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WYMONDHAM Magazine

ISSUE 74 | JULY 2023

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First phase of Becket's Chapel
restoration complete

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FOOD AND DRINK FESTIVAL SUCCESS

By **Maureen Huckle**

The hottest day of the year so far failed to deter the thousands who flocked to Wymondham on Sunday for the second Wymondham Food & Drink Festival. With over 60 stalls in the town centre selling a wide range of food and drinks there was something for everyone. Hot food, cold food, cakes, sweets, mushrooms, charcuterie and almost every type of alcohol were just some of the delights on offer.

In addition to the food and drink stalls a number of local charities boosted their funds by running stalls and activities and the Wymondham Makers Market offered a variety of handmade crafts.

A Punch & Judy Show, Town Crier and the One Voice Glee Club Choir ensured there was plenty to keep the visitors entertained and a surprise visit by Julie Reinger as part of the Radio Norfolk Treasure Quest put the event on the map all across Norfolk.

Organised by Wymondham Rotary Satellite Group all profits will be used by them to support local charities. Bev Bulcock, leader of the organising team said that the group were delighted by the Festival's success with more than £4400 raised. "We are grateful to the many local groups and businesses who have supported us in putting on the Festival again this year" she said. "The event was sponsored by Rosedale Funeral Home, Wymondham Town Council contributed to street entertainment costs, and Morgan Sindall helped out with the road closures.

Bev added "We think everyone had a great day and we have been delighted with the positive feedback from visitors and traders, so Sunday June 23rd has already been pencilled in for next year's event.

NEW DENTAL SURGERY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED FOR ELM FARM

Parker Planning Services is collecting views from residents on whether a development with a new dental surgery and 18 business units should go ahead. They have prepared preliminary drawings with a view to applying for planning permission soon.

The new development would sit behind the existing Elm Farm Business Park, using the current access off Norwich Common.

Within the proposed development, the clinical facility is anticipated to include a dentist, medical practice and/or pharmacy depending on local needs. The business units are designed to include adequate parking and solar arrays. To share your views on this proposal email elmfarm@parkerplanningservices.co.uk.



Janet Benjafield, Barry Whitcombe, Brendan Gray, Mary Primrose, Diana Grant, Susan Savage, Andrew Clarke

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE REOPENING

By Andrew Clarke

The Shed Wymondham was approached by the late Keith Benjafield to discuss the possible renovation of a large Thomas the Tank Engine structure at the Wymondham Railway Station.

The Thomas structure was built in 1988 by Douglas & Co, a civil engineering company. It was then purchased by David Turner in 1990 and in 1995 it was restored and sited at the railway station. Between 1995 and 2019 it was continually displayed at the station until being taken over by Brendan Grey when he purchased the Station Bistro restaurant.

We visited Thomas and looked at the work that would be involved to return it to its former glory. One of our Shed members, Dave Gilham, was happy to project manage the renovation and put together a plan of repairing and the necessary materials that would be needed.

Keith Benjafield donated money from his personal funds, and along with the kind donation The Station Bistro was able to offer, we were able to purchase good quality materials to ensure Thomas will be around for many more years to come.

Dave Gilham assembled a work group, and this would be The Shed's first community project involving both men and women members – a milestone in the history of The Shed after recently setting up our women's group.

The process of rubbing back the structure to its original wood began and the necessary repairs also took place. It then became a "ghost train" as it was covered in white primer!

It finally started to come to life again as the "Thomas" blue paint was applied and along with fitting of the red bumpers and the gold whistle. Once the Thomas face was fitted, he looked as good as new.

A big thank you to all The Shed members who worked on the project and special thanks go to Dave, Jules, Mike and Amy for all their hard work.

Unfortunately, Keith Benjafield passed away during the renovation and was unable to see the finished Thomas. We felt it fitting that Keith's wife Janet Benjafield unveiled the rejuvenated Thomas and on Friday 9th June we held an opening event with many Shed members, Wymondham in Bloom volunteers, the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and general public attending.

Janet's words at the opening: "My late husband Keith was a Station Adopter for Wymondham Railway Station along with Brendan (Gray) from the Station Bistro. He had a vision that Thomas could be brought back to life and thought of the talented people from The Shed. With funding from himself and Brendan and The Shed's skills we are stood here today to welcome Thomas back. Alas, Keith passed away in November 2021 but I am sure he is smiling down on us today. Thank you also to the Wymondham in Bloom team for their work in brightening up the station once again with flowers."

The Shed Wymondham often gets involved in community projects in the Wymondham and surrounding villages. Its members come from all walks of life and with an abundance of crafting skills they are always happy to impart their knowledge to other members. The original premise of The Shed ethos remains - Helping combat social isolation, improving health and wellbeing whilst learning new skills.

If you would like any more information about what The Shed could offer you then please contact us at info@theshedwymondham.org.uk or follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/theshedwym/>

TIME TO PACK YOUR JAZZ PICNIC BASKET

By Amanda Clarke

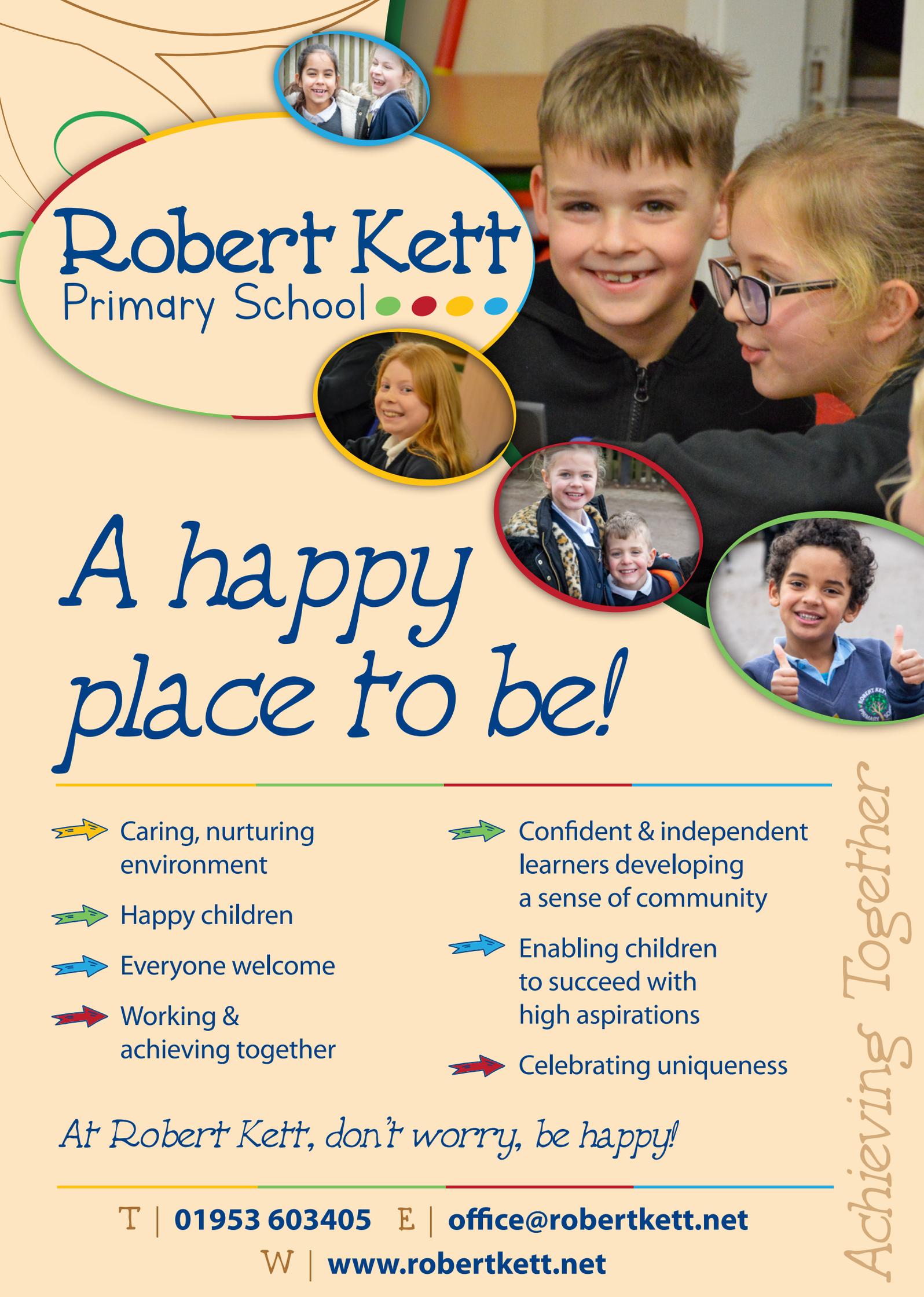
Pack the kids into your picnic baskets and head off down to Becketswell Meadow to enjoy our annual Jazz Picnic on 8th July from 6pm. The format is the same as in previous years, with entertainment by our old friends DixieMix. There will be a coffee stall, ice creams and a hot dog stall manned by Wymondham Lions, who will also be running a tombola. The evening is organised and stewarded by the Wymondham Rotary Club with help from their Satellite club members and members of the new Town Team.

This year our main sponsor is Spire Solicitors together with generous contributions from a number of other businesses and individuals, together covering all the costs of running the event. Entry to the public is free, but a voluntary collection will be taken during and after the event - all of which will be given to local charities supported by the Rotary Club. These include Norwich Foodbank, YANA, East Anglian Air Ambulance, Wymondham Men's Shed and Greening Wymondham. Last year the voluntary donations exceeded £2,000.

Leave your cars behind if you can because parking is difficult near the site. You can walk from Whitehorse Street along the river path or along Becketswell Road to the Tiffey Bridge. Toilets will be available on site and because of limited parking for disabled vehicles, owners are asked to contact Philip Richardson on 07715699211 before setting off.

The late Keith Benjafield and wife Janet on Wymondham in Bloom watering duties ▼





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Achieving Together



▲ Judith Harwood has been instrumental in attracting funding for the works



▲ The now-familiar scaffolding is coming down

RESTORED BECKET'S CHAPEL REOPENS

By Helen Leith

Historic Norfolk's annual summer party was held at Becket's Chapel on Sunday 25th June. The Mayor of Wymondham cut the ribbon and re-opened the building following major repair works by Historic Norfolk (formerly known as Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust). Judith Harwood, Chair of Historic Norfolk commented: "I'm so delighted that we have been able to deliver the first phase of our vision for the chapel and secure its future in the heart of Wymondham. There have been times when I thought that this day would not come. Nevertheless there is still much to do, but we have shown what can be achieved. This gives us the momentum we need to deliver the final phase and build the new extension."

The mediaeval Grade I listed Chapel is one of Wymondham's most important heritage assets, and is currently designated "Heritage at Risk." The Chapel is believed to have been founded by William d'Albini, Earl of Arundel in the 12th Century and named for St.Thomas a Becket. The second phase of restoration will include a Café and Visitor Information Point, actively promoting Wymondham as a heritage destination. Becket's chapel will be a multifunctional facility for the arts, and available for rent by the community for meetings, receptions and other events.

Starting on 4th July, Wymondham Arts Forum will hold a series of exhibitions at the chapel until late October.

Funding has been provided by Historic England, Architectural Heritage Fund, Norwich Freemans Charity, Pilgrim Trust, Headley Trust, Geoffrey Watling Trust and from Historic Norfolk's own resources.

Photos: Dave Balcombe

WELLBEING AND SPIRITUAL FAIR RETURNS

By Karen Savage

After the first fantastic response from the well-being and spiritual fair held at the Central Hall in Wymondham in April, Karen Savage and Jenny Wythe are happy to announce two more dates for the diary, Saturday 5th August and Saturday 2nd December.

The fair will be full to capacity with 30 stall holders and a few new readers and healers will be joining in offering treatments on the day. There will be a variety of talks and demonstrations in the adjoining rooms, starting off with an introduction into sound healing with a gong bath. There will be a meditation and a drum journey and something new, a light language demo. All demonstrations are included in the £2 entrance fee (children free). Additionally a charity book stall will be in the foyer.

Refreshments will tempt you with catering by a local cafe, The Hideout (who can resist those yummy cakes?) Vegan and vegetarian savouries will be on offer too. It will be lovely to see you, Jenny and I will be away with the fairies again, come and find us on our stalls.

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LORD WHARTON VISITS MATRIX COLLEGE

By Cheryl de Val

On the 26th of May, Matrix College received a visit from Lord Wharton, Chair for the Office for Students. They are an independent counselling training organisation based in Wymondham which attracts students from Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and beyond.

At the start of the year, the Matrix team had spotted an online article by Susan Lapworth (Chief Executive for OfS) about organising visits to Higher Education institutions for senior OfS staff and board members to improve mutual understanding. Matrix wrote to OfS to invite them to come and meet staff and students. They wanted to show Lord

Wharton and his colleagues how the college fulfils an essential role in retraining mature students and providing counselling at a time when these services are in great demand.

Matrix has a programme of teaching that allows students to continue working whilst retraining. As a degree of life experience and reflective ability are required for prospective counsellors, the students are all mature, and the



age range this year is from 28 - 61 years old, with most students in their 40s. The cohort of students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and previous academic achievements and from all walks of life. Each will bring their own life experience and subjectivity to the one-to-one encounter with their clients.

ROTARY CONCERT WITH KATHERINE PRIDDY

By Peter Cook

The Rotary club of Wymondham is delighted to present Katherine Priddy in concert on Wednesday 5th July at 7pm in Wymondham Abbey. Katherine is an internationally renowned folk singer/songwriter whose debut album reached No.1 in the Official UK Folk Charts.

Reviews of her performances include "Utterly brilliant. One of my favourite contemporary voices" Guy Garvey BBC Radio 6 Music/lead singer Elbow.

Katherine will be supported by local musicians. All proceeds to local and international charities.

Tickets £20, available from Reeves, 2 Market St. Wymondham (cash only) or online from peter.cook2018@outlook.com.



REVAMP OF HEALTH CENTRE

By Miranda Gretton

Wymondham Health Centre has been given a makeover thanks to a generous donation from a local former patient. The donation was kindly left within a legacy to Norfolk Community Health & Care NHS Trust's Charitable Fund. The fund uses donations to provide equipment and services that are above and beyond those funded by the NHS and make a genuine difference to patients.

Charity Development and Projects Manager Carol Plunkett said "we are so fortunate to have such generous and thoughtful donations like this one to support our staff and patients in this way. Refreshing a space really helps to elevate it and make it a warmer, more inviting place for the people in our communities to come and receive their care."

The Health Centre in Wymondham has received upgraded comfortable furniture to cater for differing



patient needs as well as two new pieces of artwork for the reception area, commissioned by local Wymondham artist Stephen Turner. The images reflect the beautiful Norfolk landscape and help to bring a calming atmosphere to the space, particularly for patients awaiting treatment.

The hard working centre and community nursing staff have also received a staffroom revamp, with modern multi purpose furniture to provide a bright relaxing space to take breaks and help aid resilience and recovery. NCH&C Charitable Fund is the official registered charity that raises money to benefit the patients, families/carers, and the staff of Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust. If you would like to donate to NCH&C Charitable Fund, you can do so online at <https://www.justgiving.com/norfolkcommunityhealthandcare>.

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peter.cook2018@outlook.com

All eyes descended on Centre Court at Ketts Park on Tuesday 6th June 2023 for the new Wymondham Town Council's first full council meeting of their four-year stint. Fascinated to see how the new wildcard entries would fare on-court alongside some veteran sloggers, TCW sat atop his perilously tall chair to umpire the whole thing and report back to you. So sit back, grab a bowl of strawberries and cream, and pour yourself a suspiciously dark Pimms and Lemonade, it's time to enjoy your 'Today At Wymbledon' highlights package.

PLAYERS ARE READY

The councillors warmed themselves up with an entertaining hitabout, about whether to move a Greening Wymondham item earlier up the agenda, so that the larger-than-usual number of public attendees wouldn't have to sit through the first rounds of more-mundane council business.

Cllr Michael Rosen and his Labour colleagues plus Cllr Tony Holden (Con) were for the move. Mayor Nuri-Nixon, her Lib Dem colleagues and the Greens were against. The order stayed the same.

Greening Wymondham and the public would just have to join 'The Queue' like everyone else.

But they'd have plenty to entertain them while they waited.



By Jimmy Young

QUIET PLEASE

In the updates section, Cllr Holden wanted a Hawk-Eye review of the council's annual kick-off meeting in May, as he'd noticed some committees and working groups had vanished, like the council's Communications Working Group:

"At the moment, we don't really have any communication with the public and I thought the idea was that the group was going to come up with suggestions?", the North Wymondham representative served up.

"I don't know if you've noticed, Cllr Holden, but this is actually a new administration", came Mayor Nuri-Nixon's backhand slice: "so perhaps we're trying to do things differently?".

It's certainly one way to do things differently, yes.

SECOND SERVE

Next up, Cllr Michael Rosen wanted to know why an item hadn't been discussed by the Finance Committee as

promised, to do with how much the Town Council's Clerk can spend without asking round for quotes or councillors' approval.

After some toing and froing about illness preventing the committee's last meeting happening, and whether that meant it should be discussed immediately now or not, Cllr Todd Baker (Lab) decided some crowd interaction was in order:

"Apologies to the members of the public gathered who are having to witness the back and forth here. I think it's why we wanted to bring the Greening Wymondham proposal up the agenda", he said.

Before coolly sitting back down to drink his barley water and slowly peel a banana.

But Cllr Rosen was in urgent form and had a dramatic dropshot in his arsenal. He proposed that there should be a total freeze on all non-contractual spending at the council, until the Clerk's spending limits were agreed - something the Clerk warned would cause things at the council to grind to a halt.

Perish the thought. Just imagine if Wymondham Town Council didn't do anything. It doesn't bear thinking about.

The idea was put to a vote and supported by all 4x Labour members and 1x Conservative but was defeated by 6x Lib Dems and 2x Greens.

No need to bulk buy tinned food. Wymondham Town Council can continue to function.

Summing up, Mayor Nuri-Nixon opted to pull the covers over the issue and delay play until the rain had subsided.

"I still think it's not the time to do it now unfortunately. This is not any attempt to cover anything up... I would prefer that we leave it until after the finance committee which is meeting in two weeks' time."

Where's Cliff Richard when you need him to fill in while we wait?

TENDER SPOT

We then came to an eye-opening section about the replacement of electrical pop-ups on the market place.

Cllr Holden had noticed a payment of £3630 for a single pop-up was the third of its kind in recent months, and wondered why all three pop-ups hadn't just been replaced in one job:

"Surely it would have been financially advantageous to do them all at once, rather than doing them separately? Although I do realise that by doing them all at once, we would have gone above the ten thousand pound limit..." (at which the Clerk would have to seek 3x quotations from suppliers for councillors to choose from).

The Clerk offered an explanation about some pop-ups being in poorer states than others, and that the total cost of doing all at once would have been the same as doing them separately.

But that caught Cllr Michael Rosen's attention and we entered a fascinating interchange:

"The Clerk has just said that they knew that three items in the square needed replacing. The total value of those required a tendering process. They chose to do them separately, which then avoided the tendering process. **I have to say, in my experience of local government finance, that doesn't sound right to me.**"

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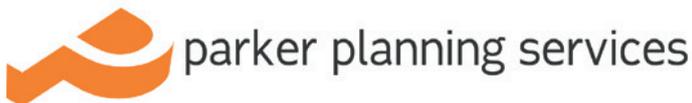
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Should Elm Farm Business Park be extended with 18 Business Units and a Dental Surgery?

TELL US YOUR THOUGHTS!

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18 spaces for small local businesses

DENTAL SURGERY



Community Consultation for proposed extension to Elm Farm Business Park for 18no commercial units and Dental Surgery

The Proposal

The purpose of this leaflet is to inform the local community and interested parties to provide an early opportunity for people to comment on emerging proposals for the extension of Elm Farm Business Park to include Commercial Units, Dental Surgery, and additional parking as required.

The Business Park and Dentist would be entered by existing access off Norwich Common.

The uses of the commercial units may be professionals similar to that of existing tenants at Elm Farm Business Park, such as Norfolk Health Watch, Accountants, other professional services or commercial uses.

The Dental/Medical Facility is anticipated to include either;

- A Dentist, or
- Dentist and GP/medical practice; or
- Dentist, GP/Medical Practice & Pharmacy

The Dental/Medical Facilities would be **in addition to existing practices locally**, not replacing or moving.

What do you think?

We wish to hear your views on the proposal.

Does your household have an unmet need for a;

- NHS or Private Dentist?
- Medical Facility?
- Pharmacy?

If so, how many people in your household have a need?

Are you currently registered with a Dentist or Doctor locally?

What are your views on the suggested proposal?

Do you have any other comments you wish to make?

Email comments can be sent to;

elmfarm@parkerplanningservices.co.uk

If you intend to address your comments by post, please send to:

**Parker Planning Services,
13-15 Cathedral Street,
Norwich,
Norfolk,
NR1 1LU**

We are expecting to submit the application imminently, your response would be appreciated.

In response, the Clerk sought to reassure any members who were worried the matter might not exactly be as tight and white as John McEnroe's shorts:

"It wasn't a ploy to avoid the tendering process...", he began.

Phew.

"...it was simply to do them one after the other to make sure that they could all be done in time for various events to be held."

But Cllr Rosen was having none of that, saying that this sort of staggered approach could have just been built into the tender.

He then sent down another ace to the Clerk:

"What you've done is just say that you knew that over the course of the financial year, you'd be spending a sum of money that was of a level that required proper tendering and it seems that that hasn't happened."

Ouch. New balls please.

After Mayor Nuri-Nixon, now in her 6th year as a councillor, interjected to plead for more time as a new administration "to get our heads round this", Cllr Rosen had one final flourish for us at match point:

"That's exactly why Cllr Baker and I were keen for this to be discussed tonight: so that we could get these things as a new administration in place as quickly as possible. So that we could be operating to the highest financial standards and really be able to show the residents of Wymondham that we are doing things in a new way, as a new administration. And that we expect this to be done properly."

A roar of appreciation erupted on Henman Hill.

Then, for the first time while TCW has been covering the council's meetings, a considerable number of councillors voted against approving that month's expenditure (4x Labour, 1x Conservative). 6x Lib Dems and 2x Greens voted to approve it.

High drama, worthy of the entry fee alone.

TOP LOB-BYING

After a fire and brimstone speech from Greening Wymondham on the perilous state of the planet, we then moved onto the main event that the public had gathered in their numbers to support: the group were asking the council to approve in principle their plans for improving Rothbury Park.

The scheme envisages nature-friendly planting, forest-style play areas, better paths, picnic areas and better seating and was put together using the group's own money and voluntary labour.

Councillors were unanimously in favour of the idea of making a park nicer, with Cllr Alex Perry (Lab) summing up the mood: "Green spaces are vitally important for everyone's physical and mental health."

Nuts were top of Cllr Lucy Nixon (Lib Dem)'s questions. And plums. Would fruit and other food-bearing trees be included in the planting scheme?

And with all that fibre floating around, talk then moved onto whether toilet provision needed to be considered, mainly led by Cllrs Baker and Rosen, who were worried about residents getting court short.

Cllr Paul Barrett (Green) bemoaned

the current "monoculture field" at Rothbury Park.

Just to translate, that means grass, dear reader.

Cllr Alex Perry brought up the rusty state of current play equipment there.

With all the talk of nice new stuff, the conversation inevitably came round to how the improvements would be paid for and how previous CIL (charges paid by developers) has been allocated. Cllr Holden pointed out £411k of CIL had been allocated to a new cemetery, when a public works loan could also be an option to cover it.

The previously built-up cemetery fund had of course been raided of £213k in 2019 to help pay for, you guessed it, the Town Council's £2 million+ offices.

Cllr Rosen suggested the issue of CIL allocation be looked at as whole by the Finance Committee.

Expect a renewed tussle over what projects get what money down the line.

Back to the Rothbury Park proposal and councillors voted unanimously in favour of approving the scheme in principle and putting together a group to look at the next steps, including funding.

A long slog could lie ahead before it's game, set, match for the project...



ROTHBURY PARK DESIGN PROPOSAL

The design aims to improve the accessibility of the park and extend the variety of activities that can take place among children, accompanying adults and older people. This is achieved by creating a series of pocket spaces that offer different activities and types of play, linked by direct and more adventurous routes. By providing a solid path between the two entrance points of Rothbury Road and Orchard Way, the park becomes a green corridor between the two roads that connects wildlife and people with their surroundings.



◀ A glimpse at Greening Wymondham's proposed improvements to Rothbury Park



ASSET OR LIABILITY?

Advertorial

By [Rebecca Mills](#), EweMove Wymondham

The property market is currently experiencing a softening of prices, attributed to various factors, one of which is the compounding effect of interest rates. The combination of softer property prices and higher borrowing costs has created a more challenging environment for both buyers and sellers, as they navigate a market that requires careful decision-making. Taking a closer look at the NR18 market, the numbers reveal an interesting snapshot of the current situation. There are currently 296 properties for sale, indicating a relatively high level of inventory. Since the 1st of June, 56 new listings have launched to market suggesting that sellers are still entering the market. On the other hand, 44 price reductions implies that sellers are adjusting their expectations and aligning with buyers in a more challenging market. Lastly, there have been 30 sales agreed proving ongoing activity, albeit at a slower pace. Overall, these numbers demonstrate the dynamics of a market in transition, where both buyers and sellers are navigating the changing landscape with careful consideration. So, what does this all mean for sellers currently? Pricing is crucial to achieving a successful sale! Not just for the initial launch of the property, but as an ongoing evaluation. As mentioned above, there are several market factors which you and I cannot influence. On the other hand, there are those we

can: Pricing, Marketing, Service, and Communication. Overriding message - ensure you treat your property as an Asset, not a Liability. It's always a pleasure to hear from all of you that read my articles, your support is amazing and valued. If you have any questions regarding your journey as a seller, get in touch today.

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Realistic pricing for market conditions is essential

3 in 4 agents state properties selling below initial asking price

Source: Dataloft Poll of Inform subscribers

AT WHAT LEVELS ARE SALES OFFERS CURRENTLY BEING ACCEPTED?



WHAT'S IN A PHOTO?

Becket's Chapel By Philip Yaxley

The Grammar School's schoolroom in Becket's Chapel c.1890 ▼

The extensive renovation of Becket's Chapel has been proceeding for some time. It's worth recalling that, since its foundation as a chapel dedicated to the Archbishop of Canterbury St Thomas Becket, murdered in 1170, it has played a prominent part in the Wymondham story - not least as a grammar school. After its chapel days and then before the Reformation as a meeting place for the Wattlefield or Middleton Guild, in 1561 it became Wymondham Free School and then Wymondham Grammar School.

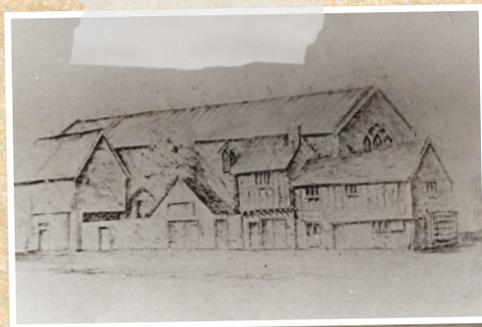
However, in the 1800s the building had deteriorated and Priory House in Middleton Street took over in 1835 with nearby York House becoming a science laboratory. The chapel, which until the mid-1800s had been surrounded by other buildings, among them shops, the town's lock-up and stocks, together with the fire engine shed, was eventually restored in the 1870s and for a time served as a public hall until 1888 when it was again used by the Grammar School until the school's closure in 1903.

The Grammar School's badge, the fleur-de-lys, can still be seen over the chapel's doorway, as well as on the Middleton Street properties.

Since the school's closure the chapel has served as a church hall, the public library and the Arts Centre, while it is hoped that once the current work is completed it will once again play an important role in the town, particularly perhaps in attracting tourism.



Interior of Thomas a' Becket's Chapel. Now King Edward III Grammar School.



▲ The Chapel with outbuildings around it in 1871 from a drawing by Thomas Jeckell

The Chapel before restoration in the 1870s ▼



More from this series at:
wymondhammagazine.co.uk/whats-in-a-photo

◀ The Chapel undergoing its current restoration, ready for a bright future



By Alex Perry

TED TALKS



We plough

“We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land, but it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand,” but sometimes God can overdo the watering.

“Corn needs moisture,” said Ted, “but give it too much and it will drown.” He explained that rainwater can remove the nitrates from the soil, and without these nitrates, crops won't grow. On top of that, excessive rain can lead to a baby boom of wireworms (the larvae of click beetles) who will gladly help themselves to your wheat and barley. So, farmers use clay pipes or dig channels to drain surface rainwater into nearby ditches or streams.

In addition, it is essential for farmers to have fields as flat as possible to prevent the build-up of rainwater in the furrows (trenches) made by ploughing. This can be achieved by ploughing in several different directions. Ted has wryly observed that modern farmers have much bigger fields than in his day, with plenty of “crinkles” (ups and downs) and “then they wonder why nothing grows!”

The art of ploughing has changed dramatically in Ted's lifetime. As recently as the late 1940s horse drawn ploughs were used in Norfolk. From that decade, Ted remembers mechanised ploughs made out of old cars fitted with iron spike wheels. It was during the 1950s that purpose-built tractors, particularly those manufactured by Ford, became a must have item for farmers.

Since the 1980s tractors have increased in size. Recently Ted saw a three tonne John Deere tractor (John Deere invented a steel plough in the 19th century) just east of Norwich.

The advantage of these gigantic, high-tech machines is that they get jobs done much quicker, but there are drawbacks. For example, the sheer weight of these tractors compacts the soil, which can reduce the amount of water being able to enter the soil, increase soil erosion and make it harder for plant roots to grow.

Fortunately, there are effective farming methods to address the problems of compacted soil. However, Ted has reminded us that our relationship with the land is based on give and take; we like to take, but sometimes we must remember to give.



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By **Neville Cameron**

Life for me has never been either straight forward or easy but luck, if there is such a thing, has left me reeling this time.

Many of my followers know my story but for those who don't know what's been happening here's a brief outline: it all started with a trip to the doctors for a simple blood pressure test, it was high but I wasn't bothered anyway I had an important bit of shopping to do after I'd picked Yvonne (my long suffering wife) up. We were off to Morrison's not for shopping, oh no that was a by product, I needed chocolate and the biggest bar of Cadbury's milk chocolate I could lay my hands on. Funny that, because I'm diabetic and it was running out of control even though Yvonne was begging me to sort it out but I was indestructible.

As I was about to set off my phone rang, it was my GP. In short he dropped a bombshell, "well you say you can't lose weight because your medication won't let you, you say you can't walk because of pain in your knees and hips, now we find your diabetes is hopeless and your blood pressure's off the scale. Well done! I'll give you a month to live!"

I never bought that chocolate. Indeed I cut my food rations down by half, sorted my sugar intake out, getting my diabetes out and most importantly I actually started walking. That first walk was only a few hundred yards but by the time I reached home I was gasping for air and nearly collapsing on the doorstep. At that time I used special scales weighing in at over

25 stones 5 pounds.

Keeping up my strict regime I weighed in at 18 stone, a loss of around 7.5 stones. I was walking in all weathers, I became terrified of putting on weight again and damn the weather or hunger.

I never felt well though, coughing up phlegm and lots of it. Eventually I saw a nurse practitioner at the GP's surgery who said my chest was clear and was very dismissive. However that night I became seriously ill, collapsing next to our bed unable to get up. Waiting 4 hours for the ambulance made things critical, the ambulance people thought I'd got pneumonia and worse still sepsis.

It took 4 firefighters and the ambulance people to carry my lifeless, limp body down our twisted staircase arriving with blue lights flashing me away to resuscitation at Norwich Hospital.

I can't remember most of it but

apparently I was very delusional screaming, shouting, swearing, thinking the walls themselves were trying to eat me. I was between life and death, but eventually well enough for life saving surgery to drain the fluids that were collapsing my lungs through that blood poisoning. My chances of survival were less than 50%. As Covid was at its height I had no visitors and being in hospital seriously ill was not pleasant. Eventually the massive drains in my chest were removed and soon after I was released.

So that's it then, err NO within 2 weeks I was back in again with Sepsis and pneumonia. This time I escaped an operation but was extremely poorly. It was great to get home again and I was going to enjoy myself. I still wasn't well but I'd started walking again, managing a mile which wasn't too bad as my maximum distance walked for charity was 6.5 miles coinciding with my 65th birthday.

Well as I said I wasn't feeling too good as was proved very shortly afterwards when I slipped down one of our house steps. Landing hurt like jiggery, nowhere near as much as it hurt when I grabbed my lower leg which was totally pointing in the wrong direction straightening it out to where it should have been. It was at this point I woke our neighbours with my screaming.

12 hours later in A&E firstly I was congratulated on nearly straightening my leg perfectly then I was diagnosed as having a broken lower leg, ankle, with muscles and tendon trauma as well. On top of this, severe blisters had formed, halting surgery for quite a time. Eventually I had an operation screwing the bone in the leg together. As the plaster casts were removed in the final stages of healing those blasted screws slapped clean in half and I felt a different sort of pain.

Eventually I was declared mended but I still had shed loads of pain. Phoning up I was reassured and told to ring back in a month. That I did only to find I'd been discharged. So my GP wrote asking for an urgent appointment which through Covid, waiting lists, strikes and holidays happened on 15th May this year.

We were ready to fight my corner, we wanted answers. The pain was getting worse every day stopping me walking. It had become so very painful that I'd resorted back to using sticks to walk. Indeed to help you understand the pain, if I was to wash up I needed morphine, in reality I was using morphine to do anything, it was just wrong.

We certainly weren't ready for what came next though. He showed

us on the X-rays that I'd been very unfortunate enough to have severe arthritis in the whole area with bones grinding on each other. There is no cure! The only last resort thing they may offer was total fixing of all the bones so the foot and leg are immobilised taking away walking in its natural form.

There was a downside though, he said, "no surgeon will operate on you as you're far too heavy, your BMI is 41 you've got masses of weight to lose and I can't see you doing that. Would you like to be referred to others that can help with your weight."

"Yes please," I replied.

Well I entered full on depression with Yvonne totally gobsmacked. We were in a world of hopelessness.

Well that's how it seemed until I remembered he had pretty much said I couldn't lose weight or walk on my own. That was it, that red flag to a bull thing happened, I'd proved the Doctor wrong once I'm going to do it again. So on May 16th my food rations are back to lower levels as they'd gone back up through depression with not walking. My sugar levels are getting the Neville treatment as well, but most importantly I'm walking again and taking pictures.

I'm only able to walk very short distances as every step is painful. I've cut the morphine down drastically, thankfully as that's strong medication with its own severe side effects. Actually I've found my body's natural endorphins help greatly. Yes, I'm near tears sometimes using those crunchy bones but I'm going to do this and I'll get to a size where I can consider for myself if I go for complete fusion of the leg, ankle and foot. I want to be the driver in charge of my destiny, not a puppet doing what I'm told.

My pieces in the magazine may alter through this but I intend making it more interesting hopefully with an unusual journey. Of course I'm keeping going on the Facebook group Wymondham Ways as well walking and photographing things on dry/safe days on non dangerous routes.

As a footnote I'm not going the electric wheelchair route as I'm prone towards being lazy and once I'm sat in one of those things you'll never get me out of it again...

It's going to be tough, it's going to be different but by heck it's not going to be boring so please join me on a journey that some may want to try themselves. Now that would be brill.



NEVILLE WALKS AGAIN



A GUIDE TO 100% MORTGAGES

By [Tanith Spray](#),
Chartered Legal Executive, Licensed Conveyancer at Spire Solicitors

Advertorial by



A 100% mortgage is a type of mortgage that allows a borrower to borrow the entire purchase price of the property without having to put down a deposit. This means that the borrower does not have to contribute any money towards the purchase of the property at the beginning, which can be attractive to first-time buyers who may not have a large sum of money saved up for a deposit.

However, 100% mortgages are not as readily available as they were prior to the 2008 financial crisis. The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has introduced stricter regulations on mortgage lending to prevent a repeat of the crisis, and this has led to a tightening of lending criteria by mortgage lenders.

Some lenders still offer 100% mortgages, but they are generally only available to those who meet certain criteria, such as having a high credit score and a good track record of managing their finances. Lenders may also require additional security, such as a guarantor or a charge on another property.

ADVANTAGES OF 100% MORTGAGES

If you wish to buy a property but you haven't been able to save up the money for a deposit, then a 100% mortgage removes this obstruction. This can allow you to buy your first home sooner and if house prices are rising and renting is high, this could mean saving money in the long run as once you are on the property ladder and paying your mortgage, you are building up equity in the property.

DISADVANTAGES OF 100% MORTGAGES

Although a 100% mortgage can get you on the property ladder sooner, there are higher risks with 100% mortgages than the more traditional 90% or 75%.

One potential risk of a 100% mortgage is that you may end up in negative equity if the value of the property falls. This means that the amount owed on the mortgage is greater than the value of the property, which can be a problem if the borrower needs to sell the property or remortgage.

Another risk is that if you struggle to keep up with the mortgage repayment, such as if you lose your job or experience a significant increase in

your living expenses, you may default on your mortgage. This risk is higher than with a traditional mortgage as it is likely that your monthly repayment will be larger as you are borrowing more money.

There are also fewer lenders to choose from when looking at 100% mortgages and this can lead to less competitive rates.

It is important for borrowers looking at 100% mortgages to carefully consider their financial circumstances and to seek independent financial advice before making a decision. They should also shop around to find the best deal, as interest rates and fees can vary widely between lenders.

If you would like to discuss anything in this article further or are looking at purchasing a property, contact the Residential Conveyancing team now on [01953 606351](tel:01953606351) or email info@spiresolicitors.co.uk.



Q&A

By Gill Harle

Wymondham in Bloom volunteers: Diana Grant & Janis Raynsford

You may have seen them around the town – the Wymondham in Bloom volunteers – working hard as they weed and water the plants and flowers that help to make Wymondham a more beautiful place for residents and visitors alike. Here we find out more from volunteers Diana Grant and Janis Raynsford about the group and what they do.

Can you tell us more about the background of Wymondham in Bloom?

Diana: Wymondham in Bloom was started in 2019 by Kim Carsok and I joined two years later. It comes under the umbrella of the Town Team, as a local group which aims to make our town look beautiful with plants, make us proud of our environment and get people participating for a lovely community spirit. Initially, we encourage retailers and businesses in the town centre to put out floral displays in summer which can be judged and awarded certificates. The Garden Club members are involved in that and fifty per cent of the cost is met by our Town Council. In addition, we have several showpiece local projects which are presented to the Royal Horticultural Society judges who visit in July to assess the town for Anglia in Bloom awards. Ultimately, the regional winner goes on to compete at Britain in Bloom. Our portfolio adheres to RHS standards which demonstrate environmental responsibility, sustainability, wildlife

friendly biodiversity, community and intergenerational involvement and the score for our award can be Bronze, Silver, Silver Gilt or Gold. We aim for Gold of course.

We publicise our events on our Facebook page and sometimes have a stall at the farmers' market.

What are some of the projects in your portfolio for Anglia in Bloom?

Last year we presented Browick Road School Garden Club to the judges. The children have a garden in the school grounds and learn how to grow plants, vegetables and flowers - it's very successful and the children are so proud. Browick Road Community Orchard is a fantastic project by Greening Wymondham with whom



we're closely associated as we share many aims and ideas. We also showed the judges the MNR Abbey Station last year and they loved it. The Abbey churchyard herb garden, cared for by Hilary Hunter and the churchyard team, is extraordinary. There's also Toll's Meadow nature reserve and the Chapel Lane allotments. Each year we select our best examples to present. We're currently finalising the portfolio to present and show the judges for Anglia in Bloom this year.

We plan children's sunflower and pumpkin growing competitions and a home frontage competition which is anonymously judged. Where there's a neglected or unattractive area we focus on changing this by presenting our plans and working towards showing progress the following year. Our goal is to enhance Wymondham's community spaces for everyone to enjoy and appreciate.

How do you get local retailers and businesses to take part?

The town centre businesses are encouraged to decorate but they don't have to be judged. Participants are given a voucher as an incentive, which entitles them to 50% off (funded by the Town Council grant) and can be used in the Wymondham Garden Centre or Myhills Pet & Garden. There are all kinds of different awards for those who take part.



How did you get involved with Wymondham in Bloom and what do you get out of it?

Diana: When I moved here in 2020, I was very keen to get involved in local activities and, despite things being a bit hidden due to the lockdown, I connected with Kim and the team via social media. I have a passion for gardening, but my garden being rather small here, I had the time to put into gardening in a voluntary capacity. The feedback from people who see and appreciate our work is highly rewarding. And the best part is working together in our volunteer team and sharing our enthusiasm and energy.

Janis: I joined Wymondham in Bloom in April this year. I'm passionate about gardening so enjoy taking care of the plants and making the place nicer and more colourful for the public. I enjoy the social aspect of being part of Wymondham in Bloom too. I also look after Chandler's Hill Garden having taken over from an elderly lady, Brenda Ford.

Diana: Janis does a lot, including helping out in the Museum gardens and Priory Gardens too. She has won a Civic Award for her contributions to local community green spaces.

Can you tell us more about the volunteers and other people involved?

Diana: Volunteers join in as they are

able - it's very flexible. This year we have more people - about 15. We use Facebook to encourage interest and participation. We give as much choice as possible of activities according to people's abilities or interests. Almost everyone is retired or semi-retired but still fairly active and we can work around limitations. Everyone is welcome. We try to offer choice and make it light-hearted. Team spirit and satisfaction are important. We always enjoy our refreshments too.

I'm a coordinator and there are five of us in a core team. We share the work out - Annette writes the portfolio, which is a tremendous task. Paula and Janet work with the retailers who participate in the scheme. Kim, who is part of Town Team has been leading it and continues as an inspiration to us all. Jackie has recently taken over the social media promotions. We've had professional input from a local garden designer, Lesley Anne Clarke, who helped us with plant choices for the 30+ town centre planters, so we had a planting plan for plants that would thrive and look beautiful without too much work. Her guidance enabled us this year to make our own plan.

What type of activities do you do?

Janis: Since I joined, we've been out tidying up the streets, weeding the cobbles and walls of shops and houses - we've made a very good job of Town Green underneath the tree. Then planting around the town. The work is

sometimes hard, but we've achieved quite a lot.

Diana: In the summer of 2021 watering was challenging due to the drought. A small team of us met regularly using donated water from local businesses or which we brought in our cars. The following year we decided we'd like to work more collaboratively with the council grounds team. We agreed to choose the plants and we worked together with the planting. This year we're taking over more and have chosen and planted everything while the council's groundsmen team have done much of the watering. I'm quite proud of our collaboration with them as they have a big workload looking after the parks, cemetery and churchyard. Wymondham probably looks at its best in summer but our goal is to keep it looking attractive all year round. With that in mind, we're working towards increased use of perennials and long-term planting rather than temporary annuals which are more work and more expensive in the long term. Litter picking is necessary to keep





public spaces looking good. Working with Greening Wymondham we now hold volunteer public litter picking events every couple of months, covering residential and industrial outlying areas, not just the town centre. Usually on Saturdays a growing number of people of all ages come along, often up to 50. We are increasingly supporting groups of Brownies, Scouts and Rainbows who want to do litter picking events for their badges.

How do you tell weeds from wildflowers?

That's an interesting one. In our decision making we look with an open mind at what are weeds and

wildflowers. There are some beautiful areas of wildflowers in Wymondham: the Abbey churchyard, Browick Orchard, along by the wall of Chandler's Hill.

What about Open Gardens in Wymondham?

Janis: This was last year in Wymondham. It's every other year and we alternate with Hethersett.

Diana: Open Gardens has always been run by the Museum and Heritage Society who benefit from most of the funds raised. Last year we got involved as both Janis and I sit on the committee at the Heritage Society. It was very successful and we opened about 25 gardens in Wymondham.

What does the future hold for Wymondham in Bloom?

Its future is about the way it's recognised, valued and appreciated, and its success is about the challenges ahead, our goals and how much we achieve. It will never stand still as it's looking at creating, with volunteer effort, a better public space around us where we live and work in our town.

For more information visit <https://www.wymondhamtownteam.org/wym-in-bloom-2023> or

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100091803803061>



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STAR THROWERS UPDATE

By Victoria Pigg

Welcome to our latest news update from Star Throwers Cancer Support Charity. Our cancer support centre is open Monday – Friday from 9am – 5pm, please drop in and find out all about our free cancer support services.

GARDEN PARTY

We are bringing back the Star Throwers Garden Party this year on Saturday 1st July from 11am – 2pm. This will be a casual, social event at the Star Throwers Centre. Entry will be free – relax in the garden with tea, coffee and cake. Come and join us!

GOLF DAY

Join us in October for a Charity Golf Day to support two local cancer support charities – Star Throwers and Finnbar's Force. This promises to be a very enjoyable day with the chance to take part in fun competitions along the way, in the beautiful setting of Bawburgh Golf Club, to support two very worthy local charities. Stableford Team Event – Best 2 from 4. Teams of 4 – £220 per Team: Coffee & Bacon Roll on Arrival 9.00am, Two Course Meal & Coffee, Followed by Charity Silent Auction & Raffle. To enter contact: victoria@starthrowers.org.uk.

BLICKLING HALF MARATHON

Entries are now open for the Autumn Half Marathon and there are free places available once again for Star Throwers: <https://totalracetiming.co.uk/race/416>. This will take place on Sunday 22nd October. Autumn course is 100% on road, it starts and finishes in Aylsham and takes you around the scenic villages and roads surrounding Aylsham and Blickling. Entry is FREE! Sign up to this challenge on behalf of Star Throwers and commit to raising a minimum of £100 for the charity.

STAR THROWERS BALL

Our next Charity Ball will take place at Glen Lodge at Bawburgh Golf Club on Saturday 18th November 2023. The evening will include: 3 Course Meal, Live Band & DJ, Live Auction, Raffle and Fun Casino. Tickets are £60pp. Please contact us to find out more: victoria@starthrowers.org.uk www.starthrowers.org.uk

NEW SEASON AT WYMONDHAM ARTS CENTRE



By Christine Buckton

We are pleased to announce that after a long period of repair work, we will soon be ready to reopen the Arts Centre. Thanks to Historic Norfolk, a substantial repair programme has transformed Becket's Chapel.

The programme this year will run until late October. Details of all the exhibitions scheduled can be found on our website at <https://wymondhamarts.uk/Programme/>

The Centre will be open to the public from 11am to 4pm (Tuesday to Sunday) during the exhibition season. Further information about each exhibition can be found on the website, or pick up a leaflet from the Centre.

Opening on the 4th July, the first exhibition will be Wymondham High Academy's Showcase. Do come and see the talented artists from our local High School and have a look around the renovated Becket's Chapel. Wymondham High is delighted to return

with Showcase#15. It is an exhibition of final pieces by A Level Fine Art, Art Multimedia and Art Textiles students, accompanied by a selection of GCSE Fine Art, Art Textiles and Photography work.

From 11-23 July an exhibition of Naomi Clements Wright's works will be on show. She will be showing a wide selection of paintings including flowers, interiors, beach scenes, townscapes, landscapes and figures. There will also be greeting cards and prints for sale.

To close out the month, the 'Freedom' exhibition will run from 25-30 July. Capturing the beauty, light, mystery and emotive qualities of the Norfolk coastal landscape is the motivation for Leticia and Steven's work. They use paint, ink, pastel, and photography to create pieces that aim to reflect the energy, atmosphere and majesty of East Anglia.

U3A AUTUMN PROGRAMME

By Alan Browne

Wymondham u3a (formerly the University of the Third Age) is arranging a programme of day and short courses to be held during Autumn 2023 and Spring 2024.

Stand and Deliver - Highwaymen vs the Georgian judicial system. A day course on 15th September

Norfolk's Industrial Past. A short course: 22nd September to 13th October.

An improvisation workshop. A day course on 24th November.

Ignorance is bliss, or is it? – a morning seminar on 15th January.

Giant Molecules - the stuff of life. A short course - 6 mornings in February and March.

Special Interest Day in March - the engineering problems and solutions of future energy generation. The day will comprise four 45 minute to 1 hour long talks followed by questions from the audience. Speakers will be drawn from leading innovators in delivering future energy needs for the UK and beyond.

People participating in any of these events will not have to be members of u3a. More details of all the above will be published in the coming weeks. Contact: Alan Browne (Chair, Wymondham u3a Life Long Learning Steering Group) 01953 600973.

LIFE GOES ON AT WYMONDHAM ABBEY STATION



By *Angie McDonald*

It may not look, at first glance, as if there has been anything happening at the Mid Norfolk Railway's Wymondham Abbey Station.

But a group of volunteers has been working hard, not only restoring the newly named 'Church Lane' Signal Box, but also clearing the lineside of overgrowth, cleaning and maintaining the platform and ticket office, and tending the gardens which surround the station area.

We anticipate a resumption of train services to Dereham before the end of this year's running season. Trains are currently in operation midweek and at weekends between Dereham and Thuxton, and there are special events, including the popular 'Railway at War' weekend on August 6th and 7th.

Wymondham Abbey Station will be open to visitors on Saturday July 8th from 4-9pm (the same evening as the Jazz Picnic). Please help our work by supporting the 'Back on Track' fundraising appeal then, or by visiting our website online (info@mnr.org.uk).



Photos: *Ian McDonald*

CHORAL SOCIETY SUMMER CONCERT

By *Julia McDonald*

Wymondham Choral Society is busy preparing for a concert on 22 July, a triumphant return to Wymondham Abbey with beautiful music by Mozart.

The choir was formed in September 1980 and they perform a wide range of choral works from early music to the present day. The choir managed to keep going during the pandemic and has since welcomed many new members. Over the past year three concerts have been performed. Last summer the musical director, Claire Dixon, chose a delightful selection of folk songs by well known composers and Tippett's gorgeous spirituals from 'A Child of our Time'. Karen Harries, the soloist in the Tippett, included three beautiful solos by Grieg, Hahn and Vaughan Williams.

Bob Chilcott's Christmas Oratorio, the central work in the December concert, featured William

Falconer's fine tenor voice. The performance was enhanced by flautist Grace Duthie whose solo, Debussy's *Syrinx*, was a delightful addition to the concert. A pleasing selection of pieces suitable for the season was enjoyed after the interval.

The Choral Society received many congratulations for their March concert. Claire Dixon's choice of Puccini's *Messa di Gloria* seemed to meet with everyone's approval and showed the choir singing with confidence and joy. Fauré's *Requiem* after the interval was equally stirring.

The upcoming concert features two works by Mozart. Firstly, *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore - Solemn Vespers* - composed in 1780 for Salzburg Cathedral. The setting of the five Vespers psalms and a concluding Magnificat, scored for chorus, soloists and a modest orchestra, is much loved for its joyful choral writing. This will be followed by one of the most famous musical compositions ever written, Mozart's final project, *Requiem*. The story of the uncompleted *Requiem* is well known: Mozart died before he had finished the work. Austrian composer Franz Xaver Süssmayr completed the *Requiem* in what we could now call its "traditional" version.

The choir will be joined by four soloists and an invited orchestra for this, much anticipated,

performance. Tickets, £15 (under 16s free) are available on the door or online: www.trybooking.com/uk/events/eventlist/eventListingAccount/wcs



GREENING WYMONDHAM WINS NORFOLK BIODIVERSITY AWARD

By *Nicola Maunder*

Greening Wymondham have won the Groups Award for the Norfolk Biodiversity Awards 2023! Peter and Sue Knights were delighted to be presented with a certificate at Norwich Castle in late June, for Greening Wymondham's wide-ranging activities in their community for biodiversity and the environment.

Here are the criteria that were used to decide on the award winners: "This award recognises the achievements of groups working on biodiversity projects in their local community. Local groups inspire people to recognise and care for their local biodiversity and bring people together to work with a common purpose. We look for achievements for the group, as well as for wildlife and habitats."

TALKING NEWSPAPER HOSTS REGIONAL CONFERENCE

By **Tony Vale**

Wymondham and Attleborough Talking Newspaper (W A T N) hosted a regional conference of similar groups from across the Eastern Counties, in collaboration with the Talking News Federation (TNF).

The meeting began with a welcome by Wymondham's Deputy Mayor, Councillor Annette James and was followed by a presentation by TNF President, Peter White MBE, who is also the presenter for the BBC Radio Four "In Touch" programme.

The all day event was timely, as it coincided with the local groups 25th anniversary, which provides an audio digest of local news and information and a quarterly audio magazine, for more than 30 visually impaired people, in and around the two towns.

The delegates heard talks from TNF Trustees, on a range of topics related to producing a Talking Newspaper and a number of associated organisations

involved with supporting people with sight loss were present. These included Vision Norfolk, RNIB, British Wireless for the Blind and Deafblind UK, whose CEO lives in Wymondham.

There was a display in Wymondham library throughout the week leading up to the event, to raise awareness of the services available to visually impaired library users. The day also allowed time for networking with the different groups and organisations.

Ian Gorst, a Trustee and Team Leader representing Chatterbox Norwich said, "It was a great opportunity to meet with other groups and listen to how they are dealing with some of the difficulties associated with running a talking newspaper, including recruiting new listeners and how to source suitable articles for talking newspapers and magazines. As there will only be 5 of these roadshows held nationally it was great for Wymondham to be able to



host the event".

Tony and Georgette Vale from the Wymondham and Attleborough Talking Newspaper were instrumental to the successful event, in arranging the venue, refreshments and general setting up of the day.

W A T N is looking for more volunteers to help collate material and to do sound recording for their fortnightly production. Full training will be provided. Contact the Chairman, Tony Vale, via tony@valemiluk for more information.



OPEN GARDENS OUTING

By **Andy Speller**

In May the speaker at the Wymondham Garden Club monthly meeting was Gabrielle Reid, a wonderful lady who runs "Gabriel's Cutting Garden" in the picturesque village of Gissing.

An organic garden, Gabi grows flowers for colours and scents on an acre of land, 35 different sorts of Roses and loads of other plants for flowers all year round, creates seasonal floral displays to order, and, as she says "that just gathered look, fabulous fragrance and country charm".

Her garden isn't normally open to the public, but as luck would have it, was open for "Gissing's Sunday Best" – Open Gardens & Classic Cars on the first Sunday of June.

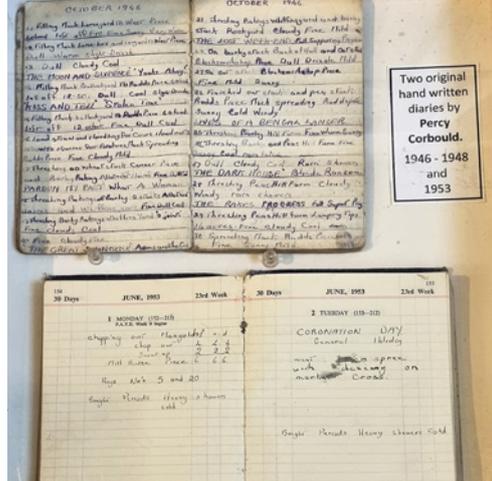
A perfect summer's day when lots of Garden Club members went along to see the Open Gardens including Gabriel's Garden.

14 Gardens and Spaces

(Community Orchard, Mill Green Wildlife area) were open for a small admission charge. For those perhaps less inclined to gardening – the Classic cars included some famous sporty and rare models. Gardens of all shapes and sizes with features to commend them. Plenty of flowers to sniff and plants, shrubs and trees to admire.

Everyone who went had a great day. The community hall served tea and cakes plus the village pub ran a mini-beer festival - what more could you want!

Next meetings of the Club: July 17th is a talk by Jamie Blake from Bressingham Gardens, intriguingly titled "The Weeding of the 5,000 with 2 Hoes & 5 Wishes". August 21st is Gardeners Question Time with the very popular Guy Barker who always brings along plants and flowers to wow the audience; not a meeting to miss!



AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE ON DISPLAY AT HERITAGE MUSEUM

By Neil Haverson

Percy Corbould left school in 1934 aged 14. He started work on a farm at Browick, just outside Wymondham. He went on to spend his working life on the farm and kept diaries recording his years as farmworker. Percy's family have kindly loaned two of his diaries to Wymondham Heritage Museum. These are on display and, along with extracts from them of Percy's memories of his farming life in the 1940s, they form a central plank of the museum's redesigned agricultural exhibition, "Our Agricultural Heritage".

The Courbold family visited the museum to formally launch the new display. Welcoming them, museum committee vice chair Simon Long, thanked them for the loan of the diaries and said that Percy Courbold was the first of the museum's plan to focus on local characters,

The farm where Percy worked covered several miles; from the Hethersett Road in Wymondham to Sillfield and Spooner Row. Much of the land he worked on has since been taken up for the construction of the A11 and more recently for housing development.

The barns where he would have cared for animals have been converted into homes.



In his diaries Percy reveals how tough life was for a farm worker in the 1940s. A six-day week with just two weeks' holiday. The working day was long and consisted of hard manual labour. It was mainly outside, in all weathers all year round.

Percy's son Stephen Courbold said: "There was no mechanisation then, no tractors, just horse and cart. What takes two hours to do a field these days took three or four days then. He always had something to do, stone picking, ditching."

Sunday was the usual day off. Workers needed this to ease the aches and pains.

"Dad played football, he was an Arsenal supporter," said Stephen. "He went to Norwich speedway, and they would cycle to Yarmouth for a night out!"

Percy passed away in 2001 but through his diaries, visitors to the museum get a fascinating insight into the life of the farm worker of yesteryear.

Wymondham Heritage Museum and Tearoom is open daily until the end of October. For more information about opening times and admission prices go to thewhm.org.uk.

PERCY'S FARMING YEAR

In his diaries, Percy Corbould recorded his farming year month-by-month. It illustrates how labour-intensive farming was. These are just a few of his tasks.

January: Threshing hay and straw; cutting Kale and topping sugar beet for animal feed. Carting muck from the animal houses.

February: Clearing wood and straw from fields, trimming hedges and ditches, carting lime.

March: Restocking hay, straw and animal feed. Muck carting from the cow barns.

April: Filling the water tanks in the meadows, digging gardens to plant vegetables.

May: Hoeing sugar beet and peas. Moving calves between cow barns.

June: Hoeing sugar beet and chopping out mangolds. Turning hay.

July: Working on hay and straw stacks, hoeing kale and carting hay and straw.

August: Stocking up linseed and wheat. Lumping and carting peas, carting flax and muck.

September: Trimming hedges and ditches, turning and cutting barley and peas.

October: Cutting and carting kale, carting muck, loading hay and straw for cows.

November: Harrowing, driving muck spreader. Topping mangolds and sugar beet.

December: Riddling potatoes and loading onto lorries. Covering sugar beet, loading hay straw pulp, kale and beet.



◀ Left to right, back: Barbara Corbould, Jake McNeil, Callum McNeil, Casey McNeil Percy's granddaughter, Jimmy Forbes, Vicki Forbes, granddaughter; front: Zara McNeil, Stephen Corbould, son



THE
LOWE
DOWN

With Freddy Lowe



SHOULD JOURNALISTS 'CATER' TO THE VIEWS OF THEIR AUDIENCE?

I recently had a conversation with the Editor-in-Chief of an Edinburgh news publication, and he told me that the role of journalism was to “cater” to the views of the audience (‘cater’ being his exact verb) and that all writers must “work within the views or opinions that the audience will find acceptable”.

At first glance, that may seem reasonable. The financial model is understandable: subscription newspapers want to keep their readers' money by writing what people will expect to read. Even still, possibly in a naïve way, this ethos depressed me. It is the product of a wider social phenomenon: various mainstream newspapers all with their tribalistic ‘camps’, where every tribe of readers is spoon-fed opinions they already hold. Being mindful of publishing accurate, good-taste content is one thing; bending over backwards to conform to orthodoxy is another. This led me to realise just how privileged we are in Wymondham with the resources we have to hand: take Wymondham Magazine as an example. The wonderful thing about this publication is that, by contrast, it is home to a variety of voices within the community. Maybe that's a product of town-community publications: more amicability and many people get their say. That's one of many reasons I remain privileged to contribute to it.

I am also grateful that my Wymondham teachers created environments where it was okay to have your own mind. Social media has, undoubtedly, made my generation more frightened to break out of echo chambers, so to have good teachers to moderate classroom discussions was vital. This was especially vital for English Literature, a subject

entirely based on the communication of alternate views, where free thought backed up by empirical evidence from the text is the goal. I have occasionally been guilty (as I'm sure we all have) of being That Student who would raise his hand and state an opinion the complete opposite of how other students felt, and I was fortunate to have teachers that didn't chuck me out on my ear. Teachers are pros; this is never their first rodeo. To have a good teacher meant it didn't matter if a few angry classmates whispered or scowled in the privacy of being outside my eye line. The classroom environment could remain relatively upbeat.

However, that sentence from the Edinburgh EIC – the need to “cater” to views that an audience “will find acceptable” – whilst understandable in the context of a paying newspaper, is reminiscent of something I am increasingly noticing among people of my age. My generation is terrified of causing offence. We may not admit this. We may declare that we are simply being careful of what we say or that

we are just
being
tactical,
which
are in

themselves commendable qualities. I think this fear goes beyond mere tact. Social media has made us all very frightened to transcend the orthodoxies of our friends or communities, especially in the intense teenage circles of secondary schools or universities. University friends of mine have told me that they would never submit anything to the aforementioned Edinburgh publication because they fear ostracisation for their stances on contentious issues, even though they are incredibly kind, liberal people.

This led me to another considerable Wymondham privilege: Wymondham High Academy was (and hopefully still is!) full of teachers prepared to tell pupils, “You might be totally wrong about this. Here's what you should consider instead.” My Science teachers were unafraid to break the news when I'd melted a tray or smashed a test tube. It can hurt your heart to hear criticism in the moment (especially in a room full of your peers), but a year at university has made me appreciate it in retrospect. Universities encourage challenging yourself too – of course – but one does come across a few pupils who haven't quite got the memo: they deliver their opinions in grandiose speeches as if their views are sacrosanct, implying in their tone that any attempt to challenge them would be futile. University professors may well feel less capable of challenging these people because it is less of a ‘disciplinary’ environment, unlike school.

Thank you, Wymondham, for everything! In cases like these, I realise how lucky we are.



Saturday 2nd July

Quiz
8pm, Football Club
wymondhamtownfc.co.uk/

Tuesday 4th July

Full Town Council
7pm, WTC Kett's Park Office
Public welcome
www.wymondhamtowncouncil.org

Wednesday 5th July

Art Society Demo with Jenny Hand
7:15pm, Catholic Church Hall
Jenny is curator of the Munnings Museum in Dedham, Suffolk, which is at Castle House, the former home of the East Anglian artist Sir Alfred Munnings (1878-1959). The museum owns the largest collection of art works of this prolific painter and former president of the Royal Academy. Jenny will give an illustrated talk about the artist.
www.wymondhamart.org

Saturday 8th July

Community Orchard Volunteer Workday
10am-12pm, Browick Road Orchard
Refreshments and tools provided but bring your own gloves. Entrance opposite Gunton Road NR18 0QN or Ayton Road Car Park.
www.greeningwymondham.org/

Jazz Picnic

6pm-9pm, Becketswell Meadow
Enjoy the upbeat music of DixieMix outdoors with a lovely view of the Abbey.

Youth Music Society Concert

7pm, Wymondham Abbey
Tickets on the door, children free.
Questions to enquiries@wymys.org.uk
wymys.org.uk/

Sunday 9th July

Car Boot Sale
9am, Football Club
wymondhamtownfc.co.uk/

Thursday 13th July

Junior Strings Concert
6:30pm, Queen St Baptist Church
A performance by Wymondham Youth Music Society members.
01953 529158
wymys.org.uk/

Friday 14th July

Bingo
8pm, Football Club
wymondhamtownfc.co.uk/

Saturday 15th July

Car Show
10am-4pm, Rugby Club
www.wrfccarshow.co.uk/

Sunday 16th July

Quiz
8pm, Football Club
wymondhamtownfc.co.uk/

Monday 17th July

Garden Club Talk "The Weeding of the 5,000 - With 2 Hoes & 5 Wishes"
7:30pm, Town Green Centre
A talk by Jamie Blake from the famous Bressingham Gardens. An interesting title, come along to find out more!
Show Table - A Rose bloom, 5 stems of lavender, Vase of Sweet Peas (8 stems), Soft Fruit Cookery competition - 3 Fruit Scones. Club Table - A favourite from my Garden - Plant or Flower, Fruit or Vegetable. Members Free, guests £4.
For further information about the club contact wymondhamgardenclub@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100077254060337

Tuesday 18th July

Town Council LEET Meeting
7pm, WTC Kett's Park Office
All welcome to observe the TC Committee on leisure, environment enterprise and tourism.
www.wymondhamtowncouncil.org

Saturday 22nd July

Community Orchard Volunteer Workday
10am-12pm, Browick Road Orchard
Refreshments and tools provided but bring your own gloves. Entrance opposite Gunton Road NR18 0QN or Ayton Road Car Park.
www.greeningwymondham.org/

Sunday 23rd July

Guided Nature Walks
2pm-4pm, Toll's Meadow
Car Park on Cemetery Lane (free on Sundays). All welcome, no charge (donations to NWT welcome).
01953 602 876
www.facebook.com/WymondhamNatureGroup/

Friday 28th July

Bingo
8pm, Football Club
wymondhamtownfc.co.uk/

Saturday 29th July

A11 Derby Charity Day
11am, Football Club
WTFC is hosting a charity derby and family fun day on Kings Head Meadow. Come and enjoy 2 football games, live music, food, drinks, games, raffles and penalty shootout competitions.
wymondhamtownfc.co.uk/

Wednesday 2nd August

Art Society Demo with Peter Partington
7:15pm, Catholic Church Hall
Peter Partington is widely known as The Wildlife Artist and has had a long career as an artist and illustrator of the world of nature. His inspiration is always found in the landscape with pencil, sketchbook and paints. He will paint wildlife in its habitat.
www.wymondhamart.org

Tuesday 8th August

Art Society Annual Exhibition
11am-4pm, Becket's Chapel
The exhibition displays Art Society members' paintings from the last year in all mediums, styles and subject matter. Paintings, greetings cards and affordable unframed paintings are all for sale. Free entry from 8th to 13th August.
www.wymondhamart.org

MARKETS**Charter Market**

Every Friday
8am to 2.30pm Market Place

Farmers' Market

Third Saturday
(15th July)
9am to 1pm, Market Place
www.wymondhamtowncouncil.org
01953 603 302

WYMONDHAM Magazine

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