

NORTON NATTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE STOCKTON PARISH

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EXCHANGE

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Cover photograph: Jackie Bennett

SEASON OF MISTS AND MELLOW FRUITFULNESS...

The opening line of this famous poem by John Keats needs no introduction, but perhaps the new, revamped local newsletter does, so here it is!

A real group effort, the following pages contain words from people all around the parish. We hope you find it an interesting and useful read and perhaps a nice way to spend a few quiet minutes with a cuppa.

The Norton Natter is for everybody in the parish and we hope as it becomes more established that we will hear from lots of local people. We'd love you to share your interests, photos new and old of the area, sketches, poetry, riddles, crosswords, you name it, if it's something you think could interest, inspire or just put a smile on someone's face then please get in touch by sending an email to marc@caviarandchips.co.uk.

For the full poem by John Keats (1795 - 1821) 'To Autumn' see the back page.



(Photograph: Beck Bagnall)

THIS MONTH'S EVENTS

**Every Tuesday & Thursday**

Norton's walking and running group meet at 6:00pm every Tuesday and Thursday at the Village Hall. All fitness levels welcome to join and walk or run 5k or 10k. As the nights draw in reflective clothing is a must. Something to keep the mind and body active whilst being part of a group socially distanced in the fresh air. Any questions call Steve Bagnall 07483 900 183 or email stevebagnall20@gmail.com

Wednesday 4th November

Norton Parish Meeting at 7:30pm held virtually with details in the Parish Pump article in this newsletter.

The Bowling Club

Anyone interested in joining the Bowling Club can ring Mark Bennett on 01952 730 339, the club meets twice a week during the summer just off the Bridgnorth Road

The Village Hall

This facility is available for all kinds of community events from village parties, workshops, meetings to private hire. The committee organises the popular annual car boot sales in order to raise essential funds to keep the building open. If you would like to volunteer and get involved please contact Andrew Bennett (secretary) Andrew.r.bennett@hotmail.com – 07904 209272. While the hall is getting "COVID-19 ready" it isn't available for booking, but any booking enquiries, please contact Marie Manton on 01952 730873 or Becks Bagnall on 01952 730397. There is a Norton Village Hall Facebook page for updates. There is also a website – currently being updated details to follow.

Jubilee Play Park

The Parish Council manages the local play park off the A442 in the centre of Norton on Windmill Lane which has wooden rustic play equipment in keeping with the rural location, a small football area and picnic benches are also available with free access to the side.

THE PARISH PUMP

The civil parish of Stockton, of which the village of Norton is the largest settlement includes Stockton and Higford, lies in the mixed farming belt of east Shropshire. It is to be found six miles to the north of Bridgnorth and five miles to the south-west of Shifnal.

Local affairs are dealt with by Stockton Parish Council, they meet every two months and during lockdown are meeting virtually; when allowed will start to meet at Norton Village Hall. Minutes of meetings together with information of local activities and events is available via the Parish Council's web site at:

<https://www.hugofox.com/community/stockton-parish-council-10617/about-us/>



Or the Parish Council notice board on the Village Hall at Norton on Cheswardine Lane.

Some of the projects sponsored through the Parish Council are the 'Gateway' entrance project into Norton on the A442, the restoration and alternative use of the K6 Phone Box and the 'Smartwater' programme for all Parishioners to mark their own property, kits can be supplied via the Clerk who's details are below.

The Parish Council continues to meet during these uncertain times 'virtually' any Parishioner wishing to join the meeting are very welcome to do so either directly through their mobile phone, ipad or laptop as long as it has a microphone and camera, also available is a direct phone in facility on a mobile or landline.

Please check the web site or Parish Notice board at the Village Hall for the contact numbers.

September meeting update of the Parish Council. The Parish Council held its bi-monthly zoom meeting on Wednesday 2nd September 2020.

(Photograph: Beck Bagnall)

One of the main areas of discussion continues to be issues relating to the roads. After an in depth discussion in terms of the A442 the Parish Council resolved a three point plan to be raised with Shropshire Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner that:

1. Continues to support the case for a by-pass for Norton.
2. Lobbies for resurfacing of the A442.
3. Introduces a better system of speed and traffic management.

If Parishioners have any comments or feedback on the issues raised above please contact the Parish Clerk.

The next 'virtual' Parish Council meetings will be held online from 7.30pm on the following Wednesdays 4/11/20, 6/1/21, & 3/3/21, then in May 2021 after the local Elections are held.

Potholes: potholes remain a general concern across the Parish and anyone with concerns should contact Shropshire Council to report any outstanding concerns related to highways.

Smartwater packs: Any new Parishioners are entitled to receive a free Smartwater pack to mark up their own household items. Just contact the Parish Clerk with your postal address and a pack will be put in the post to you.

Volunteering: The Parish Council is very keen to encourage as many Parishioners as possible to contribute back into rural life and has already secured grant aid to help develop volunteering in the environment through litter picking and bulb planting through to supporting people to come forward to help at the Village Hall and re-launch this newsletter.

If you would like more information on forming a group or putting your name forward to get involved in existing groups please contact the Parish Clerk. Graham Bould, Stockton Parish Council Clerk: 18, Mendip Close, Little Dawley, Telford. TF4 3JG gbouldparish@yahoo.co.uk, 0779 230 0702

A NOTE FROM THE APLEY ESTATE OFFICE



This is the first of a regular contribution to the Norton Natter from the Estate Office, so firstly congratulations to the editorial team at the Parish Council for restarting the newsletter – we hope everyone appreciates the hard work and time that has been expended by them in getting this written & out to you all.

It's difficult to write this without talking about the pandemic. At the Estate Office we went into lockdown at the end of March like everyone else sending most of the staff home to work.

However because our business is classed as essential by the government – food production through farming, food retailing through the farm shop and housing provision to a lot of people some of whom are classed as vulnerable – within a week we were bringing staff back into the office to work.

In June we opened a temporary childcare facility which allowed us to get back to full strength – we ran this until the children went back to school in September. So, whilst we couldn't open the office doors we were operating at close to normal capacity.

At the Farm Shop we'd had to close the café & playbarn so we used the closure as an opportunity to re-vamp the café. One of our tenants has an interior design business, closed due to Coronavirus, and she offered her skills to help re-design the interior.

The Estate Yard team worked hard to get everything done in time to re-open in August and we're all really proud of the outcome.

So if you haven't been to the Farm Shop for a while, go and have a look and sample our new menu – Carmel and her front of house team would be delighted to welcome you back, David and his kitchen team would also be pleased to hear your feedback on the menu.

On the farming front, things have been going on as usual but like all farmers we've had a terrible year – very difficult planting season with all the rain in the autumn of 2019, wet winter, followed by a very hot & dry spring have meant that our yields are well down on a normal year. Definitely a year to forget!

We've finished the harvest now and are well into the autumn planting season and are hoping for a more normal year.

We'd like to invite you to pop into the Estate Office and meet our new team but that'll have to wait until things get closer to normal – which hopefully won't be too far away.

NOTE FROM THE VILLAGE HALL

The postponed Annual General Meeting (AGM) for Norton Village Hall took place on the 9th September. Clearly there has been a great deal of uncertainty surrounding Covid and its effect on the Village Hall. It was therefore agreed to elect committee members to run the facility for what remains of this year. The next AGM will be in March 2021. This will hopefully allow time for clarity and to encourage people within the community to step forward for election.

In March there will be a number of these positions that will be open and the continuation of the facility will be under threat if they cannot be filled.

So, if you would like to see your Village Hall not only survive but prosper in the future and you want to get involved please keep a look out for information on the Norton Village Hall Facebook page, the Norton Community Facebook page, the village noticeboards and the Norton Natter.

The next Village Hall meeting will be held on Wednesday 11th November at 7.30pm, and is likely to be a virtual meeting. Details to follow.

The following positions were filled:
Chairperson : Dave Powell
Vice Chairperson : Charlie Horton
Secretary: Andrew Bennett
Treasurer: Helen Baker
Social Secretary: Paula Davies
Booking Manager – Marie Manton & Becks Bagnall
Bar Manager: Adam Morris
Publicity: Jackie Bennett

THE WIDER WORLD!

The old telephone box in Norton's Cheswardine Lane has just been converted into a community book exchange.

It's been given a lick of paint, shelves fitted and books added. All done by volunteers from the village. The exchange is free and open to everyone.

The stock is made up from voluntary donations. Hopefully the box will also be used as a seasonal plant and seed exchange in Spring and Autumn. So please pay it a visit and help yourself, just try to leave something in return to keep the exchange stock going and interesting. Any items that have not moved after a period of time will be disposed of via charity shops if possible.

We also ask that everyone apply Covid safe common sense (wash hands and sanitise items on returning home).

To get the starter stock going if you have any spare books of any kind including children's, DVDs and audio books please drop them off at the telephone box. Although please keep in mind that there is limited space in the telephone box so not too many books at once please! Any queries to Jackie Bennett (01952 730325) or Jackie.a.bennett@hotmail.com. Thank you.



NOTE FROM THE RECTORY

Words from Revd Keith Hodson

We would usually be looking forward to our harvest thanksgiving services at this time of year but with the present restrictions on numbers this may not be possible, nor enjoyable.

The government have mandated that we have to wear masks in "places of worship": nor are we allowed to sing hymns, as singing can spread the virus. So we will not be able to "raise the song of harvest home" as the hymn Come ye thankful people come invites.

Couples have postponed their 2020 weddings, and numbers are restricted for baptisms and church funerals as well as weddings. Our Easter service was cancelled, and there is no certainty that we will easily have Remembrance Sunday service and Christmas services with social distancing reducing seating room, as well as having to wear masks and not being able to sing carols.



The church yard has also suffered as our new team in 2019 who nicely maintained the grass have not been able to travel to Stockton this year with the government requirements. Our apologies to families who have been disappointed by the state of the church yard. We hope they can come in October.

At least we did welcome the Bishop of Lichfield to St Chad's in August. He is planning to visit on foot all 27 St Chad's churches in his diocese on various days.

So he came to us from St Chad's Boningale via St Chad's Pattingham - he is a keen walker! In the short midweek service with him were these words in the bible readingstrengthen your weak knees and make straight paths for your feet..... Bishop Michael has a sense of humour!

AUTUMN RECIPE

From PAULA's PANTRY

Chicken & Broccoli in mayonnaise cream sauce

Serves 6

Ingredients:

A 4 lb chicken (whole)
1 x Onion roughly chopped
1 x Carrot roughly chopped
1 x Bouquet garni
Salt & whole black peppercorns
2lbs Broccoli (fresh or frozen)

The sauce

Butter & Flour for a roux
1 x rounded tbsp curry powder
4 tbsp mayonnaise
7oz tin of evaporated milk
4 x tbsp lemon juice
2 oz cheddar cheese
Salt & pepper

The topping

4 x rounded tbsp of white breadcrumbs or 2 small packets of crisps crushed.

Method:

Put the whole chicken in a large saucepan together with the chopped onion, carrot, bouquet garni, salt & peppercorns.

Bring to the boil and then simmer gently for 1 hour, leave the chicken to cool in the stock. In another saucepan boil the broccoli in salted water till the stalks are tender, then drain and quickly refresh with cold water to keep the colour. Butter a large ovenproof dish and put the drained broccoli in it.

When the chicken is cold, remove the skin and strip the meat from the bones then place the meat on top of the broccoli. Retain the stock.

The sauce

Melt a knob of butter, add flour and curry powder to make a roux, gradually add a pint of the chicken stock, and gently cook - stirring all the time until the sauce thickens.

Remove the sauce from the heat and add evaporated milk, mayonnaise, lemon juice and grated cheese. Stir the sauce until the cheese has melted. Add salt and pepper to taste. Pour the sauce over the chicken and broccoli dish, sprinkle the breadcrumbs (or crushed crisps) over the top. Bake in a moderate oven 375F, 190C, gas 5 for 30 mins

Serve with creamy mash, brightly coloured veg - perhaps lemon glazed carrots?
ENJOY!








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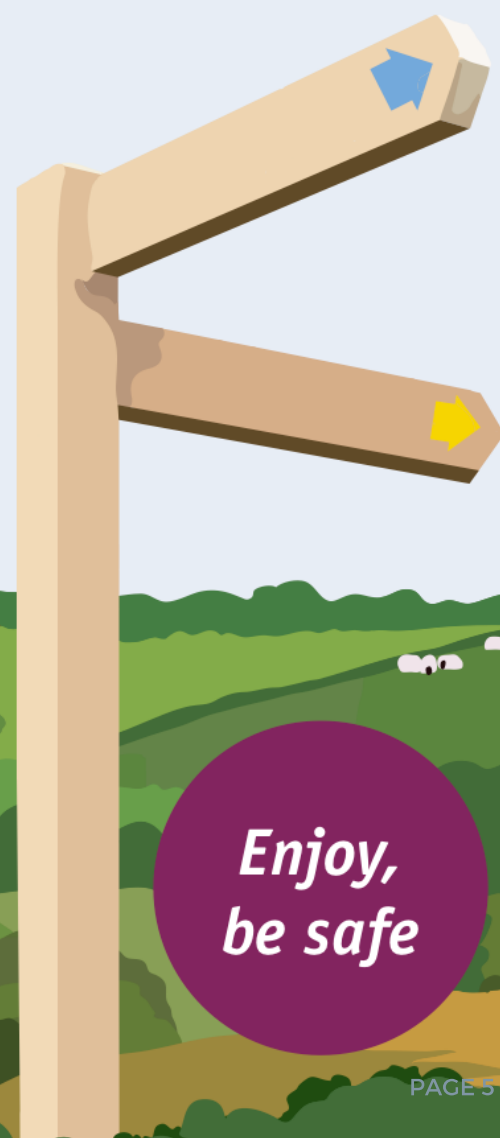
- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Park carefully so access to gateways and driveways is clear
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Follow paths but give way to others where it's narrow

Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit, take all your litter home
- Don't have BBQs or fires
- Keep dogs under effective control
- Dog poo - bag it and bin it

Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead, check what facilities are open, be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs and obey social distancing measures



*Enjoy,
be safe*

TO AUTUMN By JOHN KEATS

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad my find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too, -
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue:
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river salallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-cricket sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

EDITORIAL TEAM

Jackie Bennett - Social & Digital Media
Graham Bould - Parish Clerk
Marc Hornby - Editor
John Pigg - Distribution
Emily Taylor - Reporter

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Send your events, news, photographs and
contributions for future editions to
Marc Hornby marc@caviarandchips.co.uk.
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.
The next edition will be printed on 30th
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