

Church & Village News

No: 110

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

March 2025



Little Lifts run at Barningham Hall

Photograph by Michael J Mawby



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ECHO Ear Care is a new service, which is now available in **Holt Consulting Rooms** for clinic appointments.

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WHAT'S ON

March

Mon 3	Hempstead Village Hall	Crafty Creations - Upcycling photo frames 2-4pm
Fri 7	Corpusty Village Hall	Film night - Paddington in Peru 7pm
Sat 8	Baconsthorpe Village Hall	Craft Fair 10-1pm
Thur 13	Hempstead Village Hall	Crafty Creations - working with Jute 10-12 noon
Sun 9	Corpusty Village Hall	Table-top sale & breakfast 9-12 noon
Wed 19	Hempstead Church	Church & Churchyard spring clean 10am
Sat 22	Hempstead Village Hall	Crafty Creations - Easter decorations 2-4pm
Sat 29	Hempstead Hole Farm Barn	Posy making for Mothering Sunday 10.30am

April

Fr 4	Corpusty Village Hall	Film night - Gladiator II - 7pm
Sat 12	Hempstead Village Hall	Family Easter Craft day - 10.30- 4pm.
Sat 12	Corpusty Village Hall	Spring Wreath Making

CLASH DIARY

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

May			August		
10	Matlaske	Quiz Night	3	Hempstead Village Fete	
14	Saxthorpe Church	Plant swap day, Coffee, Cake & Chat	Oct		
31	Saxthorpe Church	Evening Concert - Serendipity	10	Millers Barn Saxthorpe	Harvest Supper
June			11	Matlaske	Quiz Night
28 - 29	Edgefield Open Gardens		Dec		
July			13-14	Saxthorpe Church	Living Nativity
12	Baconsthorpe Fete				
26	Matlaske	Music & Pizza in the Park			

POST OFFICES

Baconsthorpe Mobile Post Office Van		
Wednesdays	10.45am - 11.30am	Village Hall
		01263 587726
Corpusty Stores		
Monday-Friday	9am - 12noon	
Iteringham Shop		
Monday - Thursday	9am - 1pm	01263 587325

LOCAL MP

Steffan Aqarone steff.aqarone.mp@parliament.uk

COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Steffan Aqarone 01603 327827
 steffan.aqarone.cllr@norfolk.gov.uk

HOLT BANKING HUB

The Venue (Community Centre), Kerridge Way NR25 6DN
 9am-5pm

Monday – NatWest
 Tuesday – TSB
 Wednesday – Barclays
 Thursday – Santander
 Friday – Lloyds

MOBILE LIBRARY TIMES

13 March, 10 April, 8 May			
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 Cott

Dates and times from

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/40143/Mobile-libraries>
 Route Number: CEN 411

HOLT LIBRARY

NB: When unstaffed you need Open Library access on your library account.

Mon 8am - 7pm (unstaffed all day)
 Tues 8am - 7pm (staffed from 10am)
 Wed 8am - 7pm (staffed from 2pm)
 Thurs 8am - 7pm (unstaffed all day)
 Fri 8am - 7pm (staffed from 10am)
 Sat 8am - 4pm (staffed from 1pm)
 Sun 10am - 2pm (unstaffed)

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.

Dear All,

Do we need courage to speak with compassion when facing someone we disagree with?

This question is worth reflecting on as from time-to-time we find ourselves (hopefully rarely) face-to-face with someone we disagree with. How we act is important, as it reveals our core values.

I have reflected on this question since January when I watched an inescapable moment for the incoming U.S. President at a service in Washington where the Bishop of Washington, Mariann Budde, preached. Initially, when I heard the headlines about this service, I was concerned that the Bishop had been too direct in her words. (You can watch the sermon on YouTube.)

Bishop Mariann was aware that she was not just preaching before the President but before the world. She outlined 4 foundations for unity: first, honouring the dignity of every human as children before God; second, being honest about our differences; third, being aware of our blind spots, and that we run a risk when we think someone is 'absolutely wrong' and we are 'absolutely right'.

It was her 4th foundation – compassion – that grabbed global headlines. She spoke of how the President felt saved from assassination by the “hand of a loving God” and called him to have mercy: mercy for families with gay, lesbian and transgender children who are scared; mercy on immigrants working in farms, office blocks, restaurant kitchens and hospitals – people who may not have the right documents but pay taxes, are good neighbours, and faithful members of churches, mosques and synagogues, gurdwara, and temples. She pleaded for mercy on “communities whose children fear that their parents will be taken away” and for those “fleeing war and persecution.”

As she spoke, the world and nation listened.

Was the Bishop's plea for mercy wise? Would it make any difference?

Watching the service, it is clear the Bishop knew what she was doing. She knew she would irritate and be criticised. She knew she would receive hate mail. The President also knew the Bishop would make it uncomfortable as she had not held back about speaking out and marching against his policies before.

Maybe we will disagree over on what the Bishop said, but I think without doubt she showed immense courage. She was - as I am - convinced that the message of Christ is that we must seek to defend those on the margins of society and pursue justice. And, when we hear of plans for a new 'Rivieria' in Gaza, for Greenland and the Panama Canal, maybe she was right to voice her concerns.

And if you do listen to the homily, listen to its delivery. The President stated on Truth, his social platform, that the “so-called Bishop was a radical left hard line Trump hater... nasty in tone, and not compelling or smart.”

You may agree. However, I felt her words showed neither malice nor anger, rather they were full of compassion, reflecting Scripture's call that we should be slow to anger, of great compassion, to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.*

May we all act with gentleness and grace in all our encounters,

David

**Proverbs 15.18, Micah 6.8; Luke 6.36; Matthew 14.14*



THE BENEFICE OF MATLASKE

Church Services for March

March 2025 Rota

There is a new rota for church services across the Benefice, which we hope will allow all to know when there is a service across our 7 parishes

1st Sunday in the month, we meet at Saxthorpe and Matlaske;

2nd Sunday in the month, we meet at Edgefield and Barningham Winter;

3rd Sunday in the month we met at Baconsthorpe and Plumstead;

4th Sunday in the month we meet at Hempstead and Edgefield for Family Church. (here we hope to include a new “Cafe” style church every other month after Easter.)

on a 5th Sunday in the month we'll be varied, and hope to include some mid-week meditations and services throughout the year.

Services will mainly be at 8.30am, 10.30am and 5pm, but keep an eye open for variations. We will continue to publish service details in Church & Village News with the times. We also publish services online in 'A Church Near You'. We are committed to serve the parishes in this Benefice (group) to the very best of our ability. If you have any suggestions, we would love to hear them and see if we can implement them.

Sunday 2nd March, Transfiguration		
8:30am	Eucharist	Saxthorpe
10:30am	Eucharist	Matlaske
Wednesday 5th March, Ash Wednesday		
6:00pm	Richard Lamey	Matlaske
Sunday 9th March, Lent I		
8:30am	Eucharist	Edgefield
10:30am	Eucharist	Barningham Winter
Sunday 16th March, Lent II		
8:30am	Eucharist	Baconsthorpe
10:30am	Eucharist	Plumstead
Sunday 23rd March, Lent III		
8:30am	Eucharist	Hempstead
4:00pm	Family Church	Edgefield Village Hall
Sunday 30th March, Mothering Sunday		
8:30am	Eucharist	Barningham Winter
10:30am	Eucharist	Saxthorpe
10:30am	Eucharist	Hempstead
Sunday 6th April, Lent V/Passiontide		
8:30am	Eucharist	Matlaske
10:30am	Eucharist	Saxthorpe
Details of all our services: achurchnearyou.com/benefice/26-271D/ Country Mice Toddler Group, Baconsthorpe Village Hall Tuesdays 10:00-12 Coffee Cake and Chat: Saxthorpe Church, every Wednesday 10-11am		

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT CHURCH & VILLAGE NEWS

Although there is no cover charge, you can support this magazine by making a donation at TSB Business Banking, Church & Village Newsletter, Sort code: 30-94-34, Account No: 00598342, Ref: CVN Donation. Many thanks.

New advertisers please email: advertising@matlaske.org.uk



200 Club

£50 W Peck £25 W Mack £10 R Youngs

CHURCH NEWS

Church clear up

On Saturday May 10th feisty folks will, we hope, gather at the church for the annual clear up. This involves cleaning and straightening gravestones; cleaning church inside and this year we hope to remove the unsightly chicken wire from the porch windows. Everyone is more than welcome. We start at 10am.

A Performance of Scrooge at St Mary's

January 19th seems such a long time ago now but we do have 87 photos taken by a member of the audience to remind us of what a lovely evening it was.



After four rehearsals in the very cold church, a cast of 17 with ages ranging from 5 to 65 from the Benefice and beyond, performed our own abridged version of A Christmas Carol. The church was full and the play was enjoyed by everyone. I enclose a few photos as a reminder of that happy occasion. My sincere thanks go to the cast for giving up their time and to the ladies for their superb refreshments.



Noah's Ark

The creation of the wall hanging of Noah's Ark is progressing well. Eight talented ladies meet at Ash Tree Farm every week to create the animals which will go into the ark. This will eventually enhance the wall of the children's corner in St Mary's. We look forward to photos in the next newsletter.



Another Social Event Open to All

Jo Brannigan and I thought it was high time Baconsthorpe had a book club again. There will be no pressure just an informal chat and hopefully a book to discuss. Chosen book can be purchased or downloaded and we thought we would meet for drinks and nibbles at various houses. If you are interested please call or text me on 07879 414577 or Jo on 07787 533212 just to give us an idea of numbers, then we can agree on a date and first location.

LOOKING AHEAD EXCITING NEWS

July 12th is the date set for the Baconsthorpe Fete. Once again we are encouraging everyone to get baking for The Great Baconsthorpe Bake Off! Search out your recipes to create your favourite cake. I meanwhile must begin my search for a brave person to be the judge and sample as many as 22 cakes. Last year it was Richard from Byfords, he is still recovering and attends Weight Watchers on a regular basis!

MORE EXCITING NEWS!

On August 29th there will be an outdoor performance of Midsummer Night's Dream in the garden at the village hall. This is of course Pop Up pub night. So many will perhaps want to eat, have a drink and then afterwards enjoy an abridged performance of the play. What an evening – not to be missed!! More details will follow in the next newsletters.

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Craft Fair – Saturday 8 March at the village hall. 10am – 1pm. Lots of lovely hand crafted items.

Pop Up Pub – Friday 28 March. Ham, egg and chips on the menu. Bar opens at 6pm.

200 Club – still numbers available. You could win £50 every month for just £1 a month subscription.

BARNINGHAM - Sara Buxton 01263 577207

LITTLE LIFTS TRAIL RUN RETURNS!

After raising an astonishing £20,000 last year (see cover picture) the Norfolk-based Little Lifts breast cancer charity is back at Barningham Hall this year for the 2025 Trail Run.

This is the third time that Mr & Mrs Courtauld and other local land owners are generously allowing the event to take place on land that is normally private. If you want to join the runners on 26th April for the 10km 20km or 30km challenges, there's still time to enter (details below).

CAN YOU HELP?

But you don't have to run to help this small but mighty local breast cancer charity. If you would like to be involved either as a volunteer on the day, or by providing some home-baked goodies for the cake stall, please email Georgie Rodwell at georgie@norfolkcordial.com or call on 07988 189910.

Find out more about Little Lifts's work at www.littlelifts.org.uk. If this inspires you to pull on your running shoes, entry details can be found at www.littlelifts.org.uk/events. The runs begin and end within the normally private Barningham Estate. All three courses are mainly on grass, farm tracks and private roads through our beautiful North Norfolk countryside.

ELECTORAL ROLL FORMS

It has been a quiet and cold start to 2025 in Barningham!

If you have your electoral roll forms please could you let me have them back as soon as possible and thank you to the people that have. Should you require one please contact me as soon as possible.

Thai Evening

Friday 21st March Baconsthorpe Village Hall
6.30 pm

Stunning Chicken Red Curry, a real treat to the taste buds

Khao Pad, Thai Fried Rice, combining pork with vegetables, herbs and spices

(vegetarian options for both choices)

£10 cash on the night.

Please book on 07729972386

Bakers Needed!

Help us to support people with breast cancer by baking for our upcoming charity event!

The Little Lifts Trail Run
Saturday 26th April

For details contact Georgie at:
07988189910 or georgie@norfolkcordial.com





CHURCH NEWS

(from Alison Mawson)

We had the joyful wedding of Thomas Mawson to Rachel Morley on 8th February. The church looked beautiful, bedecked with greenery and flowers, and the couple were radiantly happy.



The greenery transformed the church into Narnia for the half term children's activity morning, when 26 children climbed through a real wardrobe to follow the story and to meet the White Witch. They enjoyed painting, making snowflakes, crafting lions and playing with "snow" and play-dough. The feedback included "wonderful", "great theme", "my favourite is all of it!"

Early tea party

We are celebrating Mothering Sunday a week early on 23rd March at Family Church in the village hall. Children are invited to come at 4.00pm with their parents to prepare gifts and a tea party, and we welcome any adult to join us at 4.45pm for a short service, followed by tea. Please let us know if you are coming by contacting youth@matlaske.org.uk or one of the Churchwardens.



Sadly missed

We have had funerals for Anne Walker and Ghislaine Kinsley, both of whom were active members of Edgefield Church and contributed massively to village life. They are sadly missed. Many of you will remember Ray Painter, who worked at Edgefield Garage for 50 years. He has died peacefully aged 88.



VILLAGE HALL NEWS

(from Jim Frost)

Edgefest 7 is coming!

A date for your diary. On Saturday, July 19th, we will be holding another of our highly popular summer events on the Green. This year there will be a hog roast and highly popular local band, "The Hot Crumbs". Due to ever-rising costs, we will (for the first time in over 12 years) be raising our prices to £15 per head - still a bargain with our ever-cheap licensed bar.

200 Club

January's 200 Club winners were:

1st: Joy Hardiment (£50), 2nd: Chris Sheehan (£30) and 3rd: William Longe (£20).

Edgefield Toad Patrol 2025 – come and join us!

During late February and early March each year the amphibians make their annual migration to the village pond from the surrounding gardens and countryside. Last year the toad patrols successfully placed 713 toads, newts and frogs from the danger of the road and lane to the safety of the pond. A group of enthusiastic patrollers made this success story possible. We would very much welcome additional volunteers to join the teams and help save our amphibians in Spring 2025.

The migration normally continues through to the middle of March, dusk until 9pm. We create a rota, have a WhatsApp group for updates and volunteers are normally only required a couple of hours, two evenings a week. A very rewarding few hours a week for our volunteers mean that the amphibians of Edgefield continue to thrive in our wonderful village pond in the future.

If you are interested, please contact Simon Gooding and Wendy Middleton on wmsg@btinternet.com or 01263 585065.

HEMPSTEAD - Jonathan Neville 07836 675369

Coffee & Catchup

Friday 7th March Friday 4th April. All welcome!

Hempstead 200 Club winners

£50 M Feilden; £25 J Sanders; £10 S Hawkey; £5 R Griffiths, I Summers, A Loach



CRAFTY CREATIONS SECOND ANNIVERSARY!

Hempstead Crafty Creation celebrated their second anniversary in February. The ladies had a celebratory trip out to Walsingham to visit the snowdrops followed by a group lunch. This group has gone from strength to strength over the two years with new ladies joining regularly. The variety of crafts they have covered over their meetings are too many to list here.

Memorable achievements last year were the lovely Poppy display created for the 80th D-Day Anniversary. Every meeting is a hive of activity and friendly chatter with a lot of laughter in the mix. So many personally made treasures have been created in our meetings with new skills learnt and some members whose confidence has grown enormously. This friendly group meet three times a month at the village hall and all are always made very welcome.



UPCOMING DATES:

Monday 3rd March - Up-cycling Photo Frames

Thursday 13th March - Working with Jute

Saturday 22nd March - Easter theme decorations

Early April we will have the annual Family Easter Craft day - Saturday 12th April 10.30am - 4pm.

All ages very welcome to join in at anytime during the day.

WELCOME TO HEMPSTEAD

Curt Weibel & Shelley Jones have moved into Crabapple Cottage on Court Green, while Sarah & Annabelle Middleton have moved into The Knoll. We welcome them and hope that they will enjoy being part of our community.

HELP OUR LOCAL TOADS

Each spring, during February and March, toads, frogs and newts return to local ponds to breed. Most ponds, including newly installed garden ponds, are likely to be used by frogs and newts but only a few are used by toads, who are faithful to their birth pond. There are several ponds in our group of parishes that have been used by generations of toads, to which they migrate up to a mile or more at night to breed, then back again to their 'home patch'.

Toads are not fast movers, and this can make them particularly vulnerable to road traffic on migration to and from their pond – as well as crossing roads, they often use stretches of roads and tracks as it's easier for them to crawl along these than through thick vegetation. Also, male toads will often sit in roads where they can see around them, waiting for a female to grab and hitch a lift to the pond, where they are in 'pole position' for fertilising her eggs.



Rookery Pond, near Green Farm west of Hempstead village, is an important breeding pond for toads. Each year local volunteers help thousands of toads to get safely across the road near the pond. Volunteer patrollers don't need to be available every evening, they work in pairs and usually do one or two 90 minute 'shifts' a week on a rota, between dusk and the first couple of hours of darkness, when the weather is suitable for toads to move (relatively mild and damp).

If you might be interested in becoming a local toad patroller at Hempstead, please contact Tim Venes - timvenes01@gmail.com tel. 07876 322406 to find out more.

You can also help by:

- Being aware of where toad patrols take place during February and March, watch out for warning signs, and drive carefully near these, to help both the toads and the patrollers (there are also patrols nearby at Edgefield, Selbrigg Pond and North Barningham).
- Develop 'toad awareness' if you are driving on rural roads at night, especially in February and March, but also any time over the spring and summer, as toads still come out to hunt at night when migration is over. They're most likely to be out in mild and wet or damp weather. If you drive reasonably slowly and watch the road carefully, you can see them on the road in the car headlights and hopefully avoid them with your wheels.

Not all local ponds with breeding toads have a patrol - please also be especially careful in early spring near Pond Hills, Hempstead and Plumstead Hall Farm up to Baconsthorpe.

Thank you for helping our local toads!

HELP FOR HEMPSTEAD COFFEE MORNING

Our monthly coffee morning has been organised by Ian Summers for a number of years and we would like to thank him for his commitment to keeping this going. Now that Ian has moved away from the village I (Lesley Lennox) have taken up the baton. The event is well attended by regulars who enjoy the coffee and catch up, and we are looking for volunteers to make sure that it stays on the village calendar. All we need is for someone to open up the hall, set up the tables and bring along a cake and milk. Making coffee is not an onerous task and there are always volunteers to wash up at the end. The more volunteers on a rota the least number of months you would be required to help. The event is always on the first Friday of each month from 10.30am to Midday. Contact me if this is something you would like to be involved in.



Thank you Ian and we wish you well in your new home and village.

Lesley Lennox

lesley.lennox@project21.ltd.uk

07446 777660

HEMPSTEAD VILLAGE HALL REAR FOOTPATH

The Village Hall Committee have recently been working on a project to improve the footpath that exists to the rear of the hall and comes out onto the top end of The Knoll cul-de-sac. Volunteers have been working tirelessly to get this footpath to an improved state over the last couple of months. Although this work will be ongoing for a while we are clearly now at a good interim stage and final completion will be a while longer due to expense that is now needed. When completed this footpath will allow much improved wheelchair access and a greater ease of movement of goods to and from the hall. This will ultimately relieve pressure on the roadside verge in front of the Hall.

The Committee are very grateful for the help of others in the very hard work that has been done so far in this project. We would particularly like to express our extreme thanks to Mark Terry for hedge cutting, earth moving and fence erection, Peter Hawkey for the gift of fence posts, wire and labouring, Jill Roy for organisation and labouring, Mo Williams for bonfire, Johnny Weir for fence work and Glenn Sullivan for transporting debris. Without the help of these we would not be in the position we are now with this project.

Thank you, the Village Hall Committee.



SELBRIGG SWANS

Francis Feilden reports that since the male (Scarface) departed, the pen has come and gone a few times - although she has not been there to his knowledge for about a week, and it would appear that she is looking for a new man!



CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD SPRING CLEAN

Please come along if you can to the church and churchyard on Wednesday March 19th at 10am. There are some cleaning things in the church but do bring your own dusters/sprays/polish/dustpan and brushes etc for cleaning inside the church. Please also bring trimmers/hedgecutters/rakes etc for those who can help outside. We would like to make inroads into the increasing bramble/rubbish area at the back of the church which is now smothering some of the graves which we want to clear, and cutting and shaping the yew trees and balls etc.

Last year it took us about two hours as we were about 14 volunteers which was lovely.

POSY MAKING FOR MOTHERING SUNDAY

Saturday 29th March at 10.30 am in Hole Farm Barn (home of Rose Carver)

We have a Mothering Sunday service at Hempstead on Sunday March 30th at 10.30am. (one of three in the Benefice). We need to make lots of small posies of spring flowers to hand out to everyone in church. So please could any of you who would like to, bring loose flowers/greenery/blossom from your gardens to Hole Farm Barn at 10.30 am where we will combine them all to make posies for the next day. We will provide coffee and elastic bands!

MATLASKE - Duncan Wood 01263 570293

LOOKING AHEAD

Lots of things in planning and for your diaries in Matlaske this year

10th May Quiz Night

26th July Music & Pizza in The Park

11th October Quiz Night

7th December Christmas Party

Further details on all will be given nearer the time.



LOOKING BACK - OUR RELUCTANT RESIDENTS...

Daily Mirror - Tuesday 8th January 1946

SEVEN HOPEFUL HUNS GOT CAUGHT IN A LIFEBOAT

SEVEN German prisoners-of-war stole a lorry, drove fifteen miles, broke into a life-boat house and were all set to sail home from England. But they could not start the engine in time. Police found them sitting in the boat, and now they are back in their prisoner-of-war camp at Matlaske, Norfolk.

Their escape bid was foiled by Mr. Sam Abel, proprietor of a garage near the lifeboat station at Wells. He saw the Germans drive up in a lorry they had stolen from the camp, fifteen miles away. He recognised it as one in which the prisoners were regularly brought to the beach to work. As it was then about 9.30 on Saturday night he told the police.

A sergeant and a constable went to the boathouse and rounded-up the Germans, who did not resist. Mr. Theodore Neilsen, coxswain of the Wells lifeboat station, said last night: "The lifeboats are always ready for service at a moment's notice and stocked with provisions. If then men had succeeded in getting the boat away there was enough petrol to take them between 120 and 130 miles."



ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH

All are welcome to visit the church and churchyard, which is showing promising signs of spring, usually at its best in March and April.

CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL

Every 6 years, the church Electoral Roll is renewed. If you would like to be on the Roll, even if you were previously, you will need to complete an application form. Contact Eleanor on 01263 577868.



LUNCH CLUB LAUNCH AT VILLAGE HALL

The Village Hall is building on its popular breakfasts, which are held with car boot or table top sales, by launching a fortnightly Tuesday lunch club (12 to 2pm) offering soup and a sandwich, sausages rolls, cakes and other treats to eat in, or take away. The first was scheduled for 25th February as a fund-raiser for the restoration of the station buildings.

The next table top sale and breakfast is on 9 March, 9am to noon.

A WREATH IS NOT JUST FOR CHRISTMAS...

Wreath-making is back at the Village Hall, but this time for Easter. Join Karen and her team on Saturday 12 April or Sunday 13th. £20 per person. Refreshments on sale.

FAMILY FILM FUN

The March film at the Village Hall (Friday 7 March, 7pm) is bound to appeal to the whole family - Paddington in Peru. Tickets £5, or you can join the Film Club and pay £30 for a whole year.

TECH AND TEA

Norfolk County Council's Tech Skills for Life will be at the village hall on Tuesday 11 March; 10am till noon.

If you're struggling with your smart phone, laptop, or tablet bring it along, get some help from the professionals and enjoy a cuppa and cake. Or just come along for a cuppa, cake and the company.

For more details of these and many other activities at the Village Hall, go to corpustyandsaxthorpevillagehall.org.uk.

ALLOTMENT HEDGE PLANTING

Work has started on improving the roadside hedgerow at the Little London allotment site. A mix of native hedgerow plants, including hawthorn, field maple, dogwood and blackthorn have been planted to fill gaps left by recent clearance. The parish council's meeting on 12 March will consider the next steps in making the best use of the area.

CHURCH ROOF REPAIRS

St Andrews Church PCC has agreed that repairs to the leaky south aisle roof should go ahead, and that while the scaffolding is in place less urgent repointing to the nave wall should also be carried out. The total cost is over £15,500, but it should be possible to recover the VAT. The PCC is seeing what grants are available to support the work, although fund-raising last year - in particular contributions of nearly £5,000 at the popular Wednesday morning Coffee & Cake sessions - have kept the Church's finances sound. However, the restoration of the Queen Anne Boards will have to be put on hold.



CHILDREN YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Hopefully winter is behind us and spring is on its way, warmer temperatures and lighter nights.

EASTER HOLIDAYS

Across the seven villages, plans are going ahead for 3 flowerpot painting workshops this Easter



Saxthorpe Church Saturday 6th April 10.30-12

Edgefield Church Tuesday 8th April 10.30-12

Barningham Winter TBC

Children of primary school age across the parishes will get delivered a plain flowerpot in March.



Bring the pot along to your nearest or most convenient venue; to paint it, all materials will be supplied. We have some spare pots, so if older children would like to take part, or you have grandchildren staying, please get in touch first. Youth @matlaske.org.uk

COUNTRY MICE PARENT & TODDLER GROUP

This small and friendly group is for anyone caring for a baby or toddler. Tuesday mornings during term time at 10-12noon in Baconsthorpe Village Hall, cost £2 per family to include healthy snacks. Some excellent play opportunities for little ones and a relaxing supportive environment.



YOUTH GROUP IDEA

There is a seed of an idea to try to establish a youth group for 8–11-year-olds. Any thoughts, ideas, practical offers of help would be gratefully received. No promises at this point but it would be helpful to get an understanding of demand. Email Youth@matlaske.org.uk



INVITATION TO MEDITATION

After two trial sessions of meditation in Hempstead church, and some enthusiasm for continuing, very soon it will become a regular feature of worship in the Benefice. Over the past 20 years I have been fortunate to have been taught meditation, and it is a privilege to be able to pass on such an important part of spiritual life.



Learning little by little to quieten the mind and find the silence within where God can work us is not easy. It takes regular practice, like the piano, or golf, to be available to God. There are good days and bad days, distractions and all the mood swings of what it is to be human, but it is worth it. Whether or not you have ever meditated, you will be very welcome, as we practice together.

The 'base' will be Hempstead Church, and the first session will be there on Wednesday 16th April starting 6pm. However, in following months we will move to a different parish for a second session. The meditation period itself will be short and the whole session be no more than half an hour. For the first one in April, in Holy Week, and from time to time as we go forward, the meditation practice will be followed by Compline, which you are welcome to stay for if you wish. We look forward to seeing you.

Frances Emeleus

TO PLANT A GARDEN IS TO BELIEVE IN TOMORROW

As I attempt to write this month's article for March, full of hopeful optimistic chat of seed planting, gardening plans and the start of Spring I am looking out at our garden which is very much in the grip of Winter, it snowed last night and whilst it didn't really settle the garden is looking at its bleakest and it's most forlorn so it feels almost ludicrous to be now talking about getting seeds in the ground. But this is the joy of it all because in a few weeks' time it won't be ridiculous, the year (despite all appearances to the contrary) is turning. Winter is losing its grip.

Now for the to do list! And a confession, I am sure I mentioned in the Autumn about clearing and cleaning the greenhouse, unfortunately with one thing and another I just didn't get round to ours. So I earmarked the brightest day in the week for the most dreaded of tasks (which felt like a good start) because our greenhouse was in a dreadful pickle I actually did a bit of homework on the best way to clean a thoroughly neglected greenhouse. So first up was to clear the greenhouse and to brush off any loose soil on the windows or floor. Next was to clean out the gutters before you even get started. But the best tip was to have two buckets one with warm soapy water the other cold clean water so that each time you washed down the greenhouse you rinsed your warm soapy cloth out in the clean cold water. My next tip was to then tie a rough towel to the head of a plastic bristled broom, which did an excellent job of cleaning the algae off the outside of the greenhouse. Once the worst was off I then hosed it down and all in all it ended up taking just over an hour and it's the best it's ever looked!



My other incentive to getting the greenhouse sorted was so I could then place my seed and plant order, something I look forward to! I have always used Simpson's seeds they are a small family based business in Wiltshire. For the last few years I have also ordered all my tomato/aubergine and chilli plants from them too. Because I have a small greenhouse I like growing a variety of tomatoes and it honestly feels more effective to buy their plants, which have all had a good early start. I have found to my cost over the years that we don't really have good enough light levels (or warmth despite using a windowsill propagator) in our house for tomato seedlings to grow well. Because they seem to struggle to get enough light they just don't get off on the right foot, always being too leggy or weak and the one thing I have learnt about

growing tomatoes is that you do need strong plants that grow well from the start. Simpson's seeds don't have the largest range of seeds but what they do have is a good range of well-chosen seeds and selected plants, which are interesting tried and tested varieties. I also like their seed packaging which is minimal but effective. Do give them a look.

Finally a quick round up of a few tasks that could be done in March if the weather behaves itself! If the weather is kind then I would get on with planting seeds in the greenhouse if the weather isn't playing fair then I would crack on with any prep that you can. So that's making sure you've got enough seed trays plant pots labels etc. and that they are all clean and ready to go. Also make sure you've got compost in too and if you've got room, do store it in the greenhouse to help it to start to warm up. As soon as it does get warmer there will be a lot to do so anything you can do now (annoying chore wise) just makes everything so much easier.

This month's photo is the aubergine plant 'Galine' that we grew in the greenhouse, happily every bit of an aubergine plant is lovely from its beautifully shaped leaves to its pretty flowers and stunning fruit. We highly recommend it!



Michelle and Mick

HISTORY WATCH - INDUSTRY IN CORPUSTY & SAXTHORPE

Some hundred-odd years ago most of our rural villages provided just farm work for their inhabitants, but there were exceptions. Who would have thought that these two small villages would have had any industry, but they did, and two more divergent types it would be difficult to find: an iron foundry and a concern making mineral water.

The earlier of the two was the iron works, started in 1800 by two young brothers Thomas and William Hase. This company was obviously pretty versatile as, besides making agricultural items, such as the plough on the village sign, they manufactured the unique sawmill at Gunton, made an improved version of the treadmill for inmates at Walsingham Gaol, and a jetty at Cromer. One of their cast iron drain covers was still in evidence at the Owl Tearooms in Holt - the Saxthorpe Foundry markings still proudly displayed. The factory closed in 1960, having provided useful employment to several locals over those 160 years.



The second industry was quite different and was Pinchen Mineral Water Company. I suspect that the nearby River Bure and a local railway station were two reasons for its location here. Founded in 1864, Pinchen's products were supplied to all our local shops

and pubs. "Pinchen's Pop", as it was always known, was a joy to us school kids. A bottle of that and a packet of Smiths Crisps from the local village shop was a great delight. The factory closed in 1962 - another link with the past severed but not forgotten. (Picture from North Norfolk Bottles, website norfolkbottles.com)



Arthur Pentney

WHAT FUTURE FOR NORTH NORFOLK?

It may have passed you by, but a major change in the way some of our most important local services are provided is hurtling towards us. The Government is set on establishing a new Mayor at the head of a Norfolk and Suffolk Combined County Authority - and electing the first Mayor of Norfolk & Suffolk is probably just over a year away. The aim is to give the two counties a louder voice nationally, and potentially access to more money passed from the Government.

A knock-on effect of this is that North Norfolk District Council is likely to disappear as Norfolk and Suffolk see their existing county and district councils replaced by 'unitary' authorities. These will take over responsibility for all local services, such as bin collections, road repairs, adult social care, children's service, planning, housing and so-on.

This is not the first time that council reorganisation has faced Norfolk, but this time it has to go ahead to remain in step with the rest of the country. One of the thorniest decisions is how to divide up Norfolk into new unitary councils, especially since the Government wants these to serve populations of around 500,000.

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The options seem to be either three councils, one of which would be Norwich, all the way to a single council for the whole of Norfolk. (In effect this second option would see Norfolk County Council take over the services currently run by districts.) The problem is that three unitary councils would represent way below the 500,000 population target, and just one would be way above.

Whatever the final shape of Norfolk map there are many tricky details to be resolved - what would happen to North Norfolk's offices (pictured above) at Cromer, for example, or the future maintenance of Cromer Pier? And all these issues have to be cleared for the new councils to come into being in 2028. Watch this space!

John Birchall



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