

Please note new address: nortonnewsletter24@hotmail.com

IMPORTANT NOTICE Due to increased printing costs we are asking for donations towards the cost of printing the Newsletter. Payment can be made by cheque payable to Norton Newsletter or by cash. Please put your payment in an envelope, marked with your name, in the new box on the Post Office counter. You can also pay by bank transfer, sort code 09-01-52, account number 22744308 with your name as the reference. Items for the notice board in the shop will now cost £0.50p a week. Cash or cheques in an envelope clearly marked with your name should also be placed in the new box on the Post Office counter. All donations are most gratefully received. If you require a receipt, please contact the Treasurer, pamrastall@gmail.com. Many thanks to Peter Callaghan for providing the smart new box.

NORTON SHOP WEBSITE

<https://www.nortonshop.co.uk>

FESTIVAL WEBSITE <https://www.nortonfestival.org>

PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

<https://nortonsubhamdonpc.co.uk/>

FRIENDS OF NORTON CHURCH WEBSITE

<https://nortonsubhamdonpc.co.uk/friends-of-norton-church>

VILLAGE HALL WEBSITE

<http://nshvillagehall.co.uk>

NEW ADVERT AT END OF THIS NEWSLETTER

Norton Stained Glass

VILLAGE CAROL SINGING Thank you to everyone for singing along and all who generously helped to reach £475.00 by donating to ShelterBox over the Christmas period. Over the past 20 years the village has donated £5000 to various charities. Bill and Cilla Caswell.

CHRISTMAS MARKET Thanks to everyone who supported Christmas@Norton. We raised the fantastic sum of £420 for Somerset Mind. Thanks also to Lisa Parsons for organising such a great event. Anne Fairweather.

FLOODING IN NORTON What a problem this has become. Please be considerate when driving through the village if there is flood water – driving too fast can cause problems for villagers and their properties. On a lighter note, it's lovely to see snowdrops and daffodils pushing through in the Jubilee gardens. Spring is in the air! Lynne Orchard.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT JANUARY 2024

It was lovely to see so many people attend the January Parish Council meeting. The PC works very hard for the community so your support and positive feedback was really appreciated. Thank you.

Planning: No planning applications this month.

Parish Council's Budget and Precept: This was discussed at great length at the meeting. We are still none the wiser regarding costs for services from

April 2024. However, we have to set our budget and we have to set our precept now. From April, Norton Parish Council will be funding many services including dog and litter bin - weekly emptying, grit bin filling (twice a year), verge maintenance (twice a year), footpath strimming and maintenance (twice a year). We still have no idea what services will be statutory, but we hope that Highways (potholes, jetting etc) will be included and SC will still provide. We have also agreed with SC to fund some of the maintenance for Minchington Rec, which is owned by Somerset Council. We have agreed to take on the funding for grass cutting, tree and rose maintenance and dog and litter bin emptying (another 4 bins on top of the 8 bins we already own). To give you an example on costs for dog bin emptying from April – a proposed cost is currently looking £7.80 per bin per week. This service alone will cost the Parish Council approximately £4,867 a year. Minchington Rec is a central focal point of the village and very popular with families. Therefore, it is important that it is still maintained to a high level. The Parish Council have now fixed their budget and the precept will be set at £45,000. For a BAND D property this will mean the Parish Council part of your Council Tax will be £137.91 per year. The breakdown of total number of dwellings in each band in the village is: Band A – 7; Band B – 62; Band C – 71; Band D – 43; Band E – 71; Band F – 60; Band G – 27; Band H – 3. Total number of properties in the parish: 344.

Recent Flooding in Norton sub Hamdon

Flooding has occurred again at the end of Rectory Lane. One resident said the drain's outfall becomes ineffective once the water level reaches the drain's outfall height. He is asking SC to fit a non-return valve to the pipe. Requests were made regarding the footbridge (on footpath Y20/23) that crosses the brook to be repaired, and for the bridge to be raised to enable flood defences to be built. The Rights of Way area warden has been notified and has asked the Lead Local Flood Authority to visit the site and deal with this matter. A tree has fallen across the brook between this footbridge and the junction at Great Street and is preventing the clear flow of water. Elsewhere, there are blockages impeding the flow: alongside the footpath (Y20/14) from Little Street towards Chiselborough, including a yellow plastic bag and the fallen tree by the Wessex Water pumping station. The tree has been in the water for

over two years, hindering a smooth flow towards the river on the other side of the A356. If you own property next to a watercourse you are responsible for clearing obstructions, see below.

Riparian Landowner responsibilities: If you own land or property next to a river, stream or ditch you are a 'riparian landowner', and it is assumed you own the land up to the centre of the watercourse. Riparian landowners are responsible for keeping banks clear of any obstruction which increases flooding risk, either on your land or downstream if washed away. You are responsible for maintaining the riverbed and vegetation growing on the banks, and you must remove any litter and animal carcasses, even if they did not come from your land. The next PC meeting will be held on **Monday 12th February at 7.30pm in the committee room in the Village Hall.** Members of the public are welcome to attend. Louise Brooks, Clerk to Norton sub Hamdon Parish Council, nortonpcclerk@outlook.com

NORTON CHURCH SERVICES for February.
Sunday 4th 9.30am Morning Prayer. **Sunday 11th 9.30am** Communion. **Sunday 18th 6.00pm** Evensong. Details of all services and information about the Benefice are on the website www.hamhillchurches.org and Church notice boards. Rev Nick Clarke 07485 789968

A THOUSAND HELPED 560 adults and 440 children in 203 families received help from The Lord's Larder in December. Thanks to everyone who supported the project, particularly those who used the collection point in Norton Parish Church – some have been very generous in buying items from the Norton Shop. The church has a list of current needs. Donations, large and small, are most welcome and appreciated.

FESTIVAL FIESTA Plans are being put in place for the 2024 Norton Festival Weekend over the Early May Bank Holiday, Friday 3rd to Monday 6th May. Its success depends on the participation of village organisations and individuals. Amongst other things, active participation is being sought for Community Songs, an Exhibition of Interests & Hobbies, and an Owl Hunt around the village. For further information and offers of involvement, please contact the Festival Coordinator, The Reverend Richard Terrell revrichardterrell@gmail.com

THE READING ROOM in 2024:
Monday Feb 5th and 19th, Crafty Critters 1.30–3.30 pm. Work on your own project or seek inspiration for new ideas. Join us for a friendly couple of hours of crafting and chat. £2.50 per session including tea/coffee and biscuits. Tricia 882646.
Monday Feb 5th and 19th, IT Support 3.30–5 pm. Drop in for help with mobile phones, l pads and anything else. And don't forget there are free six month mobile phone contracts available, courtesy of

Vodafone's campaign for digital inclusion. For information ring Chrissie on 07948 379439.

Katy's Tea Room Tuesdays–Fridays 10-4 pm. Evenings and weekends Available to book for meetings/private hire. £11.50 for 3 hours. Fully equipped kitchen, cloakroom and wifi, the room can accommodate 20-30 people. Phone 881505 or email nortonrr.bookings@gmail.com
Second Hand Books available for sale. New books constantly being added. To browse or to donate books please call Sophie 881099 or email nortonrr.bookings@gmail.com

NORTON MOVIE NIGHTS at the Lord Nelson on Tuesday 13th February. A Bunch of Amateurs (95 mins) will appeal to all lovers of film nights. Bradford Movie Makers is one of the world's oldest amateur film-making clubs – a bold statement for a group of dedicated cinephiles who are proud to be called amateurs. An affectionate and heartening portrait of the importance of cinema for the community. Tickets at £5 on sale in Norton shop from 1st February. Doors open 7.45, film starts 8 pm.

MOBILE LIBRARY AND BOOK CLUB The Mobile library will be in Chiselborough opposite the Village Hall on **Tuesday 20th February from 9.30-10am and in Higher Street, Norton Sub Hamdon from 10.10-10.35am.** The book club will meet on the same day. Contact Anne Fairweather on 882620 for details of time and place.

NORTON SUB HAMDON VILLAGE HALL For those newcomers to the village that might not know, the present Hall was built and opened in 2006. This hall replaced the previous one obtained for the Village by Mr Jack Warry, and built with help from many volunteers in the 70's. We will be holding our **AGM on February 20th at 6.30 in the meeting room at the hall.** Everyone is welcome to see how the hall is run and the many improvements achieved. However, more is needed to keep up the standards. The Hall committee is a small but very dedicated group of volunteers who give up their time to contribute to the general running of the hall, bookings, viewings, health and safety, etc. If anyone is interested in knowing how we work, what we do, or might want to get involved, just contact Jennie Harris, Secretary or Julian Cole, Chairman – or pop in to the meeting and see for yourself; any suggestions or comments will be welcome, and we look forward to seeing you. Jennie Harris, Secretary Norton Village Hall Committee. 01935 881718

LADIES GROUP We all enjoyed a delicious and plentiful Savoury Afternoon Tea at Katy's Cafe, to welcome the New Year. There was much conversation and all too soon it was time to leave. Thanks go to Katy and her two helpers for making such a memorable occasion. Our next meeting will be held in the Reading Room on **Tuesday February 20th at 7.30 pm**, when we welcome Janet Seaton who will talk about Kelways Nurseries and

how it has flourished over the years. Ten Pin Bowling is back on our agenda, and we shall have a new champion after our match on **Wednesday February 21st**. Please contact Sue if you wish to play. Our AGM will be in the Reading Room on **Tuesday 19th March at 7.30 pm**, a good opportunity to come along and see what's in store for the new season. Anyone thinking of joining our small, but perfectly formed group, will be very welcome.

NORTON VILLAGE COFFEE MORNINGS Thank you to everyone who attended January's marmalade coffee morning. A full report will be in the March Newsletter. We meet again at **10.45 am on Wednesday 28th February** at Adele and Steven Wassell's home, Quinces, Church Lane, next to St. Mary's Church, Norton. 'Anything Goes!' is the theme for the sales table, so please bring along any donation. Refreshments will be served as always. The coffee mornings are a great way of meeting friends and neighbours and hearing village news. They last for about an hour and all are welcome. Sophie Hale and Sophie Snow.

NORTON SHOP/POST OFFICE It's time to look back on the previous year and make plans for the upcoming one. Trade figures for the shop as of now compared to last year are: Weekly transaction volume is up 11%, sales are up 23%, and the average transaction value is up 11%. Despite inflation being partially to blame for the increase, the trend is still increasing. This year, we want to make enhancements to the shopping experience that will help the store become more financially stable in the long run. Collect your online deliveries from the Post Office for Amazon, DPD, and Parcelforce. Also, everyday banking, paying in checks, cash withdrawals, paying bills, and so much more. None of this would be possible without the incredible efforts of our staff, volunteers, fund-raisers, and, most importantly, our loyal customers. Particular recognition and thanks are due to Sara and Katie for their outstanding work over the run up to Christmas, and to Louise Matraves, Anne Fairweather, and Lindsay Higgins for their £373 Christmas fund-raising. The CLT board wish you a Happy New year.

THE NORTON MERRY MOWERS. We would like three new members to join the team for the 2024 season. The requirements are: 1. Able to walk. 2. Able to direct a lawnmower in a straight-ish line. 3. Able to help an hour or so once a month from March to October (we only mow when it's dry!). 4. Age limit 15–85 years old (no pay or pension). You will get 15 minutes of mowing training; no tests or examinations to pass. We invite our volunteers to join the full team of 18–20 members in the Lord Nelson for the Skittlers AGM every February/March, so you must be able to walk as far as the pub and direct a skittle ball in a straight-ish line as well. If you can fulfil these requirements and would like to maintain the best-kept churchyard for miles around,

please phone either Chris Westwood on 881681 or Peter Callaghan on 881850.

WHAT'S ON AT ARK Tai Chi with Jona, Mondays 9.30–10.30 am, £5 per session. **Soup and Socials** at Merriott Village Hall every other Tuesday from 10.30–2 pm, soup served 12.30–1.30 pm. Free of charge, no need to book. **Community Lunches** at Merriott Village Hall every other Tuesday 12–2 pm, lunch served at 12.30 pm, £6 for two courses. Booking is essential. Please call 01460 391974 **Health Walks** Every second and fourth Thursday, approx. 1 hour walk from the ARK bus, starting at 10.30 am followed by tea, coffee and biscuits. No need to book. We also host a number of courses at ARK, please see our website for more details. **We are always looking for volunteers**, so if you have some spare time, we would much appreciate your help with practical and gardening skills, help in the kitchen with lunch and soup clubs, assistance with hosting courses or just lending a listening ear or a helping hand with activities. There is always something that you can do to help. Email volunteer@arkategwood.com if you would like to come and see us. For general enquiries please email office@arkategwood.com, call 01460 391974 or visit www.arkategwood.com.

FRIENDS OF NORTON CHURCH WINE CLUB

The draw results for this month were as follows: Jane Ashdown (2) Penny Cudmore, Mike and Pam Rastall, Jennie Harris, Liz Fish, John Forest, Alec Secombe, Alexia Hill. To join the wine club contact Mary Batstone on 07967604681 or email marybatstone@gmail.com

STOKE-SUB-HAMDON GARDENING CLUB

Stoke-sub-Hamdon Gardening Club holds its AGM on **Wednesday 28th February**. It's Membership Renewal time, so a great opportunity to join the Club at the beginning of our year and get the most of your membership fee. Do come along if you're curious about what we do. After the AGM the evening will be informal, with a Quiz (local and gardening knowledge); free refreshments; raffle; plant sales. Stoke-sub-Hamdon Memorial Hall, doors open 7.15 pm, meeting starts at 7.30 pm. Visitors very welcome!

STOKE SUB HAMDON VILLAGE ARTISTS

Our next exciting workshop is on **Saturday March 23rd**, 10.00 am–3.00 pm at the Memorial Hall, Stoke-sub-Hamdon. Kate Field will be demonstrating painting animals with acrylics in her own style. Have a look at her website, www.artistkatefield.com. The fee for the day will be £35:00 to include materials and painting canvasses. Free teas and coffees. All welcome, contact us for more details. The Village Artists is a very friendly group of amateurs who meet at the Stoke Memorial Hall on Tuesday evenings 7.30–9 pm and Friday mornings 10.00–12.00 noon during school term time. We share an enjoyment of traditional art at all

levels, and seek to develop our artistic skills through discussion and an encouraging environment. If you wish to learn more about our group, please contact Andrew on 01935 823691, SSHTheVillageArtistsGroup@gmail.com. Facebook: Stoke Sub Hamdon The Village Artists Group. We look forward to hearing from you.

REFUGEE AID FROM TAUNTON – HONOUR FOR RAFT The Kings Award for Voluntary Service (MBE for charities) was granted to Raft through the Refugee Support Group (RSG), refugeeaidfromraft.org.uk The King's Award was granted in November 2023 for eight years of voluntary work overseas and in their local area. Raft trustees wrote on their Facebook page: 'This belongs to each and every one of our wonderful volunteers, past and present, who have given time, hard work and commitment over eight years'. Those sentiments include all those who have supported Raft through Refugee Support Group, have donated goods, organised and attended fundraising events, and who have printed articles. Nothing would be achieved without such supportive volunteers, and we do hope they will continue to help. Raft continues to request clean, washable clothing in

good condition for men and women (all sizes for both), teenagers, children and babies in refugee camps. This includes waterproofs; winter clothing, especially for men; boots, shoes and trainers, in great need; new underwear for all; hygiene products, especially for women and babies, and toiletries (unwanted Christmas gifts?) for all. Any item is very much welcomed. Raft is always being asked for blankets, sleeping bags and tents and, with so many victims of wars and natural disasters, disability aids are very much needed, e.g. sticks, crutches, walkers, medical supplies. If you have anything you think might be useful to an injured person, please include it. A charity in Cardiff collects from Raft and ships them in a container which Raft helps to fund. Our grateful thanks to all supporters as usual. Geraldine Downey 01460 271358.

**ADVERTISEMENT:
NORTON STAINED GLASS**

Locally crafted Stained Glass projects undertaken for repairs or new commissions. We also have Glass Valentine's Hearts for sale in Norton Community Shop until 14 February. Call 881175 or email de.bree@outlook.com

Village Diary of Events

Monday 5 February Crafty Critters Reading Room 1.30pm
Monday 5 February IT Support, Reading Room 3.30pm
Monday 12 February Parish Council meeting, Committee Room, Village Hall 7.30pm
Tuesday 13 February Movie Nites, Lord Nelson 7.45pm
Monday 19 February Crafty Critters Reading Room 1.30pm
Monday 19 February IT Support, Reading Room 3.30pm
Tuesday 20 February Mobile Library and Book Club, Higher Street 10.10am
Tuesday 20 February, Ladies Group Meeting, Reading Room 7.30pm
Wednesday 28 February, Village Coffee morning, Quinces 10.45am

ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER should be in the box on the Post Office counter, or sent by email to: nortonnewsletter24@hotmail.com by 4.00 pm on the 19th of each month.

NEWCOMERS TO OUR VILLAGE If you know of anyone who has moved to Norton, please ask for their details and phone/text the editors or email, see below, so that we can welcome them to our village.

THE NEWSLETTER is produced monthly by the Newsletter Committee and is distributed free to every house in the village by volunteers who give their services free of charge. The Editors are Chrissie Way 07948 379439 and Rowena Aley 0777 811705 with Assistant Editor Mrs Chrissie O'Brien. Email nortonnewsletter24@hotmail.com. All emails are replied to as soon as possible; please check if no acknowledgement is received by the deadline date.

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