

THE NORTON MESSENGER

April 2026



EDITORIAL

Thank you to all the many contributors this month – it was a hard job squeezing everything in. I still need photos for the front cover – please send in any you take that would be suitable.

If you have anything you would like to see published send it to the address below by the 15th of the previous month, including any new article ideas you have.

Diana

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VILLAGE EVENTS AND NOTICES

NORTON VILLAGE HALL CLASSES

IP31 3LE

MONDAY	6.00pm - 6.45pm 7.00pm - 7.45pm	Paracise Jo's Fit4All	 
TUESDAY	9.30am - 10.30am	Serenity Yoga	
	10.45am - 11.45am	Silver Swans Over-55s Ballet Class	
	7.15pm - 9.15pm	Song Circle Ladies' Choir	
WEDNESDAY	6.30pm - 7.30pm	Zumba	
THURSDAY	9.00am - 10.00am 7.00pm - 8.00pm	Pilates with Paula Rockfit with Bliss	 
FRIDAY	9.15am - 10.15am 10.45am - 11.45 am	Zumba Fitness with Yvonne	

For further details please contact: nortonvhbookings@gmail.com

LATEST NEWS + LATEST NEWS + LATEST NEWS + LATEST NEWS



NORTON VILLAGE HALL IS NOW OPEN AFTER REFURBISHMENT!

We're excited to announce that NORTON VILLAGE HALL has undergone a beautiful transformation and is now open for bookings!

What's New?

- Fully refurbished Hall with modern facilities
- Extended facilities with new Changing Rooms for Sports
- Spacious and versatile layout suitable for all events
- Enhanced accessibility for everyone
- Whether you're planning a Party, Meeting, Class or Community Gathering, our Hall is the perfect place for your next event

To Book or Enquire, contact us at nortonvhbookings@gmail.com

Visit NortonVillageHall.com to book your event, or to look for other events

Come and experience your newly refurbished Village Hall
It's *your* community space - and it's better than ever!



And finally, don't forget that the new
Norton Village Coffee Shop
is now open for business
so do pay it a visit!



NORTON WI

The official launch meeting of the Norton WI is set for Monday, 13th April at 7.30pm, Norton Baptist Church Hall. Our speaker will be Amanda Sutherland who will talk about how a career in costume design for stage and screen led to her starting her own business designing Bridal Accessories and Fascinators. (Due to unforeseen circumstances Amanda was able to talk at our February meeting, but EAAA stepped in to give a demonstration and talk on CPR.) We look forward to the re-launch of the WI in Norton.



NHS COVID Spring Booster Vaccination Programme

As we move into spring, we want to help our patients stay healthy and protected. COVID-19 is still with us, and for those at higher risk, a "booster" dose helps top up your protection.

Who can get the spring booster?

The booster is offered to the following people, who are most likely to get seriously ill from the virus:

- Aged 75 or over (or if you turn 75 by 30 June 2026).
- Living in a care home for older adults.
- Aged 6 months or over with a weakened immune system (for example, due to a health condition or treatment like chemotherapy).

Why should I get the booster?

Protection from previous doses or infections fades over time. Viruses can also change. An extra dose:

- Reduces your risk of getting very poorly.
- Helps you recover faster if you do catch it.
- Reduces the chance of needing to go to hospital.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Programme

From 1 April 2026, the eligibility criteria for this programme will change to allow people aged 80 years and over, and all residents in care homes for older adults, to receive the RSV vaccine on the NHS.

What is RSV?

RSV is a common cause of coughs and colds. Most people get it several times during their life.

It usually gets better by itself, but in some more vulnerable people it can lead to illnesses with serious breathing problems. These may need to be treated in hospital and can be life-threatening.

How to get your vaccinations

The national COVID spring booster programme starts on 13th April and runs through to 30th June. Woolpit Health Centre has several large clinics planned in April and May. Eligible patients will either receive an invitation by letter, or a text message with a link to book an appointment. Housebound patients will be notified of their vaccination date by telephone. Whilst the RSV vaccine can be given all year round, eligible patients will be offered co-administration of the RSV vaccine at their COVID spring booster appointment.

ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH (Part of the Benefice of Pakenham, Norton & Tostock, with Great Ashfield, Hunston & Stowlangtoft)

Rector: Revd Katherine Valentine Tel 01359 235095 Email: kavalentine677@gmail.com

Website: www.achurchnearlyou.com Benefice Church magazine www.vcnews.org.uk

April 2026 Church Services

Open daily for visitors and private prayer. St Andrew's Norton services are highlighted below.

2 nd	Maundy Thursday	7.30am Holy Communion followed by Stripping of the Altar and vigil until 9pm	Pakenham
3 rd	Good Friday	10am Good Friday meditations 10am Easter Garden Service – all ages 1.30pm Walk of witness meet at Village Hall 2pm Good Friday Service in church – all ages 1.40pm Walk of witness meet at Nether Hall gates 2pm An hour at the Cross	Tostock Norton Great Ashfield Great Ashfield Pakenham Pakenham
5 th	Easter Day	8am Holy Communion (BCP) 9.30am Family Festival Communion 9.30am Family Festival Communion 10am Family@Church with communion 11am Family Festival Communion	Norton Hunston Tostock Pakenham Great Ashfield
12 th	2nd Sunday of Easter	9.30am Holy Communion 9.30am Morning Worship 11am Family Communion	Tostock Great Ashfield Pakenham
19 th	3rd Sunday of Easter	9.30am Holy Communion (BCP) 9.30am Morning Worship 11am Family Communion 6pm Evening Prayer and Praise	Pakenham Norton Great Ashfield Tostock
26 th	4th Sunday of Easter	9.30am TOAST 9.30am Holy Communion 11am Family Communion 11am Morning Worship	Great Ashfield Hunston Norton Tostock

EASTER CELEBRATIONS FOR ALL AGES!

GOOD FRIDAY 10am EASTER GARDEN SERVICE St Andrew's Norton - families and children all welcome to come and help make our Easter Garden. Bring small plants, stones and flowers. Hot Cross buns and refreshments provided!

1.30pm Walk of witness & service at Gt Ashfield - make a beautiful Easter cross to hang on your door.

EASTER DAY FAMILY COMMUNION SERVICES - all ages are welcome and services will include special treats!!



Norton CEVC Primary School
School Close Norton Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 3LZ
Headteacher Mrs Lisa Sparkes
office@norton.suffolk.sch.uk 01359 230520.



The Spring Term has certainly been a busy one, with the children enjoying many enrichment activities such as PE sessions, our first ever Lower Key Stage 2 production, Science Week and other school events. As I walk around the school, speak to the children and teach in some classes—still the favourite part of my job—it is lovely to see them settled, working hard and fully engaged in their learning.

One of the highlights of this term was World Book Day on Thursday 5 March. Staff and children had great fun dressing up as book characters or wearing comfy PJs ready for story time; there was certainly a wealth of colour and a wide range of books represented. The children enjoyed a variety of literary activities throughout the day, including an engaging assembly delivered by Mrs Herbert, where they solved the mystery of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. One of my favourite parts of the day is when the older children meet with the younger ones to share books together. It is wonderful to see our Christian values of community and compassion shown in such a meaningful way.

A few days later, the children had the pleasure of meeting author and illustrator David Shelton. In Key Stage 1, Dave created an improvised book with the children during a KS1 assembly, using their ideas to develop a character and storyline. In Key Stage 2, the children were challenged to draw two distinctive characters so the reader would not confuse them, while also thinking about their backstory and how they know each other. He was very impressed with the children's efforts. Reading is very much a priority at Norton and a real strength of the school, recognised in our Ofsted report and reflected in 90% of our Year 6 pupils meeting the expected standard in their Key Stage 2 SATs, compared to the national figure of 76%. Hearing children read individually is essential, and we are always keen to find volunteers who can come in for an afternoon or morning once a week to listen to the children read. If you have the time and would be interested, please contact the school office for further details.

Year 6 and Year 5 have both performed their class assemblies this half-term, each giving a snapshot of their learning journey so far this year. It always amazes me how much the children cover during the school day and the confidence and courage they show as they speak, dance and sing in front of an audience of children and parents.

In the classrooms, Star Class (EYFS) has been busy writing and delivering letters as part of their Jolly Postman topic. In Galaxy Class (Year 1), the children were introduced to the skill of weaving using a hula hoop as our loom. The results were very impressive and are now proudly on display. In Planet Class (Year 2), the children have really enjoyed learning about the journey from wheat to bread as part of their 'Farms' topic.

In Comet Class (Year 3), the children have been creating botanical-inspired clay slabs and bowls. They positioned twigs, flowers and leaves on clay before rolling it to create impressions. The next step will be to paint the clay using carefully selected, nature-inspired colours.

In Rocket Class (Year 4), as part of their science work, the children have been investigating whether gas has any weight. They measured a range of fizzy drinks, shook them until the bubbles disappeared, and weighed them again when flat. For some drinks this resulted in a loss of 1–2g. Excellent scientific skills were on show, including considering variables, taking repeated readings and evaluating how the test could be made more reliable.

Meteor Class (Year 5) have been writing and performing poems linked to loneliness as part of their English work. Their clarinet skills are also progressing well, and during their class assembly we enjoyed watching them sing and play to the soundtrack Mamma Mia.

In Supernova Class (Year 6), the children have travelled back in time to the early medieval period to discover how absolute power in England was fiercely contested by the Anglo-Saxons and Danish Vikings. They have learned how Viking raiders and traders became settlers and conquerors, and how the nation of England developed from the seven Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. As we approach Easter, the children are preparing to celebrate with an Easter Service at St Andrew's Church, as well as an Easter Bingo event organised by FAPONS.

If you have recently moved to the area and have school-age or pre-school children, please contact the office to arrange a school tour. We still have a few places available.

Wishing you a happy Easter.

Mrs L Sparkes



PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD on 2nd February 2026

PRESENT in the Chair: Mrs. S. Hill

Mr. B. Aket, Mr. J. Bolus, Prof. K. Jaggard, Mr. R. Lenko, Mr. G. Millen, Mr. J. Morgan, Mr. G. Walton, Mr. N. Winstanley
Mrs. J. Rowland (Clerk) LGA 1972 s12 para 40

3 members of the public

District Councillor H. Richardson,

APOLOGIES: County Councillor A. Mellen

District Councillor D. Bradbury.

1.	The Chair welcomed everyone	
2	Declarations of pecuniary and local non-pecuniary interests a) To receive declarations of pecuniary, non-pecuniary interest(s) and personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature inc. gifts of hospitality exceeding £25 - none b) To receive declarations of lobbying for planning matters on the agenda - none c)To receive requests for dispensations –none	
3	PUBLIC FORUM –to receive reports for information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the public–to receive questions and matters of concern from those in attendance Village bus service cancelled. Mrs. Hill commented Richard Winch (D.C.) had invited the Council to join a group in applying to reinstate the cancelled service, He will arrange a Teams meeting to discuss further action. Mr. Winch stated he had been part of another group and been successful in securing bus funding. Andy Mellen had forwarded information from the Public Transport Team which seemed helpful in providing funding to replace/restart lost services requiring submission of a S.O.A.P. form to access B.S.I.P. plans or local authority bus grants. These schemes provide 2 x £1.8m and 1 x £2.8m funds available for regularly based schemes to fund new bus routes. Mr. Etchells-Butler expressed concern that the Council had done nothing while the bus service slowly declined in the village with a number of elderly residents unable to travel to town. He stated the Community Bus is about 2 weeks booked up, costing £8 each way. Mrs. Hill commented other villages had also been affected by this bus cancellation. It was run by a private company who stated it was not viable. Dan’s coaches had been encouraged to continue their service but again they had stated it was not financially viable due to lack of use. The Council had carried out a survey to find who and how many would use a bus service but again there was little support. The Council had asked if Norton could be added to the bus running Elmswell to Thurston but this was rejected as it would increase the journey time. Mr. Aket questioned why route 320 was not on the subsidized routes and who makes the decision to add routes. Cllr Richardson commented on the Mid Suffolk taxi bus going along predetermined routes but it is demand based. Mr. Etchells-Butler commented on use of school buses which run everyday, but it was felt this could present a safe-guarding issue. Mrs. Hill and Mr. Aket agreed to be part of the Teams meeting being arranged. Members of the public – to receive comments submitted via email Preschool ditch and hedge. Preschool stated they had attempted to get the ditch cleared and hedge cut but could not find anyone able to do it during school holiday time. The Council agreed to help. Mr. Walton agreed to ask a contractor he knew who could possibly carry out the work during half term. 	
	REPORTS FOR INFORMATION –to receive written reports for information only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report from County Councillor Andy Mellen. Mr. Lenko commented on the mention of 20mph limits and felt Heath Road might be suitable. Report from District Councillors Harry Richardson and David Bradbury. Cllr Richardson commented that the call for sites closed at the end of January. The budget meeting will be held in February and there is likely to be an increase of 2.99%. A decision on reorganization is expected in March about whether it will be 3 or 1 authority. It had been stated the new bin collection days may change but he understood Norton’s would not. The Clerk asked about the report that Suffolk residents can now borrow a thermal camera from their local library for free to detect where heat is escaping. Cllr Richardson stated this is a new initiative.	
4	MINUTES	
	5.1 To RESOLVE minutes of Council meeting held on 5 th January 2026 are a true and correct record. Mr. Aket proposed acceptance seconded by Mr.Bolus, all agreed	
5	MATTERS ARISING	
	6.1 Bus stop hatching at crossroads – ongoing. Mr. Millen reported that a car had knocked over the bus stop sign and bent it. The Clerk had reported this to SCC who will investigate.	5

	6.2 UKPN update draft lease received. A final draft had been received to which the Clerk outlined her comments to various points. These will be conveyed to the solicitor, but left to her to decide if these were relevant to use.	Clerk												
	6.3 Thermal imaging camera. Prof. Jaggard will collect the camera and has a list of residents to visit. Unfortunately it does not work well if it is raining.	Prof. Jaggard												
	<p>6.4 Review of Stowmarket Football use of playing field. Mr. Aket reported that Mr. Morgan, Prof Jaggard and himself had met with Karen Robertson to discuss usage. They had agreed to 4 recommendations to put to the Council. Subsequently additional information had been received from the Club which he read out to the Council. Following further discussion Mr. Aket proposed the Council accept the recommendations of the working party, ie agreement to use of field to end of the season with no permanent changes, review at the end of the season, Sunday mornings only with additional bookings made with Village Hall, fee of £65 per booking to the Village Hall. It was felt the additional information received changed the working party pointers and there needed to be an agreement between all parties. The following draft agreement will be put to the FC:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreement to the use of the playing field and hall, changing rooms only, to the end of the season. 2. No permanent changes to the playing field football pitches. 3. At the end of the season, 31st May, there will be a review of the arrangements 4. Use of the facilities will be Saturday morning and Sunday mornings 9.30am – 12.30pm and Wednesday evening 6pm to 8 pm, for games and training - to be arranged with Karen. 5. A fee of £25 per pitch per session, to be proforma invoiced by Village Hall. <p>Coffee shop does not open Saturdays or Sundays or in the evening Details of the proposed maintenance of the pitch and care of the Hall required. Storage of equipment to be arranged with the Village Hall. Toilet facilities will be available when changing rooms are used. If changing rooms are not to be used, toilet facilities will need to be arranged with the Village Hall. Nets for the current goals to be supplied by the Football Club.</p>													
7.	PLANNING													
	<p>7.1 APPLICATION FOR RESERVED MATTERS - DC/26/00050 Land West Of Suffolk House (Plot 8), Ixworth Road, Norton, Application for Approval of Reserved Matters following grant of Outline Permission DC/22/01941 (following Appeal APP/W3520/W/23/3316136) Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Submission of details for Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping, Access points to be considered - Erection of 9No self-build/custom build dwellings in relation to plot 8. The Council had no comment to make.</p>													
	<p>7.2 APPROVED CONDITION(S): Land at Stanton Street, Ixworth Road, Norton DC/25/05251 Discharge of Conditions Application for DC/25/04182 - Conditions 3 (Landscaping) and 5 (Boundary treatment to neighbour to Plot 7)</p>													
	FINANCIAL MATTERS													
	<p>8.1 The following accounts were approved for payment.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Clerk's salary £624.00</td> <td>LGA1972 s112</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Messenger, £374.00</td> <td>LGA1972 s112</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BT – vhall wifi £35.94</td> <td>LGA 1972 s133</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Aubergine 262 Ltd £72.00</td> <td>LGA 1972 s142</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Compass Pest Control £375.00</td> <td>Public Health Act 1875 s164</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HMRC £210.45</td> <td>LGA1972 s112</td> </tr> </table>	Clerk's salary £624.00	LGA1972 s112	Messenger, £374.00	LGA1972 s112	BT – vhall wifi £35.94	LGA 1972 s133	Aubergine 262 Ltd £72.00	LGA 1972 s142	Compass Pest Control £375.00	Public Health Act 1875 s164	HMRC £210.45	LGA1972 s112	
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	8.2 The Clerk confirmed a loan repayment paid on 9 th Jan £11230.78 and another repayment is due 10/2/26 £2967.13													
	8.3 MSDC changes to recycling and income. Due to the changes with the household waste collection, it is envisaged that the glass and paper banks will be removed. As there was a direct payment to the P.Council from SCC this will end. Due to this, a transition fund payments for the next two years (covering 26/27 and 27/28) will be a one-off final payment of £2396 based on the average for the previous 3 years actual payments. A final payment will be made in April 2026 to cover Feb 2026 to Jan 2028.													
	8.4 The Clerk presented a budget statement and circulated the bank mandate for internet banking for approval. Councillors APPROVED both.													
	8.5 Update on Council subscription to Gov.uk. The Clerk reported she had had one online meeting concerning the design of the site. A photo or video of the village was required for the home page.	Mr. Millen												
	8.6 The Council confirmed SALC as internal auditors for the coming financial year and confirmed the Clerk as RFO													

	8.7 Mr. Walton asked for a waste bin to be positioned near pre-school. The Clerk agreed to investigate costs.	Clerk
	8.8 Prof. Jaggard met with Mr. Burt. Some of the items can be stored in the cabinet in the office, but a further cabinet is required. Councillors agreed to this order. Prof Jaggard will research and let the Clerk know which cabinet to order.	Clerk Prof.Jaggard
9.	REVIEW OF POLICIES	
	9.1 The Clerk forwarded the following policies for review: Apologies & non-attendance, Apologies for absence and disqualification, IT Policy, Data Protection Policy, general privacy policy, Financial & general risk assessment, Councillor Code of Conduct. Document and Electronic Data Retention Policy. Councillors APPROVED all policies.	
10	REORGANISATION/DEVOLUTION – no update	
11	SPEEDWATCH	
	11.1 Strategy to combat speeding – consultant led investigation – Update on highways survey & grant application. Mr. Winstanley stated he is currently trying to find grant funding to carry out this survey with the help of Cllr Richardson, who could give a portion of locality funding.	
	11.2 30mph between Norton and Stowlangtoft – Highways replied that speed limit changes require all requisite criteria to be met, after which the Community Speed and Safety Engineer is able to approve the change of speed and request an estimate for the associated costs. If this is not the case the decision lies with a panel made up of Head of Transport Strategy and cabinet member. This requires a speed limit report costing £750 plus the cost of a speed survey. The report enables the PC and CC to provide comments to support the draft report. When finalized the PC and CC can again request changes before final submission. The decision by the panel is final and only reconsidered if circumstances change. The Clerk will contact Hunston PC who are currently trying to get a speed reduction.	Clerk
	11.3 Update on new SID and pole on A1088. Mr. Lenko stated the new pole has been installed and the SID has been ordered from Westcotec.	
	11.4 Report from Speedwatch Coordinator circulated to all Councillors. Mr. Moland thanked the Council for their support and to his small team spending time on speedwatch. He will start collating the speed data, but is not allowed to store number plates. Stowlangtoft had enquired about a lorrywatch as they felt a large number of lorries are now travelling along the A1088. Norton had not previously undertaken this but Mr. Moland felt lorries could be recorded but they tend not to speed.	
12	VILLAGE HALL	
	12.1 City fibre. Mr. Walton had asked the Village Hall whether they had requested this connection. The route proposed by City Fibre is to where the old service goes and not where the ducting goes to the new route to the hall. This connection had not been requested. The Clerk will decline their offer.	
	12.2 Report from Management Committee circulated to Councillors. Noted	
13	PLAY AREAS	
	13.1 Play areas adjacent to Village Hall and Prospect Road. Swing and seat on playing field have been repaired, but Mr.Lenko felt the wooden train will need replacing very soon.	
	13.2 Gate lock. Mr. Walton to investigate replacement	Mr. Walton
14	NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN	
	14.1 Draft plan and character appraisal are awaited from Mr.Poole with a request of his approximate cost to complete the Plan. Mr. Walton asked how the call for sites would affect the NP, Mr. Winstanley stated this would need to be asked of Mr. Poole.	
15	CORRESPONDENCE	
	15.1 Clerks & Councils Direct - noted	
	15.2 Councillor details - List updated and confirmed. Phone numbers will not be shown.	
	15.3 Changes to Locality Funding - noted	
	15.4 CAB confirmed they are able to give a talk at the APM 20 th April 2026. It was agreed to ask them to attend about half hour into the meeting to allow some of the business to be completed first.	
16	Questions and Comments from Members and suggestions for next meeting.	
	16.1 Comments received about overgrown hedge along The Street causing a problem for two vehicles passing. The owner will be written to.	Clerk
17	To confirm the date of next meeting 2nd March 2026	
18	There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.58	7



Norton Salvation Army

What's on at the Army in April?

Good Friday 3 rd	Good Friday Reflections	10.30am
Easter Sunday 5 th	Easter Breakfast Church	10.45am
	(Enjoy coffee/tea/pastries in a relaxed Worship setting)	
Sunday 12 th	Morning Worship	11.00am
Sunday 19 th	Evening Praise	6.00pm
Sunday 26 th	Morning Worship	11.00am
Wednesday 1 st	Friends Cafe	2.00pm - 4.00pm
	(We are a dementia friendly group offering time out to include carers)	
Thursday 9 th	Band Rehearsal	8.00pm – 9.30pm
Thursday 16 th /30 th	Choir Rehearsal	8.00pm – 9.30pm
Thursdays	Cameo Lunches	11.45am – 1.30pm
	(3 Course Meal £6.00)	
Friday 17 th	Adult Craft Club	7.00pm – 9.00pm

Saturday 4th April

Easter Craft 10.00am – 12.00pm



Toys

Bacon

Jigsaw

puzzles



Plants

Butties

Cake Stall

Saturday 25th April

Spring Sale

10.00am – 12.00pm

Please feel free to come & join in with us at any time: You would be very welcome



Norton Baptist Church

April 2026

Check the information below for our services throughout April and beyond



By the time you read this month's edition of The Messenger the clocks will have changed and the Easter Weekend will be upon us.

Easter weekend will see a lot of activity at the Baptist church, we are joining with our friends at the Salvation Army on **Good Friday** at 10:30am and then we have our own service on **Easter Sunday**. Doors open at 10am for refreshments and the service will start at 10:30am. This will be an **All Age** service and it would be great to see as many of you as possible to celebrate one of the most important days in the church calendar.

Easter Saturday, April 4th, is also going to be busy. We are delighted to be hosting the Norton School Choir in the morning. Come and hear the children sing and enjoy craft activities and refreshments – all for free.

Our Praise and Worship services and Café Church will take place as normal this month and we will celebrate communion on the third Sunday.

We hope you have a great month and please do let us know if there is anything you want to talk about or if you would like us to pray for you or with you.



	5 th	12 th	19 th	26 th
Easter Sunday	10am			
Praise & Worship		10am		
Praise & Worship			10am	
Café Church				10am

NORTON & DISTRICT TWINNING ASSOCIATION

In case you didn't know...

Norton and District Twinning Association started in 1986 when representatives from Norton met their counterparts in Muids, a beautiful village in the Department of the Eure in Normandy, on the banks of the River Seine near Les Andeleys. They also had a mutual interest in setting up a twinning association. The rest as they say is "history" and 40 years on the two villages still enjoying a flourishing relationship.



1986 in Muids

Aside from a brief interlude for the recent pandemic, annual visits have been held alternately in Norton and Muids. Over the years there have been many memorable events held in both countries that have celebrated our two villages and their different cultures. Many families have known each other for much of that time; however more recent members have come to enjoy very successful partnerships with their French hosts.



2025 in Norton

You do not have to take on the Exchange if this is not for you. We hold events to socialise as well as raising funds for Association activities and to help local charities.

As our name suggests we extend beyond Norton to all outlying villages and communities and you can always be sure of a warm welcome, both at our events and as a potential new member.

In January of 2021 we began a successful monthly Lotto Draw with the chosen number winning half of the entry money – Should you wish to take part this can be for just one draw, or on an ongoing basis, you choose so please get in touch!



40th Anniversary

If you or your family have ever been members of the Association then please get in touch and ...



****SAVE THE DATE: 12th July 2026****
Invitations to our celebration will be sent shortly



We would love you to share your memories from the last 40 years, so please do send any pictures or stories through to us using the contact details below!



Dates for your diary:

- ❖ **23rd-27th May 2026:** Exchange visit to Muids (members only)
- ❖ **12th July:** 40th Anniversary Celebration (invitation only)
- ❖ **TBC (Sept/Oct):** Bingo Night



nortontwinning@gmail.com



Norton and District Twinning Association

DOWN OUR STREET

This month I am continuing the theme of looking at AI coloured images of Norton from days past.

Below are two views of 'Dog Corner', viewed from The Street and looking down Heath Road.



Below left is the old house which stood on the corner of Hawes Lane and Heath Road.

Below right is Heath Road looking towards the low meadows of the Black Bourn valley.



Below left is Wood House which used to stand on the extreme western boundary of the parish next to part of Pakenham wood.

Below right is an aerial view of Norton Service Station in its early days. A large house to the right has been demolished and 'Islwyn' and 'Holly Lodge' can be seen under construction. Mr Guy later extended the garage to include a camping and caravan shop which eventually became the garage. This extension was later part of John Smith and Frank Pettitt's business and is now Andy's Autofix.



Below left Norton Baptist Chapel was founded in 1834. This photo is from about 1905.

Below right is the old, thatched cottage in Woolpit Road. It was divided into homes for several families. After it was demolished, 'Norebridge' and 'Conifers' were built on the site.



Below. Ploughing with horses near Crawley Hall. Aerial view of Crawley Hall looking North. The east range of the house dates from mid C16, with further ranges added in the early C17.



Above. A view of The Street from about 1920, looking East. The Reading Room is first on the right, the next two houses were demolished leaving Bridge House, which was then one storey high (behind delivery boy's hat). Maltings Cottage is on the extreme left. Maple Cottage (next left) was later extended.



Above is a view of The Street from about 1930, looking East. Trevelyn Cottage and the shoe shop are on the left, by the boys. Just past this is Mill Farm Cottage. School Close did not exist and there was just a stile opposite the old school which led to a footpath to St Andrew's church. The fence on the right was to protect pedestrians and animals from going into a pond. (Pond Cottage is named after this. The old house which stood close to the right (by the people) has been demolished



10,048 Street and School, Norton

The Street looking West. The large house on the right has long since been demolished, 'Brambles', 'The Bungalow' and 'Applebury' were built there and in the garden. The next house is 'Mill Farm Cottage' and is still on the corner of School Close. Poplar trees to the left were felled in the 70s.

More old photos next month.

ELMSWELL GARDEN CLUB

I have been growing with peat free compost for some years, keen to do my bit to preserve peat bogs. The Head Gardener, Tom at West Dean Garden (West Sussex) has undertaken trials and shared these online (The English Gardener Magazine or on the West Dean Garden Blog). There are some great tips from Tom too on using peat free composts and I definitely need to feed and water more based on his advice.

Our next speaker on March 17th is Caroline Holmes who will be sharing her insights on Sandringham, a Royal country estate. Caroline is a garden historian and academic. All meetings start at 7.30pm in Wesley Chapel, School Road.

We are also planning a day trip over the summer to Beth Chatto's beautiful garden in Essex, more details to follow.

Non-members are always welcome and you may make some new friends. There is a small fee for non-members of £5 for each meeting, but membership for the year is a bargain at just £20 for all ten meetings.

We look forward to welcoming you in March and cultivating another year of shared garden inspiration together.

Wendy For Information contact elmswellgadmin@btinternet.com or myself on 07748 442951.

ELMSWELL HISTORY CLUB

A large appreciative audience enjoyed "Suffolk Connections with Darwin's Voyage on the Beagle", our beautifully illustrated March talk by Roy Clare, a retired Royal Navy Rear Admiral.



Our next meeting on 9th April, 7.30pm at the Wesley Hall (IP30 9EE), will welcome Mark Lawrence for his talk on Hadleigh Guildhall which comprises a fine Grade I listed building of Medieval origin containing many interesting historical and original architectural features and a Victorian Grade II addition. Mark has carried out extensive researches into many aspects of Hadleigh, and his talk will delve into the history of the 15th-Century Guildhall from when it was just a patch of land to the buildings that were put up, and sometimes fell down, over 600 years. As a group, we visited this amazing complex a few years ago, and Mark's talk will be based on a recently-published book which he co-authored, copies of which will be for sale that evening.

As always, non-members/visitors are always welcome (£6pp, cash only please), so do join us then. For further information about our History Group, please visit our website – www.elmswell-history.org.uk – or contact our Secretary, on 01359-242601

NORTON VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



AGM

at:

The Village Hall, Norton IP31 3LE

on:

Tuesday
21st April 2026
at 7.30pm

An opportunity for you to learn more about your new Village Hall and put forward your views. Refreshments will be available

For further details please contact Anna Till at: chair@nortonvillagehall.com or 07881 784219

NORTON PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

To be held on Monday 20th April 2026 at 7.30pm in Norton Baptist church.

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the APM held on 28th April 2025
3. Matters arising from the above meeting
4. Report by the Chair of the Parish Council
5. Report by County Councillor
6. Report by District Councillors





There will be a break from the business of the meeting to welcome a representative from the **Stowmarket Citizens Advice Bureau** to give a talk about the CAB work within the community.

7. Financial Report of Norton United Charity
8. Financial Report of Norton Parish Council
9. Reports from Village Organisations
10. Any Other Business.

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