



"ALMARTUNE"

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THE AYL MERTON NEWSLETTER

Sponsored by the Parish Council
AUTUMN 2015



What is going on with our weather?

Just over a week ago, Storm Desmond unleashed a record rainfall on parts of Cumbria with devastating effect. Many residents face a very bleak Christmas and festive cheer will be in short supply. They have a tough year ahead and our hearts go out to them at this time.

This followed on from a most peculiar November which proved to be the third warmest on record in Britain when three new records were set. The highest daytime temperature of 22.4 C in Ceredigion, western Wales, the warmest November night (16.1 C) in County Down and the gloomiest November on record.

So far the unseasonably mild weather has continued well into December with temperatures as much as 5 C above normal and reports of daffodils already in flower in neighbouring Suffolk. However, by all accounts we shouldn't be lulled into a false sense of security as most meteorologists are warning of the likelihood of a big freeze around February. This is said to be due to the El Nino weather system raging in the equatorial Pacific that has sent sea temperatures soaring to near record levels and playing havoc with global weather patterns. There have been powerful cyclones in the Pacific, droughts in Indonesia and Australia and floods along the west coast of South America. Whilst that's all a long way away from us, the meteorologists consider that by February there's a strong possibility that El Nino, which drives warm humid winds across the Atlantic, will buckle the jet stream, raising the chances of widespread snow. The meteorologists remind us that six years ago the icy grip of El Nino caused the coldest winter for 31 years.

I suppose we shouldn't ignore such warnings and at least make sure we are prepared. Perhaps now is the time to make sure you have enough heating oil to get you through the winter, or order some more logs for the wood burner. I've decided to change two tyres on the car which are approaching the legal limit, just to give a bit more grip should the snow arrive.

Whatever you do, stay warm and look after any neighbours who need a bit of a hand if the weather should turn into a real cold snap and prove the meteorologists right.

Enjoy your read.

John Rampling

NORTH EAST NORFOLK BIRD CLUB

One of the main reasons we bought our house in The Street, back in 2000 was the easy access the village enjoys to Felbrigg Park. With such an interesting and diverse wildlife habitat on my doorstep, I spend a significant amount of my spare time wandering its many paths and woodland trails as Jane will testify!

This autumn has been particularly good for scarce and unusual birds in the park, including only the second recorded sightings of two reed-bed species, Bearded Tit and Cetti's Warbler. A rare Yellow Browed Warbler, which breeds from the Ural mountains eastwards to Siberia, Mongolia and China and spends its winters in India, Taiwan and the Malay Peninsular, has also been spotted. Weighing little more than a fifty pence piece, it's nothing short of a miracle that this tiny warbler has flown nearly 10,000 km to visit us! I'm also pleased to report that the Felbrigg population of Mandarin Duck, a scarce bird in Norfolk, remains stable, with successful breeding this summer – the first recorded since 2009.

If you are interested in the wildlife of Felbrigg Park, the newly created North East Norfolk Bird Club, which holds its indoor meetings at the Village Hall on the last Thursday of each month (September – May), also organise mid-week walks in the park, on the third Wednesday of each month. Details of all events can be found on the club's website at nenbc.co.uk

At the request of the National Trust I've also recently started leading monthly bird walks on their behalf, again you can find details on the Felbrigg NT website. For regular updates of wildlife sightings in Aylmerton parish and Felbrigg Park visit: aylmertonnature diary.wordpress.com

Trevor Williams

Chairman -North East Norfolk Bird Club

NEW PARISH CLERK

Aylmerton Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new Parish Clerk., Sarah Hayden. Sarah joined took up her post on 1st November 2015. As an experienced legal secretary and current Clerk at Gresham Parish Council, we are sure she will do an excellent job for us.

The new contact details for Sarah are as follows:-

Sarah Hayden
Clerk to Aylmerton Parish Council
53 Cromer Road
LOWER GRESHAM, Norfolk
NR11 8RB

Tel: 01263 570223

E-mail:- sarah352hayden@btinternet.com

Twitter:- @AylmertonPC

We would also like to thank our previous Clerk, Janet Warner, for all her efforts for Aylmerton PC. It was a difficult decision for Janet to give up working for Aylmerton, however, with her commitments to both Cromer and Northrepps and an ever increasing workload, we fully understand her decision.

We wish them both well.

Keith Rounce

Chair - Aylmerton Parish Council

We have been asked by Norfolk County Council and Voluntary Norfolk to publicise the benefits of two transport initiatives both of which could assist our rural community. Do take the opportunity of reading what they have to offer as it might be of some benefit to you or someone you know. If so, do get in touch with them for there's nothing to lose and it might solve your problem.

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL - TRANSPORT PLUS

What is Transport Plus?

Transport Plus is an unique public transport service provided jointly by NCC and ERS Medical to assist adult members of the public to access essential health, social and well-being services. It's been in operation for several years and it's a local voluntary transport service using primarily volunteer car drivers to help people to get out and about.

Booking requests are made through a local Call Centre and staff will plan and organise the journey making best use of available transport resources.

Whose entitled to use the service?

The service is available to adult members of the public who:-

- ✓ Have a specific health and social need but are not eligible for free transport.
- ✓ Unable to use or gain access to public transport
- ✓ Cannot access services using public transport provided by family or friends.
- ✓ Require a carer or assistant to travel with them to assist in accessing their appointment.
- ✓ Are able to get in and out of a car unaided.

So where can you get to?

Examples of the journeys covered are:-

- Health related journeys to medical centres such as hospitals, doctors, health clinics etc.
- Other preventative health care appointments (i.e. Dentist, optician, physiotherapy, occupational therapy)
- Day care and respite care
- Social activities, voluntary care
- Other activity aiding the well being of the individual.

How much does it cost?

A charge of 45p per mile is made to cover the cost of fuel and general wear and tear of the vehicle. It includes any mileage

to and from your house, although every attempt is made to use the nearest volunteer driver to your home.

You can get an estimate of the cost of the journey by phoning the Call Centre **03344 800 8020**.

N.B. If you have to cancel your transport give as much notice as possible, otherwise a charge may have to made for late cancellations.

If you have any queries you can phone **0344 800 8020** and ask for **Transport Plus**, the Call Centre is there to help you.

VOLUNTARY NORFOLK

Car Link Volunteer drivers needed in our area

We have been asked by Voluntary Norfolk to assist them in publicising their push to recruit new volunteer drivers to join their Car Link Patient Transport Service. This is a partnership between ERS medical and Voluntary Norfolk which provides non-emergency patient transport throughout the majority of the county. The volunteer drivers provide an essential service, transporting up to 100 patients to their destinations each day.. Voluntary Norfolk is particularly short of drivers in our area and are looking to recruit volunteer drivers with their own car who are caring, calm and reliable individuals to join their busy teams. They are also looking to find volunteers happy to go above and beyond the usual, such as taking on early morning appointments and on occasions appointments in London. All expenses are reimbursed and training is provided.

If you would like to help out, or require more information, please contact Jules Alderson on 01603 883860 or alternatively by E-mail:- jules.alderson@voluntarynorfolk.org.uk

As we are a rural area with a very limited bus service, this is a facility that deserves support as it could benefit a number of people in the village who have trouble getting to medical appointments.

VILLAGE LOAN HEATER

A couple of years or so the Parish Council acquired a halogen space heater from North Norfolk District Council intending it to be lent out to residents in the event of an emergency breakdown with their home heating. Gas and oil boilers are often at full stretch during spells of severe weather and at such times equipment failures are most likely to occur.

This can be extremely inconvenient and worrying especially if the person is elderly, unwell or has disability problems. Should such an event happen please do not hesitate to contact the Parish Clerk, **Sarah Hayden (Tel: 01263 570223)** who can arrange for it to be delivered free of charge until the heating problem has been fixed.

Let's hope you have no need to call on this service, but you never know!

ALLOTMENT TO LET

Our new Parish Clerk has been in touch to say that there is just one allotment that has become available to let. The cost is a very modest £22 a year, payable at Michaelmas (October).

If you are interested or would like more information please contact our Clerk, Sarah Hayden (Tel: 01263 570223 or email: sarah352hayden@btinternet.com)

SECOND HOME OWNERS

Back in 2013 the Norfolk Coast Partnership undertook detailed research and issued a report entitled *“Raising awareness for second homeowners of how they can help to sustain local communities”*.

It's too lengthy a document to repeat, but it did provide some interesting facts and figures. For example, it might come as a surprise that across North Norfolk, in the 5 years up to 2013, the proportion of second homes was relatively stable with no obvious upward or downward trends. One wonders if that might have changed in the past 2 years in Aylmerton?

In the AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) in 2013 there were just over 3,000 second homes which represents 24% of all dwellings. The wider picture is that second homes only amount to 3% of dwellings throughout Norfolk, 1.3% in the eastern region and just 1.1% nationally.

It comes as no surprise that Cornwall has the most second homes (14,095), but after that there are a few surprises:-

Westminster (7,152)

Kensington & Chelsea (6,737)

Birmingham (6,431)

North Norfolk (4,763) – of which the AONB has c. 3,000

Camden (4,120)

Devon (4,115)

Tower Hamlets (4,074)

Scarborough (3,979)

South Lakeland ((3,845)

Turning to those parishes within the AONB, Weybourne had 52% second homes (227 out of 440 properties), followed closely by Burnham Overy with 51% . Most of the other villages on that stretch of coast were all in the mid forties or thirties.

Some 68 Parish Councils were surveyed and the main changes they wished to see were:-

- Using local trades people
- Stay in touch by leaving contact details with several neighbours
- Have a sensitive approach to property development
- Use local shops
- Review security arrangements e.g., lights/alarms
- Use refuse and recycling properly
- Make sure property is occupied possibly by short term or holiday lets
- Get involved with local events and customs
- Volunteer to help the local area

Second home owners were also surveyed and, by and large, they also identified most of these issues as being important. It was evident that they wished to support the area as far as it was practical to do so.

If there is a lack of shared understanding regarding the benefits and draw backs from second homes, then it can lead to a perception of an “us and them” situation, which in turn decreases positive actions and solutions. The report concluded

that second homes are part of a wider picture of pressures on rural communities and that the correlation with second home ownership and, say, the decline in local industries is not proven. The growth of second homes can be a consequence rather than a cause and may be part of a wider problem. Thus people buying second homes may not be the cause for changes in population but a symptom of other things.

A wide ranging report on the situation in Suffolk concluded *“...although much is made of second homeowners' tendency to shop en route to their weekend getaway, the closure of rural shops and businesses is part of a widespread trend that has more to do with cheap prices at large supermarkets. Second homeowners are not alone in looking for cheap produce. The conflict and tension felt within local communities at the closure of these businesses may be polluting the atmosphere, but the reasons are not clearly linked to second home ownership.”*

If you want to read the report in full it's available on the website for Norfolk Coast Partnership – second homes.

Importantly, second home owners welcome parish newsletters as one of the best ways to learn about what is happening locally, giving them the opportunity of joining in and supporting the community.

In Aylmerton our newsletter is hand delivered to every household (including second homes) so, if you are a second home owner we would ask you to get in touch and let us have your views on how we can best give you more information about what's going on in and around the village. Also, would you prefer to receive your copy of Almartune by e-mail?

Contact John Rampling (01263 712146 or email rampling233@btinternet.com)

NEWS FROM ST JOHN'S

A big thank you to all who have supported Connie's Cake Stall which combines with a coffee morning on the first Saturday of the month from March to December. Each year has seen our numbers increase and the income from the cakes and jams etc. will again total over £1,000 for Church funds. Profit from refreshments and the book stall also generates income for the Village Hall. Many thanks to everyone who cooks the cakes or provides jams, plants etc.

So we look forward to seeing everyone again at 10 am on the 5th of March in the Village Hall.

Our Advent Carol Service on the 29th of November was, again, very well attended. The service began with Lizzie Tatam and Logan Wilson reading the opening prayers before the first Advent candle was lit. The Choir, as always, sang some beautiful anthems which always make this service so very special.

However, if you missed that service our traditional Christmas carol Service is on the 20th of December at 6 pm when, again, the choir will be in good voice as we listen to the readings for Christmas and sing the carols we know so well. There will be mulled wine and mince pies afterwards.

Connie Burchett

IMPROVED BROADBAND IN THE VILLAGE

Norfolk County Council's Better Broadband for Norfolk (BBfN) Project has been concentrating on trying to persuade British Telecom to provide Superfast Broadband in areas of Norfolk where installation is not commercially viable.

For sometime the Parish Council, aided by our County Cllr. Michael Baker and our District Cllr, Sarah Butikofer, as well as a number of residents, have been active in liaising with BBfN highlighting the abject broadband speed in most parts of the village, and seeking an upgrade to ensure an acceptable broadband service for the whole of the village.

In truth it's not been easy, but there are signs that the pressure that has been applied is at last beginning to bear some fruit.

At the end of November BBfN announced that a new communications cabinet (which will be known as West Runton 2) is to be installed in the near future at the rear of the verge (near the existing BT cabinet) on the corner of Beechwood Avenue and Sandy Lane, Aylmerton. This should see an improvement of varying degrees for almost all Aylmerton residents. However, those properties south of the A148 will not get the full upgrade until a few months later. The communications cabinets have to run sequentially so the existing cabinet has first to be upgraded before the new cabinet can be installed.

Unfortunately, there will still be 14 properties that cannot be reached, but will be eligible for the Governments voucher scheme, details of which are due at any time.

People can check to see which cabinet they are currently served from and the available speed using the following link <https://www.btwholesale.com/includes/adsl/adsl.htm>

District Cllr. Sarah Butikofer said *“Whilst it's not perfect, it is a start, but it's most important we continue pressing for an acceptable level of service for the whole of the village. We simply cannot afford to be left behind just because we are a rural community”.*

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

FILM CLUB

This was successfully launched on 18 September when there was a good response from the village. With an annual membership of just £2.50 to cover the cost of tea, coffee and biscuits, it's arguably just about the best deal going. We have 18 members so far and they get to say what sort of films they would prefer to see, so far it's working well. The films are shown monthly on a Friday evening starting at 7 pm.

Given that this venture is becoming more popular the Village Hall Committee decided that it was necessary to upgrade our projector and sound system. Courtesy of a Black Friday deal, we have purchased a Blu-ray DVD player and a compatible projector with five speakers that will give a much improved sound. This new system will enable us to show Blu-ray DVD's in high definition, whilst ordinary DVD's will benefit from both a better picture and sound quality. Particular thanks go to Paul Tatam in the village for sourcing this equipment which saved us around £270 against normal retail prices.

There will be a film (most probably a comedy) in January so do come to see it for yourself. Details will be posted on the Village Hall noticeboard.

FUND RAISING

A Hallowe'en Race Night Supper was held on the 30th October which was well attended. Racegoers enjoyed a delightful hot supper in the Jubilee Room which, for one night, was again converted into “The Paddock Restaurant”. Some racegoers were inevitably luckier than others but a good night was had by all and the event raised over £300 for Village Hall funds.

Jim and Hilary Dumolo (aided by Desmond Eason) produced a successful and entertaining Quiz Night on the 20th of November. Our thanks go to them for organising it and all those who turned up to test their brain power. Another Quiz Night will be held in the Spring, so do keep an eye on the Village Hall notice board for details.

Our fund raising events for this year have again proved to be successful and we are fortunate that this will enable us to replace the double glazing in the main hall which has reached the end of its life and needs renewing.

PLAYING FIELD

The newly sown grass has taken quite a time to become established and this has given us some cause for concern. Consequently, we sought specialist advice, that concluded this was to be expected, at least to some degree, due to the high level of disturbance to the topsoil. We have been assured that given time it will grow on satisfactorily, but it can't be rushed. However, a slight helping hand would not go amiss and an application of an iron based fertilizer was recommended. Calvin Pigott kindly carried this out for us about three weeks ago and there are indications that the grass is showing definite signs of improvement.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

AYLMERTON PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 12 January 2016

7.30 pm at the Village Hall – ALL WELCOME

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE

ST JOHN'S CHURCH

6 pm Sunday 20th December

Followed by mulled wine and mince pies

NORTH EAST NORFOLK BIRD CLUB

7.30 pm Thursday 28 January

Speaker: Chris Mills - “Norfolk Wildlife”
