

Raynhams' Newsletter - March 2023

- Thursday 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th - Line dancing in the Village Hall from 7pm to 8pm.
- Friday 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st - West Raynham Village Hall Bar open from 7pm to 10:30pm.
- Friday 10th, 17th, 31st - Table tennis in the Village Hall from 6pm to 7pm.
- Friday 31st - Raynhams' Gardening Club meeting in the Village Hall from 6pm to 7pm.

Church Services

- Sunday 12th - East Raynham from 6.00pm.
- Sunday 19th - Helhoughton from 10.30am.
- Sunday 26th - Helhoughton from 10.30am with Archdeacon Catherine Dobson.

To hear about regular services and other events in the local churches, please send an email to: coxfordbenefice@gmail.com.

Raynham Estate Drop-In Session

Thank you to all who attended our drop-in session on 11th February. We were heartened to see so many of you turn out to find out more about plans across the estate and to share your thoughts and feedback with us on the day and since.

The first phase of our Parkland Restoration Project is now almost complete with over 150 acres of land reverting back to parkland and nearly 4,500 native trees planted to reinstate the historic parkland setting.

We are now moving on to the next phase, which is the dredging of the lake. This part of the project will see bunds and weirs created over the coming weeks which will collect the dredged silt once that part of the works can commence. The final phase later in the year will then be further works to the lake edge to help restore what is one of Norfolk's oldest hand-built lakes.

We have also taken on board your comments about the footpath at Larder Canal and we have added this to our team works schedule to improve the area which has been suffering with water logging at times.

It is our intention to hold further drop-in sessions in the coming months so that we can give you updates on current projects.

Abbie Panks, Raynham Estate.

Raynham Parish Council

Minutes, agendas and reports of Parish Council meetings are available to view and download from the website at www.raynhampc.info, which also includes the latest news from Norfolk County Council. Parish Council meetings are held in West Raynham Village Hall starting at 7pm, and the dates for this year are:

- 28 March
- May TBC
- 25 July
- 26 September
- 28 November

Raynham Art Club

I am delighted to confirm that our group's first session will be held in West Raynham Village Hall from 10am to 2pm on Tuesday 4th April, and the same time on Tuesdays thereafter.

I am looking forward to it immensely and those who have signed up are already on the list, but if anyone else fancies looking in to see what goes on then you will be very welcome.

It is free of charge and I hope will be great fun. There will be a break for tea/coffee at some point in the morning. See you then!

Rowena Buckeridge

Raynhams' Book Club

A small friendly group meets in West Raynham at the beginning of each month to talk about the books they are reading and their literary likes and dislikes!

Members take turns to recommend a set book every two months, and recent titles have included 'The Promise' by Damon Galgut; 'Pachinko' by Min Jin Lee; 'Rosewater' by Tade Thompson, and 'All the Light We Cannot See' by Anthony Doerr. For more information email westray.newsletter@gmail.com.

Modern Line Dancing

Classes are an hour long and take place on Thursdays from 7pm in the Village Hall. To guarantee the class can run we pay for blocks of six sessions (due on the first session) and the price per individual depends on the number agreeing to join. If eight or more people want to join, then a block of six classes costs £36 (£6 per session) per person; if there are seven it is £42; and for six it is £48 - any fewer and the class cannot run. If you haven't tried modern line dancing and would like to see whether it is something for you, then you are very welcome to 'drop-in' to any class (and pay £6) to see how much fun it is and then decide whether to sign up for more. If you have any questions or for more information, please email westray.newsletter@gmail.com.

Table Tennis

All ages and abilities welcome! Sessions take place in the Village Hall on Fridays from 6pm to 7pm. The next set of dates in March are the 10th, 17th and 31st. For April the dates are the 7th and 21st. Anyone who would like to play do please get in touch with me on ssforsyth@gmail.com.

Sandra Forsyth

Sunflower Seeds in the Reading Room

Please help yourself to sunflower hearts to fill up your bird feeders. These have been provided by a grant from the Solar Fund.

Andrew Buck

Contact Details & Past Newsletters

- westray.newsletter@gmail.com to send in articles or manage subscriptions.
- <https://www.raynhampc.info/documents> to download previous issues of the Newsletter.

Kestrel Evaluation Squadron

In 1964 RAF West Raynham was to play a crucial role in the development of a revolutionary new aircraft; as fast and manoeuvrable as a fighter, but capable of vertical take-off and landing, just like a helicopter. The Kestrel was so revolutionary that a special squadron was formed to assess its suitability for field operations.

The Tripartite Evaluation Squadron (TES) was an international project, the first of its kind in the world. Under their British Commanding Officer, Wing Commander D. McLagan Scrimgeour, British, German and American military pilots and ground crew worked together to evaluate the aircraft's performance under a variety of conditions.



The experimental single seat transonic aircraft was a forerunner of the Harrier vertical and short take-off and landing (V/STOL) jet fighter bomber. It was designed to operate in the high-speed, low level tactical strike reconnaissance role. One of the most advanced military aircraft in the world, the Kestrel needed no airfield but could operate from a patch of unprepared ground making it extremely versatile.

The team used West Raynham as a base for the evaluation, but also two nearby abandoned airfields at Bircham and North Pickenham as semi-prepared sites, and Buckenham Tofts as an unprepared site for landings with the minimum of ancillary equipment. Find out more from these films produced at the time:

- <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=764280214462720>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QWtPv3UocTO>

Nine Kestrel FGA.1 aircraft were ordered for the project, but one was lost on the day that flying began. One of the pilots crashed on take-off and Scrimgeour and two others received the Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct for their part in rescuing him from the burning aircraft.

One of the Deputy Commanders, heading Germany's six-man contingent, was the war-time flying ace Gerhard 'Gerd' Barkhorn. Barkhorn was the first pilot to fly 1,000 combat sorties and was credited with 301 victories on the Eastern Front against the Soviet Red Air Force,

making him the second most successful pilot of all time, after Erich Hartmann. He was shot down nine times in his combat career, bailed out once and wounded twice. He eventually surrendered to the Western Allies in May 1945 and was kept a prisoner of war until his release in September.

Barkhorn was invited to join the new German Air Force, or Bundesluftwaffe, in 1955 and was among a group of pilots sent to England to be trained by the RAF. Returning to Germany, he commanded the 31 Fighter Bomber Wing before joining the staff of the Air Force Test Command and coming to West Raynham.

During one mission, Barkhorn crash-landed at RAF West Raynham, when he apparently cut thrust one metre above the ground, wiping out the undercarriage. Known for his dry humour, Barkhorn is said to have commented, as he was helped out of the wreckage: "Drei hundert und zwei". With 301 'kills' claimed during WW2 he had, 20 years later, finally claimed his 302nd.



RAF West Raynham played host in October 1965 to a number of high-ranking government and military representatives of countries interested in the new aircraft. The RAF ordered six pre-production P.1127 (RAF) aircraft that year, and in early 1967 Hawker Aviation received an order for a further 60, by then formally designated the Harrier GR.1.

Harriers have served in the Royal Air Force and in the Royal Navy, being ideally suited to operating from aircraft carriers, as well as other foreign air forces — primarily the US Marine Corps. They played an important role in the Falklands and Gulf Wars and more recently in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Bridget Howarth.

Volunteering at Sculthorpe Moor Nature Reserve

Opportunities are always available for volunteers to help with the conservation and operation of this wetland reserve managed by the Hawk and Owl Trust. You can help in the Visitor Centre, be a part of the outdoor team, or become a warden and take part in wildlife surveys around the reserve.

In the Visitor Centre volunteers are the first point of contact for the public, and if you enjoy talking to people then you will get on fine in this essential role for the reserve!

Practical 'hands on' volunteers are important for the maintenance and management on the reserve. Their hard work includes helping build walkways, bird hides, scrub clearance and repairs. Volunteers also make bird boxes for the Hawk and Owl Trust Adopt-a-Box scheme.

Volunteer wardens are a vital link in explaining what is going on in the reserve to the public. Wardens and other volunteers help with regular wildlife surveys covering birds, butterflies and dragonflies and damselflies.

If you would like to find out more about volunteering opportunities, then please contact Séamus O'Dowd at seamus.odowd@hawkandowltrust.org.uk. Alternatively, you can phone Séamus on 01328 856788 (Tuesdays and Thursdays only).



Free to a Good Home

Cupboard

Wooden cupboard with two shelves and wall fixings - suitable for garage or shed.

Size is: 72cm x 50cm x 36cm (height x length x depth).



Leaf blower

Mains operated - 2400 Watts with 'suck' and 'blow' actions. Lightweight and hardly used.

For both items, please contact Paresh at Foundry Cottage or send an email to: pareshs999@gmail.com.



West Raynham Nature Notes - February 2023

I thought February was quite a good month, with plenty of birdlife coming to the garden feeders, frogs starting to get very active in our pond and I saw my first butterfly of the year - a comma along the riverbank one sunny morning.



Comma butterfly - first sighting of the year

Out and about I was pleased to see a stoat dart across the path in front of me in the marshy woodland north of the lake. Stoats are probably quite common here but only rarely glimpsed. Another mammal, the Chinese water deer, is becoming more frequent - or at least I am seeing them more often and in several different places. My latest sighting was in a field on the Hardlands. Despite their name, these non-native deer do stray some distance from wet habitats; you could expect to see them anywhere around here, along with the ever-present muntjac and roe deer. We have been seeing all three species in the same field in late afternoon, just as it's getting dark.

Bird-wise there's been little of special note to report, although a very late group of pink-footed geese were heard passing over on the last day of the month. Most of the wintering pink-feet in Norfolk - of which there are tens of thousands, have already left on their journey back to Iceland.

Desilting works at Raynham Lake

I expect most people will have noticed the earth works going on in the big field on the north side of the village - or you may have seen the plans during the drop-in session that the Raynham Estate hosted in the Village Hall on 11th February. These works look quite dramatic, but they are forming temporary banded lagoons into which silt and sludge will be pumped from the lake as the desilting operation gets going later this spring.

Obviously, at one level this will be quite disruptive for wildlife but the lake has been neglected for many years and has become overgrown and so silted up it is too shallow. By opening up some of the fringing vegetation and creating a deeper water body, we can expect a wider variety of wildfowl and other wildlife to recolonise once the works are completed.

I am curious to see whether the temporary lagoons will attract interesting passage migrants during the spring and autumn, or just be dead, stagnant pools and dark, baked sludge as the summer progresses. I hope the former, but we will see. At least the current earthworks are providing a huge feast for numerous black-headed and common gulls, that can be seen flocking behind the bulldozers.

One other surprise: I discovered a pair of grey herons have made a nest high up in an alder on the east side of the lake, which is the first time herons have nested here in recent years, at least as far as I am aware. They are typically early season breeders, so I hope they can raise their brood before the lake works are too far advanced.

Saving frogs and toads

In the coming weeks, when we get mild, wet evenings, we can expect many frogs and toads to be on the move. Unfortunately, many get squashed on the roads. If any of you have a spare moment on such evenings, it would be great if you could pop out with a torch and search the street near your home and pick up any amphibians you find that are heading into harm's way.

Anywhere along The Street from the bottom of Hollow Lane to the other end of the village is a good place to look. I have also in the past found quite a few squashed specimens near the road bridge over the river at the bottom on the lime avenue.

One challenge can be knowing which way the animals are going. It would be galling to help them back across the road that they have already crossed once, so if in doubt as to which way they look like they are heading, take a moment to watch them before diving in. Of course, if cars are approaching, you may need to intervene quickly.



Snowdrops at St Margaret's

If you have any unusual nature observations please let me know:
David Stubbs: davidstubbs1@btinternet.com or WhatsApp me on 07974922197

Rural Cost of Living Household Survey.

The Rural Services Network in partnership with the Citizens Advice is running a Rural Cost of Living Household Survey at https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Rural_Households_Cost-of-Living.

Ideally, we would like to target hard to reach rural residents i.e. those without access to the internet or unable to engage with online services. As much as we would like to supply paper surveys and input them ourselves, our resources don't allow this and that's why we would really appreciate your help. Neighbours and friends can help fill in the survey for residents without internet access.

Results from the survey will build on the Rural Cost of Living research we commissioned last year and help us to lobby Government Departments, MPs and other policy makers for a fairer deal for rural communities. The survey will run until 31 March 2023.

Richard Inman, Office and Website Manager; Tel: 01822 851370; @rsnonline.



Rural Households Survey on the Cost of Living



Do you live in a rural area and are you feeling the pinch?

The Rural Services Network and the Rural Issues Group of Citizens Advice are jointly running a survey to understand more about rural household budgets at, what is, a very difficult time for many.

Research commissioned by the RSN last year shows rural areas are suffering more acutely from the rise in the cost of living. Results from the survey will help us to engage more effectively with Government Departments, MPs and other policy makers.

https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Rural_Households_Cost-of-Living



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Scan the QR code to
access the survey
and tell us your views

The survey closes on 31 March 2023

The way you vote at your polling station is changing...

From **May 2023** new UK government legislation contained within the Elections Act 2022 means all voters voting in person at the polling station will need to provide photographic identification before being issued with your ballot paper.

Please see overleaf for accepted forms of identification

If you do not have one of the accepted forms of identification you may apply for a **free** Voter Authority Certificate at www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate

Please visit our website at www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/voterID for more information or email us at electoraiservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk or call 01263 513811

Postal Votes

You DO NOT need to provide photographic ID if you have a POSTAL VOTE. For more information and if you wish to apply for a postal vote please visit our website to download an application form or request one by emailing us at postalvotes@north-norfolk.co.uk or call **01263 513811** or collect a form from our Cromer or Fakenham offices

The accepted forms of photographic identification are:

- a passport issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, a British Overseas Territory, an EEA state, or a Commonwealth country
- a driving licence issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, or an EEA state
- a biometric immigration document
- an identity card bearing the Proof of Age Standards Scheme hologram (a PASS card)
- a Ministry of Defence Form 90 (Defence Identity Card)
- a Blue Badge
- a national identity card issued by an EEA state
- an Older Person's Bus Pass
- Disabled Person's Bus Pass
- an Oyster 60+ Card
- a Freedom Pass
- a Scottish National Entitlement Card issued in Scotland
- a 60 and Over Welsh Concessionary Travel Card issued in Wales
- Disabled Person's Welsh Concessionary Travel Card issued in Wales
- a Senior SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- Registered Blind SmartPass or Blind Person's SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- a War Disablement SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- a 60+ SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- a Half Fare SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- an Electoral Identity Card issued in Northern Ireland

EXPIRED DOCUMENTS ARE SUITABLE PROVIDING THE PHOTOGRAPH IS A TRUE LIKENESS

Please visit our website at www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/voterID for more information or email us at electoraiservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Please act now to:

ENSURE YOU EITHER HAVE ONE OF THE ACCEPTED FORMS OF PHOTOGRAPHIC ID LISTED OVERLEAF

OR

YOU COMPLETE AN APPLICATION FOR A FREE VOTER AUTHORITY CERTIFICATE BEFORE THE DEADLINE OF 5PM ON TUESDAY 25TH APRIL 2023

OR

YOU APPLY FOR A POSTAL VOTE BEFORE THE DEADLINE OF 5PM ON TUESDAY 18TH APRIL 2023



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