

Raynhams' Newsletter - February 2023

- Friday 10th, 17th, 24th - West Raynham Village Hall Bar open from 7pm to 10:30pm.
- Thursday 9th, 16th, 23rd - Line dancing in the Village Hall from 7pm to 8pm.
- Saturday 11th - Drop-in session in Village Hall on Raynham Estate from 10am to 12 noon.
- Friday 24th - Raynhams' Gardening Club meeting in Village Hall from 6pm to 7pm.

Church Services

- Sunday 12th - East Raynham from 6.00pm
- Sunday 19th - Helhoughton from 10.30am
- Wednesday 22nd - Ash Wednesday at Tatterford from 6pm
- Sunday 26th - South Raynham from 10.30am

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

Drop-in Session

On Saturday 11th February we will be hosting a drop-in session in West Raynham Village Hall where you can find out more about current and upcoming projects across Raynham Estate. The session will run from 10am to 12pm, and we do hope you can join us.

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

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.

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.

Village Hall News

Committee meetings

Over this winter period we have been holding virtual meetings, which has been more convenient for members and saves us spending on heating the hall for just a small meeting. Our next in-person meeting is planned for Monday 13 March at 6:30pm in the Village Hall.

Save the date - main events

More details to follow, but please note the three main events planned for this year:

- **Coronation Street Party** - Sunday 7 May in The Street, West Raynham (or in Village Hall if wet weather). Coordinator, Allison Henshaw
[Note: the actual coronation on 6 May will be screened live in the Village Hall]
- **End of Summer Village Party** - Sunday 27 August in Seppings Meadow opposite the Village Green (same place as last year). Coordinator, Debbie Lamont
- **Fish & Chips Supper and live music** - Saturday 16 or 23 September (tbc), Village Hall. Coordinator, Melvin Forman

There will also be a series of smaller events from time to time in the Village Hall, such as the annual Sid's Quiz in May, other quiz nights, a table tennis competition, wine tasting, gin and rum evening, a Romanian evening and talks by guest speakers. Other ideas welcome. Keep checking the notice board and this newsletter for further information.

Reading Room

Lately the Reading Room has become a bit of a dumping ground and is too cluttered with unwanted items. There is also a serious problem of dampness inside and we are talking with the Raynham Estate about much needed repairs to the roof and chimney. In the meantime, we ask everyone please do not leave any more books, magazines or other items in the Reading Room until further notice.

If you have items to donate for future raffles or tombolas, please either hold on to them for the moment, or let us know and we will sort out where to store them.

Village Hall Bar



As usual, the Village Hall Bar will be open every Friday evening from 7:00pm - 10:30pm.

We do prefer contactless card payment, but for those who prefer to continue to pay in cash, this will still be possible.

Please do come along and meet with fellow residents. Dogs are welcome!

For any questions or information, please contact us on: westraynham.vhc@gmail.com

Raynhams' Gardening Club

The Gardening Club met at the end of January, and we would like to remind you of some dates for your diary for 2023.

First our meetings are held between 6pm to 7pm on the last Friday of each month. These are the dates for the first half of the year, and all are very welcome to attend:

- 24th February; 31st March; 28th April; 26th May; 30th June.

Spring has started to happen with the snowdrops coming out and we are enormously lucky to have a lot of wild snowdrops to admire in The Raynhams.



In addition, there are several gardens in Norfolk opening under the National Garden Scheme (NGS) this month and here is a selection which have snowdrop walks:

- LEXHAM HALL - Sundays 5th and 12th February
- HORSTEAD HOUSE - Saturday 18th February
- BAGTHORPE HALL - Sunday 19th February
- HINDRINGHAM HALL - Saturday 25th February
- RAVENINGHAM HALL - Saturday 25th February
- CHESTNUT FARM - Sunday 26th February

Please check the NGS website or the printed Yellow Book for exact locations and opening times. We are also lucky to have Walsingham Abbey in Little Walsingham right on our doorstep with its carpets of snowdrops and a spectacular sight they make.

Later in Spring will be a visit to the wonderful gardens at Stody Lodge on Friday 12th May. Then we are going to spectacular Elsing Hall on Saturday 10th June.

On Saturday 19th August we have hired a coach to visit the Beth Chatto gardens near Colchester. Travel to the gardens will be completely free courtesy of a grant from the Solar Fund. This event is open to everyone in the Raynhams, not just Gardening Club members, so put it in the diary.

We hope to see lots of people joining us for these events.

Bryan Welton, Chair of the Gardening Club.

West Raynham Plant Stall

Just a reminder there is still a variety of trees available at the plant stall, and mild days during this month and into March are ideal times to plant them as young trees will still be dormant. I wish I had a big garden as I would be planting several of them for posterity! So do a bit to help reduce global warming and plant a tree in 2023!

I have lots of new plants ready and over-wintering to go on the stall once things warm up in March. These include a small number of cuttings from plants in my garden, one of which is in full bloom now. Not only in flower but it's scented too! It is Sarcococca - a family of evergreen plants that grow about one to two metres tall, and are commonly known as Christmas Box.

My plant is about a metre tall after about 14 years. Sarcococca need to be planted near a path you use regularly in the winter, and ideally in sun to bring out the scent. I have mine beside the main gate into the garden so as you come through the gate this time of year on mild days you get a waft of scent, not what you expect in January or February!



Bryan Welton.

Raynhams' Calendars and Monthly Photo Competition

Our thanks to everyone who contributed to and bought the 2023 calendars during the Christmas period. The photos in the calendars were selected from winners and runners-up in the monthly photo competition during 2022.

We won't be holding a monthly photo competition or producing a calendar this year. For information the sales of calendars made for 2021 and 2023 have been disappointing and haven't covered the printing costs. In 2020 we sold 79 out of 200 printed calendars (39.5%). In 2022, 56 calendars were sold out of 90 available (62%), and a further 10 were given as prizes and to the judge Paula Smith in Sculthorpe.

We are open to any ideas on what else to do next. Maybe a Photography Club to coordinate activities? These could include having themed collections of photos exhibited at village hall coffee mornings and other events, and/or turning photos into postcards for sale through local businesses, churches, and the Reading Room. If you have any suggestions, then please send an email to: westray.newsletter@gmail.com.

Paresh & Judy.

Evening School in Helhoughton

From 1880 it was compulsory for all children between the ages of five and 10 to attend school, but children in Helhoughton and West Raynham were fortunate to have had this opportunity since 1854 when the Marquis Townshend endowed a school in each village.

A new teacher, James Layland, moved into the Helhoughton Schoolhouse in 1881 and alongside teaching in the school every day he had, within months, opened an Evening School "for the benefit of young men and lads residing in the three Raynhams, Helhoughton and Tatterford" so that they might continue their education after having left school. Although new to the village, Layland was already being described as the energetic and successful master of the Board



School and the Eastern Daily Press spoke highly of his efforts to "elevate and improve the neighbourhood". He came to Helhoughton having been assistant teacher in Massingham where, "through his kind and gentle manner he obtained the respect of the parishioners."

Classes in reading, writing, arithmetic and scripture were available each Tuesday and Thursday during the winter and were later extended to include Geography or History. In addition, with help from the Marquis Townshend, a lending library was opened a few years later. Layland urged those who had left school "not for a moment to suppose that their education was complete, in fact the foundation had only been laid, and they had to build a structure upon it." He suggested they spend their leisure hours "reading good and useful books, in order that they might grow up to be truthful, manly, courteous and God-fearing men and women."

On Easter Monday in 1885, "this quiet little village was the scene of much gaiety and festive rejoicings", as people gathered to witness Layland's marriage to Helen Young, a grocer's assistant working for her uncle in Helhoughton. The Lynn Advertiser reported "long before the time fixed for the ceremony, the church and streets were crowded. [Layland] is held in great esteem by all classes in the village and neighbourhood."

Annual inspections suggest that attendance at Evening School was good. In April 1892, 24 had been presented for examination; 21 achieving a pass in reading; 15 in writing, and nine in arithmetic. The Inspector added a supplementary note: "The lads were in very good order and did their work cheerfully ... The school promises to be very useful."

In 1895 though, the Raynham 'Monthly Magazine' announced that Layland was to leave Helhoughton to take over as master of the schools in Great Bircham, a post his father had held for many years. He was presented with a 'handsome Queen Anne tea and coffee service and large polished oak tray with silver fittings' inscribed "Presented by his friends in the parishes of Helhoughton, Tatterford, East, West and South Raynham to James Joseph Layland, as a mark of esteem. Christmas 1895". In response, he thanked everyone for their beautiful gift and said he would always cherish the happy years he had spent in the area and the friends he had made.

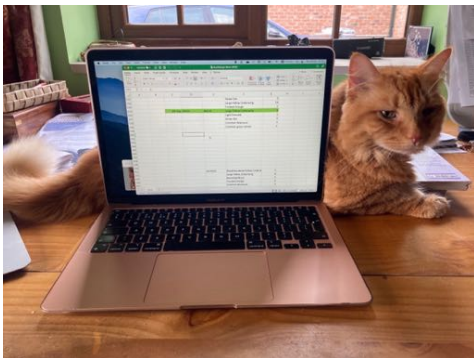
Layland's successor, James Cowans, continued to provide lessons for those keen to learn and standards remained high. In April 1899, special grants were claimed for instruction in Agriculture, Book-keeping and Commercial Geography for eight boys between the ages of 13 and 18: John Graver, Wilfrid Harper, John Hudson, Boaz Lambert, George and Horace Lee, and Fred and Walter Morris. In 1901, with the average attendance of around 15 boys, the inspector commented: "This class is taught with considerable care. The order is very good, and the attention of the scholars is well maintained."

Layland, meanwhile, had arrived in Bircham, and almost immediately offered what he called 'Evening Continuation Classes', with over 30 youths and young men signing up to attend.

From there, James Layland and his wife moved to Lessingham, near Smallburgh, and then to Nunthorpe in Yorkshire where they were to celebrate their Golden Wedding. They chose to name their home 'Raynham House'; an indication perhaps that they truly had cherished the time spent in the villages in and around Helhoughton. Many young men in these same villages had cause to be grateful to him for the dedication he had shown over his 14 years here, and his interest in their life-long education.

Bridget Howarth.

Moths at Foundry Cottage



After submitting my species list to Norfolk Moths, I received four queries back from the County Moth Recorder. With the help of Adrian Riley in Syderstone, I returned an amended list with one previously unrecorded species which was the Rustic Shoulder-knot, *Apamea sordens*. Caterpillars of *A. sordens* feed through the winter on various grasses such as cock's-foot.

This brings the total number of moth species recorded last year between April and October to 190, while in 2021 between April and July I found 116 species.

Paresh Shah.

Beaver Release at Sculthorpe Moor Nature Reserve

At the nature reserve managed by the Hawk and Owl Trust, a male and female beaver were released inside a 20-hectare enclosure last April. The beavers have been monitored by staff



and volunteers, along with possible changes to several biodiversity indicators caused by the feeding behaviours of the two beavers.

There is a fantastic video available on YouTube which details the processes leading up to the beaver releases, involving large-scale habitat modification and the creation of new wetland pools on the reserve. See

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VM2RY-p5_n0.

West Raynham Nature Notes - January 2023

In the last newsletter I reported on my annual New Year's Day birdwatch around the parish, so the main update for January just gone has to be the 'Big Garden Birdwatch', a national campaign promoted by the RSPB that encourages as many people as possible to spend one hour counting the birds in their garden during the last weekend of the month.

Dubbed the largest exercise of 'citizen science' - last year nearly 700,000 people took part - the data reported by so many observers right across the country, provide a vital snapshot of the status of several of our commoner bird species. While they may still be common, many once familiar species have declined significantly over the last few decades, while others, such as the goldfinch, have increased dramatically. The Big Garden Birdwatch is a simple and fun way to gather useful information that can highlight such trends in populations.

This time, I chose my vantage point outside, where I had a good view of our feeders, yet far enough back and hidden so I would not disturb the birds. I prefer to be outside, so I can hear different calls better. It's fine to do the count from indoors looking out of a window, but you lose a lot of sound, unless you open the windows and let all your precious and expensive heat out!

I stayed in the same spot for the whole hour, and it was a real delight to have this time watching the comings and goings of so many birds in such a small area. Altogether, I noted 20 species, but the real interest was in the number of individuals of each. Top of the charts were the blue tits (10 noted) just edging goldfinches on nine birds.

To the honest, these were minimum numbers. I am certain there were more of each, but with constant movement it is impossible to keep track of them all. Six each of greenfinch, dunnock and blackbird were also conservative estimates. It was very pleasing to see so many greenfinches. They have declined a lot in recent years, but this last year has seen a bit of a revival. Blackbirds have been very numerous this winter, their numbers bulked up by European birds migrating away from even colder weather further north and east.

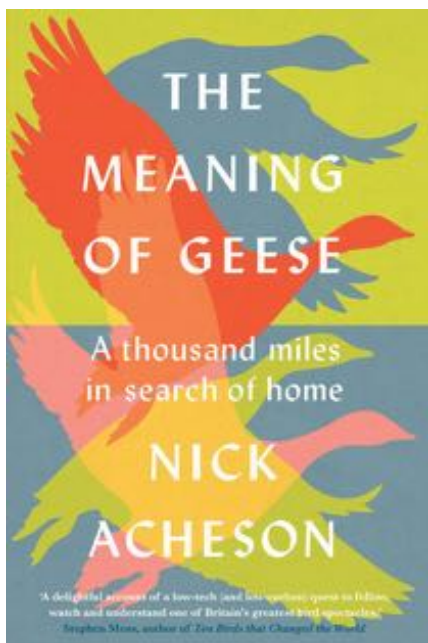


I really enjoyed watching the dunnocks. There were at least two groups of three beginning their spring courtship. Dunnocks are unusual in being polyandrous (look it up!); their generally skulking behaviour and drab plumage belie a fascinating life history.

Top bird in the rarity stakes was a female blackcap that briefly came to the peanut feeder. In fact, this bird has been visiting us throughout this month, but is not something you are likely to see every day in winter. Blackcaps are mostly a summer visitor but increasing numbers of continental birds are coming to the British Isles to overwinter. Those that do, often visit gardens. Weirdly, I read recently that some of our winter blackcaps actually come from Spain! That definitely seems perverse.

More confusing still, a female blackcap has a brown cap. Birds are not simple, but always fascinating and a joy to watch.

New book on Norfolk's geese



I mentioned a few months ago that my friend and local naturalist, Nick Acheson, has a book coming out, entitled 'The Meaning of Geese'. It is all about his post-lockdown odyssey to study wild geese across North Norfolk, all from the vantage point of a red bicycle borrowed from his mother. It is a marvellous account of connecting with nature and even includes a section on the geese of Raynham Park.

Some of you may have seen his cameo appearance on the recent series of Winter Watch, where he and Michaela Strachan marvelled at all the pink-footed geese on their dawn flight from The Wash at Snettisham, to find feeding sites inland. Sometimes these geese can be seen on fields in the Raynhams, but more often in high-flying V-formation (known as skeins) passing over.

Nick is a brilliant writer and regularly contributes to Norfolk magazine. He is also an occasional contributor on nature-related matters on the Today programme, as well as being a prolific Tweeter. I have no doubt his book will be hugely enjoyable and I would recommend it to all readers of Nature Notes.

The Meaning of Geese is published by Chelsea Green and comes out on 9 February. See <https://chelseagreen.co.uk/book/the-meaning-of-geese/>.

David Stubbs.

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

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 electoralservices@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

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

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
- a 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
- a Disabled Person's Welsh Concessionary Travel Card issued in Wales
- a Senior SmartPass issued in Northern Ireland
- a 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 electoralservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk

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