



CROUGHTON NEWS

January 2021

Community groups tackling loneliness to benefit from £4m fund

Book clubs, walking groups and other community projects will be able to apply for a £4 million fund designed to help reduce loneliness in the coming months.

The Local Connections Fund – made up of £2 million from the Government and £2 million from The National Lottery Community Fund – will be used for hundreds of small grants worth between £300 and £2,500.

These investments are designed to help local organisations bring people and communities together as the country recovers from the coronavirus pandemic.

The Local Connections Fund will be split into two rounds of funding – each with its own application window, one in January 2021 and one in the summer 2021.

Funding will be available to small charities and community groups in England with an annual income of £50,000 or less, which are working to reduce loneliness by helping people feel more connected.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport will provide the first round of funding, totalling £2 million, and this will open for applications on 5 January 2021.

Organisations should apply via The National Lottery Community Fund, the largest funder of community activity in the UK. Grants from this round will be distributed and spent by the end of the financial year.

Think NHS 111 First

NHS England and NHS Improvement has launched the next phase of the latest 'Help Us, Help You' campaign which focuses on the NHS 111 service as a new way to access A&E.

If you have an urgent but not life-threatening medical need, make sure you contact NHS 111 first rather than going straight to A&E. If you do need urgent care, then NHS 111 can now book you in to be seen quickly and safely in A&E.

As well as this, NHS 111 is also able to direct to or book an appointment at Urgent Treatment Centres, access to Out of Hours GP Services, pharmacies, emergency dental services and walk-in clinics.

Contacting 111 first will also help the NHS to keep you safe by maintaining social distancing and ensure that you receive the right care in the right place, in a more timely and safe way.

If you or your loved one have a life-threatening illness or injury then you should always use 999 and if you do arrive at A&E without contacting NHS 111 you will still receive medical care, with emergency treatments prioritised.

Just think 111 first. When you think you need A&E, contact NHS 111 by phone or online at <https://111.nhs.uk/>

Further information about NHS 111 First is available at www.northamptonshireccg.nhs.uk

Thank You to Croughton Wine Appreciation Group

As members of our village Wine Group, we would like to say a huge "Thank You" to the members of the Committee for all their efforts in keeping the group entertained and together in this most difficult year. Since March, they have organised regular virtual on-line wine tasting sessions, assisted with obtaining wines, given informative presentations and kept up a steady flow of spirit-lifting banter! Even the Christmas Party was not allowed to escape – the theme was based on the book "The Great Gatsby" and so we duly dressed up in 1920's glamour, listened to light-hearted presentations, tasted four wines from countries in the book and enjoyed yummy food treats made by members of the committee and delivered to members just before the event started. It was a lovely evening and, for once in 2020, we could feel we were socialising - a rarity these days! Thank you everyone – we really appreciate all your hard work.

Croughton Tea Rooms Afternoon Tea Christmas Raffle

... in aid of All Saints Church Croughton Raised £125.00.
Winning ticket no 143 - Mrs Blue Mouat. The members of Croughton PCC would like to thank Sarah for providing this lovely prize.

Coronavirus Volunteer Group

There are currently 20+ volunteers operating across Croughton village should anyone need any assistance during self isolation.

Each volunteer looks after the residents in the street that they live in (two volunteers per street). Leaflets have been dropped to every household in the village with the contact details; information can also be found outside the Co-op and in the bus shelter.

The volunteer group is being organised via the Croughton Chat Facebook Group. Or for more details, please contact Lotty Dollman, 07804 905747.

Croughton Village Website

For all information on events, parish council meetings and general information etc.

www.croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Parish Council Meeting held on 14th December 2020

Renewal of High and Low Voltage Cables: Apart from some snagging issues that needed rectifying, the works that had got underway at the end of July after a 4 months-long postponement, had been completed. Fencing and landscaping works would be undertaken in the cut linking Park End with Portway Crescent. When supplies become available, road planings are to be used to improve the surface of a small area by the sub-station to the rear of the Reading Room.

The Parish Council is grateful to Mr Dave Edwards, Engineer, Western Power Distribution for his updates throughout the project. Mr Edwards was ever willing to satisfactorily and promptly address any concerns that had been brought to his attention, whether reports of a blocked or broken pipe, churned up verge, vegetation/tree issues, muddy pedestrian surface, seat damage, or footpath reinstatement.

In spite of all the planning that had gone into the works, a weak link remains in the system due to the unsuitable siting of the sub-station in Mill Lane and existing cables. WPD is now hoping to be able to re-site the sub-station by the Spring, a project that will not commence before the various parties have been consulted and funding is in place. It will also necessitate the digging up of the footpath once again.

Highway Matters: Drainage at Brackley Road and Park End: The issue of surface water run-off continues to be an on-going problem and has been raised continually with the Highway Authority. After cleaning all the gullies at the end of July and having grips cut in the grass verge on Brackley Road Northants Highways has asked Thames Water to check the main line through the village. The next gully cleanse is scheduled for February.

Speeding concerns at Blenheim: Countdown and speed limit signs, the VAS devices and intermittent siting of the Police monitoring van are all measures to inform and encourage drivers to keep to the 30 mph speed limit. In response to

concerns over excess speeds and volume of traffic in both directions through Blenheim the Parish Council has agreed to ask Northants Highways to revisit the issue of a traffic throttle and any other traffic calming measures, such as speed cushions that might be feasible and effective for this route.

Community Speed Watch: We do not yet know whether the scheme will go ahead this year. Northants Police will review any plans this month.

Budget 2021/2022: The Council considered its budget for payments and receipts for next year. The Parish Council is not considering taking on new responsibilities but did make provision for traffic calming at Blenheim, a grant to the Community Bus Service and repairs to the Cemetery fencing. Reserves for footway lighting and maintenance of the allotment wall will continue to be increased. A draft budget of £38,208 representing an increase of approx. 8.5% over this year's budget was agreed. Final adjustments will be made at the January Meeting when the Precept will also be set.

Parish Council Meetings are held every month on the second Monday. Next meetings: 11th January 2021, 8th February 2021, 8th March 2021.

Meetings commence at 7.30 p.m.

These are currently held via Zoom, an internet platform. Please consult the Agenda published on the website for the link to join the meeting.

Those with no internet access may also join the meeting by telephone using this number: 0203 481 5240 and inputting the Meeting ID: 798 1637 8105.

This means that members of the public are able to be in remote attendance at meetings one way or another and also to participate by speaking to items that are listed on the Agenda. Agendas are published a few days in advance on the website www.croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk

All Saints Church Services for January 2021

10th January Holy Communion - 9.30am

24th January Morning Prayer - 10am

The government directives allow up to 30 people to attend any service.

Social distancing must be observed as will the wearing of face masks.

Footway Lighting

The Parish Council is responsible for the 57 lights around the village. If you notice a light that is not working please report its location to the Parish Clerk.

The columns will carry a number between 1 and 57 for further ease of identification. Those lights that are bracketed to telegraph poles do not have numbers on the poles. The number is not so clearly visible but can be found on the box to which the light is attached. Faults are reported for remedial action to the Parish Council's Lighting Contractor. Thank you.

The Ability Village Bus Service

Note, the schedule may change due to future Government Covid Guidelines

The Ability village bus service runs to Banbury Town centre, Gateway and main supermarkets on Tuesdays and Thursdays and to Brackley (including the new Sainsbury's) on Fridays.

- You need to REGISTER with the scheme before you can use this service. You can REGISTER online here – <https://abilitycic.org.uk/register>

Or you can contact me for a form to post.

- You also need to PRE-BOOK your seat for a particular journey as spaces are limited. To book your seat Tel: 01327 604123
- The bus will pick up from the bus stops at Park End & The Blackbird & other pre-arranged locations in the village, at about 10am & will return at 1pm.
- Face masks or a scarf MUST be worn on the bus.
- It is FREE to travel from the bus stops if you have a valid bus pass
- If you don't have a bus pass, the single fare to Banbury is £6.70 or return fare £13.40 and the single fare to Brackley is £4.75 or return fare £9.50
- Please get in touch if you have any queries, I'm happy to help! Meryl – 16 Mill Lane, 819525/07766 495059

MERYL'S PLANT STALL In Aid Of CROUGHTON READING ROOM & BRACKLEY HOGWATCH

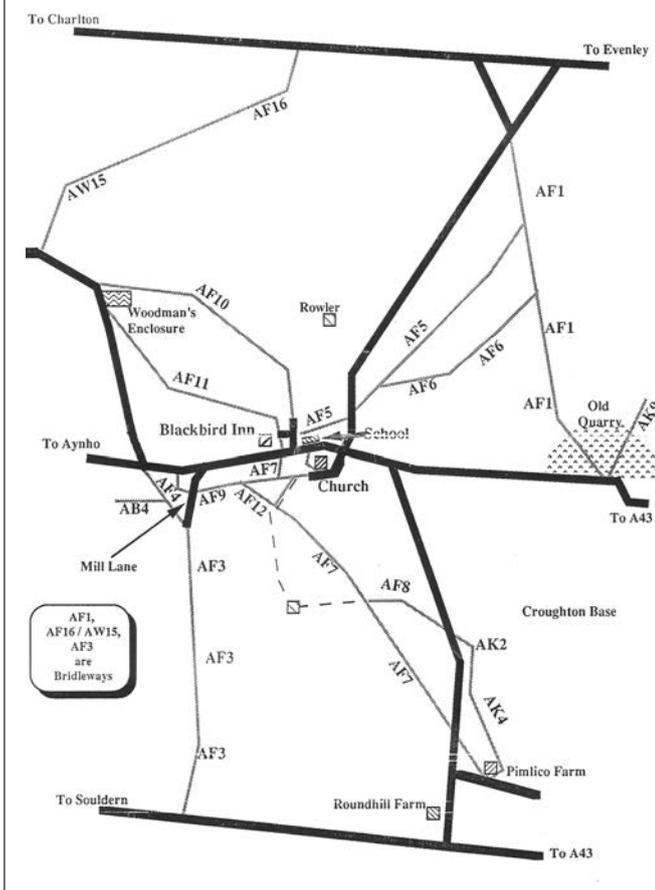
Happy New Year to you all, let's hope this one is better than the last one! 2020 has been an exceptional year but sadly not always for good reasons, although for my plant stall it has been the busiest & raised the most money for Croughton Reading Room & Brackley Hogwatch in its history. A very big THANK YOU to everyone who has supported me in all different ways & also thank you to my hubby Stephen & my friend Becky for all of their help.

There is a nice selection of plants for sale on my stall. Some of the latest arrivals are Hellebores (Christmas rose), white Japanese anemone "Honorine Jobert", Mexican daisies (Erigeron), two varieties of dogwoods – "Midwinter Fire" & "Golden Variegated" as well as two viburnum Fragrans shrubs. There are lots of other plants available too – all at very reasonable prices & new plants are added regularly. If you are shielding, I am happy to deliver plants within the village. All proceeds are shared between Croughton Tea Rooms & Brackley Hogwatch.

Meryl
16 Mill Lane,
819525/07766 495059



Simplified plan of footpaths and bridleways around Croughton (not to scale).



Pastoral Letter January 2021: Revd Sue Cooper writes

Dear Friends, I hope that your Christmas was enjoyable, even if somewhat different from the one you had planned! But now, as we turn our thoughts to a new year; can you remember New year's eve last year . . . none of us knew what was about to happen to the world with the pandemic, which is probably a good thing! What a year 2020 was. But hope springs eternal and we have the promising vaccines coming to the rescue. Only time will tell how this will work out, but we hope and pray for better days ahead.

Traditionally at the turn of a new year many of us are looking at ways we can change certain aspects of our lives for the better, like getting a new job, changing career, or moving house. And we might also look at what "self-improvement" methods we could try, in an attempt to change certain aspects of ourselves. However, for many people, these thoughts have already been addressed in the past year during the time and space created by lockdown and restrictions. Much of the nation has already been engaged in a process of self-examination, and making life changes, which, for some has been liberating. For others however the past year has left them struggling to put food on the table, struggling to pay the bills and make ends meet; and for thousands of others the past year has been a process of grief, with one loss after another and has left them shell-shocked and heartbroken as they pick up the pieces of their lives. It has been said that although we are all going through the same Covid storm, we are not all sitting in the same boat. This is true.

At the beginning of this letter I said that, "this time last year none of us knew what was about to happen to the world with the pandemic"; But the thing is, God knew.

God knew that this was coming to the world and he knows how it will pass. This is very hard for us to get our heads around, and it is something which causes many people to question whether there is a God at all? and if there is a God . . . then what sort of God is he that would allow this terrible pandemic to wreak such disaster on the world? These are valid questions. So why doesn't God do something?? Why doesn't he act in our world??

The truth is, God has done something . . . and he has acted in our world. He sent Jesus! And although this truth might sound simplistic to some, trusting in Gods actions, or apparent inactions in our world, is not easy . . . it takes courage and faith. Jesus warned his followers that "in this world you will have many troubles but take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

Trusting in Gods ultimate goodness towards us requires a daily step of faith, especially when we don't understand how God is working through all of this.

It is a daily step of faith to live our lives with God, and for God. I do pray that 2021 will be a happy and healthy one for us all. Happy New Year to you all.

With love Rev Sue.

Contact: Tel 01869 810903, email revsue.cooper@gmail.com

Newsletter submissions by 28th of each month to:
Georgina Lucas, 50 Portway Drive, Croughton.
Tel: 01869 810923, or e-mail galucas@waitrose.com
The Croughton Newsletter is published by the Parish Council.

**NHS
VOLUNTEER
RESPONDERS**

DELIVERED BY
**ROYAL
VOLUNTARY
SERVICE**

NHS



Do you need some help while self-isolating?

If you, or someone you know, needs a hand with collecting shopping or prescriptions, or just wants someone to talk to, our **NHS Volunteer Responders** are here to help.

Join the thousands of others throughout England who are already receiving support – even if it's just for a friendly chat.

Call 0808 196 3646* or visit
nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk

Help is available if you have a medical condition which makes you vulnerable to COVID-19, especially if you are over 70. You also qualify if you are pregnant or have a disability.

* 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week

Royal Voluntary Service is a registered charity 1015988 (England and Wales) & SC038924 (Scotland).