SPRING 2024

NORTON NATTER

NEWSLETTER OF THE STOCKTON PARISH



Cover photo by Becks Bagnall

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PARISH COUNCIL 2024 JANUARY MEETING

The Parish Council held its bi-monthly meeting at the start of the New Year in January and had updates on activities with the main focus on the precept for 2024/25. The Parish Council have been concentrating on a number of projects, including local improvements to drainage ditches, pull-ins and footpaths, repair and maintenance of the equipment within the Jubilee Play Park, new benches along with the replacement of pads and the battery in the defibrillator located at the Village Hall. Some of these projects have attracted grant funding from others, but have had to be matched with Parish Council resources. This has meant that the precept, the Parish Councils element to the Council Tax will increase by around £500 approximately £3 a year or 25p per month on a Band D property within the Parish. The projects will continue to be promoted through Norton Natter so Parishioners are aware of what is happening.

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

Future Parish Meetings

The dates are the 6th March, 1st May, 3rd July, 4th September and 6th November 2024, the 8th January, 5th March and 7th May 2025.

THE PARISH PUMP

Reports were also received on the Jubilee Play Park with additional grant applications being submitted for an Envirogrant to Veolia for a 'Willow Living Sculpture' and to Shropshire Council for a mix of fruit trees for a small community orchard. Any one interested in getting involved in tree planting can contact the Clerk on the details below.

The Chairman, Lord Gavin Hamilton also updated the Parish Council on the fundraising for the Church roof at Stockton and dialogue underway with Shropshire Wildlife Trust about survey work to be undertaken on the village pond which would lead to a management plan and the potential for future external applications for funding any plan.

Smartwater anti burglary project kits for marking up Parishioners property are still available free by contacting the Clerk on the details below.

Potential Parish Projects and Initiatives:

The Parish Council is always looking at ways to improve amenities within the Parish. They have focused on the Jubilee Play Park and are asking for Parishioners views on Outdoor Gym
Equipment as potential additions. Please contact the Clerk with any comments if you would like to see and use this type of equipment, the type of equipment being considered can be viewed at **www.sunshinegym.co.uk**

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

The Parish Council is always on the lookout for volunteers to help with environmental projects around the area; plus anyone interested in being involved with the editorial group for this newsletter, please contact the Clerk, Graham Bould on gbouldparish@yahoo.co.uk - text/ring 07792 300702.



SAINT PATRICK'S DAY - NORTON VILLAGE CEILI

Saint Patrick's Day is fast approaching, as is the Norton Village céilí, which takes place on Saturday the 16th of March, one day before the big day itself, a wonderful way to get the weekend started.

And nobody will need reminding that the Six Nations rugby draws to a close that evening with Wales playing Italy at 2:15pm in Cardiff, Ireland vs. Scotland at 4:45pm in Dublin and of course France taking on England in Lyon at 8pm.

As an Irish resident of the village, I thought it would be nice to share some thoughts on Irish dancing.

My first memories of céilís, or more correctly 'céilithe,' are from my school summer holidays. Irish colleges are a very popular place for Irish teenagers to spend the long summers, especially as schools in Ireland close for the whole of June, July and August to allow children to help out with the harvest. And at least one céilí - along with multiple practice sessions - is held each week at an Irish College.

So why do secondary school students attend these colleges in the Gaeltacht or Irish speaking areas of the country? It appears that the reason is twofold; to improve results in their Irish language exams... and to meet a nice cailín (girl) or buachaill (boy). And a céilí is always the best way to do this... whilst also having a lot of fun, learning something new and generally blowing out the cobwebs. So get your dancing shoes on (or not – you can wear whatever you like) and give it a try! You might even meet someone you like more than yourself.
Sláinte!

POLICE ADVICE

Although vehicle crime is low across West Mercia, every winter the force receives a number of reports from drivers who have had their cars stolen after leaving the engine running, while they wait in the warmth of their home for it to heat up and defrost the windscreen. Some vehicle owners nip inside for just a few seconds to collect a bag or finish the last mouthful of their breakfast coffee - but that's all the time an opportunist thief needs.

To 'freeze out' the thieves, West Mercia Police advises motorists to:

- Clear windscreens with de-icer and a scraper
- Sit in vehicles while the heater de-mists the windscreen

Drivers who ignore this advice are taking big risks. Thieves will drive around residential areas looking for likely targets - when they spot a vehicle with its engine left running on a drive or outside a home, it's there for the taking.

One person will be dropped off, gets into the target vehicle and simply drives away. Many of the vehicles are never recovered, and some - especially high value models such as Mercedes, BMW and Audi - may be shipped overseas.

It is also worth remembering if your car is stolen when keys have been left in it, you may find your insurance will not cover you. If your house keys are stolen along with your car, your home is then vulnerable too.

So, this winter, don't give criminals an easy ride by leaving your car running unattended.

Police Community Support Officer Contact Details:

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



RAES RECIPE

As Easter is early this year, I thought a lamb dish would be a good idea. Apley farm shop butcher will prepare the rack of lamb very well for you on request.

Rack of Lamb with Walnut & Herb Crust and Wine & Grape Sauce

Serves 4-6 Preheat oven at 200c (180c fan) gas mark 6

Ingredients:
- 2 x prepared racks of lamb
- 1 x egg beaten

Walnut & Herb crust ingredients:
- 30g (1oz) Fresh wholemeal breadcrumbs
- 30g (1oz) Parsley chopped

If you can get some fresh rosemary leaves finely chopped add them to the parsley (they go very well with lamb)

- 2 tbsp coarsely chopped walnuts
- 2 large cloves of garlic crushed
- Zest of 1 lemon finely grated
- 1 tbsp walnut oil (sunflower oil will be ok)
- Salt & black pepper

Wine & grape sauce ingredients:
- 150ml (1/4 pint) of dry white wine
- 150ml (1/4 pint) lamb or chicken stock
- 125g (4oz) seedless green grapes halved



METHOD

1. Brush the outsides of racks of lamb with some beaten egg.
2. Prepare the walnut and herb crust – Bind together the breadcrumbs, parsley, rosemary, walnuts, garlic, lemon zest and seasoning with the remaining beaten egg. Chill for 30minutes.
3. Coat the racks with the herb crust then place in a roasting tin crust side up.
4. Cook the lamb in the pre heated oven for 30 minutes.
5. Remove lamb from oven and cover with foil to stand in a warm place for 10 minutes.
6. Meanwhile spoon all but 1 x tbsp of the fat from the roasting tin.
7. Set the tin on the hob, pour in the white wine and bring to the boil, stirring to dissolve any sediment from the bottom of the tin.
8. Add the stock and boil, stirring occasionally for 2-3 minutes. Add seasoning to taste.
9. Strain into a warmed sauce boat or jug and stir in the grapes.

FULL STEAM AHEAD - NO PLACE LIKE HOME

from Graham Jones

January is behind us and Spring is on its way. Some people may be making plans, booking Summer holidays. Some young people think nothing of it, traveling to Las Vegas or Bali for a wedding ceremony. Football fans swarm all over Europe all year round. It has not always been so.

In the forties and fifties the pace of life was much slower, and simpler. Men who had served overseas during the war were happy to leave it all behind and live in peace. Farm work and forestry did fit the bill, and the push-bike was all that was needed for transport. There were a few motor bikes and one or two pre-war cars in the village and for those who worked at Southwell's Carpet Factory a bus!

The Midland Red bus service did improve after nationalisation in 1947 and that was very useful, but the Severn Valley Railway was better. From Linley Halt north to Shrewsbury and south to Kidderminster the SVR was best.

One man who was very familiar with the line between Linley and Bridgnorth was Norman Sharpe. He was head gamekeeper at Apley for many years but he spent his early days, before The Great War, as an errand-boy in the Apley Office in Bridgnorth. Norman was wounded on the battle-field, he survived but he might have died in the sidings at Bridgnorth station. There was a regular train service between Linley and Bridgnorth which Norman used. One afternoon with no time to spare Norman made a short-cut across the tracks and was hit by a slowly shunting carriage and fell between the tracks. He lay there while the carriage passed over him.

I will never forget my first train ride, with my mother, from Linley to Bridgnorth. We shared a carriage with another family, mother and three children. I knew the route through farms and woodland as far as High Rock when I searched for the nest of a buzzard or kingfisher to add to my egg collection. I failed. I had more success fishing for pike and chub.



It was a bright sunny day and one of the boys asked for the window to be let down. It was held in place with a stout leather strap with holes at intervals. The lad leaned out, he had obviously done this before. We trundled on. There was so much to see, so much to take in. I could see the High Rock getting ever nearer.



Come out of there!

The boy moved away sharply. His mother stepped forward and snatched up the leather strap. She pulled the strap sharply down and the carriage window slammed shut. A stream of smoke and steam rushed past the window. The train fled into the tunnel, no-one had warned me that there was a tunnel under Bridgnorth. There was almost total darkness except for just a few sparks that bounced against the walls of the tunnel. Light poured in at the end as we drew into the station.

When shopping was done we returned but now I was prepared for the drama of smoke and steam. Then I could enjoy the familiar scenery of The Severn and The Terrace. We may plan for holidays anywhere in the world but the best part will always be the return.



DISCOVER WORFIELD TENNIS CLUB

Worfield Tennis Club is a hidden gem! Tucked away on the beautiful Davenport Estate next to Worfield Cricket Club, we have two recently renovated floodlit Tiger Turf (artificial grass) courts. Surrounded by farmland and beautiful mature trees we have the most lovely setting to play tennis.

We'd love to welcome new faces to the club whether you're a seasoned player or your racket is a little rusty.

New members are always welcome and as a member you can use the courts as often as you like, take part in our club activities such as social mix-ins and friendly club competitions. We have LTA qualified coaches to help you get started if you're a complete beginner or brush up your skills if it's been a while since you played. Coaching sessions are available for adults and juniors.

If you'd like to try the courts you can use our 'pay and play' option. You don't need to be a member, just head to our website, book your court time and turn up and play.

We have players of all ages and abilities. If you're a player on your own we can introduce you other players, or you can join one of our group sessions. I know it can be a little daunting to start a new sport, or join a new club but please be assured of a warm and friendly welcome at Worfield.

Please visit our website to find out more about the Club and our activities and to book your 'pay and play' session.

www.worfieldtennisclub.co.uk



COMMUNITY NEWS

Stockton Bowling Club held its Annual General Meeting on 20th February 2024 at Norton Village Hall, we are always on the look-out for new members to join our club if wanting to play, learn or just be a social member and come along for a drink. All ages welcome. (located just past Hundred House before the Row of houses in lay by on A442).

Our new bowling season in the Highley League will be commencing April 2024. Fixtures to be put on the Norton Community page and Stockton's web page when available. At this present time we will just go forward with Stockton A for now, teams will remain at 8 players per team. We hope to get a Stockton B team formed again, we would welcome any new members to join us, as we do not want to see the club close.

Our Groundsman Rob Weir has been working hard to get the green ready to opening, we will post the date for green opening on our Facebook page. Where our club will play the Tony Scott Doubles from 2pm. If anyone would like to come along to watch, you are more than welcome refreshments will be available.

We are looking to hold our Friday night social events again to encourage local residents to come along. Look out for details on our web page. We also hope to boost our funds by organising a bar-be-cue in the summer months. Our current subscription for members who want to join our club is £27.00 this season.

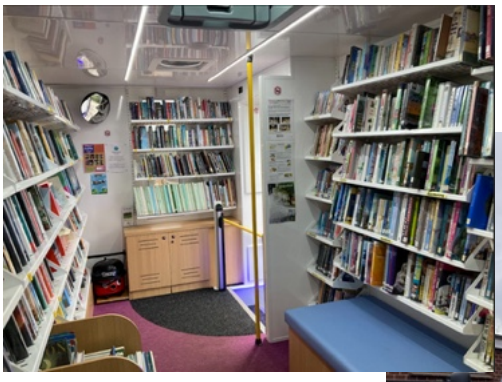
I would like to thank everyone who came along to the Highley League division One Singles for the Mark Bennett memorial competition last July, it was well supported by bowlers and people who had known Mark living in Norton, we hope to be hosting the competition again. July 2024 details to be announced later. 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.

We are planning on giving the pavilion and toilets a bit of a spruce up with a lick of paint for the new season.

The bowling club has been a part of Norton Village for over 60 years, it would be lovely to keep the club going another 60 but as our members/players are reducing due to age or illness, we desperately need some members who may have new ideas on how we can raise funding and membership levels or we could lose the club due to lack of funds.

Many of our past and current members /residents of Norton village have put a lot of time and effort voluntarily to keep the club going, 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 welcome, for more details contact Jeanette Bennett on 01952 730339 or Martin Bennett on 07870 511655.



LIBRARY IN NORTON

Did you know that Norton has its very own library?



The Brookes Mobile Library parks up for 10 minutes every other Wednesday from 12:40pm until 12:50pm and is fully stocked with an impressive range of books. You can find it either outside the village hall or at the bus stop on the opposite side of the road. It is next due to visit on Wednesday, 6th of March.

ST CHAD'S, STOCKTON CHURCH UPDATE

Currently our parishes, the Six Parishes of Beckbury, Badger, Kemberton, Stockton, Sutton Maddock and Ryton are in an 'interregnum', the period between the retirement of one Rector (Revd Keith) and a new one.

Teams from the Six Parishes are currently working through options for the future, because as Keith had gone part time a few years ago, to save cost, we are only able to offer a role for a half time Rector, unless we are prepared to contribute a higher amount or team up with other local churches.



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

Meanwhile we are very lucky that the Rural Dean, Revd Matthew Lefroy, along with Tina Dalton and the PCC are coordinating services at Stockton and the church is available for Weddings, Christenings or Funerals as required. In fact, the church is holding a few more weddings every year in conjunction with Stockton House. Congratulations to Shane Payne & Abbie O'Hanlon, Sarah Bowater & Edward Bradley and Lewis O'Carroll & Jasmine Horsley who are celebrating their weddings at Stockton this year.

Unfortunately, the saga of the leaking roof continues. Because the church is grade 2* listed the roof repairs need to be approved by the Diocese of Lichfield. Currently the church has just about enough money to repair the flat roofs & gutters with a fibreglass roofing system, but not enough for lead. In any event, lead has been stolen from the roof in the past and is therefore not a sensible option. Despite this, the Diocese prefer to replace like for like – i.e. with lead. We, with the help of the architect Anne Netherwood, are trying to arrive at a sensible solution which the church can afford. This is extremely urgent, because the leaking into the roof structure will eventually cause a major issue and possible dereliction.

The next service planned for Stockton is 31st March, 11.00 am Easter Communion with Rev'd Jess Harper. Please do attend if you can.

Many thanks the to PCC (Church Council): Tina Dalton, Hilary Blakely, Neale Dalton, Jeremy Dyas, Charlotte Dyas and Gavin Hamilton for all the work they do to help keep Stockton Church in our community.

NORTON NATTER JUMBLE - CAN YOU GUESS THE LINK?

1. ENTTPOSSSREI _____
2. IETRNEOTTTS CLEE _____
3. NWBRO ELEC _____
4. ONGL NYMD _____
5. EHHTA NYMD _____
6. THE NKWREI _____
7. LNEOCKW EEDG _____
8. ECAR ARDOCAC _____
9. NVEERS _____
10. NNYO _____
11. EEMT _____
12. EOCRV _____











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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 15th May 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.