AUTUMN 2024

NORTON NATTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE STOCKTON PARISH



Cover photo by Sharon Gwynne

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REMEMBRANCE

BY GRAHAM JONES

In November there are always two, possibly three, events of note. "Remember, Remember the Fifth of November, Gunpowder, Treason and Plot". On the fifth of November 1605, Guy Fawkes was found together with thirty-six barrels of gunpowder under the House of Lords. He and eight others were executed for their trouble.

In the 1950s garments too shabby to be sent to a jumble sale were used to dress a Guy, usually wearing blue overalls, who would be burned on Bonfire Night. Earlier attempts were made to raise funds to buy a box of fireworks. Guy was put on an old pram, paraded around the village and cheeky boys appealed for a 'penny for the Guy'. If this was repeated today, they would have to ask for at least 'fifty pence for the Guy'. Maybe that is why Halloween, imported from the USA, has become so popular. 'Trick or Treat' is the chant. Whatever the treat, it would cost more than a penny.

The event that unites everyone in November, is of course, Remembrance Day. For me this year was special. Almost by accident, I was able to visit the Normandy Memorial which records the names of over 22,000 service men and women, who died on D-day and during the battle of Normandy, in the summer of 1944.



A week before my visit, King Charles, the French President and other dignitaries were there to lay wreathes and to celebrate the official completion of the Normandy Memorial.



It was fine weather for my visit, and there were few visitors. From the car park to the memorial was an uphill path. This was deliberate so that an air of peace was achieved at the memorial.

Life-sized metal figures of servicemen and two nurses filled the field between the memorial and what was named Gold Beach during the invasion. The sea beyond was blue and calm on the day of my visit.



Fortunately Sam Coles and Bill Roberts, local lads, were not named on the memorial pillars; they survived the battle. When the names of the fallen are read at the memorial service at Stockton, the last man on the list is Leslie Webb. His name recorded forever on pillar 316.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

THE PARISH PUMP

PARISH COUNCIL 2024 - JULY AND SEPTEMBER MEETINGS

The Parish Council held its bi-monthly meetings in July and September covering a number of topics. This included the continued support for the Bowls Club, with it's developments to secure external funding for upgrades at the site for flood lighting and their drive. Dialogue has also been developing with RAF Cosford trainees and Bridgnorth Young Farmers, about the potential for volunteering across the parish on environmental projects. **Any Parishioners wanting to engage with environmental and health projects (as highlighted below), across the parish, please contact the Clerk whose details are set out at the foot of this article.** A number of projects are therefore continuing and are under development. They include hedge planting at the Play Park and verge planting with meadow flowers on the verges leading to Stockton Church and Stockton House. An additional project is also under development, which will be a parish walking group based around walking the rights of way across the area, with updates of how the project will work in future editions.

Survey works on the village pond have also been commissioned with Shropshire Wildlife Trust by the Apley Estate and the results should be available this year, with further dialogue and the potential for external funding applications to address any improvements. The continued situation of bus services serving the area have also been raised with Shropshire Councillor, Andrew Sherrington, who will be reporting back on any local progress made at future meetings. An additional feature has also been developed within this edition, covering how Parishioners can get involved in upgrading their fibre broadband connections which the Parish Council supports. In a review of the local Place Plan by Shropshire Council, relating to Neighbourhood Projects, the Norton by-pass has not been taken forward or supported to the next stages as a potential infrastructure project. In terms of planning applications, two have been received since the last report. The conversion of the Old Smithy in Village Road into residential use and the crown lifting for Chestnut and Oak trees at Apley Park Mews, both of which the Parish Council has raised no objections. The Parish Council will also be working with Samco to drop the second set of kerbs on the A442 close to the Bowling Club, to allow for better disabled access on the footpaths.

After the annual ROSPA inspection of the Play Park in Mill Lane, a number of upgrades to the play timber structures will be undertaken this year by a local contractor. The Parish Council also manages the bus shelter in the Village and is **asking Parishioners to keep a very close and vigilant watch on the shelter, as it has suffered from some anti-social behaviour over the recent months.** The Parish Council at their September meeting received positive feedback from West Mercia Police, operating with Staffordshire Police, targeting machine thieves who have been involved in machinery thefts from farms and household sheds. The local police team have encouraged all owners of these types of machines to get them fixed with trackers; so if in the future items are stolen, the Police can track and find the stolen items. Anyone interested can also sign up to Neighbourhood Matters with West Mercia to get up to-date news from their local Police teams.

Parishioners are also very welcome to attend Parish Council meetings, 7.30pm at Norton Village Hall and raise any concerns directly.

The dates are the 6th November 2024, the 8th January (precept setting), 5th March and 7th May (including the Annual Parishioners meeting) 2025.



An introduction to your new Parish Councillor on Stockton Parish Council

About me - Cat Griffiths

My husband and I purchased our home in Norton nearly 10 years ago and have always felt incredibly fortunate to live in such a picturesque village.

I was a primary school teacher for ten years before joining my husband at Bramble Developments Ltd, our building company, specialising in the renovation of historical buildings, many of which have been located on Apley's estate. My hobbies include keeping fit, travelling and gardening. Now that our eldest son has started school, I am in a position to contribute more fully to the village and the people within it that I have grown extremely fond of.

As I look forward to getting more involved in our village community, I am eager to lend my skills to the Parish Council projects that will benefit not only our neighbours but also the future generations who will call Norton home. I am particularly interested in the Rights of Way mapping exercise that is scheduled to take place soon. I am certain my two trusty labradors will be more than happy to help with that walking project too! If you see me out and about, please feel free to say hello.

Kind regards

Councillor Catherine Griffiths
07866 809896 (m)

POLICE ADVICE

As the days shorten and the nights lengthen during autumn, it's crucial to make sure security at your property is in order. Autumn brings about a change of lifestyle for many, with the longer nights and cosy evening indoors becoming the norm. Unfortunately, this seasonal shift also presents an opportunity for potential intruders. With the onset of darkness, potential intruders have more cover, making it essential to take proactive measures if you haven't done so already. Begin by conducting a thorough inspection of your property's exterior. Trim back overgrown foliage that can obscure sightlines and offer hiding places. Inspect your locks and windows, ensuring they are in good condition and are properly secured. Consider installing anti-snap locks or window alarms for added protection.

Illuminate your property with motion sensor lights to deter unwanted visitors. Regularly review your security cameras and alarm systems (if you have them), ensuring that they are functioning correctly. Remember a well-lit, secure home is less appealing to potential intruders, allowing you to enjoy the autumn season with peace of mind.

PCSO Sam Newbrook 40447
Police Community Support Officer | LPAF / Safer Neighbourhood Team / Shifnal and Albrighton | West Mercia Police

Shifnal Police Base, Tudor Way, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8DJ
Mobile: 07814 285101
Email: sam.newbrook@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

LETTER FROM WESTMINSTER SEPTEMBER 2024

August has flown by and autumn will soon be upon us. I have enjoyed the summer recess, with its opportunity to get out and about in our wonderful constituency. I have seen the valuable community services delivered at the Mayfair Centre in Church Stretton and the Cavalier Centre in Much Wenlock. I have also met with officials at Severn Trent in Ludlow to see how we can further improve water quality.

Now that the office has been set up in Ludlow, with another office in the works for Bridgnorth, it has been great to start local advice surgeries, and I look forward to many more going on in the coming months. Following on from these surgeries I have launched campaigns, asked the Government questions and achieved meaningful change in the specific situations of residents.

Readers will know that the Chancellor has announced winter fuel payments will only be paid to those in receipt of means-tested qualifying benefits like Pension Credit. Charities and constituents have raised significant concerns about the change, with an estimated 880,000 people eligible for Pension Credit not yet claiming it. Regrettably, the new government chose not to put the decision before Parliament. So, my colleagues and I signed a motion calling for MPs to be given the right to debate these changes. As per convention, the government conceded to doing so. I made my thoughts on the decision clear; we should not be depriving pensioners of this payment. After a lifetime of hard work, pensioners should get the dignity and respect in retirement they deserve.

It was fantastic to visit one of the free holiday clubs in South Shropshire, at St Lawrence Primary School in Church Stretton. Under the previous government, more than £200 million funding per year was provided to local authorities for the Half-Term Activities Fund (HAF). This provided 11.3 million days of enriching activities with healthy food to children and young people in this country. I have urged the new government to continue funding this scheme.

Additionally, our pubs in South Shropshire are hugely valued community assets. I love to nip into the George and Dragon Inn in Much Wenlock for a spot of lunch or for an evening out with my wife at The Mill at Leighton, as well as many other great community pubs. To recognise the value of our great pubs, I have called on the government to confirm it is committed to continuing the last government's package of support for pubs - including the Brexit Pubs Guarantee, which means that the duty paid on a draught pint in a pub will always be lower than its equivalent in a supermarket. The government should also continue to freeze alcohol duty and discount business rates for small businesses.

I am also campaigning for the better provision of defibrillators and enhanced training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, after meeting volunteers from Clun Valley AED Scheme. They provide a vital service in the community, responding to emergency referrals from West Midlands Ambulance Service. They have also grown a network of 35 defibrillators. When used within the crucial first few minutes of a cardiac arrest, the chances of survival increase to as high as 70%. The increased availability of this equipment could save many more lives. Supporting our local communities is an integral part of my plan for South Shropshire. By listening to what matters to you, I can support your concerns and deliver more for our community. So please do not hesitate to get in touch if I can ever be of any assistance to you.

Contact details are as follows: Email: stuart.anderson.mp@parliament.uk
Website: www.stuartanderson.org.uk
Phone: 01584 872187

Upcoming surgeries in the constituency:
Much Wenlock – 20th September
Bishop's Castle – 4th October
Dorrington – 25th October
Cleobury Mortimer – 15th November
Ludlow - 29th November

To get in touch for more details and/or to book an appointment please use the above.

RAES RECIPE

Autumn is upon us, so why not try this seasonal recipe?

PHEASANT (OR CHICKEN) GOUJONS WITH TOMATO SALSA

INGREDIENTS



For the Goujons:
1 Pheasant or chicken breast per person
1 plate of flour
1 egg
1 plate of toasted breadcrumbs (mixed with a small amount of chilli powder to taste)
Cooking oil

For the Salsa:
1 chopped onion
1 chopped red pepper
1 tin of tomatoes
1 teaspoon of mixed herbs
1 teaspoon of sugar
I add a pinch of chilli powder, but this is optional
Salt and pepper to taste
Cooking oil

METHOD

For the Goujons:

Remove the skin (if any) from the meat, and cut it into strips.

Coat the strips in beaten egg and then dip in the breadcrumbs until covered.

Using a small amount of oil (I prefer sunflower oil), pan-fry the meat in batches for 5-8 minutes, or until just brown.

Keep each batch warm until all are cooked.

You can serve these with any dip, but I like a tangy Tomato Salsa.

For the Salsa:

In a little oil, fry the onion and pepper together until slightly soft.

Add the tomatoes, mixed herbs, chilli powder (if using) and sugar; season to taste with the salt and pepper.

Serve the Goujons and Salsa with potato wedges; youngsters will enjoy this addition!

We are Bramble Developments, a team of builders based in the beautiful Shropshire countryside with a passion for renovation and interior design.

We specialise in converting barns and other historical buildings full of history into beautiful modern day living spaces.

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For more information please contact Dan Griffiths on 07815056608 or visit www.brambledevelopments.co.uk

AUTUMN - IS IT THE FALL
BY GRAHAM JONES

Weather forecasters tell us that the first day of autumn is always the 1st of September and the last day of autumn is the 30th of November. Astronomers have other ideas. Autumn begins at the equinox, when the sun illuminates the northern and southern hemisphere equally. This year the autumn equinox begins on the 22nd of September.

Nature lovers (phenologists) have a different view. As far as they are concerned, falling leaves and the migration of birds are the indicators for the beginning of autumn. The weather certainly plays a part.

I sometimes think that Burwarton Show is an indicator for the end of summer and the beginning of autumn. If there happens to be fine weather in early August farmers and farmhands may not be able to spare the time to attend.

One man who made every effort to attend was Tom Irons, the wagoner at Oldington. He looked after a pair of shire horses that even out of harness were magnificent. When dressed for the show they were awarded first prize repeatedly. In preparation Tom must have spent hours grooming and making the brasses gleam.



WITCHES AND KNIGHTS



The design of some of them had not changed for centuries. The crescent design was very common, this was a symbol of the Moon Goddess, and she gave protection against witches. Another common design was a simple replica of a badge of rank of a knight or an officer that they displayed on their shields or armour. Tom's team carried a lot of history.



Bert and Bill at Stockton with the Winners

Also competing at Burwarton were the very best of the shorthorn cattle cared for by Bert White at Stockton. He was the man who led the team that went to Burwarton to show them off and collect the Cups and rosettes.

When harvest time was over and before winter set in farmers might be tempted to take a holiday. Travel agents would encourage them to cross the Atlantic and visit New England in The Fall, where 'good foliage could be guaranteed'. Certainly this is also true of Comer Woods on the Dudmaston Estate, nearer home and a cheaper option.

Autumn Colours - The Terrace and Apley Park are just as good.



Harvest Festival is still celebrated locally, feeding the nation is still a priority. Today the Thanksgiving is not exactly as it was, the churches are not decorated quite as lavishly. Thanksgiving was given not just by farmers harvesting the grain, but the cottagers also gave thanks for the successful harvesting of fruits and vegetables they had cared for throughout the growing season. There was some competition.

Norton Show in the Reading Room (Village Hall) was a competition to find the gardener who had produced the finest plate of raspberries, the longest, straightest kidney bean and the fattest, heaviest marrow. Fine examples of all the products of the district were brought to the district were brought to decorate the churches at Sutton Maddock and Stockton. Those attending the Thanksgiving Service at Saint Chad's had to be particularly careful entering the church. They might easily trip over the marrow laid in front of the font.



SPARTANS READY TO START

Spartans aim to start work on the playing field in the next few weeks with the hope that by end of the month it will be seeded and ready to rest for at least 10 months.

Other news from Spartans:

The club kick off it's junior football this weekend at Oldbury Wells School on Sunday. Please come and support any Sunday across the season.

Spartans 1st Team have made a great start to the season in Salop Premiere Division after winning promotion. Games are on Saturday afternoons at Oldbury Wells.

Spartans Women's Team kick off too. This is the first ever competitive Women's Team the club have entered in to a league in there 38 year history. Anne Jonson, ex wolves pro, heads up the team. You can watch on Sunday afternoons at Oldbury Wells School.

Keep an eye on Spartans Facebook for up to date information. https://www.facebook.com/BridgnorthSpartansJFC/

ULTRA FAST BROADBAND IN NORTON???

People may have seen on Facebook recently that the Government are operating a Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme, which can help contribute towards the cost of making Ultrafast Full Fibre Broadband available to a community. It seems that Norton is included as part of Birmingham and the Black Country, under the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme, and Openreach is the company installing here. (Check out - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gigabit-broadband-voucher-scheme-information/gigabit-broadband-voucher-scheme-information)

The process is that householders and/or businesses make an online 'pledge' to use the Full Fibre Broadband system if it is implemented. For each pledge, the Government promise to make a sum of money available to Openreach, for them to carry out the installation works. If the total pledged reaches the Openreach target figure, Openreach will look into whether or not they want to build the system.

At the time of writing, pledges to Openreach's "Norton Exchange Project" are 11 homes, 0 businesses, £49,500 pledged, 18.46% of the target. If the target is reached (just over £268,000) Openreach will investigate building the network. Check out the current status of the "Norton Exchange Project" by entering a Norton postcode at - https://www.openreach.com/connect-my-community

If, or when Full Fibre Broadband becomes available, paying for Full Fibre access to the Internet, via an Internet Service Provider, would be required from those who had 'pledged'.

Key conditions of voucher funding

When an individual or a business 'pledges' (ie, applies online for a voucher) they would be committing to ordering a Full Fibre service from a provider of their choice, if/when the network is built, for a minimum of 12 months.

If the pledge target is reached, this is not a commitment from Openreach to build. The decision to build, and the timeline, would be subject to a technical survey.

Only one voucher pledge per person, per address. It may be that not all Norton addresses are eligible – you can check your eligibility by inputting your postcode at the link in paragraph 3, above.

At the link in the first paragraph, above, the Government states that if Full Fibre Broadband is built, minimum speeds must reach -

- at least double your existing speed if your current speed is less than 50Mbps
- a t least 100Mbps if your current speed is more than 50Mbps.

Cost of access

It will cost you nothing at the initial stage, just to make the pledge.

If/when Full Fibre becomes available, it will be possible to order it through any Internet Service Provider operating in the area. As is currently the case, a wide variety of contracts would be available, from a range of Internet Service Providers. Charges would vary, usually dependent on the length of contract, and agreed minimum download/upload speeds. It would be up to each individual, household, or business to decide which provider and which contract is best for them.

Andrew Bennett : Mob. 07904 209272

COMMUNITY NEWS

STOCKTON BOWLING CLUB NEWS

We are fast approaching the end of our bowling season in the Highley & District Bowling League.

Stockton A team are currently 2nd in the Division 2 League standings, with Broseley just ahead of us, both teams should be promoted to Division 1 for the 2025 bowling season.

Stockton B, our new team have enjoyed the experience of bowling in the league for the first time. Some of them were beginners but have had some good match results. They hope to build on this in the league next year.

On 10th September both Stockton A and B were drawn to play each other in the Highley Knockout semi-finals on Bylet no. 2 green. The result was Stockton A winning by 17 shots after giving Stockton B a 44 handicap. We will play Bridgnorth B team in the final which will be played on 29th September 2024 end of season presentation day at Bridgnorth.



We are looking to boost our funds by approaching local businesses in the community for sponsorship. We would look to promote sponsors on new team shirts next season. If anyone would be interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact me.

We are approaching the Mid-Shropshire League to enter a team in Division 3 playing on a Friday night next year. This will enable the green to be used more and hopefully increase funding for the club. If anyone is interested in playing for us new or past players please get in contact with me.

We have this season hosted qualifying rounds and final day competitions, and again we hosted the Mark Bennett Memorial in July for the third year. This was won by Rob Weir of Stockton A beating Gareth Jones of Horsehay. Next year other clubs in the league will be given the opportunity to host the competition.

If anyone is interested in joining us as a member to play, to learn or just to socialise, all ages welcome. For more details contact: Jeanette Bennett 01952 730339 or Martin Bennett on 07870511655. For more updates visit our Stockton Bowling Facebook page and Norton Community page.

GRANT FUNDING INFORMATION - STOBART SUSTAINABILITY FUND

The Stobart Sustainability fund is aimed at supporting community-led sustainability projects and initiatives lead by non-profit organisations, community groups and educational facilities, such as schools and colleges, to help them transform their local community through projects that tackle climate change, reduce carbon emissions or that protect and enhance the environment.

They welcome applications from community groups, educational facilities or small businesses.

Applications need to be of a green, ecological or sustainability nature with the project benefiting the environment.

The Stobart Sustainability Fund | Stobart (eddiestobart.com)

Grants are available to individuals through the Gardening with Disabilities Trust to enable them to continue gardening despite advancing illness, age, or disability.

To apply for a grant, individuals must provide a letter from their doctor or other healthcare professional indicating their disability and a copy of another official document, such as a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or a Blue Parking Badge.

The grants can be used for: Raised beds / Poly Tunnels / Greenhouses / Tools / Small-scale garden adaptations. e.g. access pathways. / Plants or Shrubs / Compost

The closing date for applications is the 30th November 2024.

More info:
Organisation name: Gardening with Disabilities Trust
Deadline: 30-11-2024
Link: https://www.gardeningwithdisabilitiestrust.org.uk/apply-for-a-grant/

HARVEST LUNCH



The harvest festival at St. Chad's Church Stockton on Sunday, 29th of September was very well attended and was followed by a delicious bring and share lunch in a packed Norton village hall. The lunch raised £430 towards the church roof, which is currently being repaired.











HARVEST LUNCH FUNDRAISER FOR CHURCH ROOF

The PCC is delighted to have appointed Severnside Roofing to carry out renewal of the Church roof. They are replacing the nave roof tiles and the transept and parapet gutters. After many years of leaking, this will ensure that the church building remains usable. Many thanks to everyone who has contributed over the years.





Work continues to find a new Rector for us within the Six Parishes. Lichfield have agreed to help fund a full time Rector who will help bring renewal to the church ministry within our community.







There is a vacancy for one more person to join the PCC. The role requires good organisational skills and the PCC would welcome anyone who feels they would like to get involved to please get in touch with any of its members; Lord Hamilton, Tina or Neale Dalton, Charlotte or Jeremy Dyas.

There will be a service at the church on Remembrance Sunday at 10:45am, to which all are welcome.





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SAMCO
GROUNDWORKS & CONSTRUCTION

Features focused on Harper Adams University.....

Be bold and brilliant, Harper class of 2024 told at Graduation ceremonies

https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/news/211228/be-bold-and-brilliant-harper-class-of-2024-told-at-graduation-ceremonies

Robot harvest investigates how autonomy can harness strip cropping benefits

https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/news/211222/watch-robot-harvest-investigates-how-autonomy-can-harness-strip-cropping-benefits

Businesswoman raises a glass to Sustaining Shropshire project for 'valuable' advice and support

https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/news/211223/businesswoman-raises-a-glass-to-sustaining-shropshire-project-for-valuable-advice-and-support

New Business School set to transform education and industry engagement

https://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/news/211218/new-business-school-set-to-transform-education-and-industry-engagement

Answers from Summer Norton Natter Bird Crossword

Across	Down
2. Whimbrel	1. Greylag Goose
4. Cormorant	3. House martin
6. Peregrine falcon	5. Long tailed tit
10. Seven coloured linnet	7. Eider duck
12. Skylark	8. Goshawk
13. Tree creeper	9. Kingfisher
	11. Moorhen





EDITORIAL TEAM

Jackie Bennett - Social & Digital Media
Graham Bould - Parish Clerk
Charlotte Dyas - Content & Editing
Louise Pollock - Editor & Executive Assistant to the Estate Director, Apley Estate
John Pigg - Distribution

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If you'd like to advertise your business in the Norton Natter, please get in touch.
Send your events, news, photographs and contributions for future editions to Jackie Bennett at jackie.a.bennett@hotmail.com or the Parish Clerk, Graham Bould at gbouldparish@yahoo.co.uk by 25th November 2024. Follow our Parish Facebook page www.facebook.com/nortoncommunitygroup.

We'd love to hear what you think of the Norton Natter and we welcome ideas and suggestions to improve the content and add news and updates to the newsletter and Facebook pages.