SUMMER 2025

NORTON NATTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE STOCKTON PARISH



Cover photo by: Becks Bagnall

In this issue

PARISH PUMP NEWS

COMMUNITY NEWS

RAE'S RECIPE

NORTON VERGE MEADOW EXPERIMENT

CHARITY WALK IN AID OF ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY

John Webb is our Six Parishes Dementia Friendly Co-ordinator and has sent the following message:

A prayer from Faith and Worship

Memory fades, and recollections become hazy clouds, fading outlines of strangers' faces and forgotten places.
Even the familiar, loved ones and names that once tripped lightly off the tongue cause confusion, in what seems a cruel dismantling of a life once lived,
Compassionate God for all who live in fear of what they might become, and those already walking down this lonely road we call dementia grant them peace.
May each moment, however brief, be filled with joy not sorrow, and your love be seen through those who care for these your loved and fragile people.

Now a big thank you to all those people who kindly donated to my fundraising walk in aid of the Alzheimer's Society, which I completed on the 10th May at Stonehenge, Wiltshire. There were about 1600 of us walking some doing 26 miles or like myself doing 13 miles.

We had glorious sunny weather throughout which was appreciated by all. It was hoped that more than £500,000 was going to be raised on the day. My total was £635.00 plus gift aid so thank you again.

By the way my time for completing was 4 hours 34 minutes and 54 seconds.

John Webb, Six Parishes Dementia Friendly coordinator.

NORTON VILLAGE HALL AGM

Norton AGM was held on 16th March. There was a good turnout with new and familiar faces.

The new committee are planning to get Wi-Fi into the hall and create a new website to make enquiries and bookings easier. They also plan to redecorate/ freshen up the building to make it a great venue for locals to hire. Progress on future plans to follow in the next edition.

Hopefully you have enjoyed the recent car boots put on by the committee & friends of Norton village hall and held at Apley Farm Shop. The committee would like to thank Apley Estate and Apley Farm Shop for letting us have the use of their back field and catering van.

Both dates went well, generating much needed income for the hall. As always a huge thank you to the volunteers on the day and behind the scenes. Without you all it would never be possible!

THE PARISH PUMP

Parish Council 2025 May meeting:

The Parish Council held its bi-monthly, Annual and Parishioners meetings on the 7th May 2025 post local elections. Six members have been returned in an uncontested election but Stockton Parish Council requires seven Parish Councillors. There remains one vacancy, if any Parishioners are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor, please contact the Clerk whose details are below. Henry Phillips, a long standing member of the Parish Council stood down at these elections, his fellow members paid a sincere tribute to Henry's long years of service. Stuart Anderson MP for South Shropshire submitted a written report to the meeting which is featured within this newsletter.

The A442 continues to dominate the Parish Council discussions and although some repairs have been undertaken, parts of the carriageway are sinking with a number of safety defects. Shropshire Council have indicated that the road is subject to monthly inspections but the Parish Council is still not satisfied and will continue to lobby for the resources to resolve this major route through Shropshire. However, Shropshire Council seem to have ignored the Parish Councils deep concerns for a pedestrian crossing for the A442 which still needs addressing. Parishioners are therefore encouraged to report any defects and potholes through 'fix my street' and to raise those concerns with their new Shropshire Councillor whose details are set out below.

The local Police regularly attend the Parish Council meetings and the Parish Council agreed the three following Parish Policing Priorities:

- Speeding through the Village of Norton.
- Theft from sheds and outbuildings.
- An increase in environmental crime through fly tipping.

An external grant of £500 (picture below) has been secured from the EnviroGrant programme run through Veolia called 'Experiencing Nature' which will fund nesting boxes and wild flower meadow 'plugs' to attract pollinators at the Play Park in Windmill Lane. Other environmental projects in development relate to the cemetery and verges leading to Stockton Church. Anyone interested in volunteering to help out with these environmental projects can contact the Clerk.



The 2023/24 internal audit was also signed off at the meeting. Any elector has the right to view the accounts by contacting the Clerk whose details are at the end of the article.

The Rights of Way working group continues to meet under the theme of 'walk it' - 'report it' – 'repair it'. Once the work is complete in terms of the group's recommendations these will be reported through to a future newsletter and Parishioners will be encouraged to help walk the routes throughout the year.

The Parish Council has also agreed to publish a short leaflet to prepare their communities for emergencies. This leaflet follows on from this article for information.

Dates have been agreed for future Parish Council meetings which are held at Norton Village Hall at 7.30pm on the following Wednesdays. 2nd July, 3rd September, 7th November 2025 and the 7th January, 4th March and 6th May 2026.

Contact details: Stockton Parish Council Clerk
Graham Bould
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THIS ARTICLE HAS BEEN SENT IN BY OUR LOCAL MP STUART ANDERSON - STOCKTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING

1. Campaign Updates

Winter Fuel Payments

I have initiated a campaign to reinstate Winter Fuel Payments for pensioners in South Shropshire. Eligibility was restricted to those receiving Pension Credit, affecting approximately 2,000 pensioners in the area. I have been sending letters to constituents over the age of 65, informing them about the changes and encouraging them to check their eligibility. This proactive communication has received positive feedback, with many constituents expressing appreciation for the outreach and guidance provided.

Mobile Phone Signal and Broadband

Recognising the challenges posed by poor mobile reception and broadband connectivity in rural areas, I have launched a campaign to identify and address 'dead-spots' across South Shropshire. I have encouraged residents to report areas with inadequate coverage, facilitating targeted interventions to improve connectivity. Additionally, a £108.9 million contract with Openreach aims to deliver gigabit-capable broadband to up to 47,000 premises across East and South Shropshire, North Herefordshire, North Wales, and South West Wales, benefiting many homes and businesses in the Shropshire Hills.

Tackling Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

I have launched a campaign to combat crime and anti-social behaviour in South Shropshire. I have been engaging with local communities to understand their concerns and have been in discussions with law enforcement agencies to enhance safety measures, such as securing improved speed monitoring at speeding hotspots. Recent reports indicate that increased police presence and community involvement have led to a reduction in complaints and concerns, though the situation continues to be monitored closely.

2. Constituency Concerns

Farming Tax

The proposed reduction in Agricultural Property Relief has raised concerns among local farmers. I have been vocal about the potential impact on family-run farms, almost a thousand residents across South Shropshire have signed a petition urging the government to retain the relief, highlighting the widespread concern within the community.

Public Services – Hospitals

I have been advocating for improvements in community healthcare facilities in South Shropshire. I have called on Ministers to prioritise community healthcare services, ensuring that local residents have access to quality medical care. Recent discussions have focused on enhancing current services at Ludlow Community Hospital, while also engaging with stakeholders to support the initiative for a new hospital at the Eco Park site.

National Insurance Contributions

I have been monitoring changes to National Insurance contributions and their impact on constituents in South Shropshire. I am actively engaging with the Treasury to ensure that any adjustments consider the unique challenges faced by rural communities. This includes the impact on social care providers, healthcare charities such as Midlands Air Ambulance, and hospitality businesses. I have had numerous meetings with local people from all these sectors who have underlined the damaging nature of the tax rises.

3. Community Initiatives

School Visits

I have been visiting schools across South Shropshire to engage with students and staff, gathering insights into their concerns and aspirations. These visits have provided valuable feedback, which I am using to inform my work in Parliament. I want to ensure that the needs of young people are represented and that rural schools are properly supported.

Small Business Award and Photo Competition

To celebrate local entrepreneurship and creativity, I organised a Small Business Award and a Photo Competition. The initiatives aimed to recognize the contributions of local businesses and showcase the beauty of South Shropshire through photography. The events received positive participation.

Pothole Patrol

I have now launched a campaign to tackle the scourge of potholes in South Shropshire. According to the AA, a record £579 million was spent in the UK last year repairing vehicles damaged by potholes. I recently launched my pothole patrol, inviting constituents to tell me where the worst potholes are. I will then submit my findings to Shropshire Council.

Shop Local

To support the revival of our high streets, I am seeking the views of local residents and businesses in my new survey. I am asking residents and businesses to spend five minutes to fill in my survey and support our local towns. The findings will shape my plan, as I work with Shropshire Council and Government Ministers to ensure Bridgnorth and our other market towns can thrive in the years ahead.

I will continue to listen, support, and deliver by implementing my six-point plan:

- Unleash Rural Prosperity
- Enhance Public Services
- Champion our Farmers
- Support Local Communities
- Protect the Countryside

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ELIZABETH BARKER - YOUR NEW LOCAL SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLOR FOR SHIFNAL RURAL

I am deeply honoured and overjoyed to have been elected as your Shropshire Councillor for Reform UK in Shifnal Rural. This incredible opportunity fills me with pride and gratitude. I am wholeheartedly committed to being your voice, ensuring that our cherished rural area remains protected and supported.

I stand with unwavering dedication for our hardworking farmers, our brave veterans, and every member of our wonderful community. Your trust in me means the world, and I am eager to dive into the heart of our communities, addressing your concerns and championing your causes.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your vote of confidence. I promise to work tirelessly and passionately. I invite you to join me in this journey. Please share your thoughts and concerns with me. Together, we can make a difference and create a brighter future for Shifnal Rural. Let's work hand in hand to protect and support our beautiful community and countryside.

Reform UK Shropshire Councillor,
Elizabeth Barker



Elizabeth Barker can be contacted about Shropshire Council Services at Elizabeth.Barker@shropshire.gov.uk

WHAT'S ON AT ATTINGHAM PARK AND SUNNYCROFT THIS SUMMER

This summer, Attingham Park and Sunnycroft, two of the National Trust's properties in Shropshire, are offering a fantastic variety of events and activities for visitors of all ages. Whether you're planning a family day out, a cultural experience, or simply a relaxing afternoon in beautiful surroundings, there's something special waiting for you.



At Attingham Park, the summer highlight is undoubtedly the Summer of Play, sponsored by Starling Bank. Throughout the school holidays, families can explore different play zones across the estate. Children can get active in the sporty zone, build their own shelters in the den-building area, or dive into a world of construction play in the pre-school zone. The ever-popular straw Fort also returns, promising even more adventurous fun.

With a varied programme on offer throughout August please check the Attingham website and social media channels for updates on what's going on and when, or at Visitor Reception on the day of your visit. There is a great line-up of summer fun activities planned, including music performances, science shows, craft sessions and much more.

In June, Attingham comes alive with music. The Dance Anthems Orchestra will kick things off on Friday 13 June, featuring live dance classics and a headline set by Take That's Howard Donald. On Saturday 14 June, the atmosphere shifts to the classical with UK Proms in the Park, hosted by Robert Rinder. This event will feature well-known orchestral pieces from films and television, ending in a rousing Proms-style finale.

Food lovers will enjoy the Attingham Dining Club on Saturday 12 July, which brings the award-winning Digbeth Dining Club to the estate. Expect top-tier street food, drinks, music, and a lively, relaxed festival vibe.



Film fans can look forward to a weekend of outdoor cinema, with open-air screenings of family favourites and sing-a-longs, including The Greatest Showman, Wicked, Moana 2, Bridget Jones' Diary, and more.

For those keen to learn more about the estate's history, guided tours such as Introduction to Attingham and Attingham at War offer insights into the lives of the Berwick family and the estate's role during World War II. Meanwhile, the Hidden Home Tour reveals private stories from the Mansion's more recent past. Nordic walking sessions with WALX and canoeing along the River Tern offer more active ways to explore the parkland.

Not far from Attingham, Sunnycroft in Wellington is also hosting a series of summer events. This unique Victorian suburban villa invites visitors to step back in time. From June to October, special house tours offer a look at the life of Dorothy Lander and her 1912 travels, providing a fascinating glimpse into Edwardian family life.

On the weekend of 28–29 June, Sunnycroft hosts its Craft Fair, with a wonderful selection of handmade items from local artisans. It's an ideal spot to find unique gifts or simply enjoy a leisurely browse in the garden setting. While parking on-site is limited to blue badge holders, there are several free car parks nearby in Wellington.

With so many varied and exciting events across both sites, summer in Shropshire promises plenty of opportunities for fun, relaxation, and discovery. For full event details and booking information, visit the National Trust websites for Attingham Park and Sunnycroft.

RAES RECIPE

Frozen chicken livers are readily available and are excellent for pate and terrines. This pate freezes very well.

Preparation time: approx. 15 minutes
Cooking time: approx. 10 minutes
Chilling time: approx. 2-3hrs



CHICKEN LIVER PATE

Ingredients for 6 servings:

1lb / 450g chicken livers
2oz / 50g butter
1 medium onion
1 glove of garlic (optional, it don't like this)
2 bay leaves
Dried or fresh thyme
Salt and black pepper
2 tablespoons of brandy
2 tablespoons of double cream

Plus clarified butter to pour onto the pate once in ramekins.

METHOD

Peel and finely chop the onion and garlic.

Melt the butter in a saucepan and fry the onion, garlic and bay leaves with a good pinch of thyme for 2-3 minutes.

Trim away any green pieces of gall bladder before cutting the livers into small pieces.

Add the livers to the saucepan and cook for about 5 minutes, or until the livers are cooked.

Add 2 tablespoons of brandy, and 2 tablespoons of cream.

Season with salt and pepper.

Remove the bay leaves and liquidise or blend the mixture until smooth - or mince the mixture twice.

Pour the pate into 6 ramekins and leave to chill.

Put clarified butter (butter that has been heated and the milk content skimmed off) over the pate.

Leave to chill for several hours, or freeze.

Serve with hot buttered toast.

Enjoy!



SAMCO

FROM THE ESTATE OFFICE

The earlier summer weather and lack of rain gave our farmers a few worries with crops beginning to look quite distressed in the fields. Whilst the recent rain won't have been welcomed by all our farmers were very grateful for it and the crops look very much better now. Stems are quite short which may mean there will be less straw than normal which will cause livestock farmers a few headaches later in the year.

At Apley Farm Shop we've had a busy spring with the Vintage Tractor Run in April and the Lingen Davies Colour Run in May, both of which raised significant sums for their respective charities. We held our Dog Show & Country Fair on 1st June – we had slightly changeable weather, but it was a popular and well attended event. We're now in preparation for the Classic Car Day on 20th July – last year we had 400 classic cars on display with enthusiastic owners always willing to chat about their pride and joy. We're hoping to have at least the same number of vehicles this year – the event is free to attend so well worth a trip!

Whilst the Football Field is being re-seeded by the Spartans Football Team, we're holding the Norton Car Boot sales at Apley Farm Shop. The money raised helps the Village Hall committee to cover its costs. So come and visit, the small entry fee helps your local community and you're bound to find a bargain.

At Apley Farm Shop our nominated charity this year is Ava's Angels – a charity which supports parents with sick children in hospital. It's a really worthwhile cause so if you're up at the Farm Shop drop a little cash in the collecting buckets – it all helps.

NORTON NATTER JUMBLE

DAYS OUT IN SHROPSHIRE

1. SEVRNE VELAYL YALWIRA _____
2. MIATHATGN RAKP _____
3. OHO OOZ _____
4. TEH EIKRNW _____
5. OFTDELR ONTW KRAP _____
6. DVAID ITSNAU SOERS _____
7. ICNRADG LMLI VELYAL _____
8. RIRONIGDEB OEGGR SUMUMSE _____
9. UDOLWL ATKERM _____
10. TXCOIE ZOO _____
11. FRA SMUUEM ORDCSFO _____
12. STAKYSOE ECLTAS _____
13. STEHWNEKAO RKAP _____
14. RTEREWOX OMANR YITC _____
15. IWNIOTNTHTG LCTEAS _____

NORTON VERGE MEADOW EXPERIMENT

It's the third year of the meadow on the verge and it's clear to see that the Yellow Rattle has done its job by suppressing the strength of the grass. Seeds had been collected from the original plug plants when the heads started to rattle. In Autumn last year having cut, raked and scarified the verge we sowed all the seeds carefully collected together with a few packets of general-purpose meadow mix seeds. Now, as the early summer approaches we can make out an increased variety of leaf shapes and plant types across the whole verge. With a little bit of luck, we should start to see the following native species thriving this year.

Agrimony, Bird's-foot Trefoil , Corn Cockle, Corn Poppy, Cornflower, Field Scabious, Foxglove, Greater Knapweed, Kidney Vetch, Lesser Knapweed, Meadow Cranesbill, Musk Mallow, Oxeye Daisy, Purple Loosestrife, Ragged Robin, Red Clover, Sainfoin, Small Scabious, Teasel, Viper's Bugloss, White Clover, Wild Clary, Wild Marjoram, Yarrow, Yellow Rattle.



We also collected three cowslip plants from a garden in Wales with high hopes of them taking. If we manage to get hold of some more Yellow Rattle plug plants in time - we'll plant them directly into the patches of grass that is still too dominant to allow the native meadow plants to grow through. It was a real joy seeing Goldfinch (seven coloured linnets) feeding on the meadow verge in the summer undeterred by the trundling traffic alongside!

"Cultivating a wildflower meadow takes a number of years. The first four years are the establishment phase, where each year paints a unique picture of growth, change, and beauty. With each passing year, your wildflower meadow will become a testament to the resilience and ever-changing charm of the natural world. Throughout these establishment years, the joy lies in observing the meadow's evolution. The abundance of flowers will shift and change as they colonise their newfound habitat. You'll notice distinct plant communities forming, creating a contrast across different areas of the meadow. This evolution reflects the natural adaptability of these plants and their journey towards forming harmonious ecosystems."
Meadowmania (supplier of the additional seed this year).

COMMUNITY NEWS

Stockton Bowling Club held its annual opening of the green on Sunday 23rd March 2025, it was well attended and the weather was kind. We played for the Tony Scott Doubles Shield. The winners were Rob Weir and Chris Massie beating Jeanette Bennett and John Clarke in the final.



The new season for Stockton A in Division One of the Highley League commenced 15th April 2025 beating Broseley at home in our first match. Stockton B playing in Division Two beat Islanders B winning the aggregate by 9 points, 4 games were won by both teams.

After a six- year break from playing in the Mid-Shropshire League in 2019 we now have a new Stockton A team playing on a Friday night with members from Cleobury to help us form the team, we played our first match on 18th April 2025 away to Charlton who we beat, gaining the away aggregate points as well.



Rob Weir (Left) Adam Morris (Right)

Our groundsman Rob Weir has been working hard on the green getting it ready for matches and in-house competitions. The green is running really well. Thank you to Adam Morris of Print It Services for his sponsorship for the purchase of new polo shirts for all playing members of Stockton A and B teams.

We are still busy applying for grants to upgrade our floodlights through The British Crown Green Association and Shropshire Crown Green Bowling Association and hope to hear soon if we have been successful. We will also receive support from the Parish council.

On Friday 3rd May 2025 we held a social/practice night, it was nice to see a few village residents attend who enjoyed a roll up on the green and a drink in the pavilion.

DATE FOR THE DIARY: Saturday 2nd August 2025 - BBQ commencing at 4pm, everyone welcome. We will be holding a raffle to help raise funds to upgrade our floodlights, raffle prizes would be greatly appreciated.



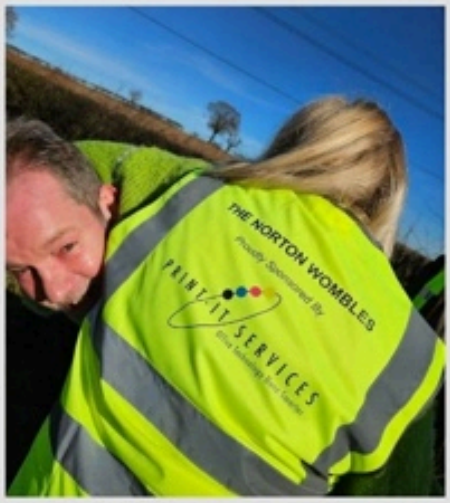
We have submitted an entry for the SCGBA 'Best Kept Green competition 2025' Many of our members have put in a lot of time and effort voluntarily to maintain the club by gardening, painting, cleaning of the pavilion and maintenance of the green. Regional judging will be held at the end of June/July with final judging the end of August.

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 07870 511655. Keep an eye on the Norton Community Group for updates and our Facebook page Stockton Bowling Club.



Norton Wombles

Attract a new sponsor !



Print IT Services have kindly supplied the Norton Wombles with new litter pickers, bag hoops, high-vis vests and gloves.

A big thank you to Adam Morris for his kind donation . It really helps the Wombles to do the job safely.



We were out in force in March!

Norton Wombles were out in force on a glorious day in March and gathered in an astonishing amount of detritus from the main A442. Within the village boundary alone they collected, 6 large gas canisters, a sunlounger, several wheel trims and numberplates and over 14 bags of litter !





... and the team finished off with a well earned drink in the sunshine at The Hundred House !

Why not come and join us next time....

Keep a look out for the next womble date on the Facebook community page. Or speak to one of the Wombles if you want to get involved. With more people we could cover more areas of the village.

STOCKTON PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council has been encouraged by other authorities from across Shropshire to consider preparing their Communities for emergencies – but what could this mean for individual households within Norton and Stockton? Our first message is that neighbours need to look out for one another particularly if you are aware of older people living close by on their own who may require a little bit more help from time to time when things happen or change.

This leaflet has therefore been split into a series of headings which the Parish Council hopes are helpful – you may consider keeping it in a safe place in case of emergencies.

Fire prevention and safety: If there is a fire, get out, stay out, call 999.

The emergency services are trained for a wide range of emergency situations. However, there is a lot you can do for example. Fit a smoke alarm, make an action plan so everyone knows how to escape in the event of a fire, take care when cooking, never leave lit candles unattended, ensure cigarettes are stubbed out and disposed of carefully, never smoke in bed, keep matches and lighters away from children, have your chimney swept regularly.

National Emergency Alerts: Emergency Alerts is a UK Government Service that will warn you if there's a danger to life nearby. Follow this link to find out more https://www.gov.uk/alerts. Additional advice is to Go In, Stay In and Tune In to local BBC Radio Shropshire 96FM.

How to prepare yourself for emergencies: Be prepared for example with suitable insurance covering risks, fit and maintain smoke alarms, prepare a first aid kit, sign up to a community messaging and information service. The following web site will be of help www.gov.uk/prepare, https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/weatherready

Accidents and system failures:

Electricity: during a power cut call 105 and to find out more visit: https://www.powercut105.com/, or https://www.nationalgrid.co.uk/power-cut-information/power-cut-advice

Water: Some tips are to wrap up your pipes, know the location/s of stop tap/s, for more information visit – https://www.stwater.co.uk

COMMUNITIES PREPARED

Gas: In the event of an emergency call 0800111999 – 24hours a day and/or visit https://www.nationalgridgas.com/safety-and-emergencies/emergencies-and-safety-advice

Natural and Environmental hazards:

Severe weather: Check for weather warnings at, Met Office helpline 03709000100 or at https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/uk-warnings

Flooding: Flood-line 03459881188 or follow @EnvAgency on Twitter and the latest updates from – www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk

Heatwaves: If feeling unwell consult your GP or call NHS 111 or call 999 for an ambulance. For more information visit the following site – https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/heatwave-how-to-cope-in-hot-weather/

Cold Weather: for more information visit – https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/, the cold weather plan on the following – https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/nhs-winter-planning

Human diseases: most up to date information relating to Covid-19 can be found on the following link – https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus

Neighbourhood Matters: This is a messaging service that keeps you in touch with the latest information from your local Policing Teams. To sign up go to – https://neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk/

Contacts for Shropshire Councils Resilience Team for other information:
https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/shropshire-prepared-emergencies-and-major-incidents/

The Parish Council Clerk can be contacted via email on gbouldparish@yahoo.co.uk, text or ring on 07792300702 or write to the address highlighted below.

Thank You

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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 17th September 2025.

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.