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Town Council aims to keep the Wymondham parish united

A move by some residents of communities to the south of Wymondham to break away and form a separate parish has not been supported by Wymondham Town Council. The initiative was triggered by the current Community Governance Review, conducted every 10-15 years to see if changes are needed in matters such as the size and nature of parishes, the appointment of polling stations for Parliamentary and Local Government elections and related matters. The last review was in 2002.

As reported in our autumn edition, an early initiative was taken by a group in Cromwells Ward in the southern part of the Wymondham parish, where parishioners canvassed opinion in the Spooner Row, Sutton and Wattlefield area and identified support for the idea of creating

a separate Community Council, independent of Wymondham. This was reported to South Norfolk Council's Electoral Arrangements Review Committee (EARC).

The Town Council has now conducted its own survey, and found that of the responses so far received, 70 were in support of creating a new Community Council and 43 favoured remaining as part of Wymondham Parish.

The matter was discussed at the Council meeting on 10 October. The unanimous view of councillors present was that they are strongly against the formation of this new Community Council. The three communities south of Wymondham have historically been governed by the various town administrative bodies for the last 120 years, most recently by Wymondham Town Council.

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Open Gardens 2018

2018 is an Open Gardens year for this popular biennial event. The beneficiaries will be Wymondham Heritage Society and the Wymondham Dementia Support Group. The last event, in 2016, raised £6,625, so more gardens open and more visitors would help to produce an even better result.

Would you like to take part by opening your garden? It doesn't matter how large or small it is, or what style, but you may need to be prepared to welcome several hundred visitors over the two days, which next year will be Saturday and Sunday 3 June. If you are interested, please contact the group on **604650** or **603180**.



Dreams of summer A beautiful show in the 2016 Open Gardens event

Town Council News

Good progress is being made on plans for new Town Council premises at Ketts Park, with architects appointed for the scheme. Much discussion has taken place over suggestions for an independent Community Council for Spooner Row, Sutton and Wattlefield, and the Town Council has made its views known to the South Norfolk Council Electoral Arrangements Review Committee. The council is very pleased to acknowledge the good work done by volunteer groups in town, and has been able to give financial assistance to two such enterprises covered in this edition.

Tidying up Gristlewood



Tidy-up team
Keen volunteers ready to tackle unruly woodland at Gristlewood

Are you interested in the environment, enjoy working outdoors and keeping active? If so, this project to enhance Wymondham's green spaces might be for you!

Wymondham Town Council is supporting a project to manage its woodland at Ketts Park, which lies next to Moot Hill and a patch of ancient woodland called Gristlewood. The project has been negotiated by Greening Wymondham, a local volunteer group involved in environmental and sustainability issues in the town, and the Norwich Fringe Project, with the help of South Norfolk Council.

The mixed deciduous woodland was planted over 20 years ago as part of the adjoining Harts Farm housing and business park. The work will remove dead, diseased and unsafe trees, selectively thinning out the rest, and coppicing/pollarding, to allow the best trees to develop, and seedlings/saplings to mature. This will provide a wider age spread, improving the appearance and diversity of the wood.

The aim is also to upgrade the woodland path to make it more usable throughout the year, to enhance the glade areas off the path, to create habitat piles for wildlife, and potentially create some wildflower areas on the woodland margins.

The Norwich Fringe Project are providing expertise and equipment, and can bring a limited number of volunteers, so Greening Wymondham is calling for local volunteers to take the project forward.

Work days have been arranged from 10.00 am – 3.00 pm on November 30, December 1, 14 and 15, with a Community work day on Saturday 13 January 2018. Volunteers are welcome to turn up at times to suit them. Further dates will be arranged for 2018.

For further information and to let us know if you can help contact either Peter Knights on **601178** at starrystarryknights@hotmail.com, or Greening Wymondham Chair Ann Rostron on **606127** annrostron@btinternet.com

Town Council Aims to Keep Wymondham Parish United

- continued from front page...

South Norfolk's EARC was asked to take the following points into consideration.

1. Should the EARC be minded to recommend the creation of a new Community Council, the Town Council requests that the EARC organise a formal referendum within the parish to establish residents' views
2. From the responses received, it is apparent that there is strong support from Sutton residents to remain within the Parish of Wymondham. The town Council recommends that should the EARC be minded to recommend to the Electoral Commission the creation of a separate Community Council, the electoral boundary be drawn along the line of the A11 trunk road so that the existing parish land to the west of the A11 remains within the Wymondham Parish.
3. It is noted that Spooner Row parish church is a daughter church of Wymondham Abbey and the parish boundary for church purposes is identical to the civic parish boundary.

In summary, taking into account the historic ties, the Town Council strongly recommends that Spooner Row, Wattlefield and Sutton remain within the existing parish of Wymondham.

The review process will not be decided until February or March 2018, and meanwhile there is time for consideration and discussion. Ultimately the Boundary Commission for England will decide if any changes should be made to Parliamentary constituency and parish boundaries.

Meeting dates – council & committees

The Town Council normally meets on the first Tuesday of each month with the Finance and General Purposes and Leisure and Environment committees meeting on the third Tuesday of alternate months. The Planning Lighting and Highways committee deals with planning applications and meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month.

Dates until April are set out below. The complete list is available on the Town Council's website.

Town Council Offices closed 25-28 December inclusive

January

- 2 Planning Lighting and Highways followed by Town Council
- 16 Planning Lighting and Highways followed by Leisure and Environment

February

- 6 Planning Lighting and Highways followed by Town Council
- 20 Planning Lighting and Highways followed by Finance and General Purposes

March

- 6 Planning Lighting and Highways followed by Town Council
- 20 Planning Lighting and Highways followed by Leisure and Environment

April

- 3 Planning Lighting and Highways followed by Town Council
- 17 Planning Lighting and Highways followed by Finance and General Purposes
- 24 Annual Parish Meeting

Who are your councillors?

As a result of the elections last May, the following have been elected to serve until the next local government elections in May 2019 (May 2021 for County Councillors), representing Wymondham on the county (NCC), district (SNC) and/or town councils.

Abbey Ward

Mr R Savage	"Kingston" 6 Park Lane NR18 9BG	603722	WTC, SNC
Mr K Hurn	6 Daisy Street NR18 OFF	603637	WTC
Mrs P Stearn	Middle Farmhouse Stanfield NR18 9BG	603984	WTC

Cromwells Ward

Mr J Halls	2 Chapel Loke, Spooner Row	600720	WTC
Mr J Hornby	9 Papillon Road NR18 0WD	600300	WTC, SNC

To be advised

Northfields Ward

Mr C Longhurst	17 Warwick Drive NR18 0LT	605126	WTC
Mr J Mooney	2 Orchard Way NR18 ONX	604482	WTC, SNC, NCC
Mr D Underwood	14 Herb Robert Glade NR18 0XS	601585	WTC

Rustens Ward

Mr P Broome	14 Bramble Way NR18 0UN	600829	WTC, SNC
Mr A Holden	31 Ashleigh Gardens NR18 0EX	859968	WTC
Mrs S Sayer	217 Norwich Road NR18 0SL	602827	WTC

Town Ward

Mr I Flatt	48 Orchard Way NR18 0NY	603398	WTC
Mr L Hornby	9 Papillon Road NR18 0WD	600300	WTC, SNC
Mrs S Wyer	11 Bramble Way NR18 0UN	07842766038	WTC

Forehoe Ward

C Foulger	Pear Tree House, Turnpike, Bunwell NR16 1SP	07745163169	NCC
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Town Council's new premises - plans moving forward

Last winter we reported that after more than 40 years in increasingly unsuitable accommodation, the Town Council was starting to think about establishing new premises on its own land, saving on rent, maintenance and running costs.

We promised to keep you informed on progress. Preliminary discussion has now reached the stage where it is possible to draw up draft plans, and four firms of architects were invited to bid for the project. The council has appointed Vincent and Gorbing, who have relevant experience, having designed the new offices for Costessey Town Council. A working group of councillors has been set up, and it is hoped that a planning application will be made to South Norfolk Council in the New Year.

At that stage the plans will be displayed on the Town Council website www.wymondhamtc@norfolkparishes.gov.uk, and in the council offices in Middleton Street. The council hopes in the next few years to have new premises which will benefit Wymondham's council tax payers, and the councillors and staff who serve them, after establishing new premises on its own land at Ketts Park.

Please use our markets!

Don't forget the great service offered by Wymondham's markets – the Friday charter market and the Farmers' Markets on the third Saturday morning of each month. Shop for your Christmas produce at the Farmers Market on Saturday 16 December.



Community News

Perhaps because the winter months are the time for tidying up our environment and looking forward to next year, in this edition we have a wealth of stories about Wymondham's great outdoors. Conservation work is already under way at Tolls Meadow and Ashwellthorpe Wood, and planned for Gristlewood next to Ketts Park, plans are in hand to improve fish stocks in the River Tiffey, and there's an invitation to take part in the 2018 Garden Open Day. And there are important developments concerning the town's built environment, involving Becket's Chapel and the Market Cross.

A secure future for Becket's Chapel?

Becket's Chapel in Church Street is the second oldest surviving building in Wymondham, built less than 100 years after the Abbey. Originally a guild chapel, it became the Grammar School after the Dissolution of the Monasteries, and then went through a number of uses in the nineteenth century. After WW2 it became the town library, then fell vacant when the new library was built in 2008.

Since then the chapel has been leased by Wymondham Arts Forum on an annual basis from the owners, the Old Grammar School Trust, an educational charity. In 2010 a study was carried out by local architects Lucas Hickman Smith into the feasibility of restoring the chapel and extending it to provide further accommodation for arts use and other community roles. Initial approaches to the Heritage Lottery Fund suggested that the necessary grant aid might be available, provided that a suitable partner could be found for a variety of suitable community, heritage and educational uses, and a feasible business plan approved.

From the early days it was envisaged by the Arts Forum that the Tourist Information Office (TIC) might be a partner. The TIC's accommodation in the Market Cross, though attractive, offers no access for people with disabilities, with a steep flight



Outside, inside The exterior of Becket's Chapel has been an important feature of our townscape for 800 years. The interior currently provides a beautiful setting for Wymondham Arts Centre's exhibitions.

of steps, often slippery in wet or frosty weather. Shared use of a building would offer many advantages both to the TIC and the Arts Forum.

For some years the Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust been interested in the project, and recently made a presentation, jointly with Wymondham Arts Forum, to the Town Council on the possibilities of an extended chapel providing shared accommodation for the TIC as a starting point for the provision of the active promotion of the heritage assets of Wymondham, the arts centre and other educational and community uses as well as preserving and promoting the heritage of the building. The Town Council was asked to consider in principle the idea of moving the TIC from the Market Cross to Becket's Chapel, with no commitment at this stage. The idea was generally well

received, and the council recorded the following unanimous resolution:

'The Council notes the presentation on the future of Becket's Chapel submitted by Norfolk Historic Building Trust and Wymondham Arts Forum, and agrees to support the outline plans for the refurbishment and future use of the building.

'The Town Council will consider, subject to a feasibility study and business case, the relocation of the Tourist Information Centre to the refurbished building.'

The Historic Buildings Trust will now start discussions with the Heritage Lottery Fund and other interested bodies to take the project forward. So it may at last be possible to secure the future of the chapel, and establish its place within Wymondham's heritage.

Scouts help with woodland conservation



Ashwellthorpe Lower Wood is an ancient woodland mentioned in the Domesday Book. Wymondham Nature Group volunteers have been working there on autumn and winter Sundays for over twenty five years since Norfolk Wildlife Trust bought the Wood and began to reinstate the traditional coppicing regime.

Welcome help comes from 1st Wymondham Pioneer Scout Troop who join the working party three times a year. Scout Leader Richard Horler said "Coppicing is a great community based activity for the Scouts. It allows them to put the knowledge they learn in the Troop about the safe use of knives, saws and occasionally axes into practice and build up their experience in using these tools. We also use Ashwellthorpe Wood as a base for hikes and other activities, so the Scouts see the effects of conservation work on the woodland over a long period".

Practical conservation organiser Dr Anne Edwards says "New volunteers are always welcome. Learn ancient forestry techniques, appreciate the woodland

biodiversity and enjoy the fresh air, exercise and atavistic pleasure of a bonfire!" More information from Anne Edwards **01603 812309** or email wymondham@norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk



Just part of the Town Team
(L-R) Chris Claydon, Zoe McAuliffe, Karen Claydon, Doug Hodges

Lights on for Christmas!

Saturday 18 November saw an army of volunteers take to the streets of Wymondham to put up the Christmas lights.

Thanks to successful fundraising and a grant of £3000 from the Town Council, extra areas of the Town will be lit up this year as well as having new, coloured lights on the Christmas trees. The addition this year of two fire crews also made the task a bit easier. The WI did their usual excellent job of putting the lights on the trees, and volunteers made cakes, soup and hot drinks to keep the team well nourished and warm.

The Lighting up Wymondham team thank the organisers, fundraisers, volunteers and all who have donated, and wish a very Merry Christmas to everyone.

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Wymondham Community Events – Winter 2017

December

Tue 12 to Fri 15	10–4	Advent Spiral open to all with associated events	Abbey
Sat 16	9.00	Farmers' Market	Market Place
Sun 17	6.30	Wymondham Christmas Carol Service	Abbey
Wed 20	1.30–3.30	Children's Christmas craft activity session	Abbey
Thu 21	1.30–3.30	Children's Christmas craft activity session	Abbey

January

Tue 2	7.30	Town Council meeting	Tiffany Room, Central Hall
Sun 7	6.30	Epiphany Carol Service	Abbey
Sat 20	9.00	Farmers' Market	Market Place

February

Tue 6	7.30	Town Council meeting	Tiffany Room, Central Hall
Sun 11	2.30	Regal Experience Film: Gunfight at the O.K. Corral – lawman Wyatt Earp teams up with outlaw Doc Holliday to form an unlikely alliance to confront a gang of thugs – with Burt Lancaster, Kirk Douglas and Rhonda Fleming.	Ex Services Club
Sat 17	9.00	Farmers' Market	Market Place

March

Tue 6	7.30	Town Council meeting	Tiffany Room, Central Hall
Sat 17	9.00	Farmers' Market	Market Place
	7.30	Wymondham Symphony Orchestra Spring Concert: Mendelssohn, Brahms, Hummel and Copland	Abbey
Sun 18	2.30	Regal Experience Film: Stage Fright – gripping Hitchcock thriller set in England and starring Marlene Dietrich, Richard Todd, Jane Wyman and Alastair Sim.	Ex Services Club
Sat 24	7.30	Wymondham Choral Society performs Bob Chilcott's Requiem and Karl Jenkins' Sacred Songs.	Abbey

April

Mon 2	11.30–3	Abbey Duck Race (wet weather provision in Abbey)	Becketswell
Tue 3	7.30	Town Council meeting	Tiffany Room, Central Hall
Sun 8	7.30	Regal Experience Film: to be announced	Ex Services Club
Sat 21	9.00	Farmers' Market	Market Place
	11.00	Coffee-time organ recital	Abbey
Tue 24	7.30	Annual Parish Meeting	Tiffany Room, Central Hall
Sat 28	7.00	Messiah performed by Merry Opera	Abbey



More fish in the Tiffey



Something fishy in here? One of the weirs which impede the passage of fish up the Tiffey at Becketswell.

The Environment Agency and Norfolk Rivers Trust are working on a project to improve the numbers of fish in the River Tiffey. There are several barriers preventing their natural movements at Becketswell Bridge and at the weir upstream. These barriers mean that most fish are unable to migrate up and down the river and therefore unable to fully use this wonderful habitat for breeding and foraging.

The aim of the project is to improve fish movement upstream, enhance the river bank for wildlife and people, as well as provide great fishing opportunities, by improving the river habitat. The steepness of the river banks will also be reduced to make it more accessible for people using the area. Currently the river is deeply channelled and slightly overgrown, making it invisible and uninviting.

An initial survey has been carried out to look at the fish species upstream and downstream of the barriers and the results were very clear. Upstream only four species of fish were found, in relatively low numbers, whereas downstream eight species were found. Interestingly we found fish of different ages and numbers and more importantly found the critically endangered European eel. This eel requires open migration routes in order to complete its amazing life cycle. Sadly no brown trout were found and the project aims to remedy this in the longer term.

The Environment Agency and Norfolk Rivers Trust are currently working on developing the options for the project and will look to consult local people using social media and council newsletters in spring 2018. We hope that the works will begin in autumn 2018 and we will be working with a number of local groups to restore this section of river to its fish-full glory! Would you like to get involved? Contact Norfolk Rivers Trust for more information on ursula@norfolkrivertrust.org

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Wymondham's own Local Nature Reserve

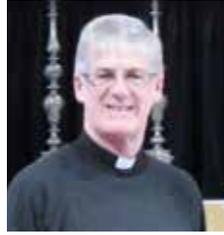
Between Cemetery Lane and London Road, near the traffic lights, you'll find Tolls Meadow, Wymondham's own local nature reserve. The site has been owned by Wymondham Town Council since 1994, and they are responsible for the upkeep of the site in partnership with Wymondham Nature Group.

Volunteer Warden John Beckett says that "It was previously owned and managed by a farmer, Mr Toll, who grazed horses on the meadow. I have heard that the donkeys from Great Yarmouth beach came here to over-winter".

"In the early 2000s the site was declared a County Wildlife Site and, as a wet meadow, is an increasingly rare habitat in this country. The four and a half acres include several flower-rich water meadows either side of the river Tiffey. The site is also rich in mammals including water voles, a variety of small rodents, several species of deer and possibly otters, and there is an extensive bird life. Invertebrates include not only butterflies and dragonflies, but also ground-dwelling invertebrates and a range of aquatic species.

Tolls Meadow is free and open to the public on a daily basis and is well

Abbey's new Assistant Priest



The Reverend Stephen Sealy has been appointed as Assistant Priest at Wymondham Abbey. He was licensed by the

Bishop of Thetford, The Rt Revd Dr Alan Winton, at a special ceremony in November.

The Reverend Catherine Relf-Pennington, the vicar of Wymondham Abbey, is delighted with the appointment. "Stephen is a great fit for the Abbey", she said. "He brings exceptional experience and skills with him and will be providing a much needed additional pair of hands for our very busy parish."

Born in Hampshire, Stephen worked as an administrator for eight years with British Rail. He read Theology at King's College, London, followed by two years at Lincoln Theological College.

He was ordained in 1988. In 1991 he became Precentor of Canterbury Cathedral - a post very much involved with liturgy and music. He then served as parish priest in Pembury and Sidcup in the Diocese of Rochester.

Singing has been one of Stephen's great passions, having been in a variety of choirs since the age of seven, including Portsmouth and Lincoln Cathedral choirs, as an alto. Other interests include railways, cricket, and a love of the prose and poetry of Sir John Betjeman. He is looking forward to exploring Norfolk!"

serviced with litter bins, benches, dog waste disposal facilities, steps, ramps, rails, bridges, wheelchair access and an observation tower. There is a quarter of a mile of tarmac path suitable for buggies, wheelchairs, trikes, bicycles and mobility scooters. Responsible dog walking is encouraged. Dogs please keep your owners on their leads!

The routine Meadow clearance, following cutting by a contractor, is carried out by volunteers from WyNG, supervised by the warden who also undertakes twice weekly

litter collection. The invading willow scrub has to be cut back annually and this is a favourite task of the volunteers. We are always looking for new helpers.

Forthcoming event dates in the New Year: 7 Jan, Feb 4, Mar 4 and 18. These are all Sunday afternoons, 1.30 – 3.30pm. Meet on site by Cemetery Lane entrance.

If you would like to volunteer with the WyNG workers or contribute in some other way please contact warden John Beckett either by phone on **602876** or email **sandrab686@aol.com**

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Keeping in touch

About Wymondham is published four times a year. To keep right up to date visit the Town Council's website at **wymondhamtc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk**

We welcome your contributions. If you want to submit articles or photos, put items in the diary or comment on content please contact **John Wood on 01953 602051**.

To advertise or comment on circulation please contact the **Town Clerk on 01953 603302**. The next edition will be in March: copy date is **Wednesday 28th February**.