent. Reach out and text a friend - asking for help is a sign of strength. Friends will understand it's ok not to always feel ok. Listen to uplifting music to make the day feel cheery.

And finally - "life won't let us down"...keep going and keep believing it.

## Lockdown brings WI Members together

Stanhoe & Barwick WI have found new ways to keep in touch during the lockdowns. It's been challenging, being unable to meet since March 2020 and with members spread across 11 villages. Nevertheless, the ladies kept in contact with one another, offering support and having a 'mardle'. A rota ensures that everyone is phoned regularly and all have welcomed the opportunity to chat, many finding that they know one another so much better now.

A successful Christmas raffle, with prizes donated by local businesses and members, raised over £180 for funds. This is now being used to provide little surprises for all members.

Valentine's bookmarks were made by Vice-President Nicki Smith and distributed to all 29 members, who warmly appreciated the thought. The committee are now hard at work organising an Easter gift.

The next step is to look at offering regular Zoom chats and Zoom speakers.

Stanhoe and Barwick WI's Facebook page gives further details of recent activities. New members are always welcome!

### KING'S LYNN TRIRATNA BUDDHISTS



We are a small and friendly group of practising Buddhists and meditators.

Our aim as a group is to bring together people with an interest in (and a commitment to) living a Buddhist way of life within the modern setting. The Triratna Buddhist Order and Community is not monastic and members live fully integrated lives in society as teachers, hospital workers, pharmacists, electricians, prison visitors, social workers and more.

The group offers beginners Meditation, Yoga and Buddhist study and places great emphasis on forming a positive supportive community within which deep friendships can and do thrive.

All of our events are currently taking place online and will continue to for the foreseeable future.

Events are led by three ordained members of the Triratna Buddhist Order who live locally and details appear on our website <https://kingslynntriratnabuddhists.co.uk/>





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## Our Lady of Perpetual Succour & St Edmund Hunstanton with St Cecilia's, Dersingham



Mass times have now returned to normal in both our churches. Please remember to wear a mask when coming to church, keep your distance and use the hand sanitiser provided.

The World Day of Prayer service this year has been prepared by the women of Vanuatu and the theme for this year is 'Build on a Strong Foundation'. This year will be very different as we sadly can't all get together as we normally do. It is a global event and people will be worshipping on the day in unusual ways. It is proposed that we hold a service virtually via Zoom on Friday 5th March. It will begin at 10am with a power point presentation about Vanuatu and the service will begin at 10.30am. you can get more information at [www.wwdp.org.uk](http://www.wwdp.org.uk) where you can access free resources and downloads. If you are interested in joining our local Zoom meeting the details will be on our website or contact Pat Nevin on 01485779446. You are also encouraged to give donations, which you can do in a variety of different ways;

- a) By cheque, made payable to WDP, sent to WDP, Commercial Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2RR
- b) By online donation via the WDP website – [www.wwdp.org.uk](http://www.wwdp.org.uk) – minimum £10
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sum after 2021WDP and your text will cost the amount plus one standard rate message.

d) By cash to the branch secretary If you are a tax payer, please don't forget Gift Aid

For Parish news including Mass times and prayer requests, please see the Parish News page on our website, where you will also find Easter Mass times.

For information about live streamed Masses in the Diocese and related matters, please check the Coronavirus section on our Links page. People are advised not to go to Mass if they have any symptoms, however mild, or anyone who is still shielding or vulnerable.

The Sunday Masses are at 9am at Mountbatten Road, Dersingham and 11am at Sandringham Road, Hunstanton but there is a limit on the amount of people allowed in. Daily Masses are at 10am at Hunstanton Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and 10.15am at Dersingham Wednesday. There are quite a few changes to the way Mass will be celebrated and people should be guided by the stewards. Website: [www.hunstantoncatholicparish.org](http://www.hunstantoncatholicparish.org)

Email: [parish@hunstantoncatholicparish.org](mailto:parish@hunstantoncatholicparish.org)

The Parish telephone number is 01485 534675.

If you require a Priest urgently please telephone V. Rev Canon Peter Rollings on 01553 772220 or email: [parishpriest763@gmail.com](mailto:parishpriest763@gmail.com)

## UNION CHURCH

GIVING UP

The season of Lent is with us in March when many of us think about giving up something – often related to trying to take a few pounds of weight off which has crept up on us over winter. We find it easy to decide this sort of giving up if there is an incentive to gain something, ie a better healthier body. The original idea of Lent was more to do with doing without excessive or expensive food to focus the mind on abstaining from food or an activity that if given up was a real sacrifice and test of self-discipline.

This identifies with the real meaning of Easter – when Jesus gave up his life for everyone in the world. That sort of sacrifice is the ultimate of someone giving up everything on behalf of

another, something that costs everything to benefit someone else. So when you think about giving up something for Lent why not look for the lasting benefit of real sacrifice and

self-discipline to help you understand more about how Jesus gave his everything for you and everyone else in the world. That way you are more in line with Jesus' way of doing things. John 3.16: For God so loved the world that he gave his own son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

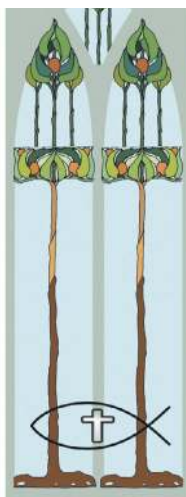
With Every Blessing,

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## Christian Science Society Hunstanton

### The inevitability of Good!

MARCH – we all begin to think of spring! The bulbs push through the cold heavy earth and the buds swell, defying the wind. Spring comes as a law of inevitability of goodness. This law that controls the seasons is the law of God, good, and if we let it, controls us all too.

Because goodness and joy are not things but thoughts, they are available to each of us. This law of good is a promise that exists and each of us can claim.

Further information on the worldwide Christian Science church can be found at [www.christianscience.com](http://www.christianscience.com). Due to the current situation our we have suspended our church services in our building, but Christian Science Sunday and Wednesday services are available online. Please go to [www.spirituality4.me/livestream/](http://www.spirituality4.me/livestream/) to find live-streamed services around the UK, along with other online events, talks and webinars. An online shop is also available where you will find books, CDs and many other resources. Follow us on Facebook to find out when our regular services in Hunstanton will resume. For daily inspiration look at <https://www.christianscience.com/christian-healing-today/daily-lift>.

The copy date for the April issue of  
Town and Around is 12th March.  
Please send your articles and photos to:  
[editor@townandaround.net](mailto:editor@townandaround.net)  
or by post to the address on page 2.  
Thank you.

# The Salvation Army in Snettisham

This year sees The Salvation Army in Snettisham celebrate 125 years of being in the village. We hope to be able to celebrate this special anniversary with events throughout the year, once restrictions are lifted, so watch this space for more news on that. If you have ever attended The Salvation Army in Snettisham it would be good to hear from you and even better if you have some photos that you could lend to us for a display later in the year.

The Salvation Army in Snettisham was started by two female officers, Captain Lightfoot and Lieutenant Pickles in 1896. We believe that there may have been a corps in the village from 1885 but that closed and the work of the Army recommenced in 1896. Originally the Army met in The Volunteers Drill Hall near The Rose and Crown but in 1909 moved to its present location in Alma Road when the Methodists moved to their new premises on Lynn Road.

This year, for us at the Army, will be a time to look back on the people and events of the past. A time to recall all that has happened and how God has used The Salvation Army in the local area over the past 125 years.

It is good to be reminded of God's faithfulness over the years and to remember all his blessings. It is all too easy when we are experiencing a difficult time in our lives to forget the many times God has seen us through rough patches in the past. Psalm 46 says 'God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.'

The Salvation Army has been in Snettisham for one hundred and twenty-five years and over those years many things have changed. We have moved premises and renovated our current property. We have been a thriving corps and also been very small (at one time only having six members). Today we are a thriving Christian Community once again but some things do not change, one of which is the reason for our existence which can be summed up in our Corps Mission Statement which states that

**"The Snettisham Corps of The Salvation Army exists to save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity."**

At the time of writing, we are still in lockdown and so we are not meeting in our hall at the moment but we hope that soon we shall be able to open for worship again. It would be lovely to see you on Sundays for a time of praise and prayer. Although we are not meeting at our hall in Alma Road, Snettisham we are still available to help, be that in practical ways (food parcels etc) or for pastoral support (if you



*The Salvation Army Band, Snettisham, in 1930 (above) and more recently (below)*



just want a chat or have questions about the Christian faith).

Please feel free to get in touch with me at  
[alison.kirby@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:alison.kirby@salvationarmy.org.uk) or 01485 579079.

## A recipe from the Prudent Pensioner

I made this soup recently and to make it into a delicious Cauliflower Cheese soup.

I cut 1oz/30g of Blue Cheese into small pieces and added this just before I pureed the vegetables.

### Cauliflower & Celery Soup

2 large sticks Celery  
Cauliflower approx. 340g/12oz.  
1 medium size Shallot or small Onion  
1 medium size Potato  
Chicken stock cube dissolved in 500ml hot water  
A knob of butter  
Salt and pepper

Peel potato and cut into small pieces.  
Peel onion/shallot and slice fairly thinly.  
Put butter into a saucepan and soften over a

low to medium heat, add onion/shallot stir well. Cook for a minute stirring frequently. Add potato and stock to saucepan and bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover and leave gently simmering, stirring occasionally. Cut off cauliflower florets and place in a bowl of lightly salted cold water.

Remove and discard discoloured base of cauliflower. Cut stalk into small pieces, rinse in cold water and add to saucepan. Trim off and discard ends from celery, clean and slice fairly thinly. Strain water off florets and rinse in cold water. Add celery slices and florets to saucepan, stir well. Bring to the boil then reduce heat, cover and leave simmering, stirring often, for 10 minutes, or until potato is fairly soft. Season to taste. Strain off most of the liquid into a jug, and 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. Reheat, serve and enjoy.

-o0o-

My updated book "Less Waste more Soup" 45 easy, budget friendly recipes for nourishing soup is now available from Amazon. A search for Doreen Reed will find it (together with my books of light hearted poems and tales)

It is also available from Ridouts Bakery in Heacham

See more recipes on The Prudent Pensioner Facebook page

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# Hunstanton & The Saxon Shore Benefice

Dear Friends,

I don't know about you but I am finding that my spirits are beginning to be lifted as the days are getting longer. There is much around us to be grateful for during this time of necessary reduction in human contact and increase in contact via virtual means or telephone only. Many of you will have faced a tremendously difficult time recently because of your own health or concerns for others. Life is not straightforward at the moment but I am trying to find very small things to delight in each day.

Let me tell you about a recent excitement... as I was on a video call when I suddenly saw a bright green flash of colour and my concentration was well and truly disturbed. I turned to look at my bird feeders, and I saw a gorgeous sight. I had a bright green parakeet enjoying some sunflower hearts on one of the feeders. It was having a lovely time and I could see the gorgeous green feathers and red beak so clearly that I was more than a little excited.

I know that it is simply a bird and that it didn't stay around for long at all but it gave me such a thrill and something to smile about. That little creature was only going where there was food, it was only here for a day. However, in that short time I was grinning about my, unusual for Old Hunstanton, garden bird and thanking God for such a colourful visitor.

My bright green feathered visitor encouraged me to think again about how little colourful events can help us along the way in life. We are so very blessed to have beautiful countryside, seaside, sunrises and sunsets to look upon in this area. Each of these small joys can be like a shot of colour to lift our spirits. Part of my delight at spotting an unusual bird in my garden was to tell my friends about this little excitement, I wanted others to share in my joy.

Sharing our positive moments in life is something that comes

naturally. We delight to hear of a baby being born, a marriage, getting a job or having an encouraging answer to prayer. Occasionally the joys have felt thin on the ground and we are more likely to be joining together in complaints at our present predicament. This verbal negativity is so easily spilled over in to snappiness with our family or an email sent off in the heat of the moment that had more frustration than grace. It's understandable but we can all make the choice to look out, or even search out, little flashes of colour, joy and delight in the everyday. The most precious things to look for are not things but people! People can bring that flash of bright colour and joy in many different ways.

I love these verses from Matthew 10 that talk of how precious we are to God and as an added bonus Jesus mentions the humble sparrow... "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows."

A little reminder that you are precious in God's sight. Now that is something to be joyful about!

For details of services please see the Benefice website. With blessings and prayers.

**Rachael, Rev Rachael Dines**

rachaeldines@hotmail.com

PS: I am hoping to get some of us knitting little gifts of joy and I am after some spare coloured wool and buttons. All will be revealed in the summer months! If you have any scraps do drop them off at The Rectory, they will be put to good, colourful, use. Thank you

## How Many Plagues Does It Take?

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

It was about 18 months ago I wrote a piece for T&A where I was pondering on the lack of insects on my car windscreen when we had been on holiday. Holiday? – what's that I hear you ask! Well, 18 months on we've had Covid around for nearly a year, and no holiday yet in sight, so I'm taking a further look at what has been happening.

About 3500 years ago the Israelites – God's people – were living in Egypt. God directed Moses to go and get the Israelites freed and out of Egypt. The story can be read in the second book in the bible, Exodus. As Pharaoh keeps blocking this God releases successive plagues to try to get him to agree. There were ten plagues in all affecting the whole country all in response to one person's refusal to obey God.

In my previous article printed in October or November 2019's edition I pondered on not only the lack of insects, but on a number of other things that had occurred in nature in the preceding few years. Foot and Mouth Disease, Swine Flu, Dutch Elm Disease, Ash Die-back, Bird Flu, the Horse Chestnut trees are infected, and I've probably forgotten some. Now Covid has struck twice. We've had two significant peaks and our lives have been turned upside down by it, whether or not we've actually had it. These are all warning signs that we are walking out of God's will.

Please don't misunderstand me – I am not saying that any individual has had Covid because of any particular behaviour – all the Egyptians were affected by the decisions of just one person – Pharaoh. Nor am I saying that God sent Covid. God doesn't send disease, but sometimes, when a people group walk outside of God's will, they no longer have his protection.

Things started to go down-hill here when the government reneged on The Balfour Agreement after World War 2 and caused a lot of

problems for Jews trying to resettle in Israel, to the extent that we – UK – forced boat loads of refugees to go back to Germany, the last place on earth that they wanted to be. And to this day the UK government has failed to show repentance for this. The current government may not be the people who made these decisions but they were made in the name of UK and as such we are still reaping the consequence.

We moved further away from God in the late 50's/early 60's with a series of laws passed which undermined our basic Judeo-Christian legal code. The abortion act is just one of these pieces of legislation. It was introduced to stop women having to go to back street abortionists, in itself not a bad motive for the law, but with subsequent amendments it has effectively undermined the basic morality of the country. Its progressive erosion of the sanctity of life has brought us to a place where abortion up to full term is a possibility. USA already has that in the laws of some of its states. Imagine that - one day the baby could be aborted, but the next day its death would be murder. Nine million babies have been aborted so far in the UK since the law was passed. That is effectively a whole generation wiped out.

It is time for this country to turn back to God in a meaningful way. Biblical prophecy makes it clear that there will be an end to this world, and each person has a decision to make before then, because once it comes it will be too late to change our choice. God's heart is that all men be saved and his son Jesus has already taken the punishment for all of our sins on the cross. From the cross God reaches out to us through Christ with forgiveness acceptance and love. There is a real heaven and a real hell and where we go ultimately is our choice. You can do nothing and opt out, in the process choosing hell as your eternal future. Alternatively you can trust in God's word and in Jesus' sacrifice for you and commit yourself to try to live by his pattern.

# ART IN THE DIGITAL RENAISSANCE

Lesley Nadel

*'When you're hungry,  
you'll eat the potato peel'  
(Old Polish saying)*

Potato skins have a very different meaning to survivors of WW2 than to the modern generation. To many they were a lifeline to survival. We know that if you care about art, art cares about you. Art plays a very important role in Society brining immeasurable joy to all ages and cultures. So where has our art lifeline come from? The Internet, no less.

Our laptops, iPads, Smart phones are the hottest new event venue for all sorts of things. Many of the arts have been able to make a digital transition from the real world to the virtual, video chatting world. Zoom has paid a major part in helping artists share their craft and bring communities together. A video conferencing software system, more familiar to those working from home, suddenly emerged as the tool of creative people to bring their art to those of us stuck in our houses.

Artists, Actors, musicians, arts education and experimentation, audience participation events, all have been a lifeline of sorts to professional and amateur artists in the time of quarantine and social distancing. Many recorded Zoom sessions have also been hosted on other video platforms, like YouTube, enabling a wider audience to catch up later.

Learning to Zoom effectively to showcase their Art has been a skill organisers have learned along the way. Muting microphones to limit background noise and cross talk as well as limiting group sizes are just two of the lessons learned.

Who knows where Zoom will sit in our lives when this Pandemic outbreak is resolved and we are less isolated. It's likely that artists will continue to find ways to create, collaborate and share their work on the internet.

Art goes on forever, even in the most difficult of times. Technology will also go on forever. But It's not just famous museums like the Tate in London, The Louvre in Paris or the Guggenheim in New York that



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**Edward Seago, From Circus to Sandringham. - James Russell**

Like LS Lowry, oil painter and watercolourist, Edward Seago (1910-74) was immensely popular but overlooked by critics; today the best of his landscapes look fantastic, while his life story is full of interest. He mixed in aristocratic circles, making friends among the Royal family; a colourful wartime career and a trip to Antarctica aboard the Royal Yacht add to this fascinating account.



*Traffic Signals - Eighth Army Area, Italy 1944*



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have given us WIFI access to Andy Warhol, Rembrandt, Van Gogh etc. Some of the most inventive creations have come from Instagrammers and Twitter. It seems that your 'everyday' man and woman also want to showcase their work and demand to be noticed. There are pretend pictures of Hockney, Emin, Renoir and others, now popping up where pictures of the accounts holders normally appear, posting from 'fan accounts'. These pretend greats post a picture of the favoured artist with a snippet of information about them. The followings are huge. Just goes to show how many of us out there need a daily dose of familiar, soothing and educational history of art.

In the Covid world that we are currently living in, it seems no longer so important that we need to see things for 'real'. Art is all over the internet. Are we surprised that quarantine would be the time when we would cross a bunch of world famous wonders off our 'bucket list', thanks to the Internet, or will we still want to see them in 'the flesh' when we are free again? Some people may be digital junkies but we need to remember that it is estimated that 5/6 million people in our country do not have access to the internet.

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Copy date for April's issue is 12th March

# Health update with Dr David Ince

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

**Last month, I hoped that by the time you read my piece that the vaccination program locally would be in full swing. It is.**

So far we have vaccinated around 6000 of our most elderly and vulnerable patients at Snettisham Surgery or have visited them to vaccinate them in their own homes. We are ahead of where the government expects us to be having vaccinated around 90% of everyone in our coastal area above the age of 70 (as of 10th February). This is a credit to the individual surgery teams, our primary care network staff but, most importantly, to you – the patients and their families, friends and carers. To coordinate 400 over 80s being vaccinated in a day at an unfamiliar site is nothing compared to the single mindedness of our patients and the support of their carers, families and friends to get them there. Come rain, sun or snow our patients at their extreme of age have come through the hub – always thankful and smiling – greeted by their surgery's team that many of them had not seen for nearly a year. I lost count of the number of patients who said 'It's been a long time since I saw you, Doc!'. I generally replied along the lines of how well they looked despite this (or more likely, because of it)!

This is just the beginning and although we can see an end it is still a distant shore – I'm not sure it is even the end of the beginning but it is definitely a good start. We have been very happy with how the Snettisham hub has operated and we have also started some vaccination within the practices with the Oxford AZ vaccine. I would like to mention our PCN pharmacists – Aaron Howman and George Gordon – they have been on site everyday supporting the vaccinating team and have made up every, single dose of the Pfizer vaccine that has been given. They open up in the morning and close the site in the evening. They coordinate all the vaccine delivery and distribution in

the community. Industrious, essential but often invisible to the outside world, they have truly made the hub the success it is.

There are ambitious (appropriate) plans to vaccinate all adults by Spring and we stand ready to achieve this and believe we have the infrastructure to deliver. A mass vaccination site has opened in Kings Lynn and there are plans for a similar one in our area but we are not currently involved in the planning and hope, if opened, it will work in partnership with primary care carefully planning the remaining cohorts.

Equally we are developing our IT infrastructure to allow future cohorts to fully utilize remote booking and we are planning for patient's second vaccinations. We have had to be careful about forward booking appointments due to, as I mentioned last month, the fact we only get advised of what delivery we are going to receive a few days before it arrives. You can be assured that we are committed to delivering this service in primary care and have proved, I hope you agree, that we are capable of doing this. We find it as frustrating as you do that we cannot go faster but will continue to engage with our NHS masters to facilitate a speedy roll out.

We want to return to 'business as usual' as soon as we can and the vaccination program is the key to this. I look forward to writing a column in the near future that doesn't include the words Covid, vaccination or hub and believe we are at the beginning of the end to achieve this!

All your GP surgeries remain open and I encourage you to contact us if you are worried about any symptoms that may be preying on your minds.

I wish you good health.

## A Covid jab experience at Snettisham Surgery

Richard Bird

**Anyone who is nervous about having a vaccination will be reassured by this.**

On 30/01/21 at 14.25 I received my Covid-19 Jab. I received a phone call two days ago from the receptionist at the Heacham/Snettisham surgeries. Appointment fixed.

We live about 100 metres from the Snettisham surgery where the vaccinations are administered and we have observed the orderly comings and goings for the past couple of weeks.



I walked up the road to join the well organised gathering, watching as volunteers controlled the car parking arrangements and was greeted by a marshal who asked when my appointment was and allowing me, once my temperature had been checked, to join the queue.

A lady marshal told me that she had not experienced any 'no shows', then checked my name and details on another list and I made my way on the socially distanced painted blobs to the one of the vaccination cubicles. I was met by Doctor Russell who double checked my identity and issued me with an A4 information sheet and my blue vaccination card before vaccinating me with the PFIZER potion. This was completely painless, and here is a picture of me having the vaccination.



*Photo of Dr Russell and Richard kindly taken by Receptionist Jeanette*

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# AN ITEM OF INTEREST FROM THE HERITAGE CENTRE

This month we have a change from an “object” to a “person” who is a resident and is connected to our Heritage Centre. The person is an Honorary Life Member of our Civic Society and donator to the Heritage Centre, he agreed to be interviewed so I could write a brief life history so far, of a dear friend of us all: NEIL QUINCEY.



*Neil receiving his Honorary Membership H&DCS in 2019*

Neil was born in 1925 in the village of Friday Bridge in Cambridgeshire. His parents were William and Ethel (née Bates), William was a Journeyman Baker who plied his trade in the very early hours, then delivered them by horse and cart around the villages during daylight hours. He and Ethel were married in 1910.

William had served in WW1, initially in the Royal Navy but was then transferred to the Army. This was quite common, as the Army was losing men at a terrific rate, whereas the Navy (the largest in the world) after having blockaded many enemy ports was over-subscribed with manpower. It was decided to transfer sailors into the Army, which were formed into Battalions named after their ships. William's was Drake Bttn and after a few injuries, including a gun-shot wound to his elbow, he returned safely to his home town after the war, and in 1925 Neil was born.

Neil was educated at the local school in Friday Bridge, and when he left school, just before he was 15, he worked on a local farm, initially with horse and cart. But fortunately for Neil, the farmer bought the very first Fordson tractor for the princely sum of £110, complete with solid metal wheels, no cab and



a metal seat, but without instruction's Neil learnt to drive it.

Then along comes WW2, Neil was too young to join up so had to wait until he was called up and then joined the RAF. After completing his basic training, he was picked out to train aircrew in their different skills. Regular medicals were done and on one it was found that Neil had TB. That unfortunately ended his military career. In some ways it was a blessing in disguise, as if he had been one of the aircrew, his life expectation at that time was officially estimated at 30 missions. At times in reality it was actually put at 3 missions over Germany.

He was advised to move to the coast, where the air was cleaner and hopefully he would recover. And what better place to move to than 'Sunny Hunny', after all it was advertised as being ideal for curing respiratory and chest complaint's and convalescing with its clean air and had several Homes specifically for such problems.

At first, Neil lived in a caravan on his own towards the end of South Beach Road, on a site called the Pit.

Once cured, Neil applied for a licence to become a taxi driver which was approved, so he then set about getting a new style uniform which looked more like a chauffeur, different to an RAF one he had been used to. There were only a handful of taxi's allowed by the Urban District Council, other drivers included Bob Bird and Arthur Lawson.

Neil met Betty (née Verley) back in Friday Bridge, and they got married in 1945 at Betty's village in Cambridgeshire. They settled down to married life and started a family, living at South Beach Road in what we today call a chalet bungalow. Supported on large heavy concrete blocks. From an upstairs window/ door, access to a wooden balcony was possible. At the back of which was a couple of chalets, one of which was frequently rented by Bert Bradshaw the pianist and his wife and dog 'Monty', during his summer seasons here.

Then in January 1953 came disaster, on the evening of the 31st January, Neil was at work in his Taxi, he had a fare at Kings Lynn and Norwich.

Remember, mobile phones were not invented then so communication was by telephone land line or word of mouth.

Neil's wife Betty knew where he was driving back from and had been phoning public houses along that route home, and of course the local pubs including The Railway Inn (now The Wash & Tope).

To warn them that the Sea defence was breached and mass flooding was upon them and the sea front chalets. The first Neil knew of it was when he popped into the Railway Inn, The landlord, Vic Coombs shouted "have you spoken to Betty, she's tried to find you", Neil rang home from the pub and was told that the water was Knee deep. Neil replied that he was coming home straight away, and not to worry as a couple of years before this had happened and the water was knee deep. Betty then told him "but we are upstairs!" Panic stations, this was serious.

Neil got in his Taxi and raced down to the Level Crossing that was at the top of South Beach Road (where Tesco's roundabout is now) and was flagged down by some USAF personnel and Sgt Spencer of the local police. The sea had reached this far inland and was just crossing the railway line.

The Airman were waiting for reinforcements and a 'Weasel' (an amphibious vehicle) to arrive from RAF Sculthorpe. These duly arrived and Neil asked if he could get into the Weasel with them to get to his wife and children. Initially they said no, it was too dangerous and that they were in charge. I must add here that most of the residents living in that area at that time, were Americans.

But Sgt Spencer pointed out that Neil lived here, knew where the homes were and who lived in them, plus, if they wouldn't let him come aboard the Weasel – he would go on his own somehow. Common sense prevailed and Neil joined the crew, they set off and although

close together they had to shout in order to hear one another, it was dark and the flood water was very choppy and the wind speed was around 100 mph. When nearing Neil's home, they had to turn along the waves, which tried to tip the Weasel, they kept going, praying it would not turn over. On reaching the balcony of the home, they all scrambled onto it and the Weasel was caught by the waves and sank. The water was 11 feet deep and was up to the underside of the Balcony on the 1st floor. The time now was around 10.30pm.

Miraculously, the telephone was still working so the US officer and Sgt Spencer could

communicate with their respective rescuers 'on land'. After some hours, (some 6 hours) the water receded as it spread over the fields, but by then so many homesteads had gone, demolished or just floated away collapsing as they went.

Worse still was the final count of 31 people that had drowned.

Around 4.30am, the water was about 4 feet deep now, and in the distance they could see a tall American in a protective suit pulling a rubber dinghy, it was Reis Leming 'their knight in shining armour'.

At one point, the wind got hold of the dinghy and blew it up in the air, with Reis holding on to the rope and Neil grabbing it as well they pulled it down onto the water.

Neil had his 7-month old son tucked inside a warm Parka his 2 daughters and wife Betty on the balcony, one by one they jumped into the dinghy and Reis pulled and the other crew members pushed them to dry land near what had been the fairground. They were taken to the station which became a rescue centre, then they were put up in the Railway Hotel. By now it was early morning, the next day his family were driven back to Friday Bridge to Betty's parents, whilst Neil was back down to the flooded area helping where he could. A friend was there to attempt getting to his



*The remains of Neil's home*

house, Neil said he would come with him, suspecting what they would find, true enough when they managed to get near, all they could see was the chimney stack, the building completely gone, including his friend's wife and child.

Neil's house had to be demolished but remember earlier, I spoke of the home being built on concrete pillars, they held the structure in place and without them his too would have floated away.

Neil had the unfortunate task of identifying many of the adult bodies found as he lived amongst them, the children were identified by the school Headmaster.

Neil's family was the only 'complete' family to have survived this terrible disaster.

When life returned to some sort of normality, the family moved to an apartment in Northgate, Neil carried on taxi driving and later Betty took over an Ice Cream shop on the

front of Tamworth House and after many more years, eventually retired. Moving to the house he lives in now, since then sadly he has lost his wife and a daughter.

Still today, he is in communication with retired members of the USAF Squadron that saved his family and others on that terrible night.

NB. This was intended to be a brief story of Neil's life so far.

I have only just touched on the history of the Flood, much more information is displayed in our Heritage Centre for reading and viewing.

Our thanks to Neil for his life's story so far, long may it continue.

Interviewed and written up by Tony Armstrong, a volunteer at the Heritage Centre.

## Hunstanton and District Civic Society news

### HERITAGE CENTRE - CORONAVIRUS

With Winter and the Coronavirus Lockdown upon us, we have not been in any sort of position to open up the Heritage Centre to the public. Whether we are able to in a month or two remains to be seen. We know that normally we try to open up mid-February each year and, although it is hard to believe, it is almost a year now since we had our official opening of the Centre. Even then we were only able to open for not much more than a month before the Pandemic hit us and then for a couple of months in the Summer before we were forced to close again.

Thinking ahead, and the day we are able to open, a number of people have recently arrived in this area and have come forward and added their names to our list of volunteers. We are very grateful to them. However, we continue to be short of volunteers so if anyone out there can spare a couple of hours from when we do finally open, please contact Terry Ashworth on 01485 535292 or email ashworth@hunstantoncivicsociety.org.uk – Thank you.

### CALENDARS FOR SALE (fundraising effort for the Heritage Centre)

One or two people have come forward with photos to add to the stock of lovely photographs for the sale of calendars at the end of this year. However, in order to do that, we do need appropriate photos featuring a scene, an object or other image relevant to our area for each month.

We are appealing for members or friends of the Society to provide photos that you have taken during the course of the year up until October from which we would select the best. Each used would be attributed to the photographer.

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

# Thornham Cricket Club

Jim Clarke

It may be winter and snow on the ground when I write this little piece but we as a club are busy planning an exciting time in 2021. The field is looking amazing thanks to Adrian "Sid" Siddle and we look forward to welcoming so many teams down to the club this season.

We would love to welcome as many of you down as we can to the club, both in a playing and supporting role if rules allow as the Kettle is always on down the friendliest club in Norfolk.

## Senior Cricket

The 1st XI is in the Norfolk League Division 2 this season with our fixtures starting at 1pm.

The 2nd XI is in the Norfolk League Division 4 where with the fixtures also starting at 1pm.

The Sunday team are in the West Norfolk Division 2.

We are always on the lookout for new players within the club to help strengthen and bolster our numbers. You will be given a warm welcome by all at the club.

To join the senior section please contact Ron Williamson on ronfendt930@sky.com for more details.

## Junior Cricket

We are also looking at restarting our junior cricket sessions this summer led by Jim Clarke we would love to invite every child down to give cricket a go and hopefully start a lifetimes journey in the game. All our sessions are all inclusive high energy, fun and the main aim is LBW (LEARN BEFORE WINNING).

We take children from 3 years old upwards with the times of the sessions being:

**Minis 3-7 5.45-6.30 Tuesday Evenings**

**Juniors 6.30-7.45 Tuesday Evenings**

To enquire about joining please contact Jim on [Thornhamccinthecommunity@gmail.com](mailto:Thornhamccinthecommunity@gmail.com)

We are also going to be running some kwik cricket matches against other teams in the area at Under 9 and Under 11 age groups for the 2021 season.

So Much to look forward to in the 2021 please feel free to be a part of the Thornham CC family we would love to welcome you down.

# A million steps for the Somerville Foundation

Richard Bird (Snr)

This is my wonderful eldest son Richard W.J. Bird.



He is a retired banker who now, amongst other things, works with the Somerville Foundation as a Wellbeing Counsellor. For those that don't know, it supports young people and adults who were born with a heart condition. Richard was born with congenital (malfunctioning from birth) heart problems having had three major heart operations aged just three, six and thirty-five years old. He has achieved a 'near to', normal life, achieving academic, sporting, professional career and family successes. He is married to Gill and has three grown up offspring. This would not have been possible without the N.H.S. especially The National Heart Hospital, and the consultant that has helped him, and many thousands of others, virtually from birth, JANE SOMERVILLE, the name of the Foundation.

The development in this field is phenomenal and we have seen with our own eyes progression that is virtually space age. For example, when we saw, about 50 years

ago, the first pacemakers, they were being pulled around on trolleys with a huge battery leading to wires plugged into the heart. Now it's the size of a small soap dish with a tiny battery that lasts for years, normally located under the collar bone and it only takes a local anaesthetic to remove and replace components, it's miraculous.

Richard needs your help; he needs you to help fundraise.

This year he initiated, with a few friends and colleagues the campaign for 'A million steps for the Somerville Foundation', using this experience as a pilot so that next year in February, the month set aside for HEART MONTH across the world, we all can help fundraise for those in need. It's worldwide but it's also so very local with the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital having a specialist department. Please support Richard, more details will be coming forward but, in the meantime, if you are participating in any virtual or real fundraising events could you nominate the Somerville Foundation as your preferred charity? If you are proposing to put on an event, would you choose the Somerville Foundation as the charity you are supporting? Additionally, if you have any money-making schemes that will support the foundation then please get in touch, there is a JustGiving page and the Somerville foundation is a registered charity and has a website: [www.thesf.org.uk](http://www.thesf.org.uk)

Please contact Richard Snr or Richard Jnr in the first instance, we are listening.

Our contact details are:  
[richard.bird@thesf.org.uk](mailto:richard.bird@thesf.org.uk) or  
[richard@richardbird.me.uk](mailto:richard@richardbird.me.uk)

**STOP PRESS from Richard Jnr**

The good news is that by the end of Week 1, we had already collectively walked over a

million steps, over 500 miles, so that's amazing. Walkers are taking part from all over the UK and as far away as Cyprus.

Our awareness and fundraising have been growing also, we are over £2,000 on JustGiving and you have been great in using Social media, #millionsteps. The link to our JustGiving page is here, PLEASE SHARE IF YOU CAN.

1 Million Feb Footsteps - JustGiving

For general interest with the article, the latest edition of GUCH news has just been sent out electronically. Includes a piece from yours truly (page 17). You can read it at:

**GUCH-News-Issue-98-Spring-21.pdf ([thesf.org.uk](http://thesf.org.uk))**



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# Putting the clock back to 1963 might be worth a try

By John Maiden

On page 22 of January's "Town & Around" Tim Snelling provided a detailed explanation of the mineral content of the Ringstead River. As a boy I regularly quenched my thirst with crystal clear water from the Chalybeate spring at the western end of the Ringstead Downs. I have not been there lately to see if it is still contributing to the Ringstead River close to its source, but the wet winter has certainly turned a normally placid stream into something resembling a wild river.

Unfortunately, be the time it emerges on the western side of Redgate Hill, it looks more bewildered than wild, because it has to pass vast deposits of soil from the Hotchpotch homes excavations. Sadly, there is no sign of the water vole colony identified by ecologists prior to work starting there in 2016...



*Westgate Gardens pre 1963*

Looking back much further to 1963, there was a much longer spell of ice and snow than we had last month. This was also the year Hunstanton lost its beautiful Westgate Gardens, to make way for the central car park, a garage and the bus station. If the bus station was going to be demolished in order to bring back the Gardens it might make some sense, but to sacrifice a purpose-built public transport terminus in a seaside market town makes no sense at all. The fact that this folly is supported by the town council beggars belief, but it is probably explained by the ignorant comment of one councillor who was reported in the 'Lynn News' as saying: "With the new shelters, buses would stop in broadly the same locations as they had before the town even had a bus station 50 years ago. He concluded: "What we're worrying about, I don't know." Well, if he does not know by now, perhaps he should not be on the council. The fact that the Urban District Council saw the need for a purpose-built bus terminus ten years before Lynn had one is a good enough reason for me. Add to this, the fact that St Edmund's Terrace has changed beyond recognition over the years. Where there were trees, there is now a large apartment block and a car



*St Edmund's Terrace before the bus station replaced Westgate Gardens in 1963*

park. Unless its route is to be altered a land train stops there as it transports holiday makers to and from the cliff car park.

From the fact that bus shelters are to be installed in St Edmund's Terrace it would appear that the bus station is actually being relocated to the public highway, where it would be stupid to install flat roofed glass shelters in the lee of the Spinney trees, or adjacent to the theatre. They would be very difficult to clean and maintain.

As the bus station development is supposed to generate a profit, this money should surely be used to fund all alternative installations, including information signs and onward running costs. Otherwise Hunstanton council tax payer's precept will subsidise this unnecessary development with its retrograde public transport facilities.

We already have bus stops, turning facilities, toilets and a library. It is therefore essential that any alternative provisions should respect our Conservation Area.

This brings me to another contentious issue, namely the claim, supported by most town councillors, that the proposed brutalist shelters are ancillary structures, not requiring planning permission, in spite of

the fact that they would clearly fail to protect or enhance the character and appearance of our Conservation Area.

If Hunstanton had the benefit of an Article 4 Direction, in common with King's Lynn, this anomaly could be avoided, because the aim of an Article 4 Direction is to encourage the retention of high-quality architectural features and to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the built heritage. The designation of a Conservation Area only goes some way towards protecting the integrity of buildings and their character. Under the Town and Country Planning Act (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, permitted development rights enable property owners within a Conservation Area to undertake small-scale extensions and/or alterations without the need for planning permission. Where these rights are unchecked, they can erode the special interest of the Conservation Area!

Compared with the numerous blots on Hunstanton's landscape, two utilitarian bus shelters may appear insignificant, but the 1955 covenant on The Green would be breached yet again by the erection of any bus shelter on that part of The Green which is in St Edmund's Terrace next to the Princess theatre.

This is the month for putting clocks forward one hour, but our decision makers seem to be putting their clocks back to 1963. This would be all well and good if it meant bringing back the swimming pool, boating lake, pier, and the railway, in addition to the Westgate Gardens!



*Proposed bus shelter on part of The Green near the Princess theatre*

## Eleven homes proposed for the former Infant School site

**T**welve Town Councillors and thirty one members of the public joined the zoom meeting on 27th January when Gary Johns Architects and planning consultants Lanpro outlined their vision for the former school site on James Street in Hunstanton.

The building was vacated in 2015, following the merger of the infant school with Redgate Junior School to form Hunstanton Primary School and property guardian tenants have occupied the building during the intervening years on a 28 day rolling notice period.

The proposals include seven homes within the existing building with the remainder being new-builds.

Housing was selected as the most appropriate for the site following discussions with the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.

Commenting on behalf of Hunstanton & District Civic Society, Chair Amanda Bosworth said: "We welcome development of the former infant school and are pleased to see that the shell of the building will be retained.

"Our initial impressions of the designs are that they incorporate a good use of materials and are sympathetic to the local environment.

"The green spaces enhance the area and we hope that there will perhaps be scope to increase the size of these as the development progresses."

Andrew Jamieson, Norfolk County Council member for North Coast said: "This development would be a great addition to the local community with a design that has a clear respect for its architectural origins. I hope that other Hunstanton locals will be as pleased as I am that we can create homes in our town that the eventual occupants will be proud of."

Mark Nevitt, Founding Director at Torrington Properties said:

"Our aim is to reach high thermal standards for each dwelling with a 15% improvement above what is required by building regulations. The plan also includes the proposed installation of air source heat pumps which can provide both a more efficient and green heating solution."

The plans will see up to 11 dwellings created in total with 7 in the existing building and the other 4 built elsewhere on the site. There would be five 2-bedroom homes, five 1-bedroom homes and a single 3 bedroom dwelling.

The proposals include 3 vehicle accesses with 2 coming from James Street and another on Valentine Road. Dedicated Cycle storage will be provided and a private garden spaces created for each home.

Following the meeting members of public have been invited to share any feedback with Lanpro by email at [reply@lanproservices.co.uk](mailto:reply@lanproservices.co.uk) or via post to Hunstanton Infant School Proposals, c/o Lanpro, Brettingham House, 98 Pottergate, NR2 1EQ.



# Inner wheel

Sue Trewin  
Club Correspondent

There is a definite absence of events and fundraising to report but plenty of 'thinking ahead'. Since you heard from us last month, we have been looking at ideas for our Christmas tree for the Hunstanton Christmas tree festival. After all Rome wasn't built in a day.

The arrival of the Covid vaccine and its implementation has impacted on all of us and as we are good at lining up in an orderly fashion and everything comes to those that wait.

Spring will be upon us shortly and to mark signs of its arrival, Hunstanton and District Inner Wheel are having their own in house spring photographic competition. Spring represents the start of something new, new beginnings, progress, blossoming of new things, birth etc. As I am organising the competition, I cannot enter it, but a walk on Dersingham Bog last week produced a couple of photos seen below which might have made the competition.

Our club has survived well through the months of lockdown. Thank goodness for Zoom, emails and telephones but most of all thank goodness for the friendships developed through belonging to Inner Wheel.



## Voting safely at elections in May



On Thursday 6 May 2021 residents in King's Lynn & West Norfolk will go to the polls to have their say on who represents them at both Police Crime & Commissioner and Norfolk County Council elections.

Even though elections are not until May, we're already making plans to help you stay safe while casting your vote.

There are a number of ways to have your say - you can vote in a polling station, by post, or by appointing someone you trust to vote on your behalf, which is known as a proxy vote.

Lorraine Gore, Local Returning Officer for King's Lynn & West Norfolk said: "Elections are very important - they are an opportunity to make your voice heard and have a say on who represents you on issues that directly affect day-to-day life here in King's Lynn & West Norfolk."

"Preparing for an election at any time is resource intensive, preparing for an election during a pandemic is a whole different challenge. The elections scheduled for 6 May 2021 are still scheduled to go ahead. We are planning for these elections now so that, however you choose to cast your vote in May, you can do so safely. We will be putting arrangements in place to help you stay safe at the polling station but you also have the option to apply to vote by post or by proxy."

Ailsa Irvine, Director of Electoral Administration and Guidance at the Electoral Commission said: "The choice on how to vote at May's elections is yours - you can have your say in person, by post or by proxy."

"If you're thinking about voting by post, you can apply now. This will make sure your application is processed early, and your postal vote can be sent to you more quickly. It's easy to apply and you can do this online at:

[https://www.westnorfolk.gov.uk/info/20131/voting/72/voting\\_by\\_post](https://www.westnorfolk.gov.uk/info/20131/voting/72/voting_by_post)

**If you don't have internet access the simplest advice is to telephone the Electoral Services Office on 01553 616773 and ask for a postal vote application. The officers at the Borough Council will then send the elector(s) an application form in the post.**

"You need to be registered to vote in order to have a say at the elections - the easiest way to register is online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)"

Keep up to date between the  
monthly print editions at:  
[www.townandaround.net](http://www.townandaround.net)

## Smithdon High School uses lockdown to continue refurbishment

Lockdown may have meant students have not been much in evidence recently at Smithdon High School in Hunstanton, but that does not mean the place has been quiet, as it has provided an opportunity to continue the overhaul of the school's facilities and buildings.

Over the last year, around £1 million has been invested in purpose-built new classrooms, roofing and windows throughout the school site, and a major refurbishment of the sports hall.

The latest improvement work has seen a significant makeover for the school library with the demolition of the old disused swimming pool also going through the planning process.

"We always look for positives in anything, even school closure," said head teacher John Hirst. "With many fewer children in school, it has meant that some of the things we had planned for the summer we can get done now. This has meant anything from essential groundworks, through to the refurbishment of the library.

Smithdon, which is famed for its striking post-war architectural design, is a member of the 11-school West Norfolk Academies Trust.

The library redesign includes capacity for one-to-one learning, space for a full class, a quiet reading area, and the school's fifth computer suite, with room for an entire class of students.

Amanda Wright, Smithdon's Head of English, was thrilled by the possibilities the new facilities presented.

"The library is the heart of the English department, we use it all the time and the computer suite will make life so much easier when we are using our Accelerated Reader programme," she said.

Head of School, Amanda Gibbins, said she could not wait to see it being put to use by students when they return.

"We constantly evaluate what we are doing at Smithdon and how we could use our resources more effectively and efficiently," she said. "This is now a great multi-functional space, we just can't wait to get the students back in and using it."

Mr Hirst added that while immediate concerns of the pandemic era had been taken into account, the new look was designed for the challenges of the years to come.

"We will be out of this pandemic at some point in the near future and we want to ensure that we are best equipped to educate the future generations of children in the area," Mr Hirst added.

"It's very much future-proofed. What we are really trying to do is look beyond the pandemic and reconfigure and imagine spaces in different ways to enhance the students' experience and ensure that Smithdon is well equipped for the new demands and challenges it faces over the next few years. The changes we have made will support the highest quality learning for many years to come."



*Head of English Amanda Wright (left) and head of School Amanda Gibbins*



With demand for places growing, Mr Hirst said he hoped the on-going redevelopment of the site on Downs Road would make Smithdon High an even more popular choice for local families.

"Numbers on the school roll are

significantly increasing as the popularity of the schools grows," he said, "This investment ensures families and students can be confident that they have a modern and well-resourced school with some of the best specialist teachers and support staff in Norfolk."

## Brancaster CE VAP School news

There has been a bit less people in class because of coronavirus and another lockdown. We have only got 7 children and so has Samphire Class. We have to stay 2 metres apart. Our tables have changed round and there is only one of us at each table instead of two people. Now we sit with our bags and books!

We have been learning about "Our Wonderful World" and we have been on a safari to Kenya and have found interesting facts about Kenya's animals and the climate. We have learnt about animals all over the world, and their habitats and played an animal bingo game, matching animals to their habitats.

We went on a lovely frosty walk finding out about what we could see – frozen mud, which was really hard to walk on, frozen ploughed fields, frozen grass...and we heard lots of geese.

We wrote instructions to make bird feeders and then followed our instructions to create our own. We hung them up for the birds to eat. Then we did the Big Bird watch and saw the birds on our feeders. We saw black birds, robins, blue tits, great tits, coal tits, long tailed tits and a big fat woodpigeon amongst others.

We had great excitement when Market Lane flooded and the Main Road. We took photos and stuck them in our science books as part of our "January" work.

The children at home are doing the same work as us and we look at what they have done every Monday. They are all working hard and sometimes they do even more than us in school! We say a BIG thank you to everyone who is helping by giving us money so that everyone at home can work on a computer.

School starts again after half term on February 22nd and we finish for Easter on Monday 26th March.



## From a youth correspondent

Hello I'm Eden and like most other youngsters, I have to do everything online at the moment.

Doing online school seems to be getting easier and easier and as the days go on it's definitely turning into a routine.

We're now in half term, but it does not feel like it because it's the same routine but just without doing school every day.

Doing dance online is still quite difficult because for some reason Zoom cuts out a lot more, but that does not mean that we don't have fun. Here I am practicing my pointe work!

I can't wait to go back to school and that day does seem to be getting closer and closer, and that's a good thing, because I go to Glebe House School where the year groups go up to year eight; this means it is my last year, so as the days get closer and closer that means that the leavers' trip is getting closer and closer too.

I really excited to be able to go back to school and dance and I can't wait until I'm allowed to.



# Family ties

**With more than 54 years' glazing experience, West Norfolk Glass has weathered tough times, writes managing director Geoff Parker**

It's been a bumpy start to 2021, but the vaccine rollout hopefully signals a return to some sort of normality in the coming months. However the economic impact of the pandemic is set to be with us for some time. As a second generation family firm, we've been serving the people of Norfolk for 54 years and both during my father's time and my own in the business we've weathered the storms of recession before. In my experience, it's when longevity counts in sticking the course.

Over the years, our industry has seen incredible change with innovations that make doors and windows as effective in styling your home as making it energy efficient. Home improvement trends come and go, and at the moment timber-effect sliding sashes and flush frames seem to be popular, but what remains a constant is the importance of quality in the products and people you choose to upgrade your property.

West Norfolk Glass is about to mark its anniversary as an Independent Network Which? Trusted Trader, a status which means our service has been assessed and meets the highest standards. Unlike many double glazing companies, we employ all of our fitters so the work they carry out in your home is fully covered by our guarantee.

Using a quality UPVC product that will last is as important as fit and so we work with a range of products to be able to offer the right product for the right setting. Family-like care and quality products that last – it's a formula which works and at a time when there seems to be so much changing on a daily basis, we are proud to be an enduring constant for our customers.



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# Lending a paw to help the environment

Barked by Maisie - Guest Barker

**Hi – Maisie, the Cairn Terrier here!**

Like me and my turbocharged nose, my human's into poo. Unlike me though, he's more of a looker than a sniffer or roller - not just dog poo but bird, badger, cow, otter, sheep etc. You name it, he's found it, photographed it and got the T-shirt! Apparently it helps him do his job – rather than just being weird. He's a qualified dogologist and works for the Kennel Club, local councils and wildlife charities helping them be dog-friendly, while also protecting wildlife and farm animals. He does ok but there are lots of ways we canines can also help protect our dog walks and the environment.



Here are my tips for happy, healthy, hassle-free dog walks:-

## Play makes perfect: this is THE BEST thing

Like any dog, but especially a terrier like me, if I'm bored I'll just follow my nose, which can get me into soooo much trouble by sniffing out wildlife, sheep and cows. Getting your human to play with you on walkies (and not just yap, yap yapping away to each other, or nattering on their pawphones) keeps us interested and out of danger. Fetching safe toys (no sticks please – as they can be deadly) or sniffing out dog treats hidden in the sand and behind trees keeps me busy and safe.

## Keep clear of wildlife and farm animals

Norfolk is a great place for people, dogs and seeing sooo much wildlife and we can help keep it that way. Ensure your human prevents you from following your instincts and going up to, let alone chasing, any animals or birds at any time of year; get them to clip on your lead if need be.

In spring and summer rare birds nest on the ground, and in winter seabirds can get really tired and hungry looking for food. Going near the birds will cause them to fly off, using up their valuable energy making it even harder for them to survive. Look out for signs that help you avoid the most sensitive times and places.

Take extra care around farm animals like sheep and cows by always clipping on the lead, so the farmer sees you are being responsible. However, tell your human to release you if you feel threatened by cattle so you can get to safety separately. Always go around groups of cows, not between them.

## Poo: never leave it behind

There's nothing more likely to get all us dogs a bad name and have us banned from places than leaving our poo behind, even in a bag - that means don't leave it anywhere including paths, parks, beaches, marshes, woods, verges, fields, by crops and riverbanks.

Train your human to always remove your poo to protect the environment and avoid a fine. Any public waste bin will do for bagged dog poo (See how I made that rhyme? #Maisierocks!). Even better pop it in the home composting system that really can make your poo smell like roses!

Doggie-doo fact: poo is least dangerous to human health when it's just come out of your bum, so picking it up straight away is the safest thing to do. Leaving it behind on the ground or in a bag gives time for the infectious worms to grow that can cause blindness.

## Stay alert on pawtrol

You don't need to be a police dog to help protect the countryside. Dog walkers are great at noticing when there's something wrong. Quickly reporting your concerns can help stop environmental crime and bring the baddies to justice, so put the numbers below in your human's phone. Never put yourself in danger though as the criminals involved can turn very nasty, so just take notes and photographs as best as you can without attracting attention (don't touch – it could destroy evidence).

Groups of men out with greyhounds and lurchers could be chasing hares which is illegal and cruel. It's fine to call 999 if you see it happening, as human life can also be at risk – ask for the rural crime team or wildlife officer. Non-urgent information should be passed to the police on 101.

If you find dead birds of prey or other animals that might have been illegally poisoned phone 0800 321 600.

If you spot pollution of land, rivers or streams (like lots of dead fish) call the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60.

Fly-tipping is also a crime. Report it anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

## Follow the Dog Walking Code

Humans forget stuff, unlike me who remembers everything including where I buried all my bones, so it's a good thing that there is a great guide to having happy, healthy dog walks they can download for free at:

Though for me, just remembering to "leave only pawprints" is simple enough for any human to understand.

Keep your tails a-wagging and that poo a-bagging!

Woofs

#Maisie!



To find out more about Maisie's human's work go to [www.sjacm.co.uk](http://www.sjacm.co.uk)

## Springwood High School's bright stars set sights on Oxbridge

Students and staff at Springwood High School in King's Lynn are celebrating after the January round of university place offers saw a record-high four pupils receive offers from Oxford and Cambridge.

This year, a record 11 pupils made it to the interview stage at the prestigious universities, and now four of those have received offers, two at each university.

Josh Ampomah and Lucy Henry have both been offered places at Keble College, Oxford, to read Engineering and Biology respectively, while Ezra Nwobodo has an offer from Emmanuel College Cambridge to read Mathematics, and Beth Norman hopes to be studying music at Newnham College Cambridge.

"Last year and the year before we sent two students to Oxbridge," said Jamie Warner-Lynn, deputy head of Springwood, which is part of the West Norfolk Academies Trust, which runs 11 schools in the borough.

"This year we had 11 interviews, which is unprecedented, resulting in four offers. In the year group below, we have 60 plus students who are interested in Oxbridge Pathways, so the momentum being generated by seeing what other pupils achieve is fantastic."



Lucy Henry, from Hunstanton, was previously at another of the Trust's schools, Smithdon, before moving to Springwood for her A Levels. Her place is conditional on her achieving grades of A\*AA in her subjects Biology, Chemistry and Maths.

"Lockdown meant I didn't manage to visit Oxford to have a look round so I did an open application, for the university in general, rather than a specific college, but Keble is very close to the science buildings so it's turned out very well," she said.

"The interviews were done remotely, and before that the school gave us mock interviews, which were hugely helpful. My personal statement included things like my involvement with school music, but the interview was almost entirely academic, so they talked about my GCSE results a lot."

Her long-term career aspirations are particularly topical. "I'd like to go into research – communicable diseases really interest me," she said. "I know someone who took the same route as me and got into Oxford, which showed me it could be done, so it would be great to think I might inspire someone else to have a go."

Potentially joining her at Keble is engineer Josh, from West Lynn, who has been at Springwood since Year 7, and whose approach was slightly more targeted. "Keble is close to the engineering department, and has the most engineering students of any college so it felt right for me," he said.

"As well as my mock interview with the school's former deputy head, and the head of science, I had an external mock interview with some people at Norfolk County Council. As I was the only person

applying for engineering at Oxford, I wasn't part of a group, as such, but whenever I needed help, the staff were always very helpful."

Like Lucy, Josh has been set a top-grade challenge for his subjects, Maths, Further Maths, Physics and Chemistry, and he said he was attracted to the course because it was only in the final year that study became specialised, leaving his options open – and Oxford is the ideal base for his long-term career ambition.

"Something in the world of cars or Formula 1 really appeals to me, and lots of the teams are based around there," he said.

Ezra, from Kings Lynn, faces an extra challenge with a separate system of Maths entrance exams known as STEP for his place at Cambridge, but said the school's preparation had been "hugely helpful."

"I'm quite an independent person but the staff are very helpful and they'll always give you guidance so it's great to have them available as a resource," he said. "One of the people involved in my mock interview was a former teacher who had been part of the Oxford admissions team, so that made a big difference."

A keen musician, Ezra is taking Maths, Further Maths, Chemistry and Music for A levels, and is keeping his options open.

"That's one of the reasons I chose maths, it opens so many doors," he said. "There was someone the year above me who got into Oxford to do Maths and Philosophy, so that made me think maybe I can do something similar. It's nice to think that in these trying times, I might inspire someone else."



Beth Norman, from Docking, applied to and was given an interview by Corpus Christi College, but instead received an offer from Newnham.

"I just thought I'd give it a go," she said. "A while back I was involved in a mentoring scheme with some Cambridge students so I thought maybe I could try and aspire to what they were doing."

Previously a student at Alderman Peel school in Wells, she is studying English Literature, Music and Psychology, and has been given an offer based on grades of A\*AA.

"I'm hoping this might set me up for a career in music therapy," she said. "I went to a workshop on it in Year 10 and it really appealed to me."

Mr Warner-Lynn said the school was incredibly proud of the students who had put themselves within touching distance of places at establishments that attracted the world's finest minds.

"Springwood takes every opportunity to celebrate successes," he said. "When younger students hear them talk like this, they see it really is an attainable possibility. We're doing all we can to actively encourage all our students to be part of a culture of aspiration in the school."

*Photos: Ian Burt*



Dear Friends of the Princess Theatre

We hope you are well and coping with life at the moment. We have been busy since January re-scheduling all of the shows that should have taken place up to the end of June 2021. Please see the list

below of all of the new dates. All ticket holders with email addresses on our system have been emailed, so please check your spam/junk folders if you think you haven't heard from us. But don't worry your tickets have all been moved over to the new dates whilst we await your confirmations. If your show isn't listed below we don't have any further details at this point. Stay safe and we will see you soon, raring to go!

SOCIALLY DISTANCED SHOWS PLANNED FOR SPRING 2021 (pending government instructions) all at 5pm & 8pm

The Ultimate Girl Power Show / Sat 10th Apr '21

Everything Changes - Take That Tribute / Sat 24th Apr '21

The Boulevards / Sat 1st May '21

Doris Day Songbook / Sun 2nd May '21 (1pm & 5pm)

Solid Gold Diamond / Sat 8th May '21

One Night of Celine Dion / Sat 22nd May '21

Soul Kinda Wonderful / Sat 29th May '21

The Jersey Beats / Sat 5th June '21

All You Need Is Love - The Beatles / Sun 6th June '21

The Music of ELO / CANCELLED

100% CAPACITY SHOWS WITH NO COVID RESTRICTIONS ALL AT 7.30PM UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE  
(pending government instructions)

Wired For Sound, Cliff Richard / Sat 31st Jul '21

A Country Night In Nashville / Sat 14th May '22

Roy Orbison and the Traveling Wilburys / Sun 12th Sept '21

Psychic Sally / Fri 20th May '22

Aretha & Me with Patti Boulaye / Sat 25th Sept '21

Those Were The Days / Sun 22nd May '22

The Settlers / Weds 13th October '21 (2pm)

The Real Thing / Sat 28th May '22

Showaddywaddy / Sat 22nd January '22

Mary Duff / Sun 29th May '22

Totally Tina / Sat 5th March '22

Back To Bacharach / Sat 4th June '22

Lisa Stanley / Sat 19th March '22

Declan Nerney / Sun 19th June '22

Jimmy Buckley / Sat 26th March '22

Genesis Connected / Fri 24th June '22

Sooty's Magic Show / Weds 6th Apr '22 (11am & 2.30pm)

CANCELLED SHOWS

Exciting Science / Fri 15th Apr '22 (11am)

Foster & Allen / Petty Criminals / Naturally 7

Supreme Queen / Sun 17th Apr '22

The Kilkenny's / The Vintage Boys

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