SUMMER 2024

NORTON NATTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE STOCKTON PARISH



Cover photo by Becks Bagnall

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SUMMER IN NORTON

Summer in Norton brings longer days to enjoy the beautiful area we are so lucky to call home. Norton Park is a wonderful space to play games, meet friends and enjoy picnics in the sun...and the slides and swings are dry!

The Hundred House garden is open for all to enjoy. People swap plants and books by the village hall and harvest will soon be in full swing on all the farms around us.





The smell of cut grass, the buzz of a bee collecting nectar, the hum of a combine, the distant sound of wedding bells at Stockton Church and the annual visit from house martens, swallows and thunder bugs are all such simple summer joys.

So before school's out for some, grab an ice cold drink, step outside and take some time to enjoy reading the Norton Natter and catching up on news of all the opportunities and community activities that this wonderful place provides.



THE PARISH PUMP

STOCKTON PARISH COUNCIL 2024 MARCH AND MAY MEETINGS

The Parish Council held its bi-monthly meeting in March and its annual meeting in May.
At the March meeting, focus again turned to the village pond as an important biodiversity project for the village. An assessment is underway with a likely completion this month. The outcome of this assessment will be discussed at the next meeting.

The local PCSOs also attended the March meeting and highlighted the joint West Mercia and Staffordshire police forces' operation targeting known individuals and locations in terms of rural vehicle theft. Anyone aware of any suspicious activity should contact the police directly and report incidents in the normal way.

Speeding surveys on the A442 through Norton continue regularly through the use of a police van or motorcyclist.
The Parish Council agreed to help Norton Village Hall with a grant towards electrics and to set up a development meeting with Stockton Bowling Club to help look into external grant funding for their activities.

The Parish Council has a vacancy to co-opt a local parishioner who would like to get involved in local affairs and projects. If interested, please get in touch with the Clerk, whose details are set out below.

The annual meeting held in May agreed to the re-appointment of The Chairman, Lord Gavin Hamilton and Vice Chairman, Barry Spittle. The guest speaker was Graeme Manton from Apley Estate, who explained the costs, works and timetable for the new sewage system upgrade across Norton, details of which will be communicated to all households via a letter.
The Parish Council was also updated about the recently completed small mixed fruit orchard and extension to the hedge line within the play park off Windmill Lane.

The monitoring returns have been completed for the highways projects across the Parish for 23/24. A new application has also been submitted to complete the dropped kerbs on the footpath on the A442 from South Lodge as well as additional ditch works at Astol. The Council has also applied to the Spar supermarket chain for additional resources to help fund the 'willow sculpture' project idea at the Play Park.

Members of the Parish Council also agreed that representation be made to the Leader of Shropshire Council about the potential loss of the recycling centre which serves the Bridgnorth area as this could lead to an increase in fly-tipping, particularly in rural areas. If Parishioners do come across fly-tipping, broken signs or potholes, they are encouraged to report the problem through FixMyStreet.

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 3rd of July, 4th of September and 6th of November 2024 and the 8th of January, 5th of March and 7th of May 2025.



SUMMER PLANT EXCHANGE

Over the spring period there has once again been a wide range of seeds and seedlings shared on the swap table. This must surely be testament to either the optimism or perhaps the pessimism of local gardeners – you can decide which! So, as we head towards the height of summer, please keep putting your excess plants and produce on the table to pass on to others. Please do not forget to clearly label your deposits though, as people tend not to take things when they don't know what they are.



POLICE ADVICE

A message from the new Police Inspector which includes Stockton Parish

I'd like to inform you that I have been selected to be the new Police Inspector for South Shropshire's seven Safer Neighbourhood Teams and there will be a period of handover until I go live on 1st May from Acting Inspector David Meyer who has been sat in post since the start of the year. Some of the work that I have seen him lead and manage for the parishes of South Shropshire has been superb and my thanks have gone to him and the team for their efforts so far this year. I do acknowledge that there is always more to do in policing and for me this follows on with the basics: Visibility and Accessibility, fundamental parts of our Local Policing Community Charter (LPCC).

To introduce myself to those who I have not met or spoken to in the past, my name is Damien Kelly and it is a great honour to be able to return to South Shropshire where I have both worked and lived. I spent my adolescent years growing up in South Shropshire on the border of North Herefordshire and I can think of nowhere better to police than an area I feel so passionate about keeping safe. I flew the nest at a young age to seek a challenge in the Royal Air Force before finally settling down from all that travel into Policing which is something that has been part of my family in various parts of the UK since the mid-19th century. I am a forward-thinking embracer of change and advancement, but I do enjoy some traditional aspects of the policing role which I've spent my career fine tuning and balancing between the two. The mixture of towns, villages and hamlets housed within the parishes of South Shropshire is one of the largest geographical neighbourhood policing areas in the UK. In fact, the area is only a few square miles smaller than all the Greater Manchester Policing area entirely! That geography and 83 active parish councils come with some great advantages and complicated disadvantages which I'm sure you are more than aware of and I'm keen to manage a balance of resources, demands and priorities to an area of such size.

The team should be emailing out a few times a year for parishes to update their three priorities and inform you of what is being done to tackle them. The relationship between parish/town councils and Safer Neighbourhood policing teams is extremely important to achieve the safety, confidence and increase in quality of life for parishioners. My aim is to build on our engagement and visibility making best use of the tools available through the LPCC and the age-old techniques of simply picking up the phone or meeting up to discuss ways to improve/tackle concerns. Please know that as I will likely remain in post for some time now, I will work tirelessly for you and our communities to focus on the things that matter and I will do everything I can to successfully build confidence with the resources that I have to achieve it.

As a quick plug, if you haven't already, please do create an account with www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk which is a platform that the neighbourhood teams use to deliver important messages on crime, appeals and ongoing incidents, and to communicate with members of the community that use it. If you could share this with your parishioners, friends and family to get the best out of this system, delivering live information and communicating with your policing teams will get a whole lot easier.

Inspector 2382 Damien Kelly
South Shropshire | Safer Neighbourhood Team | West Mercia Police
Bridgnorth Police Station, The Wheatlands, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 5BD

SOUTH EAST – Sergeant 2689 Steve Mason
Shifnal and Albrighton SNT
Much Wenlock and Broseley SNT
Bridgnorth SNT
Cleobury and Highley SNT



RAE'S RECIPE

This is a lovely summer's day pudding! You can use any fruit of your choice. Serves 8.

Strawberry Roulade with Raspberry Coulis



Ingredients:
4 egg whites
I like to add ½ to 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract as it gives good flavour
45g (1½ oz) flaked almonds

For the filling:
300ml (half a pint) double cream, whipped until thick
250g (9 oz) strawberries

You will also need:
Baking paper
1 Swiss roll tin – 23cm x 33cm (9 inch x 13 inch).



METHOD

Pre-heat your oven to 200°C (180° C fan) or Gas Mark 6

Lightly oil the Swiss roll tin and line with a sheet of baking paper.

Whisk the egg whites (add the vanilla extract at this point) until stiff but not dry.

Add the sugar a teaspoon at a time and continue to whisk until all the sugar has been incorporated and the mixture is stiff and glossy.

Spoon the meringue into the lined tin and level the surface. Sprinkle over the flaked almonds.

Bake near the top of the preheated oven at 200°C (180°C fan) or Gas Mark 6 for about 8 minutes until the top is golden brown. Keep an eye on it; I cover the top of the tin with a loose sheet of baking paper if it starts to look too brown.

Reduce the temperature to 160°C (140°C fan, Gas Mark 3) and continue to bake for a further 10-15 minutes or until the meringue is firm to the touch.

Remove the meringue from the oven and turn out onto a sheet of baking paper.

Peel the lining off the base and leave the meringue to cool for 10 minutes.

Spread the whipped cream evenly over the meringue and scatter the strawberries on top of the cream.

Roll the meringue from the long side, using the baking paper to help lift it. Wrap the roulade in baking paper and leave to chill for about 30 minutes.

Lightly dust with icing sugar before serving.

For the coulis, you will need:
225g (8oz) raspberries
50-75g (2-3 oz) caster sugar (you can use icing sugar if you prefer a less 'sharp' sauce)

Liquidise the raspberries and sugar together, then sieve the puree to get rid of the woody pips. Serve in a bowl or jug to accompany the roulade.

AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY GROWTH AND RESOURCES FOR INNOVATION

The project will focus on innovation support activities for Shropshire Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the key AgriTech, Food and Drink Processing and supply sectors. The innovation support will be centred around unique, core areas of expertise available at Aston University, namely, innovation management, New Product Development, 3D printing, Photonic Sensing, and Low Carbon Biochar Technology and their application within the key AgriTech and Food & Drink sectors.

The programme is open to SMEs operating in the critical AgriTech, Food and Drink processing and supply sectors in the Shropshire Council area.

Find out more here: https://www.aston-agri.uk/ Contact the team by email: agri@aston.ac.uk

Case study: Unlocking the power of turmeric

The AGRI project's main goal was to carry out an in-depth analysis of the main chemical components of turmeric (curcuma longa) and their health benefits.

The report also goes into recommendations for the ALCHEMI LTD company on how to increase turmeric's bioavailability for powerful absorption of curcumin and catalyse metabolism.

Finally, it examines currently available commercial health beverages in relation to turmeric and curcumin.

Outcome:

Advancing the turmeric drink with the added health benefits suggested by the natural ingredients in the report for the consumer's well-being and company income.

This project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. For more information visit

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus

Contact - Phone:01743 250526 / Email: marchesgrowthhub@shropshire.gov.uk

STOP PRESS: Harper Adams University have agreed to produce a farming focused page in future editions of Norton Natter.

ST CHAD'S, STOCKTON CHURCH NEWS

Stockton Church has been without a rector for a whole year now and, keen to appoint the right person, the PCC are working hard to find a new rector to take on the role.

Luckily, despite this, there are still plenty of church events to look forward to this year.

On Sunday, 30th of June, there will be a Communion service at 11am. This is open to all. And tea, coffee and biscuits will be served afterwards.

On Sunday, 29th of September, the Harvest Festival will be followed by a bring and share lunch at Norton village hall.

A Remembrance Sunday service will be held on the 10th of November and Christmas carols will take place in the village hall on a date in December yet to be confirmed.

The roof is still a matter of concern and although repairing parts of it with fibreglass would be the cheapest option, this is not allowed. The flat roof on the transept is very leaky on the north side, which is the side facing the graveyard. In the past, stolen lead from the gutters was replaced with felt. The diocese have agreed that felt can be used temporarily and then steel can be used as a permanent replacement for the lead when funds allow.

Nave tiles and gullies will need to be replaced and these will need to be paid for along with the felt.

One option may be to leave repairing the south nave for now as the tiles are okay here. Lord Hamilton has spoken to the diocese and contacted people about various grants and the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme may be able to help. Donations are still very much needed in order to cover the full cost of the required repairs. The roof must be fixed before we can all continue to use the church; otherwise valuable funds will end up being spent on repairs.

If you wish to hold a service at Stockton please contact gavin_hamilton@outlook.com

SPARTANS READY TO BREAK GROUND



After a very wet period since September, Spartans are ready to start work on the pitch at Norton playing fields. The work will be undertaken by reputable local contractors and will be carried out to a high standard. It will take a good 12 months before any games can be played on the pitch and this will give Spartans time to renovate the pavilion.

Pictured are some of the Spartans who may well use the pitch when ready.

The picture shows the Spartans walkers preparing for the Bridgnorth Walk. Spartans had the biggest team in the walk this year and raised nearly 3k for Junior Diabetes Research Foundation.

STOCKTON BOWLING CLUB

Stockton Bowling Club held its annual opening of the green on Sunday, 24th of March 2024. It was well attended and the weather was kind. We played for the 'Tony Scott Doubles Shield' and the winners were John Clarke and Vinny Kirkland beating Tony Scott and Rob Weir by 21-19. It was all on the last end, a very close game.

We played our 'Ladies and Gentlemen Singles' on Sunday 28th of April 2024, again well supported and nice to see one of our younger residents having a go. Well done Lyra! The winners were Mo Parton and Rob Weir.



Our new bowling season in the Highley League commenced on the 2nd of April 2024 and we were able to get just enough bowlers to create a second team 'Stockton B' to play this year, which is good news as the green will get to be used more now. Both Stockton A and B are playing in Division 2 currently and we hope to see Stockton A get promoted to Division 1 next year. The team has won 4 out of 4 matches so far, just 1 point behind Broseley but it is early days yet. Stockton B, who currently have some players who are new to the game, are yet to win a match but with practice, I am sure they will win; they are all enjoying the experience of playing in the Highley League. Our new groundsman Rob Weir has been working hard on the green getting it ready for matches and in-house competitions and the green is running really well.

We have started to hold our Friday night social events again to encourage residents to come along. We held one on Friday, 19th of April and it was nice to see a few village residents attend who enjoyed their time on the green followed by a sociable drink in the pavilion.

Our next social night will be on 17 May, followed by 21 June, 19 July, 16 August and 20 September, all starting from 7pm.

We are always on the lookout for new members and would love to welcome you, whether you can bowl or not. To try and increase revenue for the club, it was decided at the AGM in February, to increase our subscriptions for playing members to £35.00, social members to £30.00 and children under 16 to £15.00.



We will be hosting the 'Mark Bennett Memorial Singles' competition on Sunday, 21st of July 2024. Refreshments and bar will be available and we will be holding a raffle where proceeds will be split between the Highley League and Stockton Bowling Club. Any raffle prize donations would be gratefully received. Next year other teams in the Highley League will have the opportunity to host this competition. Many of our past and current members and residents of Norton village have put in a lot of time and effort voluntarily to keep the club going so it would be a shame to see it fold.

If anyone is interested in joining us as a member to play, to learn or just to socialise, all ages are welcome. For more details, contact Jeanette Bennett 01952 730339 or Martin Bennett on 07870 511655.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Hedge Planting at Norton Play Park – part of the Queen's Green Canopy Project – with help from social partners



The Parish Council have secured support from The Woodland Trust who have provided whips for hedge planting as part of the Queen's Green Canopy around the edge of the Play Park in Windmill Lane, Norton.

The Wild Teams, a Shropshire Council volunteering project based around habitat management, was primarily set up for people using mental health services or those with learning disabilities, although this is not a requirement and anyone can join.

Some of the work can be a bit challenging, either due to weather or terrain. They also often carry out tasks such as tree felling or having large brash fires. People of all abilities take part and whilst everyone is made to feel comfortable, all are gently encouraged to step outside of their comfort zone, which can be quite satisfying and even exciting at times. The volunteers definitely learn something about themselves, their teammates and whatever part of the great outdoors they find themselves in.

In early March 2024, they had a bit of luck with the sun coming out by late morning for most of the teams. It's been all hands on deck as they give one final push before they take a break from their winter work for the nesting season. The Mighty Bears came over to Norton on Monday, 4th of March, returning to a site they visited a few years ago. The job was to carry on with planting whips for a hedge around the village playing field. Luckily, the ground was very soft, and the whips went in easily.

The Bears worked together as a team and got the job done in no time, leaving extra time to clear an area of hefty brambles too.



MIXED FRUIT COMMUNITY ORCHARD CREATED

The second project saw Cllr Andrew Bennett, Cllr Steve Bagnell and Cllr Barry Spittle plant up a small mixed fruit community orchard, also at the Play Park.

The trees were supplied by Shropshire Council after the Parish Council completed a successful project grant application.

NORTON TELEPHONE BOOK EXCHANGE

The steady ebb and flow of titles in the Norton Book Exchange on Cheswardine Lane indicates that it has become a quiet local success story. Thanks must go to all the people who continue to use it and in doing so, ensure the stock is refreshed and interesting. You may be interested to know that every few months, when the old telephone box becomes too overflowing, the books get thinned out and donated to the second hand book shop at Attingham Park in order to raise money for The National Trust.

Just recently, the 'books for youngsters' shelf has once again been replenished with more books from the Shropshire library service.



Please use the comments book if there is anything else you would like to see in there. Thanks again for using it!

PLACES TO VISIT

Shropshire is packed with history and heritage, and perhaps the greatest symbol of this heritage is the Ironbridge Gorge UNESCO World Heritage Site. Across the Gorge there are ten museums, run by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, that bring to life this spectacular heritage and the area's association with the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution.

In the centre of Ironbridge

As you cross the Iron Bridge, built in 1779, you are following in the footsteps of centuries of pedestrians, horses and carts. Step into the adjacent Tollhouse, one of the Trust's museums, and learn how and why this famous bridge was built.

A short walk along the river is the Museum of the Gorge, a former warehouse from where goods were transported along the River Severn to the UK and around the world.

Exploring Coalbrookdale

In nearby Coalbrookdale, the Old Furnace is home to the remains of the original furnace where Abraham Darby I perfected the iron smelting technique that was a catalyst for the Industrial Revolution. From here you can walk to the Darby Houses (open on selected dates throughout the year), and get a glimpse of what life was like for generations of the industrialist's family.



The story of iron continues at the Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron, with displays of functional iron objects that transformed people's everyday lives as well as exquisite art castings. Until 1 December 2024, a temporary exhibition in the Coalbrookdale Gallery, From Stars to Cells: The Life of Iron, goes back even further and explores iron's origins in space and how this marvellous metal is essential for life on Earth.

Enginuity is a hands-on museum for children to explore science and technology that aims to inspire the inventors and engineers of the future.

Craftsmanship in the Ironbridge Gorge

In the Trust's museums, you can also get a flavour of the different crafts and industries that developed over centuries in the Gorge.

The Jackfield Tile Museum, located in a former decorative tile factory, is now home to designs by Victorian makers as well as modern artists such as Salvador Dali.

The Coalport China Museum is where some of the world's finest china was made to grace the tables of everyone from wealthy families to queens and tsars. You can step into a bottle kiln and enjoy demonstrations of traditional techniques. The nearby Tar Tunnel (open on selected dates throughout the year) is a unique chance to see what lies in the ground beneath the Ironbridge Gorge.

At the Broseley Pipeworks (open on selected dates throughout the year) you can explore the workshops where pipes were made to be transported around the world.

Travel back to 1900 at Blists Hill Victorian Town

At Blists Hill open-air museum, step back in time to the year 1900. Stroll around this recreation of a Shropshire town, change your money into old pounds, shillings and pence, try Victorian sweets and traditional fish and chips, and see craftspeople demonstrating trades like candle making or printing.

A super-value pass

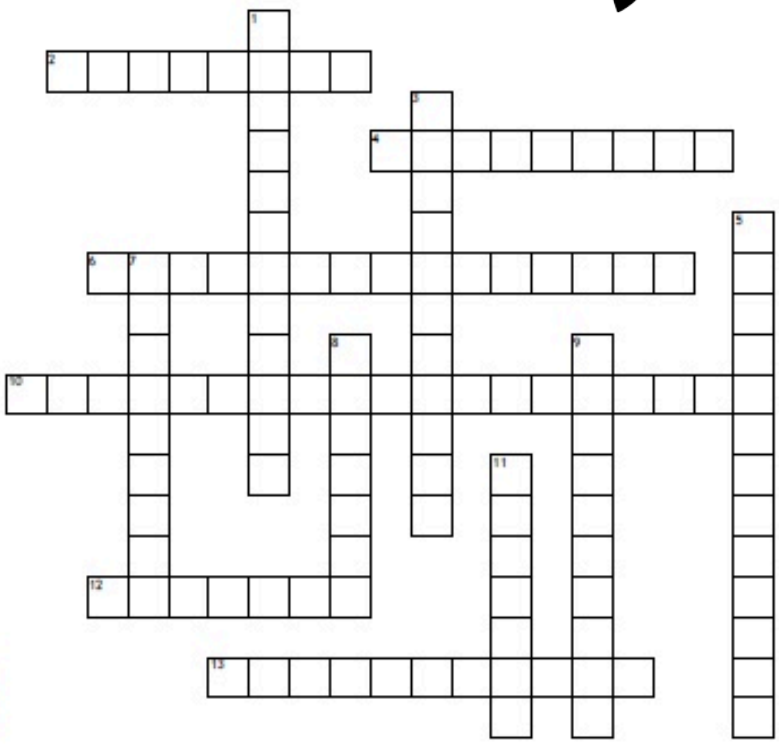
The PASS PLUS is the museums' best-value ticket. It gives a year of free access to the Trust's ten museums, as well as 10% off in the Trust's catering outlets and shops, free parking at its museum car parks and discounts on ticketed events not included in museum entrance. Plus you get a 10% discount on the PASS PLUS price if you sign up for Direct Debit. At £40 for a single adult or £105 for a family of six, it is super value for local people who wish to return to the museums at their leisure over 12 months.

Year-round events

Thanks to a busy programme of events throughout the year, there is always something new to see and do at Ironbridge's museums. This spring and summer, Blists Hill Victorian Town will welcome back annual favourite the Steam Gala Weekend as well as the Victorian Seaside Experience, a summer-holiday hit with visitors in summer 2023.

For up-to-date information about events, opening hours and ticket prices, please go to www.ironbridge.org.uk

BIRD CROSSWORD



Across

2. Smaller than a Curlew

4. Seabird that spreads it wings to dry them out

6. Bird of prey that favours sea cliff and inland crags

10. The country name for the Goldfinch

12. Living in open country it rises to a great height singing all the way

13. A bit of a creep

Down

1. Red legged wild winter visitor

3. Summer migrant that builds a cup shaped nest under eaves

5. Fly around in gangs in the winter

7. Duck that sounds like Frankie Howard

8. Looks like a large Sparrowhawk. Lives in dense woods

9. A bright spark on rivers

11. Black water bird with a red beak







Answers from Spring Norton Natter Jumble:

1. Stiperstones
2. Titterstone Clee
3. Brown Clee
4. Long Mynd
5. Heath Mynd
6. The Wrekin
7. Wenlock Edge
8. Caer Caradoc
9. Severn
10. Onny
11. Teme
12. Corve



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 23rd September 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.