

North Runcton News

At the outset of the year a reasonable aspiration may have been a foreign holiday. By April it was purchasing a bag of flour and now its just 'being normal'. One would hope the vaccine they've produced will allow us to have a less chaotic 2021 – but we still need to get through the next few weeks!

If anyone is in need of help – e.g. if you have no way to get out for provisions or you simply want a chat with someone – then please contact the Parish Council and we will try to assist.

Also – remember it's the flu season anyway. **If you normally have a flu jab – don't forget it this year.** Make an appointment with your GP!

Parish Council Update: The Parish Council have continued to meet every month on-line. If you wish to join a meeting please contact the Parish Clerk – preferably 2 days beforehand.

The Village Meeting Place was closed throughout the first lockdown – but Buttercups playgroup have been operating again since September. There are new conditions of hire that aim to minimise COVID 19 risk, and, should Government guidance on social events be relaxed in coming weeks, hirers will be required to undertake and submit their own risk assessment for review by the PC.

It still seems unlikely that any public meetings will be possible for some time – and therefore the annual New Year Quiz will have to be postponed for a while.

Activities – bulbs, birds and books: Our annual bulb planting took place again in October – hopefully further enhancing our spring display around Church Green and Rectory Lane.

Our fledgling Conservation Volunteers group have undertaken several socially distanced outdoor tasks this year – including thinning sycamore trees in Sheep's Course Wood, enlarging an existing pond and planting and sowing to increase biodiversity. We plan to diversify our tasks in 2021 – so if you enjoy a mornings work outside – *please get in touch.*

Before the lockdown we had a talk from the Nar Valley Ornithological Society – which prompted a group of us to set up a group to record what birds we have in the Parish. Some of the less expected species we have recorded are Avocet, Spoonbill, Cattle Egret, Grasshopper Warbler and ... White Tailed Eagle! We are also interested in recording the whereabouts / number of our more common species – especially if they are breeding. If you would like to join in with this recording – *please get in touch!*

A group of residents have set up a book exchange in the bus shelter on Church Green – in case of further lockdowns! Do support this – but please – not by dumping your shelf clearance for someone else to sort through!

Planning: The initial meeting of a new 'West Winch Growth Area Delivery Stakeholder Group' was held on-line in October, attended by Cllrs from both West Winch and North Runcton Parish Council. It is fair to say that progress on the development remains slow.

Initial funding for infrastructure seems to remain a sticking point. BCKLWN have advised that they are now paying for consultants to produce an overall masterplan for the site to be completed by mid-2021. They are now aiming at giving themselves planning consent for the proposed 'relief road' by early 2022. Given the other demands on the Exchequer in recent months, it is not clear whether road building in North Runcton is going to float to the top of the funding pile ...

Climate Change and Carbon Neutrality: The Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC) are developing a new initiative for Parish Councils to address the challenges of climate change. In particular – what do we all need to do to become a carbon-neutral community?

One matter is certainly to make our homes more energy efficient – and Cllr Lee Stevens has written about a new grant scheme for homeowners elsewhere in this newsletter.

Other ideas the Parish Council are going to look into are:

- Tracking your ‘carbon footprint’. How do households become ‘carbon neutral’?
- Reducing household plastic waste.
- Reducing water usage.

Further information will be forthcoming – but if this is an initiative you would like to be directly involved with – or you have other ideas for action – *please get in touch!!*

For further information on any of these items please initially contact Parish Clerk, Rachel Curtis. Telephone: 01553 673043 e-mail: northrunctonparishclerk@outlook.com

