



THE PRATTLER

The Heyford Village Newspaper

March 2025

Issue 477

Heyford Parish Church and Baptist Church

Invite you to join them for a

Lent Lunch

(Home-made soup, cheese and bread)

on Saturday 15th March

12noon - 2pm

In The Baptist Schoolroom

The Green, Nether Heyford

*There is no set charge. Cash donations are invited for the
Hope Centre, Northampton*

Food Bank

Don't go hungry – if you are in need of help, please contact Towcester Food Bank 07724 832043 (24 hours). www.towcester.foodbank.org.uk Leave a message and they will phone you back. They can issue vouchers for food as well as a delivery or collection service.

Alternatively if you wish to help, please leave donations for the food bank in the box outside the door of 15 Middle Street or the One Stop Shop where they are delivered to the bank once a week. Thank you.

The Prattler

The Prattler is run by an active voluntary committee comprising of Sue Boutle, Vicki Hamblin, Mary Rice, Jez Wilson and Mick Watts. If you would like to submit articles or have any suggestions for future issues, please get in touch with us by email or leave a message in Heyford Meats.

The Newspaper is supported by donations from the Parish Council, the Parish Church, the Baptist Church, Heyford W.I., Heyford Singers, the Bowls Club, the Village Hall and Heyford Picturedrome as well as the advertisers.

Thanks are due to the volunteers who distribute it every month. It is all very much appreciated.


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The January 2025 meeting took place on the 6th January at the Baptist Church Rooms.

Election of a Chairman. Due to the Resignation of N. Chatt it was resolved that L Dilkes take the chair for the duration of this meeting.

West Northants Councillor report - Cllr Phil Bignell reported that WNC were holding a special meeting about devolution. In Government plans WNC would be grouped with other adjoining Councils and have an elected "Mayor".

Flooding Issues - Disaster Relief Plan/Emergency Plan. Jim Arnold spoke about the recent flooding and drew attention to South View being affected for the first time, the reasons not being clear. Houses in Church St had been flooded by water coming up through the drains. It may have been debris at the grille or a blockage further on. JA found it encouraging that so many people had helped but felt that there should be a trained flood warden; young enough to be out and about. He had started an Emergency Plan and would be happy to pass this on. DM expressed willingness to look at it; and the clerk would ask the former chair how far he had got.

Cllr Phil Bignell stressed that flooding was not a Parish Council responsibility, and that it was primarily the responsibility of the Environment Agency (E.A) and WNC. KR stressed that everyone in the "Flood Zone" had a responsibility to stay in touch with the EA. This could be done online, by text or by landline.

The Clerk had been in touch with the E.A. and requested a public meeting as soon as possible. However, it should be noted that Heyford is one of many communities affected by this and subsequent incidents.

Budget/ Precept – to finalise -The budget was reconsidered in light of a number of issues. The Grass cutters had pulled out of a 3-year contract after one year due to ill health. It had not been possible to get 3 tenders in time for the meeting, so it had to be assumed that higher costs were likely. £33,500 was earmarked towards a new Play Area. The precept for 25/26 showed a 9% rise on the previous year.

The budget was set at £154,800 and the Precept to be set at £152,300

To consider and respond to the government's consultation on strengthening the standards and conduct framework for local authorities in England. Clerk had

distributed the link to the Government site. A response to be prepared for the February meeting.

Gravel Extraction - Mick George had appealed against the refusal of permission to quarry gravel. Submissions to the planning inspectorate needed to be made by 14th January. Residents from Upper Heyford, Nether Heyford and Bugbrooke have already submitted objections. A public hearing will be held locally and is expected to happen before the end of April; TW would attend on behalf of NHPC. TW felt that the previous NHPC submission was strong enough.

Reports.

Environment.

Trees on the Green. - LD had been phoned by a resident complaining that the number of trees being planted did not match the number stated in the Prattler, and wanting to know why the plan for the planting was not available. AW stated that the plan referred to was for previous planting. LD felt that if there was to be an objection to each and every tree planted on the Green that our descendants would be faced with an open field; trees were dying every year and needed replacing. Council will proceed with limited planting on the Green and in other locations, using the advice and skills of the Wildlife Group, and in line with Government advice and directives.

AW had contacted Kingfisher about water quality in the river. It was reported that untreated sewage is regularly discharged into the Nene from the treatment station in Weedon. This has resulted in very poor water quality and a consequent fall in the fish and wildlife populations. Proposal for testing to be brought to subsequent meeting.

Wellbeing - DM had attended the Bugbrooke Surgery PPM and was told that they welcome input. He had had no response from Weedon as yet.

Infrastructure - Two residents had asked for a bench at the top of Winston Close. This is not budgeted for – but Council would be happy to install a memorial bench or similar if funds/donations towards it were forthcoming. To install an appropriate bench would cost in the region of £800 – £900.

The fallen lamppost is the subject of an insurance claim, and it is hoped it will be resolved as soon as possible. Another vehicle created a large hole when it got stuck, and redress is being sought from the owners of that vehicle too. The companies involved have not proved cooperative.

Heritage - There had been a further meeting and artwork was progressing, as was a reference document on Heritage Assets. It is intended to get a leaflet printed by March.

Community - LE reported that the Community Lounge would re-open on Jan 8th, and that vouchers had been distributed to 41 pensioners and families for Christmas. She would ask Mr Wray again to install the mosaic.

Election May 2025 - NCALC is keen that all Councils do their best to publicise the 2025 election. Clerk and councillors were considering what could usefully be done to achieve a contested election. This will be an opportunity to get involved in the first tier of local government, and there will be posters etc as soon as the application packs are available.

Community Lounge (CL) at the Youth Club in Roberts Field - The Lounge is open from 10.30 to 4.30pm each Wednesday from Nov 6th until the end of March; when it will change to afternoon only.. The Lounge is now part of the National Chatty Café network aimed at combatting isolation and loneliness and promoting wellbeing. The volunteers are debating what sort of afternoon programme there should be. Suggestions are welcomed.

The CL is dependent on volunteers to keep it running, and many thanks to Lynda and Karen for all their efforts. If you do have a free afternoon, you are always welcome as a visitor or a helper.

Parish Council meetings in 2024/25 will normally be on the first Monday of each month, (unless a Bank Holiday) and would start at 19.30.

Reporting Canal Issues can be done by phoning 0303 040 4040 during normal office hours.

Reporting Highway and Footpath Issues. The Clerk will report issues that Council is made aware of, but Council would encourage residents to use the Fixmystreet service to report issues themselves as there will then be no time lag; and first-hand reports are almost always better than 2nd or 3rd hand reports. The service can be found here

<https://www.fixmystreet.com/>

It is easy to use; you can have your own account and can check up on any issues you have reported.

Streetlights within the village can be reported to the Clerk, who will report them to the maintenance company. Please do not report to Balfour Beatty as they deal only with major Highway lights – i.e., motorway, A5 and A45.

Roadworks locally & nationally can be seen on this site

<http://streetworks.org.uk/live-traffic-works-map/>

Councillor list with responsibilities and preferred means of contact.	
Mrs L. Dilkes. 17 Furnace Lane, Nether Heyford, NN7 3JF e-mail thedilkesfamily@outlook.com 07967 753216	Acting Chair, Finance, Youth Club
Mrs L. Eales – 3 Church Lane, Nether Heyford Tel. 01327 341707 e-mail lyndaeales@aol.com	Allotments, Youth Club
Linda Hall, 8 Western Ave, Nether Heyford linda.hall.netherheyford@outlook.com	Website, Finance
D. Musson. 16 Rolfe Crescent, Nether Heyford NN7 3NG Tel: 01327 344461 davemusson073@gmail.com	Footpaths. Tree Warden
Ian Parris, 1 Winston Close, NN7 3JX 07909 514916 ianparris@ianparris.com	Councillor
Karen Rivett. 12 Watery Lane, Nether Heyford. NN7 3LN yartahk@gmail.com 07711 312069	Councillor
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A. Williams 26 Church St, Nether Heyford, NN7 3LH anthony.k.williams@talk21.com	Chair of Planning, Finance, Council rep to School Trustees
K. Sanders-Moody. Newlands, 4b The Green, Nether Heyford 07702 701862	Councillor
P. Cowley. 16, Furnace Lane, Nether Heyford 07892 401245 philip.cowley4@btinternet.com	Councillor
Cllr Adam Brown - West Northamptonshire Council, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester NN12 6AD Tel: 07714 255077 Adam.Brown@westnorthants.gov.uk	Leader of the Council Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture & Leisure

Clerk. Guy Ravine, Tel:07935 931787.

E-mail: netherheyfordparishcouncil@gmail.com

Next Meeting. Monday March 3rd at the Baptist Church rooms..



Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul

Services for March 2025

Sunday 2 nd	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Church Stowe
	11:00 am	United First Sunday Service at Flore Church
	6:00 pm	Evening Prayer at Heyford
Wednesday 5 th	7:30 pm	Holy Communion for Ash Wednesday at Heyford Church
Sunday 9 th	10:00 am	Benefice Communion Service at Brockhall Church
	10:00 am	Morning Worship at Flore Chapel
Sunday 16 th	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Heyford
	10:00 am	Partnership Service at Flore Chapel
	6:00 pm	Holy Communion at Upper Stowe
Sunday 23 rd	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Flore Church (with APCM)
	10:00 am	Family Service at Upper Stowe
	4:00 pm	Café Church at Heyford Church Rooms
Saturday 29 th	2:00 pm	Messy Church at Flore Church
Sunday 30 th	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Brockhall
	10:00 am	Family Service for Mothering Sunday at Upper Stowe
	10:00 am	Coffee Church for Mothering Sunday at Flore Chapel

Midweek Services:

Thursday 10:00am Holy Communion at Flore Church

Friday 9:00am. Morning Prayer via Zoom - Please contact the Rector for an invitation

Dear Friends,

This month, I'd like to continue the journey into prayer that we began last month. If you remember, we started with the feeling that we might sometimes get, the sense that there is more to life, more to this world, than meets the eye. We then thought about making time to reflect on those moments of wonder. And perhaps we decided we'd like to say something about those moments. We might call the things we want to say 'prayer'.

When we reach this point, it's worth noting that prayer is a practical thing to do. It should give us resources to help us live our lives more fully and be more engaged with others and with the world around us. Prayer encourages us to wrestle with the realities of everyday life, bringing them before God, and perhaps finding ways to be the answers to our prayers.

Please don't think that prayer is only for the super-spiritual. Prayer is down-to-earth, human and honest. It can handle our anger, frustration, and failure, along with our thanksgiving, our passion and our success. Prayer creates a balance between the head, the heart and the hands – we pray with our feelings, and we intend to do something practical in response. Finally, prayer is open to all of us – just give it a try!

If you'd like to find out more about prayer, we're running a Lent Course on the subject, beginning on Saturday 1st March. We'll meet at the Rectory on Church Lane, Nether Heyford, beginning with breakfast at 8:30AM before looking at the material for the week from about 9:00AM-ish. This will take about an hour. Subsequent sessions will run on 15th and 29th March and 5th and 12th April. In the middle of that course, there is a Study Day on Prayer on Saturday 8th March. This will be held at Caroline Chisholm School in Northampton from 10:00AM to 2:30PM. More details can be found on the Diocese of Peterborough website.

If you'd like to explore this subject a little further, or if there's something you'd like me and/or the church to pray for, please let me know.

With love and prayer,

Rev'd Stephen (Tel: 01327 344436)

Lent Brunch/Lunches 2025

Saturday 15th March Chapel School Rooms in Heyford, 12:00PM – 2:00PM

Chapel School Rooms in Flore, 12:30PM – 2:00PM

Saturday 22nd March The Old School Rooms in Church Stowe 10:00AM – 11:30AM

The Streets we shall be praying for during March are: Close Rd, The Pound and The Peak in Heyford, The Avenue and The Glebe in Flore, The Old Dairy Farm in Upper Stowe and the outlying farms around Stowe and the Mews Houses in Brockhall.



Nether Heyford Baptist Church

Services for March

March 2 nd	10:30 am	Morning service led by John Perkins
March 9 th	10:30 am	Morning service led by Lee Hillyard
	4:00 pm	Songs of Praise also led by Lee (with tea and cakes)
March 16 th	10:30 am	Morning service led by Ted Hales (coffee after the service)
March 23 rd	10:30 am	Morning service including communion led by Clive Leakey.
March 30 th	10:30 am	Morning service led by Lee Hillyard

Events

Sat	March 8 th	10:00 am - 12:00	Coffee morning in aid of Cancer Research/church upkeep
Sat	March 15 th	12:00 - 2:00 pm	Lent Lunch with Donations for the Hope Centre
Mon	March 17 th	10:00am	Church AGM
Tues	March 25 th	10:00 am	Prayer and bible study

Coming to Nether Heyford Baptist church can be a transformative experience, rooted in the teachings of Scripture. As Hebrews 10:25 reminds us, "not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." Gathering with fellow believers allows us to uplift one another, grow in our faith, and deepen our understanding of God's word.

This Sunday, we invite you to join us for a service filled with worship, fellowship, and inspiring teachings. Come and be part of a supportive community that nurtures spiritual growth and encourages you on your journey of faith. If you are a believer, just have questions, or like the idea of just making new friends, we would love to welcome you! 10.30-11.30 Sundays

Lee Hillyard

**Nether Heyford
Baptist Church**



Coffee Morning

10.00am - 12noon

Saturday 8th MARCH



Only £1.50 per person

Drink & Biscuits included

Stalls include: –

Book, Cards, Cakes, Bric a Brac

*Money raised for
Cancer Research / Church upkeep*



THE Heyford SINGERS

**Fred
And
Dolly's
Mothers'
Day**



An Afternoon Entertainment with Graham Kinnersly

**A Musical Quiz and Sing-Along
Nether Heyford Village Hall
Friday 28th March
at 2.30pm
Tickets £8**

**Afternoon Tea Included!!
Advance Tickets from: Keith Rands-Allen
01327 340741 07971 786912
kvra44@gmail.com
www.heyfordsingers.org**

Astronomy on the Green

In the northern hemisphere a rather dull star had been of interest to the Greeks and others for a long time. Why? Well the whole night sky seemed to revolve around a point. Very close to that point was what was seen as a single star - Polaris, the North star. Hellenistic philosophers wondered about the heavens and introduced the idea of 'magnitude' or simply put how bright stars are. This tradition is used in classifying stars in constellations, with the brightest being Alpha and the second being Beta etc. Polaris is formally known as Alpha Ursae Minoris as it is the brightest star in Ursa Minor (the Little Bear).

During the nineteenth century much of what we know as modern astronomy was laid down. The concept of magnitude was worked on by a young English man from Nottingham. Norman R. Pogson was the son of a wealthy hosiery manufacturer and lace trader. It was anticipated that he would follow his father's trade, however Norman was more interested in the sciences. Luckily for him his mother Mary Anne supported his interest. At the age of 16 he left an informal education to teach mathematics. Two years later he assisted John Russel Hind of the Royal Astronomical Society to calculate the orbits of two comets.

This involvement led to Norman to work in George Bishop's Observatory based in Regents Park London and his interest in astronomy grew. One of Norman's pet projects was formalising the classification of magnitude. To do this he needed a reference star, and he picked Polaris. Polaris is not a bright star, but in the northern hemisphere it is well-known and easy to find.

If you go out on a clear night the Plough is obvious in the sky, and being circumpolar is always there. The two stars at the tip of the Plough, Merak is at the bottom of the asterism and Dubhe at the top (an asterism is a recognisable shape that is part of a constellation [in this case Ursa Major – the Great Bear]). These two stars are known as the 'pointers'; if you follow a straight line at an upward angle from them you will find Polaris at the tail end of the Little Bear. This way of finding your way around the night sky is known as 'star hopping'.

Going back to Norman, he made Polaris (a magnitude 2 star [it is a variable star going from 1.86 to 2.13 averaging 1.98]). He calculated a logarithmic formula to measure the change in brightness from one magnitude to the next. As Polaris was at the top of his classification, dimmer stars would have larger magnitudes. An aside from this is that stars brighter than Polaris have negative numbers, for example Vega (the second brightest star in the northern hemisphere) is magnitude -1.46.

We have seen here that a single star can have a large influence on both the understanding and classification of the cosmos. On a clear night the unaided dark adapted eye can see stars up to +5.5 magnitude – that is around 2,800 stars. Using binoculars that would go up to well over 5,000, and with a telescope hundreds of

thousands (that's the reason even amateur astronomers need to rely on computer aided star maps to find things).

Back to Polaris, it is ternary star system (a triplet of stars) composed of Polaris Aa, Polaris B & Polaris Ab. Polaris is also known as a Cepheid star pulsing rapidly changing in luminosity, size and temperature. Cepheid's are useful in measuring distances in space as there is a direct relationship between its luminosity and pulsation period.

So, as it turns out there is quite a lot to learn about our dull North pole star, but it will not forever be at the centre of sky's rotation. The rotation is due to the Earth spinning, and being tilted 23.4 degrees, currently this points the north pole towards Polaris. The Earth also wobbles like a spinning top, with one wobble taking 25,772 years. In around 12,000 years the north pole will point at Vega.

If you were to measure the time the stars take to complete one rotation it is 23 hours and 56 minutes, a sidereal day. As the Earth is prograde (rotating west to east – counterclockwise) to the Sun the solar day is four minutes longer.

Oh, and that dull star is 2,500 time brighter than the sun.

Clear skies

Tony Boutle



Platinum Wedding Anniversary

On the 12th March 1955 - Ann Goodman aged 18 of Nether Heyford and Patrick Wilson aged 24 of Kingsthorpe were married at St Peter and St Paul Church, Nether Heyford.

Please join us in wishing them both a very Happy 70th Wedding Anniversary.

This is a milestone that very few will achieve. Your bond is as strong as platinum, a rare and precious treasure. Happy anniversary, Mum and Dad.

With love from Kay, Gail, and Lisa.

HEYFORD PICTUREDROME

THE PROBLEM WITH PEOPLE

2023 Comedy

Nether Heyford Village Hall

THURSDAY 20th MARCH 2025

7.00pm for 7.30pm
Admission £6.00

Things don't go as planned when two distant cousins – one from New York City, the other from Northern Ireland – come together to finally put an end to a generations-long family feud.

FILM WILL BE SHOWN WITH SUB-TITLES

TEA, COFFEE, BAR

NB: We are keen to recruit new members to our organising team to ensure that Heyford Picturedrome goes forward with strength.

Can you help?

Heyford Picturedrome

Our monthly film evenings started in our village hall 14 years ago, since when they've been entertaining people, not just from this village but from surrounding areas. Our regular audiences enjoy both the films and the social events.

Obviously these events don't just 'happen' – they've been organised by a small active team – which has remained largely unchanged during all these years – a testament to the enjoyment we have in working together.

Unfortunately, our team's ages have moved on too – with some members feeling less able to give the same energy and time as they used to do, so for the continued success of the film club we need some more members to become helpers.

Can you help us please?

We keep our commitments to a minimum, with only two or three informal committee meetings a year, mainly to plan our future programmes – usually in the comfort of someone's home with a drink of some sort. Our meeting notes are brief.

And for the film evenings, we share out our 'jobs' among us, so no-one has too much to do, for instance:

Opening up the hall	Taking entrance money
Setting out:	Buying wine and juice
Chairs	Serving drinks
Tables	Clearing up at end of evening
Glasses	Locking up
Setting up:	Acting as treasurer
Screen	
Microphone	

If, firstly, you would like to know more about what is involved, you'll be welcome to talk to me - without obligation: either at our film evening on 20th February, or telephone: 01327 340803, mobile: 07814 898 336
email: alwyne76@gmail.com.

Alwyne Wilson



Nether Heyford Village Hall

Registered Charity, No. 304256

www.netherheyfordvillagehall.org nhvhevents@gmail.com

Village Hall News

View from the Chair

This year for the village hall has started with “full steam ahead”. I am pleased to say that the heating has been repaired. The main hall has been given a fresh coat of paint by a few of the trustees and new curtains have been purchased and hung. It is not by any means the end to the internal refurbishments but it's a good start. Look out for our new sign outside which will be erected shortly.

Many of you may not be aware that we have a smaller meeting room at the end of the building which comfortably holds 12/14 people. We are currently refurbishing the small kitchen that adjoins it and it has its own toilet facilities. This is available for hire for smaller events, groups or meetings. If you are interested please contact our booking secretary via the web site.

Repairs have been carried out to the exterior of the building and we are grateful to our neighbour at the rear of the hall (Stuart) who has kindly trimmed the trees and taken away all the debris.

Work is already underway to plan this years fete which will take place on 7 June. We are hoping to resurrect the tug-o-war as Faye has kindly offered us the use of the rope so we will be looking for teams of 8 adults. If you would like to enter a team please email nhvhevents@gmail.com

Of course, we will be asking for donations of cakes for our afternoon teas to be brought to the hall on the morning of the fete. All your baking is greatly appreciated because the funds raised at the fete is our main source of financing new or replacing old equipment.

We have also recently taken possession of a card payment machine which will be available for card payments during village hall organised events.

The Annual General Meeting this year will take place in the main hall on Monday 14th April at 7pm. Historically we have welcomed no more than 2 or 3 residents from the village. I would really urge you to come along and hear what has happened during the previous financial year and what is proposed for the future. It

is a public meeting and duly advertised as such. I would be pleased to see you there. It is quite a short meeting, usually no more than half an hour.

And finally don't forget to follow us on facebook to keep informed of what is going on and "like" and share our page.

Carol Tuckley
Chair of Trustees
Carolnhvhchair@gmail.com



Heyford Bowls Club

Being the closed season for outdoor bowls the clubhouse is being decorated, so no action for a week or two while our own Ken and his team move in, brushes at the ready, so we should be all spruced up for our quiz at Easter. However, that didn't stop us enjoying two successful social evenings with Bingo and Hot Dogs in January and a Beetle Drive and Jacket Potatoes in February, both well attended.

On 1st February the short mat bowlers played The Presidents' Cup in the village hall. Winners were Jan Reed, Dawn Bastin and Den Taylor, Runners-up were Shirley Collins, Rosemary Dunkley & Graham Drake. There were 24 contestants, lots of spectators, tea and home-made cake and a Grand Raffle. It was a superb afternoon which we all enjoyed very much. Our next short-mat competition is The Ladies Pairs on Saturday 22nd March, 1 o'clock, in the village hall.

If you just want to watch, have a go or even join, just turn up at the village hall wearing flat shoes on a Wednesday at 2 o'clock or 7 o'clock and see what it's all about.

Sign-on Night for the forthcoming season is 31st March at 7 o'clock at the club. If you can't attend just get in touch via our website or speak to anyone who plays for us. £80 gets you full membership, £10 Short-mat membership and £10 social membership. Any of these keeps you in touch with our indoor and outdoor games and social activities throughout the year. Our website is well worth a look with all details of the club including all activities throughout the year, plus have a good laugh at the photos on Heyford Bowls Club.co.uk.

Shirley Collins
(shirleybcollins@hotmail.co.uk)

NETHER HEYFORD

OFSTED No. EY450747

CHARITY No. 1029571

Pre-School

Ages 2-5 years

Open Monday-Friday, 9am-3pm

Funding available for eligible 2,3 and 4 year olds

Highly qualified and experienced staff

Excellent links with Bliss School

Fantastic village location with use of numerous outdoor facilities

'Rising 5' sessions for those starting school in September

Tax Free Childcare payments accepted



Before & After School Club

Wrap around care available for children aged up to 11 years old

Breakfast Club incl. breakfast open from 7.45am

After School Club open until 6pm

'Walking Bus' to and from Bliss School provided if required

Transition sessions available for Bliss School reception class.

**Drop in and see us at
The Church Rooms, Church Lane,
Nether Heyford or call on
07984 055 828**

**info@netherheyfordpreschool.co.uk
www.netherheyfordpreschool.co.uk**

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Contact: Lisa and Amy Hillyard

01327 828520 or

07808815042

**lisa.hillyard@mytc.com or
amy.hillyard@mytc.com**



U3A

Monthly meetings take place in Bugbrooke Sports & Community Centre, Camp Close, Bugbrooke NN7 3RW.

They are usually on the **third Monday afternoon of the month**, starting at 2 pm.

Monday 17th March – Life in the music by Andy Smith

Bringing a collection of instruments, Andy will sing a variety of songs, some self-penned, some well known. With lots of amusing anecdotes, it will be a fun hour and will send people away with both a smile on their faces and a tear in their eyes.

Guests welcome at the monthly meetings – to learn more, visit our website
www.u3asites.org.uk/upper-nene



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KEEP THIS BY YOUR COMPUTER - YOU MIGHT NEED US!



In Nether Heyford

"In March, winter is holding back and spring is pulling forward. Something holds and something pulls inside of us too." – Jean Hersey

Spring is around the corner and we begin to feel a bit more optimistic and energetic. It's a time to start planning for the year ahead and for getting things done. Fortunate that, as on March 6th it is our WI AGM. You can hear the groans whenever that word is said in organisations across the land. It means extra work for the treasurer and secretary and the burden for the chairman (or the grand title of President as it is in WI) to run the meeting strictly according to the rules, keeping their fingers crossed that there won't be any awkward questions.

The AGM will remind us of the fact that the WI is the largest voluntary women's organisation in the UK and for over 100 years has been instrumental in achieving positive change for women and for society. It reminds of our ideals:

We connect women; our movement offers women of all ages and backgrounds a unique chance to come together and share experiences, tackling social isolation and building a feeling of community.

We support women to learn, develop new skills, building confidence and improving wellbeing.

We empower women to use their voice individually and collectively to highlight issues that matter to them.

If you fancy joining us, please do, you will be most welcome. Thursday March 6th 7.30 in the Village Hall.

At Nether Heyford WI we live up to the aspirations of the WI movement but with a light touch. We get through the official business meeting as quickly as we can and then we can enjoy ourselves. Last year we were entertained by a trio of singers, and this year we are having a Games Evening. The last time we did this; it was a great opportunity to be introduced to new games and it caused much hilarity, much of it aimed at our own inadequacies!

I think our Taskmaster has got some team games organised... Be afraid...

Jane Wareing.
01327 340875

100% NO SALE NO FEE

- No Upfront Marketing Fee
- No Withdrawal Fee
- Local and Experienced
- Free Energy Performance Certificate
- Free Premium Listing
- Free 360° Virtual Tour

Check out our
reviews on Facebook



Chris Gibson
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PERSONAL • PROFESSIONAL • PROACTIVE

Heyford Allotments

Thinking Ahead

Last October Heyford Allotments held another of their very successful community sessions and a number of important jobs were completed. Readers of the Prattler could have been tempted to think why bother, winter was approaching, the growing season was coming to a close. However, five months on and the value of thinking ahead has become obvious.

The old strawberry beds that were dug up and replaced with more rhubarb for our community patch are looking wonderful and despite the cold weather of late, the rhubarb is flourishing and should start to provide a good early crop any day soon. Have you seen the price of rhubarb in the shops?

The big Bramley Apple Tree that has stood in the centre of the allotments since the allotments were created many years ago (can anyone actually date it) had become very overgrown and misshapen. A group of allotmentees took it upon themselves to prune and cut back, and the tree is now ready to begin the next phase of its life, providing villagers in the coming years with armfuls of wonderful cooking apples. I wonder how many apple pies or bottles of cider it has been the source of?

The "Thinking Ahead" list could go on and on. Preparation and planning really is the key to good growing.

Maybe Not Too Cold and Wet – If You Are Careful

In March you can prepare the soil, sow hardy seeds and plant out edible crops such as broad beans, that can tolerate fluctuating temperatures. But only plant out when temperatures are above freezing, ensuring plants are hardy and have been hardened off (acclimatised to outside conditions) before planting. Pre-warming the soil with cloches or clear plastic sheeting can enable you to plant out more crops.

Dig out any problem weeds, especially perennial weeds – if you get on top of them now, they'll be easier to control for the rest of the year. Hoe regularly to prevent annual weed seedlings growing.

March is the last month for planting bare-root fruit trees and bushes. You can also plant bare-root strawberry runners, asparagus crowns and Jerusalem artichokes and plant out garlic, shallots and onion sets.

If in doubt about planting out or sowing seed put your hand on the soil (old folklore suggested a bare bottom, but that is not recommended on our allotments). If the soil feels very cold, leave it for a few weeks. Plants are remarkably good at catching up!

Holes in the Hedge

We are still waiting for the gaps in the allotment hedge along Watery Lane to be repaired. Readers of the Prattler may recall that these occurred because dead trees had to be removed. Hopefully the work will have been completed by the time you read this article.

Rent and Vacancies

The Allotment Annual Rent Night took place in January and all allotment holders should have received their rent notices. Unfortunately, the Parish Council had to increase rents this year to meet rising costs.

Despite this increase, renting an allotment in Heyford is still remarkably good value.

If any tenants did not receive their rent notices (sometimes communication breaks down) they should contact Mrs Lynda Eales, 3 Church Lane, Nether Heyford tel. 01327 341707 or email: lyndaeales@aol.com Lynda is our allotment representative on the Parish Council.

There are, from time to time, vacancies for plots on the allotment site and we warmly welcome new allotmenters. If you are interested in taking on a plot, contact Lynda Eales and she will appraise you of the current situation.

Good Growing.

Mike Langrish

Bugbrooke and District Flower Society

Our first demonstration of 2025 is by Lena Patel who will present Holidays Food and Hot Sun which sounds interesting.

We look forward to welcoming members and visitors to our friendly club on Monday 24th March at 7.30pm. If you love flowers do come along to the Village Hall for a relaxing evening. You may be lucky and win a lovely arrangement in the raffle.

For more information please ring Simone on 01327 342167 or Dianne on 01604 830063.



View from the Nature Reserve

I am writing this in mid February 2025. So far, in this year, the heavy rain and fluctuating temperatures are no kinder than they were in 2024. Even ducks need somewhere dry from time to time.

Nevertheless, wild birds are showing signs of preparing to breed. In our garden, members of our House Sparrow colony are now carrying feathers to nest sites chosen in Autumn 2024. In that year, they occupied 5 out of the 7 available nest boxes. There are also 2 male Blackbirds around and 2 pairs of Dunnocks. A pair of Blue Tits are claiming last year's nest box and we also have 2 Robins but not necessarily a pair.

Not bad for a small garden.

I have been working on the Reserve this morning and will report on birds there in April. Meanwhile, there is quite a lot of work to do before then.

We now have 9 large roof tiles set in 9 areas of the Patch. These are to create shelter for ground dwelling wildlife (vertebrate and invertebrate) by providing the warm, dry space that will develop under these tiles as they settle into the ground.

All tiles will have a numbered peg knocked into the ground close by to enable us to find them as vegetation covers them. We intend to lift them at 2 month intervals to record what life is occupying the ground space under each.

Our next job will be to sow a grass/wildflower mixture on the bed that has been under wraps for the winter. We will be sowing the same "Special Wildflower Grassland Mixture". that has been so successful in the other beds.

We will also trim the vegetation in all existing Wildflower beds to 15cm high and remove the cuttings to prevent these latter killing the growing plants.

You may have noticed the Allotment / Reserve hedge now has holes where dead wood was removed to be replaced by Chestnut Paling prior to being replanted with young hedge plants.

This loss is mainly due to lack of the traditional hedge management that has prevailed since the times of various enclosures acts. Prior to this, almost everyone worked strips of land. The echo of these strips can still be seen in the Ridge and Furrow undulations on many old grasslands in our area.

These acts required each land occupier (not necessarily owner) to take on a parcel of land in the place of their strips. The boundary of this enclosure was defined by a drainage ditch The soil dug from this was put on the field side of the ditch. Hedges were then planted on this spoil. These hedges were kept young and strong by

“laying” or “Pleaching” which involved partly cutting the stems through and laying them in a horizontal line along the whole length of the hedge. This practice encouraged hedge plants to send up new shoots each year. The height and width of the hedge was determined by trimming with a “Slashook”. Every 8 years or so this hedge was left to grow tall before being layed again. This same practice continued in many places till the 1960s or later when it became more economical to use fence-stakes and barbed wire - I was laying hedges- even won prizes in the 1970’s.

Today's hedges miss out on this “Laying”, which encouraged development of the young growth that thickened the base. This is why nearly all of our farm hedges now have big holes in the bottom that would no longer secure livestock without barbed wire.

Dave Musson

Welcome Packs

Welcome packs are available for newcomers to our Village. The information in them helps people feel at home quickly.

If you notice that someone has moved in recently, get a pack for them by calling:

Charles Kiloh, 3 Church Lane, Nether Heyford Tel. 07779 900860

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Heyford Cricket Club

Work has continued down at the playing field and, thanks to the efforts of Cricket Club Members and local volunteers, the contents of the burnt-out container have been disposed of and the area cleared for new containers to be delivered. We have a temporary roller being delivered at the end of February for pre-season work and new storage will all be in place by the middle of March.

Winter Nets have now started on Mondays at Abbeyfield School, Northampton NN4 8BU from 7.15-8.30pm. We welcome players of all abilities and even if you haven't played before and fancy a go, please come along.

Our first fundraiser of the year is a quiz night on Friday 14th March, 7.30pm start. This will be at the Playing Fields Clubhouse with a cost of £5 per person and a maximum of 6 people per team. If you are interested, please resister with Simon Adkins on simon@rogercoe.co.uk or call him on 07913 745055. We hope you can join us.

Rob Pardon
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Plato

*Mother's Day with
Fred & Dolly
28 March 2.30*

Graham Kinnersly

During the grey days of February we continued to sing and master hitherto new songs. Billy Joel's *And So It Goes* is a lovely arrangement by Bob Chilcott and once we had learnt the tune, the words and feeling followed. Not an easy song but well worth the effort. For two hours each week we forget about the rain and biting wind and concentrate on the genius of song-writers – Elton John's *Can You Feel the Love Tonight* is coming along nicely with the help of Tim Rice's lyrics and a four part arrangement by Keith Christopher. The warm up exercises we do before we start singing are essential – despite the groans from everyone – in loosening the limbs and preparing the mind and the singing exercises help the vocal chords to focus. *My Bonny Lies Over the Ocean* is a cruel favourite of our Musical Director's as she watches us struggle to stand up and sit down after every word beginning with 'B'. Try it – you will be surprised how many 'B's there are...

Every year our Pianist Graham Kinnersly tries to give his own concert and this year is no exception. Based on Mother's Day this will be a joyful romp on the piano for his two (now well-known) characters Fred and Dolly. Please see advertisement in this Prattler for booking details. Tea and cake will be provided so don't miss this afternoon's entertainment to brighten up your day on 28th March.

As I have said many times before we are short of men for the Bass section. But this doesn't stop them - along with the Tenors – singing a version of *The Wellerman*. In 1831 the British-born trio of Weller brothers created a whaling station at Otakou on the South Island of New Zealand. They made a name for themselves supplying whalers with what they needed (amongst their needs were tea and rum). Their employees thus became known as 'Wellermen'. Because in New Zealand, whalers practiced what was known as 'shore-based' whaling which required them to process the whale carcasses on land, not at sea, it was a great deal of work and required a catchy song with meaning that they were happy to sing whilst working strenuously.

As we head towards our Spring Concert aptly called *Another Openin' Another Show* we continue our weekly rehearsals and hope our new members stick with us as we all learn together. Hopefully - like the Christmas Concert - May 9th and 10th will again be a sell out.

JRA

Home fire safety visits for the vulnerable

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service's specialist Prevention Team and their Home Fire Safety Advisors focus on people who are most vulnerable to fire due to frailty and complex needs, with enhanced visits. These enhanced visits to high-risk people look at all the factors that affect the likelihood of a fire taking place and consider how easily they can seek help and escape in an emergency.

Advice and support is provided to reduce the risk wherever possible with the addition of working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Where needed, visits can take place with carers and other agencies to ensure a joint approach to keeping someone safe. The Home Fire Safety Advisors can refer someone to other services if they identify the need for other kinds of care and support to reduce risks.

Team members also conduct visits alongside the Arson Task Force for people whose property is at risk of arson.

Head of Prevention at Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service Lisa Bryan said: "Our Home Fire Safety Visits are all about keeping the most vulnerable people of Northamptonshire safe and I am delighted that the continued hard work of firefighters and fire staff has seen more people protected.

"We know through the customer feedback we receive that these visits make a positive difference, helping to change behaviours and making people feel safer." Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Danielle Stone said: "Communities and prevention are at the core of my public safety plan, so I am pleased to see so many vulnerable people across Northamptonshire are being kept safe."

If you would like to refer yourself, a friend or a family member for a Home Fire Safety Visit, this can be done by visiting

www.northantsfire.gov.uk/home-safety-checks/

Or you can complete your own fire safety check online, which can be found at the link above. Alternatively, you can also phone 01604 797 000.

What happens during a Home Fire Safety Visit?

After showing their ID at the front door, firefighters will come into your house and discuss a variety of safety measures that can keep you safe at home.

They will ask questions about your lifestyle and quickly identify any potential fire hazards in your home.

These include things like electrical safety, how to stay safe when cooking and the use of candles.

Once any hazards have been identified, crews will talk to you about whether further referrals to other agencies might help to keep you safe or refer you to our Home Fire Safety Advisors for an enhanced visit.

Firefighters won't leave until they have checked that you have suitable and working smoke alarms - and they will fit new ones if needed.

The Story of Heyford: Four Hundred Years of Bell Ringing

Bell-ringing in the parish church of St Peter and St Paul goes back at least four centuries. The two oldest bells are dated 1601 and one of these is inscribed 'Thomas Morgan gave me to the church frank and free.' Judge Morgan lived in the Manor House at this time. Both bells were cast by a founder called Watts and one is the heaviest bell in the belfry. It is the tenor, weighing over seven hundred-weight. Another bell was added in 1638, cast by Watts II, and a fourth in 1704 cast by H. Penn. With these four bells it was possible to ring a maximum of 24 changes or sequences (English Change Ringing is based on mathematical sequences rather than musical composition). This was how it remained for 250 years.

Originally there was an external door in the tower where the bell-ringers could gain access. In 1855 there was extensive restoration work in the church which included opening up the tower inside, moving the organ and sealing off the outside door. The heavy wooden door was removed and became the front entrance to the former Old Sun pub.

During the 1930s ringing only usually took place on holy days such as Christmas or Easter; for church services, the bells were just tolled. During the Second World War, bell-ringing generally was banned and only to be used as an alarm for the community. However by 1943 the threat of invasion was considered over and the ban lifted.

A new era and two new bells

This spelled a new era for the Nether Heyford bells. Fred Browning, as the tower captain, recruited and trained a new generation of ringers. Fred also developed hand-bell ringing at Christmas time. This new enthusiasm was further encouraged by the addition of two new bells after the Reverend Isham Longden, rector from 1897 to 1942, left £100 in his will for a new bell. Even in the 1940's, this provided only a quarter of the amount needed to cast and hang the bells, so an active fund-raising campaign started in the village.

Coffee mornings, whist drives and sales helped to raise £400 and on 21st September 1946, two treble bells were dedicated in church. They were made in London by Gillett and Johnson and hung on a metal frame above the others who were still on a timber frame.

One was called the Victory Bell and there is a list from 1943 of villagers who donated funds towards it. The list includes the rector "Mr" (sic) Mortimer, Harry Allen the verger, Jack Capell the butcher, William Wakefield Whitton, the Kingston family, the Brownings, the Collins's and the carpenters shop. Most contributed £1, some as much as £5 and some gave 'two 'n' six.' With six bells, the number of possible changes increased dramatically from 24 to 720.

In 1995, a quarter peal was rung to commemorate the 50th anniversary of VE day. This consisted of 1260 rings non stop and lasted for about an hour. In 1996, the church celebrated the half-century of the treble bells with the Heyford Morris Men, handbell ringers, a piper, John Anderson, and a special commemorative service.

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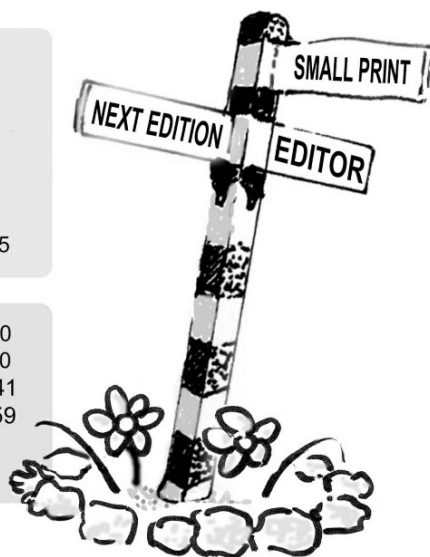
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