Church & Village News

Baconsthorpe • Barningham Winter • Edgefield • Hempstead Matlaske • Plumstead • Saxthorpe with Corpusty

December 2024 / January 2025



View of Edgefield and old church tower Photograph by Colin Scoles









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WHAT'S ON

December

Mon 2 Hempstead Village Hall Xmas wreaths 2-4pm Wed 4 Baconsthorpe Village Hall Coffee morning 10.30 Fri 6 Baconsthorpe Village Hall Christmas Quiz 6pm Fri 6 Corpusty Village Hall Film night - Wicked Little Letters 7pm Saxthorpe Church Christmas Tree & Nativity Festival Fri 6-Sun 8 Edgefield Village Hall Festive Evening 7pm Sat 7 Hempstead Village Hall Christmas craft day 10.30am-4pm Sat 7 Wreath Making (fully booked) Sat 7 Corpusty Village Hall Sun 8 Matlaske Christmas party Sun 8 Corpusty Village Hall Table-top sale & breakfast 8am-noon Mon 9 Barningham Hall Wreath Making 10.30am Corpusty Village Hall Christmas Bingo 6pm Sat 14 Sat 14 Hempstead Village Christmas Party 7pm Fri 20 Edgefield Green Carol singing 5pm Tues 24 Saxthorpe Candle lit service 5.30pm Weds 24 Baconsthorpe Christmas morning service 10.30am

January

Fri 27

Wed 8 Baconsthorpe Village Hall Coffee morning 10.30 Sun 12 Corpusty Village Hall Table-top sale & breakfast 8am-noon Sun19 Baconsthorpe Church A Christmas Carol 3.30pm Fri 31 Baconsthorpe Village Hall Pop-up pub 6.00-10.30pm

Baconsthorpe Village Hall

CLASH DIARY

To add an event contact Corinne Youngs 01263 577263 corinne@avyoungs.com

February			June		
9	Corpusty Village Hall	Table-top sale & breakfast	28 - 29	Edgefield	Open Gardens
15	Corpusty Village Hall	60s Night	July		
			12	Baconsthorpe	Fete

POST OFFICES

Baconsthorpe Mobile Post Office Van

Wednesdays	10.45am - 11.30am	Village Hall
Corpusty Stores Monday-Friday	9am - 12noon	01263 587726
Itteringham Shop		01263 587325
Monday - Thursday	9am - 1pm	

LOCAL MP

Steffan Aquarone

steff.aquarone.mp@parliament.uk

COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Steffan Aquarone

steffan.aquarone.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk/01603 327827

MOBILE LIBRARY TIMES

Pop-up pub (no food) 6.30-10.30pm

19 Dec, 16 Jan, 1	3 Feb		
Matlaske	12.40	NR11 7AQ	Old Post Office
Plumstead	13.00	NR11 7LG	Walnut Farm
Baconsthorpe	14.30	NR25 6LJ	Council Bungalows
	14.50	NR25 6LE	Hare & Hounds
Hempstead	15.05	NR25 6TL	Telephone Kiosk
Edgefield	15.45	NR24 2AL	Memorial
	16.10	NR24 2AX	The Street
Corpusty	16.35	NR11 7BU	Great Farm Cotts

Dates and times from https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/ article/40143/Mobile-libraries

Route Number: CEN 411

HOLT LIBRARY

9 Church Street, Holt NR25 6BB.

01263 712202

Tues 10am- 7pm / Wed 2pm - 7pm Fri 10am- 7pm / Sat 1pm -4pm

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of the Church and Village News. Apologies if contributed material is edited or not published due to space constraints. All facts are believed correct at time of

going to press.

Letter from the Rector - Reverend Canon David Longe

01263 577252 / 07881 950294 / rector@matlaske.org.uk

Dear All.

I write this letter in November, at a time when I am more than aware that many have lost confidence in the church, following the revelation of horrific abuse that led to the resignation of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Christmas is about the birth of the child Jesus who promises hope to all and points to a new way of living. The horrific revelations we have heard are the very opposite of the beauty of this promise. And my thoughts and prayers are for all who have been harmed in any way by individuals including those who have acted as part of the church.

As with many of my colleagues, I have questioned whether I want to be associated with an institution where such trauma has occurred. The church, as a place and institution, is set aside as a holy, safe place. Yet I feel I must stay the course. This is because that which has occurred, is not a reflection of what this child we celebrate at Christmas is about; it is not a reflection of what the "true" Church is where Christ is the cornerstone. I believe the "true" church reflects the beauty of the Divine as revealed in and through Jesus' life. What we are reading about and being horrified by is a perversion of this.

St Paul, whom I wrote about earlier in the year, understood the truth of Christ, the truth that the church must and should adhere to. He understood that the truth of Christ brings incredible gifts and transformation to lives.



Christ in the rubble Bethlehem

And this is what we are reminded of each Christmas as we contemplate Jesus' birth.

The gifts are those revealed in Christ and manifest in us through the mystery of the Holy Spirit. They are amazing, St Paul lists them as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5.22-23). The church must strive to be a place where these gifts are witnessed and encountered. Where all are welcomed; all are safe and no one – NO ONE - is harmed And, if a church, a gathering of those seeking to following Christ, does not strive to show this, then we must question what their intention is. What we have seen, are individuals who have used the church for means that are the very opposite to what the church stands for.

Jesus was not born in a safe environment, but through all his life he sought to create a loving community, where people were cherished and able to flourish. He was betrayed at the end – the lure of wealth and power were too much for those around him.

The church is tasked to demonstrate through word and deed the hope this child brings to our world. This is the hope that transformed St Paul from a murderer to saint; this is the hope that can transform us all, as we come to know how God is with us through all that we encounter. Or to put another way, as we will perceive in our Christmas services, the true light of Christ shines in the darkness, and the darkness will not overcome it. May the light of Christmas overcome all darkness, and bring you hope and joy this Christmas.

	The Benefice of Matlaske			
Chı	urch Services for December & January			
Sunday 1st December, Adve				
8:30am	Eucharist	Baconsthorpe		
10:30am	Advent Carols	North Barningham		
Sunday 8th December, Adv	ent II			
8:30am	Eucharist	Edgefield		
4:00pm	Carol Service	Saxthorpe		
Sunday 15th December, Ad	vent III			
10:30am	Eucharist	Plumstead		
5:00pm	Carol & Nativity	Edgefield		
Sunday 22nd December, Ac				
10:30am	Eucharist with Baptism	Matlaske		
5:00pm	Carol Service	Hempstead		
Tuesday 24th December				
5:30pm	Candle lit Service	Saxthorpe		
11:00pm	Midnight Mass	Barningham Winter		
Wednesday 25th Dec, Chris	stmas Day			
10:30	Eucharist	Baconsthorpe		
Sunday 29th December, Ch	aristmas I			
10:30am	Eucharist	Barningham Winter		
Sunday 5th January, Epipha	any I			
8:30am	Eucharist	Saxthorpe		
10:30am	Eucharist	Matlaske		
Sunday 12th January, Epiph	nany II			
8:30am	Eucharist	Barningham Winter		
10:30am	Plough Sunday	Saxthorpe		
5:00pm	Evensong	Edgefield		
Sunday 19th January, Epipl	nany III			
8:30am	Eucharist	Baconsthorpe		
10:30am	Eucharist	Plumstead		
Sunday 26th January, Epip				
8:30am	Eucharist	Hempstead		
4:00pm	Family Church	Edgefield Village Hall		
Sunday 2nd February, Candlemas				
8:30am	Eucharist	Matlaske		

Coffee, Plumstead Church, will resume in the spring
Country Mice Toddler Group, Baconsthorpe Village Hall, Tuesdays term time 10am-12 noon

Saxthorpe

Eucharist

10:30am

BACONSTHORPE - Hazel Martin 07879 414577

200 CLUB

£50 W Peck; £25 K Benton Worboys; £10 R Hall

CHURCH NEWS

The Bishop of Norwich, the Rt Rev'd Graham Usher confirmed ten people from across the benefice in St Mary's Baconsthorpe on November 17th, followed by one at home in Matlaske (see this month's Matlaske entry). As well as confirming and giving thoughtful guidance to the candidates, Bishop Graham spoke thoughtfully with great compassion, for those who have been harmed in the sickening abuse which has just come to light. He also dedicated the new prayer and contemplation area under the Heydon Memorial.



THAI EVENING

In celebration of the New Year

Wednesday 8th January 2025, 6.30 pm Baconsthorpe Village Hall

£10 per person - cash on the evening

Creamy Original Chicken Massaman Curry with Thai Rice

Or

Authentic Pad Thai Noodles with Chicken

Vegetarian Cashew Nut and Tofu

Phone 07729972386 to book your table.

Huge thanks to all those who came to assist on the day from across the benefice, notably the Edgefield Flying Squad of Emma Cletheroe and Kay and Kevin Harvey, as well as those who helped make the church look so welcoming with a thorough clean (Hazel, Jo and Jim Brannigan). Thanks also go to Delphine and Jo for the flowers and of course Corinne with her wonderful varied collection of china tea cups and cakes for the happy gathering after the service.

ST MARY'S NEEDS YOU

On Monday December 23 we will be decorating the church in preparation for Christmas. This is especially important as this year the Christmas morning service at 10 30 is in Baconsthorpe church. Anyone willing to give a hand would be so so welcome. We usually start at 10am and I promise no artistic skills necessary!

A VERY EXCITING EVENT - January 19th at 3 30pm

In the last two newsletters I have been calling for people to step forward to take part in a performance of A Christmas Carol, Well I am pleased to say that I think I have enough willing volunteers. Those interested in taking part will meet at 3 30 on December 1st at Baconsthorpe village hall to read the script and be allocated a role. Now all I need is for you to come and watch.



In St Mary's church Baconsthorpe at 3 30pm on January 19th you will be able to watch Scrooge on his journey back through his life. He will be taken round the church by three spirits to visit the places and people from his past. Finally you will see the transformation of this tight-fisted grasping old sinner. I do hope you will come and support. There is no admittance fee and refreshments will be available.

HELP MAKE A NOAH'S ARK WALL HANGING

We are planning to make a Noah's Ark wall hanging for the children's corner in church. The ark will need to be filled with animals and it seemed this could be a winter project in the village.

If you can sew, knit or crochet please come to Ash Tree Farm on Thursdays 9th, 16th and 23rd January at 2pm. There will be tea and cake and everything needed for this project.

We look forward to seeing you - Corinne Youngs, Ash Tree Farm.

COFFEE MORNING AT THE VILLAGE HALL

At a recent coffee morning we were bidding farewell to my neighbour Helen who is now moving to Staffordshire following the death of her husband. Helen was a regular visitor to the coffee morning and will be much missed. Our last date in 2024 is December 4th and we meet again on January 8th 2025.



VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Christmas Quiz – Friday 6 December. Fun Food Prizes. If you have not booked already for this fun

evening do give Emma a call on 07884432412 Tickets are £12 and include a sausage and mash supper served at 6 30pm. Bar opens at 6pm.

Pop up Pub – the next pub night will be on Friday 31 January with Cottage Pie on the menu. Food is served from 6 30pm and the bar opens at 6pm. Please note we will be putting the price of a meal up to $\pounds 6$ from January.

Coffee morning – the first Wednesday of every month at 10 30am in the village hall. All are welcome for free coffee, cake and scones. The first meeting in 2025 will be January 8th.

200 club – we have some numbers available. You can subscribe monthly and could win £50. See village website for details.

TIME TO SAY THANK YOU

As this is the last newsletter of 2024 it is a good time to give a mention to people who quietly work to make our village a good place to live.

Thank you to the people who deliver the newsletters every month.

Thank you to the team of people who provide flowers for the church each month.

Thank you to all those who contribute to the village stall. This provides vital revenue for the church.

Thank you to everyone who helped clean up the churchyard; who cleaned the gravestones and who cleaned the church.

Thank you to all who support the pop up pub every month and all those who support all other activities in the village hall.

Thank you to all who support the 200 club. I hope you have been lucky this year.

Finally I want to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

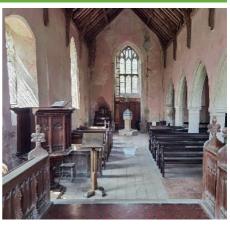
BARNINGHAM - Sara Buxton 01263 577207

ST PETER'S COMES ALIVE

A reminder that the Advent service will be held in St. Peter's North Barningham on 1st December at 10.30. This is a rare chance to see this wonderful church - which narrowly escaped demolition after closing in 1969 - as it should be: filled with people. Every year at around this time the service brings the church back to life. But remember that there is no power or heating, so dress warmly!

WREATH-MAKING AT THE HALL

Wreath making will take place on the 9th December at 10.30 at Barningham Hall. Dress warmly for this too, and bring along any special bits and bobs you want to decorate your wreath with. Please contact amelia@barninghamestate.co.uk if you would like to come along and support our little church.



May I take this opportunity to wish you ALL a very happy Christmas and my best wishes for the New Year.

EDGEFIELD - Richard Peaver 01263 587486

CHURCH NEWS (Alison Mawson)

Thank you to all who helped at or came to the Craft Fair. A total of £830 was raised for the church. Congratulations to the family from Edgefield who were confirmed by Bishop Graham in a lovely service at Baconsthorpe in November.

There will be carol singing on Edgefield Green on Friday 20th December at 5.00pm. All are welcome to come along for some rousing singing and refreshments. The village carol service with Nativity play will be on Sunday 15th December at 5.00pm, followed by mulled wine or fruit punch and mince pies. All children will have the opportunity to dress up and take part if they would like to.

Advance notice that Edgefield Open Gardens will take place over the weekend of 28th - 29th June 2025. All offers of help gratefully received. Please get in touch with Alison Mawson 587236

VILLAGE HALL NEWS (from Im Frost)

November has seen the departure of our wonderful cleaner Fang Keighley, who has decided to retire. Consequently we are looking for someone to step into the breach. The work involved 2 hours a week (preferably at a weekend, but not set in stone), and the pay is $\mathfrak{L}12.50$ per hour. Please contact me on James. frost $\mathfrak{L}59$ hotmail.co.uk or on $\mathfrak{L}59$ hotmail.co.uk

Winners of the October 200 Club were: 1st June Grand (£50), 2nd Sam Smith (£30) and 3rd Terry Williamson (£20).

The Village Hall committee would like to wish all our patrons, customers and friends a very happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you all in 2025.



Edgefield Village Hall
Available for hire with tables,
chairs, fully equipped kitchen,
stage, table tennis, audio-visual
equipment and free Wi-Fi
Contact jeffwitts@hotmail.com
07778 400012

www.facebook.com/EdgefieldVillageHall

EDGEFIELD FUEL FUND (from the Trustees)

The Trustees will distribute a payment of £25 per eligible* household in the Village Hall on Saturday 14th December 2024 between 11.00 am and 12 noon. No payments will be made outside these hours.

*To be eligible:

- (a) you must have reached the age of 60 years.
- (b) you must have been permanently resident in the Parish of Edgefield for five years and be a resident on the day of distribution.
- (c) you must apply in person.
- (d) the infirm or incapacitated may send a representative, who must bring a written authority signed by the person who qualifies.

Please note: the distribution of funds is at the discretion of the Trustees. Rude and abusive behaviour is not acceptable and is likely to result in a refusal to release a payment to an applicant or their proxy.

HEMPSTEAD - Jonathan Neville 07836 675369

COFFEE & CATCHUP

Friday, 6th December 2024 Friday, 3rd January 2025 All welcome

HEMPSTEAD 200 CLUB WINNERS

£50 G Matthews; £25 K Hurrell; £10 R Hart; £5 K Hill, M Thody, M Thody

CRAFTY CREATIONS

Xmas wreaths on Monday 2nd December 2.00 - 4.00pm.
Family Craft Day on Saturday 7th December 10.00 - 4.00pm.
Also Thursday 19th December 10.00 - 12 noon, Monday 6th January 2.00 - 4.00pm,
Thursday 16th 10.00 to 12 noon, and Saturday 25th 2.00 - 4.00pm.





HOLE FARM GOLD ROYAL FORESTRY SOCIETY AWARD

Despite Robin sadly dying this year, his legacy of transforming Hole Farm with Rose is still winning awards. Earlier this year he won the Mills and Reeve Grey Partridge Conservation award and this week we have been up to Derbyshire for the "Royal Forestry Society Excellence in Forestry Award Ceremony'. Hole Farm won Gold by coming first in the 'Small and Farm Woodland category'. I suspect the Forestry award will be making him smile the most as he devoted so much time and energy to his woods. I was left in no doubt before he died that I must enter his woods into the competition as it only comes round once every six years. He has been awarded a Commended and Second place in the past but this time he got the top prize. Hurrrah!

FAREWELL 'SCARFACE' (pic Cob swan at Selbrigg)

Alas, it appears we have lost the male swan 'Scarface' - his wife and two adult cygnets remain at the pond. He never really settled back following the dog attack earlier this year. Scarface was actually the



second husband of the Pen; her first flew into power lines in Bodham and died. She sat beside his body for two or three days before disappearing and returning 48 hours later with Scarface, some 11 years ago.

The Pen must be at least 15 yrs old; swans can live to 40 however, although they often succumb to an early demise, given all the man made obstacles, not to mention vehicles. We will look out to see if she marries a third time!

Francis Feilden

AUTUMN CRAFT WEEKEND

A big thank you to all the volunteers that helped make our craft weekend a great success, your time and help was greatly appreciated. The hall was full of stalls with a wide range of excellent crafts for sale on both days. The brilliant atmosphere the whole weekend was so lovely to see with all those that attended enjoying their time with us. Some doing their Christmas shopping and others just enjoying a warming lunch. So pleased to see some visitors coming from further away to enjoy our village and especially those that came back for the second day. Comments from the sellers and visitors were so encouraging and this annual event will continue into 2025! A big thank you from the Village Hall Committee.

Our next fundraiser will be another tabletop sale in February. Date to be finalised shortly.

MATLASKE - Duncan Wood 01263 570293



Derek England is Matlaske's most senior resident. Recently, when the Rector, the Revd David Longe, took communion to Derek and Freda at home, David and he discussed confirmation. And after much discussion (which amusingly including how the Rector's turkey kept escaping into Derek's garden) the Bishop of Norwich came to visit and in a delightful service at home confirmed Derek. The Bishop had come straight from Baconsthorpe church where he had confirmed ten others

earlier that Sunday morning. Here's a photograph of Derek, Freda and the Bishop at the confirmation. Derek was thrilled too that the Bishop gave him a hazel tree - already planted - remembering how Mother Julian of Norwich marvelled at the beauty of a hazelnut and how it is loved by God. The Bishop gives hazel trees to all those who are confirmed in the Diocese.

There's no other big news this month, so let's look at this astonishing story from Christmas 1903 in Matlaske, which featured in newspapers as far away as Liverpool.

THE LUCK OF A FALL

A Yarmouth plumber, Arthur Boulton, while engaged in covering the roof of Matlask Church with lead, has had a miraculous escape. He was standing on scaffolding just above a trapdoor, when a board slipped, and he fell through the open trapdoor to the floor, a distance of 41 feet, and escaped absolutely unharmed. A few days previously a woman in the same village fell from her chair, a distance of $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and died as a result of her injuries.

An article in the Eastern Daily Press explained that Mr Boulton fell from the top of the tower, landing on the floor of the bell chamber.

I think the unfortunate lady who fell off her chair was probably Mary Stewart (age 72), the wife of a man whom the 1901 census-taker described as an 'Ordinary agricultural labourer'. A sad tale. One can only hope that she departed this life full of Christmas cheer.

Christmas has been celebrated on the site of Matlaske Church for at least 1,175 years. Think of all those lamps and candles flickering in the darkness as our fellow-citizens of old made merry as best they could before the bleakest months of the year.

And yet, winter has its own beauty. It can certainly concentrate the mind. But it can also kindle faith, hope and love in our hearts; and those three things are the greatest Christmas gifts of all.

PLUMSTEAD - Harriet Rossi 01263 577239

PLANT SURVEY RESULTS

Norfolk Wildlife Trust have carried out a survey of the plants found in our churchyard, over the whole of this year. Do have a look at it on the village website https://plumstead.org.uk/church/. You'll be surprised at the variety of plants growing there and the report is interspersed with some lovely photos.

REMEMBRANCE

It was our turn this year, to hold the Remembrance service for the 5 smaller villages of the Benefice – Matlaske, Barningham Winter, Hempstead, Baconsthorpe and Plumstead. There were 29 people present from all the Parishes, making our small church look quite full!

HELP DECORATE THE CHURCH AND TREE

The church will be decorated for Christmas on Friday 13th – all are welcome to help. Children are invited to help with decorating the Christmas tree on Saturday 14th December – time to be arranged.

JOIN US ON THE 18TH!

On Wednesday 18th there will be a pre-Christmas gathering in the church for Plumstead people and their friends and family. Drinks and nibbles provided and, of course, a raffle!

SAXTHORPE AND CORPUSTY - John Birchall 01263 584290

FROM REMEMBRANCE TO JOY

Remembrance is always particularly poignant in Corpusty and Saxthorpe, given the terrible toll on the young men of the villages in the First World War. The reading of their names, along with those who died serving their country in the next World War, helps to bring them home. A large congregation also heard readings by the Brownies, who made wreaths laid at the font. A wreath was also laid at the memorial in the church, and at the feet of the silhouette soldier outside.

The villages can now look forward to another major commemoration at St Andrews, but this time a joyful one. The hugely popular Candlelit Service takes place on Christmas Eve at 5.30 pm. Don't be late!



VISIT OUR FRIENDLY PRIMARY SCHOOL



At Corpusty Primary School the new school year brought a new Headteacher, Miles Elcock, (pictured) as well as a strong intake of new children - and the school is keen to show what it can offer for children starting in September 2025.

The friendly and welcoming village school has spaces in all age groups. Rated 'Good' by Ofsted, children benefit from small class sizes as well as lots of outdoor learning and trips. The school has an open morning from 10.30am on Tuesday 10th December. To book a visit contact the school on 01263 587320. Reception class applications close on 15th January.

ALLOTMENT CLEARANCE UNDERWAY

Clearance of the overgrown Little London Allotments has been arranged by the Parish Council and should now be underway. Many of the allotments had become overgrown with nettles, bramble and other rampant weeds, with derelict sheds, broken fences and a general sense of decay - in spite of the sterling efforts of the remaining plot holders. The work, which is being carried out in the late autumn to minimise impact on wildlife, includes reducing the roadside hedge, although established trees will remain. The work will allow the council to consider future use of the site in ways that best meet the needs of local people.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Make sure not to miss the Christmas Festival at St Andrews. A forest of decorated trees (well, a Christmassy copse), along with a variety of interpretations of the Nativity, will take over the church from Friday 6th December to Sunday 8th.

MOLES MENACING VILLAGE HALL!

Moles are causing havoc around the Village Hall and station, digging up grassed areas and leaving hills and tunnels that could lead to twisted ankles, damaged mowers and a generally poorer surface. They are also active along the edge of the station platform. The Village Hall Committee feels it must bring in a mole catcher, but if anyone is concerned about this they are invited to speak to a member of the village hall committee - find them on www.corpustyandsaxthorpevillagehall.org.uk .





UPCOMING VILLAGE HALL EVENTS

Film Night on Friday 6 December (7pm) is 'Wicked Little Lies' starring Olivia Colman and Jessie Buckley. A 1920s English seaside town bears witness to a dark, absurd scandal in this riotous mystery comedy.

Wreath-making on Saturday 7th is sold out, but come along on Sunday 8th December (8am till noon) to the table top sale and breakfast or Saturday 14th (6pm) for Christmas Prize Bingo.

Events planned for 2025 include table top sale and breakfasts on Sundays 12 Jan, 9 Feb, 9 March, a 60's night on Saturday 15 February, plus the usual first Friday of every month is Film Night.

HELP FAMILY OR FRIENDS STAY WARM THIS WINTER

We've already had a taste of winter weather - a reminder that winter is a tough time for anyone on a low income - yet thousands of pensioners don't claim Pension Credit, or the other benefits it unlocks - including Winter Fuel Payment worth up to £300.

Pension Credit is worth £2,677 a year on average to eligible people.

What's more it unlocks other support such as Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.



It also opens up eligibility for social tariffs, the Warm Home Discount, cheaper broadband, free TV licenses, lower water bills and now the Winter Fuel Payment.

Altogether the total value unlocked by Pension Credit could be around £10,000 a year per person - potentially a life-changing amount for someone.

Pension Credit tops up weekly income to £218.15 if you're single, or £332.95 for a couple, so any pensioner on less should apply. But to qualify for this winter's Winter Fuel Payment, they must claim Pension Credit before 21 December.

If you know anyone aged over 66 who should be claiming, North Norfolk District Council can give further advice. Contact their benefits team on O1263 516349, email: benefits@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

CHILDREN YOUTH AND FAMILIES



By the time you receive this newsletter the Advent calendars are likely to have been started and the countdown to Christmas begun.

Members of your local church will deliver advent gift bags to primary school aged children in each parish very soon.

The focus this year is on angels as messengers of hope. Each gift bag will contain a: wooden angel to colour or paint; a sweet; a teabag for

a parent or carer; an invitation to December events and Church services.



Here is a craft you may enjoy together, and a reminder its often not what we receive at Christmas, but what we do together that is most memorable.

Using one paper plate, some stickers and some felt pens make this angel.

You could even set a family challenge

TO PLANT A GARDEN IS TO BELIEVE IN TOMORROW

As I write this in November, we have finally made our way out of the cyclonic gloom (a more aptly described but miserable patch of weather I've yet to come across) It feels oddly reassuring to find the weather is 'properly' cold! In a very turbulent world the smallest glimpse of normality is so appreciated.

So this is our 'bumper' December/January edition! The garden might well have to take a back seat with all the 'festive' prep, but the lovely thing is that it's there and if you ever need a respite from all the Christmas chaos, there's still a chirpy 'to-do list' waiting for you!

If you haven't felt it's been cold enough to get your tulip bulbs in, then this is a good and satisfying task. The other one is to check all your outdoor pots are raised up so they can drain properly. Another task to add to the list which does require reasonable weather, is to brush down any paths that have become slippery with algae with sharp sand and a stiff broom.

The dahlias too have had enough and they deserve a rest, so we will be clearing away their foliage and tucking them up with a good covering of light leaf mould, If you don't have your dahlias in very free



draining soil, then I would dig them up dry them off and label them well for next year. Even our well-drained soil caught us out last winter and I lost a lot of my less robust dahlias, hence the extra blanket this year!

Have you been thinking about growing more fruit trees? We are so fortunate to have a great organisation the East of England Apples and orchards project on our doorstep, We've lost so many of our orchards and to bring back just a few of these 'old favourite' trees feels a privilege. You can find them online at www. applesandorchards.org.uk what could be lovelier than giving someone a fruit tree or if you have the space a small orchard for Christmas!

Now for one of my favourite times a year, those quiet peaceful days between Christmas and New Year, a chance to curl up by the fire with a cup of tea andsome seed catalogues so you can plan or some great gardening books so you can dream.

If like us you got loads from Monty Don's original Complete Gardener then his revised new edition The Complete Gardener 2023 is a must! It's utterly fascinating to see just how much gardening practices have changed in 20 years

All that's left to say, is Thank you so much for reading our articles and for all your questions and that we wish

you the merriest of Christmases and the most peaceful of New Years!

Do keep the questions coming in! Email us at redmaple@btinternet - the most interesting question will be published next year!

Michelle and Mick McCarter

HISTORY WATCH - Baconsthorpe Village echoes from the Great War

by Arthur Pentney

The 1914-18 Conflict has now passed into history with those millions of combatants all deceased

But there are memories handed down that are worth recording at a time where everyone in every village was touched to some extend by this total war.

Did you know for instance that a cavalry unit was billeted at Chestnut Farm, Baconsthorpe? My father aged ten at the outbreak of this conflict was obviously interested in these soldiers as he lived just opposite in Rambler Cottage. One cavalryman even gave him a pair of used stirrups as a memento which I still have.

And talking of billeting, Ada Lubbock who once live in the house that is now called 'Lakeside' recalled when she was a child that they were forced to turn over their 'best' bedroom to accommodate a Sergeant Major who was foisted on them.

Some will remember Eva Bumfrey, who lived in a bungalow at Tuppenny Grove and who for many years was chief cook at Baconsthorpe School. Her fiancé was killed in this war and she remained true to his memory, remaining a Miss all her life.

Both my parents as young teenagers gave up having sugar in their tea to contribute to the war effort, and declined it for the rest of their lives. Leaving school at thirteen both entered employment locally in the very middle of the war. Here, later my father was to recall an incident



that brought home both the horrors and futility of this conflict. Father was applying animal fat as lubricant to some wagon wheels when one of the farm workers said to him "you wouldn't a done that in Kut boy, we'd a et that!' Kut Al Amara, a town in Mesopotamia (now Iraq) was besieged and starved into submission by the Turks. 13000 were taken prisoner and a third would die in captivity. So that chap talking to my father back in Baconsthorpe was one of the lucky ones.

Grandparents on both mine and my wife's side were part of this conflict. My Grandfather erecting telephone poles of the GPU was enlisted into the Royal Engineers doing similar work for the army. My wife's granddad George, was at one time based in Sheringham looking after mules. He served in the desert and the Western Front, and for ever after had an aversion to both sand and mud. He was wounded, losing the sight of one eye in the process.

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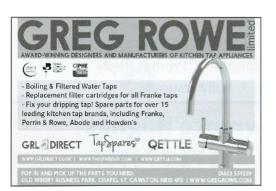
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