



CROUGHTON NEWS

September 2020

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

With all the recent rain, it's a brilliant time to put some plants in your gardens to replace your flagging annuals and bedding plants. There's a great selection of plants available, new plants are added regularly, including some donations of irises and snapdragons, homegrown mint plants & also pansies for autumn/winter colour. I have some lovely houseplants in individual china pots for sale too but as the weather becomes cooler, they may not be on the stall so please ring the doorbell or give me a ring if there's something you'd like. I'm happy to deliver any plants within the village so just get in touch! All proceeds go to Croughton Reading Room & Brackley Hogwatch.

I have also branched out into face masks! My very kind friend Elizabeth Moran has made some fantastic face masks with beautiful hedgehog design fabrics, to help raise funds for Brackley Hogwatch. The masks are 100% cotton and are hygienically packaged in self-seal plastics bags. They are £5 each and £2 from each sale will go to Brackley Hogwatch. Two sizes - child/small adult and medium adult. They can be collected from me or I can deliver within the village. I'm also happy to post them anywhere for a small charge so please think of any family and friends that may like one!

Face Cover information

- Not made to medical standard • 100% cotton
- Filter pocket • Nose bar

Thank you for your support.

Meryl, 16 Mill Lane

819525/

07766 495059



Fix My Street

The Northamptonshire Highways Street Doctor online system for reporting minor Highway defects has been superseded by Fix My Street.

Fix My Street is mobile responsive and it allows photos to be attached to reports. The new system is available via links at www.northamptonshire.gov.uk.

The provision of Charging Points for Electric Vehicles

As the movement towards the use of electric cars gains pace the Parish Council has to consider the possible need for electric vehicle charging points in the village, so we would like to open the conversation.

The first point to consider is whether there will be sufficient uptake of electric vehicles in the village to warrant the Parish Council getting involved or will those that buy electric cars be able to charge them at home.

Other considerations are: where they should be positioned, which is a problem as they would normally go on council owned land; how they could be policed so that vehicles do not hog them all night when charging is complete; and of course there is the finance to be raised.

If you have any thoughts on the subject, please enter the conversation by sending them to the Parish Clerk at the Village Hall

or by email to clerk@croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Thank you.

Footpaths

We are fortunate in the village to have such an assortment of footpaths to enjoy and have been able to use them for our daily exercise in the current situation.

It is important that walkers/riders and landowners all work together and I would like to thank the walkers for contacting me with their concerns over our paths and landowners for dealing with responses quickly and for keeping them in working order.

A reminder that we need to:

- Keep our social distance of 2 metres.
- Keep dogs under control as there are flocks of sheep in the meadows now along with horses and other dogs on walks.
- Please PICK up our dog's poo and TAKE it home or place in a bin. Picking up the poo and then just leaving the bags on the ground or tied to a hedge is NOT acceptable.
- The dog bin without a flap is unfortunate and will be dealt with by the contractors when restrictions are lifted.

I am attempting to keep the nettles down along AF11 (alongside the play area) and AF5 alongside the school playground.

Any concerns please contact Chris Fox on 01869 811655

Croughton Village Website

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

www.croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Parish Council Meeting held on 10th August 2020

Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/2020:

The External Auditor has completed the limited assurance review for the year ended 31st March 2020. The External Auditor Report and Certificate, the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements for 2019/2020 are published on the noticeboards at the Village Hall and the Co-Op, and on the Parish Council's website (Finance page). Visit www.croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk

Annual Inspections of Public Amenity Sites

Allotments: A start had been made to tidy up the site. Thank you to Mr Andrew Harper for his assistance with the removal of rubbish and unwanted items. Our Contractor had strimmed the margin at the top of the wall and would be asked to cut back any vegetation along the front of the wall as well as tackling the wilderness plot alongside the track leading up to the site.

Cemetery: A topple test had revealed two memorials that were unstable. If possible the families would be contacted, but in any event both structures would be made safe. Thank you to Mr Rob Robbins for his help.

Pavements: The tarmac in Portway Crescent outside Nos 3, 4 and 5 was breaking up and considered a slip hazard and would be reported to Fix My Street (formerly Street Doctor), the County Council's online reporting service for minor highway defects.

Footway Lighting: Several lights had been found to be not working and these faults would be reported to the Lighting Contractor for remedial action. A couple of entry plates in the base of lighting columns were obscured by hedging which, unless trimmed back, would make access for future repairs difficult. The opinion of the Lighting Contractor would be sought.

Mill Lane Footbridge: Northants Highways has made arrangements to replace the wooden footbridge over the ford with one fashioned out of recycled plastic. Although the exterior of the footbridge would have a timber grain effect, the Parish Council was neither convinced that it would in keeping with the rural setting, nor of its non-slippage and maintenance properties, but considered that it had no choice but to reluctantly accept the replacement. Northants Highways considers that this replacement model is cost effective, with a design life of 60 years, whereas the chicken wire, attached to give a sure footing, on the current footbridge is replaced every 3-4 years. The installation is scheduled for 26th and 27th October 2020.

Public Footpaths: AF11 (alongside the tennis court at the village hall) and AF5 (from Wheelers Rise to the kissing gate to the rear of the School): Despite being well-walked routes both paths had become very overgrown since the last cut each had been given by the County Council. If left to the second cut due in September the stinging nettles would have deterred most people from using these paths. Thanks to a timely and welcome offer of help, AF11 was strimmed the day after the meeting. Thank you to Mr Tim Ball. The Council would arrange for its contractor to tackle AF5.

The Parish Council is very appreciative of offers of help and is very grateful to volunteers who come forward to assist. Thank you.

Advertising in the Newsletter: The Parish Council reviewed its policy on advert sizes and rates. Please contact the Editor for details or look up the information on the website www.croughtonparishcouncil.org.uk Please note that adverts are not accepted for the website.

Special Meetings: These are called, on Proper Notice, when comments on planning applications would be unable to be returned within the statutory consultation period. On 24th August 2020 the Parish Council held a special Meeting to consider an application to determine whether prior approval is required for change of use from light industrial to a dwelling house at Old Farm Buildings, Evenley, a property which is very close to the border between our two parishes. The Parish Council had no objections but the decision rests with the Local Planning Authority (SNC).

Parish Council Meetings are held every month on the second Monday:

Next Meetings: 14th September 2020, 12th October 2020 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

Scrubs for NHS

Are you or any of your contacts handy with a sewing machine and would you like to do something really practical to help the NHS? If yes, why not consider making scrubs for clinical staff carrying out reviews in care homes.

Check out this page on what's involved: <http://www.dgft.nhs.uk/making-scrubs-for-our-hospital-staff/>

Connect through the Northants Together Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/NorthamptonshireEmergencyResponseVolunteer/>

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.

Renewal of high and low voltage cables

Mr David Edwards, Engineer, Western Power Distribution joined both meetings of the Parish Council last month to report on the progress of the works. The work began on schedule and continues throughout September. The terrain is very rocky and has called for considerable hard digging. One area that has posed a challenge and made for slow progress was a narrow section where many utility services are located. Crossing along the bottom of Wheelers Rise had also not been easy. An extra team has been deployed which should help speed things up. Intermittent faults with the traffic lights had resulted in traffic backing up, and additional through-traffic diverted from the A43 had caused some congestion.

The Parish Council is very appreciative of the consideration that the workmen had given to residents in respect of gateway access, the speedy rectification of traffic light faults, and the tidying up being done as the work moves along.

Mr Edwards is keen to reduce disturbance to residents as much as possible, and, whenever practical, the traffic lights would be taken off in the evenings whilst the work is going on.

The beginning of September should mark the end of Phase 2, from the Reading Room to Mill Lane, and the Beginning of Phase 3, Mill Lane to Blenheim.

Thank you to residents for your tolerance and patience!

Village Hall

We would like to remind people that no dogs are allowed in the playing fields area, either the sports side or the park side.

Thank you.

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 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.

Suspicious activity surrounding the Base ...

... can be reported 24/7 to the MoD Armed Mobile Patrol on 07773 971 924.

Please do not use this number to report civilian issues – that should properly be brought to the attention of Northamptonshire Police. Call 101 or go online.

Pastoral Letter September 2020: Revd Sue Cooper writes

Dear Friends, as I write this letter I am just about to take two weeks annual leave. I am looking forward to spending some time in the Rectory Garden with my Husband Nic, and going down to London to visit my Mum, and my Brother and Sisters. Usually when I am on leave I take some days out visiting towns or cities, or other interesting places. This year, everything feels different and there are places we are not able to go still.

My Husband works at Stowe School, and last summer we had the pleasure of taking my Father in law and his wife for a visit to Stowe House and Grounds. I worked there some years ago too, and I was looking forward to visiting again. I had a very happy time working at Stowe, but the strange thing was that, it all seemed different to how I remembered it. I was now seeing Stowe as a visitor. We had a tour guide take us around to explain the history of the place, and it was as if I was seeing Stowe for the very first time. Although I had worked there and knew the place well, I was now seeing it through “new” eyes, and I was surprised and delighted. It made me think about revisiting other places to see what else I had missed.

Revisiting places is a good thing, but it is also good to revisit our thoughts and ideas because, with the passage of time, things change; and we change as we get older too.

Just like any other organisation or institution, the Church has changed greatly in recent years. It was not too many years ago that it would have been unthinkable for a woman to be a Priest or Bishop in the Church of England... but now, here I am. Some folk I have spoken to sadly have a mental image of Church that involves the Vicar scowling at them from the Pulpit breathing threats of hell fire and brimstone, and they cannot conceive of a message of hope and love and grace that would bring joy and peace to their busy stress filled lives, and this is a great shame.

The thing is... God hasn't changed, and neither has the gospel of good news in Jesus Christ, but Church has changed; and yet there are still many people who are stuck with an idea of a Church that existed over 50 years ago. I guess the point I want to make from all this is, are you holding any preconceived ideas about God, Church, and Christians, that you could revisit in the Spirit of open mindedness? Or has something that happened in the past put you off, and given you reasons to hold onto ideas about God and Church that may be outdated and which could be revisited now?; because Church has changed,, and you are a different person now too. This year so many things are having to be completely revisited and seen with ‘new’ eyes because things have changed. Maybe it's time to open your heart and mind to discover, or rediscover, the things of God, Church and faith for your life... and you would be most welcome to join us at any of our Churches.

God bless you, with love Rev Sue.

Macmillan Garden Pop-Up Christmas Shop

Friday 25th September 2-6pm. Sunday 27th September 2-6pm

Charity Christmas cards and Advent calendars, wrapping paper and Christmas gift ideas. And every day greeting cards too!

10% of all sales donated to Macmillan Cancer Care

Elizabeth Wilson, The Orchard House, Church Lane, Croughton. 07967 234662.

South Northamptonshire Arts and Crafts

South Northamptonshire Art Trail, 8 – 14 October 2020

Our annual district Art Trail is prepared, with a good range of artists ready to show visitors the artwork they have been busy creating in their studios and homes. All are members of South Northamptonshire Arts. Brochures will be available soon from galleries, shops, libraries and The Forum, with full details on-line: www.arts-sn.org.uk

The Heseltine Gallery

1. Since the Art in Isolation virtual exhibition was launched on the gallery website, more artists have contributed artwork and their stories, so do have a look at these: <https://www.theheseltinegallery.org.uk/art-in-isolation1> (click on Artists' Stories for the full information).
2. Open Exhibition 2020, 5 – 13 December: call out for South Northamptonshire and North Oxfordshire artists.

Artists based in the region are invited to submit up to three artworks in any medium for this year's Open Exhibition at The Heseltine Gallery. Postponed from May, this will be a relatively short exhibition, but it offers a marvellous opportunity to purchase unique gifts and support local artists. The 2021 Open will be in the usual May slot during Oxfordshire Artweeks, all being well. Details for artists and visitors from www.theheseltinegallery.org.uk soon or from sue.carverhill@southnorthants.gov.uk

More places to enjoy good quality art:

Forge Coffee, Culworth & Evenley
Rightangle Gallery, 24 Manor Rd, Brackley;
Hayrack Gallery, Upper Stowe NN7 4S;
Hagstone Pottery (Woodford Halse),
Banbury Museum and Art Gallery, Castle Quay, Banbury
(now open with LEGO 'Brick Built' exhibition, with timed entry).
Church Lane Gallery, 3 Victory Buildings, Church Lane,
Banbury, OX16 5LT;
MK Gallery, 900 Midsummer Blvd, Milton Keynes MK9 3QA
(reopening 11 Sept).

... and countywide, online, plus some actual Open Studios in September: <https://www.northantsopenstudios.co.uk/>

Art & craft workshops have restarted at many places around the district, generally with restricted numbers, including Yardley Arts in Yardley Hastings, Vitreus Art (now in smart new premises at Bell Plantation, Towcester), Artistic Retreats in Boddington, Stitching Kitchen and Rightangle Gallery in Brackley.

Check websites or phone to book or find out about safety protocol. Visit our Arts and Culture page for more suggestions: <https://www.southnorthants.gov.uk/arts-and-culture>.

Art & photography groups are mostly still meeting on-line to encourage each other, such as Blisworth Art Groups, Towcester Photographic Society, Banbury Camera Club.

Performing Arts News

Some brave attempts have been made to run outdoor arts events at Evenley Wood and Brackley. I hope we will soon be able to publicise more activities, as organisers work out how to keep audiences and participants safe either outdoors

or indoors. Keep an eye on NMPAT's website for news of the county music groups and Saturday Centres for young people. During lockdown, NMPAT staff have been keeping spirits up by posting musical fun on social media with #NMPositiviT. Theatres are taking reservations for live shows; booking in advance will help them enormously.

Folk musicians have been missing the festival and club atmosphere of live audiences, but have made the most of the internet. Brackley Folk Club are sharing music on their Facebook page and Northampton's Great Knight Folk Club will be presenting virtual live gigs on their page from 2nd September. You can subscribe to Folk Weekend Oxford for regular excellent music 'live to your living room.' If you are missing Jazz @ The Walnut in Blisworth, Tad Newton would be pleased to hear whether you'd be interested in live gigs restarting: contact him on tadjazzfriends@gmail.com

Please do get in touch if you are planning arts events of any kind and please support those who are putting a lot of effort into making things happen for everyone. I'd be interested to know whether you find this style of e-news more useful than an attached Arts Events Calendar (pdf or Word). When events really get going again, I hope to resume a full calendar, but possibly in an e-news format with links to the detailed information.

Best wishes

Sue Carverhill, Arts Development Officer

Healthy Communities, Wellbeing Directorate, South Northamptonshire Council

Arts page on our website

Postal address: South Northamptonshire Council, The Forum, Moat Lane, Towcester, Northants NN12 6AD

Email – please note this has reverted to: sue.carverhill@southnorthants.gov.uk

01327 322334 mobile 07725 781328

My usual working days are Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

The Irish Touch

This event was due to take place on Sat 12th September at Egerton Hall having been postponed from 21st March. Regretfully, due to the ongoing Covid 19 restrictions, this event is now cancelled.

All ticket holders will be contacted directly to arrange a refund. This process will take a while and we ask for your patience. If you have any concerns that you may have been missed, please contact Kevin on 01280 702300 or by email at kevinoregan54@btinternet.com

Thanks for any help you can give.

Best wishes, Kevin O'Regan

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.