



B I R C H A M T I M E S



In and around the Birchams

news@thebirchams.uk

April 2024 Issue 6

Parish Council Matters

There is a single **vacancy** on Council, which we hope to fill by co-option on 15th May – full details of the process are available on our website – <https://bircham-pc.gov.uk/> - Policies page. Please contact the Clerk if you would like more information or a chat about what is involved.

Council is organising a **litter-pick** on Friday 3rd May at 2pm. The plan is to meet at the Social Club car park, and then kits/bags etc. will be distributed and areas allocated. Please let us know if you will be attending, to help with supplies. We thank the Borough for their assistance with this.

We are now in “**audit season**”, and are preparing the figures for 2023/24 for both internal and external scrutiny. We should be approving the accounts etc. at our May meeting. We post all this information on our website, so if you are interested in how the Parish precept is spent, please look there in due course.

We seem to have had more **planning applications** recently. As this is a Borough function, we cannot inform people of when applications may affect them, but all information is on the Borough website – <https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/> . Here you can register to be kept informed of all applications local to you, and make your own representations. We hope soon to have a page on our site giving information about the whole process, and what the rules etc. are. The Parish Council is a consultee, and all our recommendations are listed in our minutes. These include reports on the development of twelve houses at the south of Great Bircham.

Two general reminders: If you are organising an event during the year, to which the whole Parish would be welcome, you can apply for funding to help with this – contact the Clerk for more information. Also, please be careful with scams – always check if you are in the slightest doubt; if the contact is genuine, they will understand if you arrange to check and call them back.

Our next meeting is on 15th May – the Annual Parish Meeting is at 7.15pm (this is the meeting of Electors, not a Council meeting) and is followed on completion by the **Annual Parish Council Meeting**. Agendas will be on the boards, and more detailed information will be available online. If any Village Group would like to make a presentation to the Parish Meeting, do let the Clerk know.

As ever, if you wish to raise any issues with Council, please contact the Clerk on clerk@bircham-pc.gov.uk or by post at 7, Glebe Avenue, Hunstanton, PE36 6BS.

Newsletter Thoughts

Welcome to the sixth issue of the *Bircham Times*. This month we cover a lot of bases from a US mid-century dining craze, via village signs, 11th-century Bircham history, a missing body, the influence of the Dutch and ending with a wild and scarcely believable sport from our county. Plus all the regular features and a new "Crafts For All". Don't be shy... tell us about your skills base.

By the way, the saxophones that adorn this page are to honour International Jazz Day on April 30. We celebrate this in our own way with a review of an iconic book about the musical genre.

Do remember that the *Bircham Times* can be delivered to parishoners electronically and is also available, thanks to the Parish Council, from its website at: <https://bircham-pc.gov.uk/2023/09/20/newsletter-archive/>



Foodie Fare

Across the pond we go this month for the comfort food dish Chicken Divan. Sounds a little odd but it was invented in the kitchens of the Divan Parisien Restaurant in New York's Chatham Hotel in the 1930s and numerous recipes have tried to replicate the taste. Wags suggest that the "divan" bit refers to the place to retire to in order to sleep the rich meal off!

CHICKEN DIVAN

Around 600g frozen broccoli
2 cups (around 250g) cooked, diced chicken
2 cans condensed cream of chicken soup (undiluted)
1 cup (240 ml) mayonnaise
1 tsp lemon juice
½ tsp curry powder
1 tablespoon butter
½ cup (55g) grated cheese
½ cup (55g) breadcrumbs



Steam the broccoli and drain. Place it with the chicken in a casserole dish. Combine mayonnaise, lemon juice, curry powder and soup. Pour over the chicken and broccoli. Melt butter and pour over breadcrumbs and mix well. Add the grated cheese and spread the mixture evenly over the top. Bake in a moderate oven for 20-25 minutes until heated through and browned on top.

Wendy

CAMPBELL'S SOUP

The mention of condensed soup in the recipe above brings back memories of the Campbell's Soup Factory in King's Lynn, especially its iconic red tower that could be seen for miles across the Fens and indicated you were nearing journey's end. Production of soups moved to King's Lynn in 1959 and ended with a bang when the tower was brought crashing to earth on January 15, 2012, five years after the plant's closure. Its existence is still marked by signage just outside Tesco's car park.

In the Garden

Now is a great time for really getting your vegetable patch going. Growing your own food can be so rewarding: 15 years ago I'd never grown a thing, coming from a very industrial part of Manchester. I now have four reasonably sized raised beds which were still providing fresh vegetables until February. You can't rush nature so there are things that can go in now and things that need to wait. I also have an organic approach so I don't grow things that bugs, pigeons and caterpillars like.

I love broad beans and you can get these in straightaway. Mine went in some weeks ago. Get an express variety and you could be eating fresh beans by June. Harvest the lot and freeze the surplus then get a second crop in. They also do very well in the shade under my big tree. My spuds are already in. The very safe Maris Piper variety — the chip shop favourite — is easy to grow and when harvested can be stored in sacks in cupboards right up to Christmas.

My garlic went in last November so you'll have missed the boat on that for this year and my carrot seeds are sown. I'm lucky to have raised beds as carrot fly don't get off the ground high enough to attack the crop. If you are planting at ground level then get a fly-resistant variety. My leeks are also down. The classic variety is Musselburgh. Leeks are great. Nothing likes to eat them except us and you can leave them in the ground right through the winter and just harvest as you need them.

Finally rocket. Birds and insects eat almost every type of salad leaf going but the peppery taste of rocket puts them off. It is quick growing and as you take it put more seeds in. A small patch will give you leaves through to September.

Andrew



From the Annals

1849

Norfolk News – Saturday December 22 DOCKING.

"REPORTED MURDER. – There has been considerable excitement in this locality, in consequence of a rumour which has been in circulation during the past week, that a man named Mendham, of Bircham Newton, who died some days ago, had, a short time previous to his death, made some important disclosures to a neighbour, respecting his having assisted, about four years since, to bury the body of a man (said to have been murdered) in a wood at Summerfield, under an ash tree. The report further states, that he took no part in the murder, further than assisting to conceal the body; and two other persons were said to be implicated in the transaction, one of whom is transported, and the other dead. It has not transpired who the murdered man was, nor that any person was missing at that time; but the report was credited to an extent sufficient to induce several persons to search the wood. Nothing, however, has been found indicative of such an occurrence having ever taken place."

Crafts for All: Temperature Scarves

We're a bit smitten with temperature scarves (or blankets). They take a bit of planning but are some of the most colourful and creative things you can make... simple too... and record the weather over the course of a year. (Sorry Bryan!)

The idea is that every day of the year has a recorded temperature, say 5°C degrees in January and 23°C in July. You should make a note of these. Next, you apply a wool colour to each band of temperature, say an Arctic white for 0-1°C, a very pale blue for 2-3°C, a creamier colour for 4-5°C... all the way up to, say, a deep purple for 32-33°C. The fun is in colour choosing. Then you knit or crochet your scarf (easier) or blanket (more difficult). Depending on the size of the finished article, knit or crochet 1-4 rows, say, in the colour that represents that day's temperature. Since UK weather is so erratic you end up with a lovely colour array (living in Los Angeles... not so much!).



You don't even have to do Bircham or start in January. Maybe a gift for a friend living somewhere else so they have a record and memory of the past 12 months.

Try the following links for inspiration and stats for the year thusfar:

<https://www.lovecrafts.com/en-gb/c/article/temperature-blanket-climate-blanket>

<https://temperature-blanket.com/>

Dates for the Diary

Bircham Windmill summer season. Tearooms open daily 9-4pm, Bakery and attractions open daily 10-4pm

KL Stars speedway season, Adrian Flux Arena 01553 771 111 for events
<http://www.kingslynn-speedway.com/>

King's Lynn Guided Walks Tues to Sat @2pm from Saturday Market Place. £5

Thursford Collection Summer Season, Sun-Wed, 11-4pm 01328 878477

Houghton Hall and Gardens reopen (Suns, Weds, Thurs). Antony Gormley *Time Horizon* exhibition runs Apr 21-Oct 31

Sandringham House and Gardens Mar 23-Oct 11 (exc July 19-Aug 4)

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Apr 15 Bingo at the Social Club. Eyes down 7.30pm

Apr 16 onwards Baden Powell fishing smack cruise trips on the Great Ouse.
<https://floatourboat.co.uk/boork-a-trip/>

Apr 18-29 (not 23 or 24), Tulips for Tapping at a local site.

Apr 19 Crafty Burger Van at the Social Club 5.30-8pm

Apr 20 Car Wash at Bircham Windmill from 10am

Apr 20 Jams and Pickles Stall at Bircham Windmill

Apr 27 *The Great Escaper* (12A) 7.30pm at Amy Robsart Hall, Syderstone £4

Apr 28 RAF Bircham Newton Heritage Centre 10-4pm

Apr 28 Dawn Chorus at Pensthorpe 5-8am £19.95 (£29.95 to inc breakfast)

Apr 30 Bircham in Bloom, 9.30am at Bircham Stores



Digital Digest

For anyone mesmerised by population (and other) statistics

Worldometer... It's hypnotic, watching the world population tick on by at an astounding rate. When we wrote this entry it stood at 8.102 billion, by the time you read this, who knows! The site is full of forecasts, milestones and you can filter by country. Did you know that it's estimated that 106 billion people have been born since the dawn of time, making the current world population equal to 6 per cent of those who have ever lived on Earth? More soberly, 30,000 people will die of hunger today and some three-quarters of a million computers will be produced in the same 24-hour period.

<https://www.worldometers.info/>

For serious web researchers digging for lost materials

Ever wanted to return to a webpage that no longer exists or to view a previous version of a webpage? Then try the Wayback Machine. This service has been archiving the World Wide Web since 1996. With a current store of more than 866 billion webpages, there's a good chance that vital piece of content from the past that you seek can be brought back into the present.

<https://web.archive.org/>

For local planning insights

The local council planning portal that allows you to keep an eye on new building proposals.

https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20077/planning_applications/111/search_and_track_planning_applications



Conscious of the fact that we review books and websites, we thought we should add another string to our bow and include podcasts and apps. These three caught our eye recently.

Crushed by Margaret Cabourn-Smith

Podcast available on Spotify, Apple, Amazon music, etc.

Currently running at more than 50 episodes, *Crushed* is where funny people talk to podcaster and actor Margaret Cabourn-Smith about their crushes and unrequited loves. Confessional, silly and amusing.

Aurorawatch

It's rare that the Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis) are visible from the UK — less rare in Scotland, much rarer in England — hence all those ads inviting you to Norway to see them. However, on occasion they are even visible from Norfolk.

Lancaster University runs a service that monitors magnetometer readings in order to alert people when a sighting might be possible. The previous best chance was on March 25, but sadly the cloud cover in our area ruled out any such possibility.

There are apps for Android and iPhone that carry those alerts.

<https://aurorawatch.lancs.ac.uk/alerts/#apps>

Hut 33

A spoof Bletchley Park code-cracking comedy first broadcast on BBC Radio 4. The three series are now available from Amazon Audible. It's very, very silly, full of stereotypes and with a key turn by Olivia Colman as a deranged Polish character Mika, who threatens to perpetrate violence at every turn.



History Corner

VILLAGE SIGNS

At a speech given by Prince Albert (later King George VI) to a Royal Academy banquet in the spring of 1920 he remarked upon the civic pride and artistic endeavour that could be engendered by communities creating their own village signs. Not just fingerposts but full-blooded signs that extolled the virtues of English villages (Sandringham had a few). The *Daily Mail* took up the artistic cudgels and ran a competition, with awards totalling more than £2,000. An exhibition of 27 of the best entrants was opened at Australia House in October 1920 by the (now-elevated) Duke of York. Sadly, there is no evidence of the Great Bircham sign; the nearest finalist came from Swaffham. The winning entry was created by Percy Matthews of Leytonstone, London, for a design for St Peter's in Thanet, Kent. <https://www.reddit.com/media?url=https%3A%2F%2Fi.redd.it%2Fsz9rfsi1bce41.jpg>

Countryside Lore

THUNDERSTONES AND HAG STONES

In ancient folklore thunderstones (flints, axeheads, fossils, and so on) were thought to be the products of a lightning storm, rained down upon the land, and were thus imbued with mystical properties. Farmers would guard against their milk souring in thundery weather by placing a thunderstone on a windowsill or doorstep.

Another magical stone is the hag stone or adderstone, a glassy flint with a natural hole through it. The hag stone was said to ward off malevolent witches (the hags), who had designs on farmers' horses in particular.

Curl Up With a Good Book... Nice!

But Beautiful: A Book About Jazz Geoff Dyer (1991)

If you appreciate jazz (and the masters at the pinnacle of its unique appeal), you will love this book. Likewise, if you just appreciate writing at its most creative and imaginative you will also love this little gem of a book.

It consists of a series of vignettes on the creators of jazz: Ben Webster, Bud Powell, Charles Mingus, Thelonious Monk; these chapters are linked together by snippets of life on the road with Duke Ellington and his driver Harry. Taking place against a backdrop of colour bars and the most appalling racism in the US.

The writing is freestyle, improvised and elegant as is the best of jazz. Sometimes laugh-out-loud funny, sometime eye-opening informative, sometimes tear-jerkingly tragic. The chapter on Chet Baker, one of my personal all-time jazz heroes, encompasses all of these in a breathless roller coaster.

Neither fact nor fiction, it is a book that is difficult to categorise. Despite being written more than 30 years ago, it remains one of the very best books about jazz and one of the best of any genre. Read it, you won't regret it!

Terry

Dates for the Diary

May 1, 5 *Carmen* (from Royal Opera House), Corn Exchange Cinema, 6.45pm/2pm
May 2 Bircham Banter at St Mary's, 2.30-4pm
May 2 Voting for Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk, Social Club 7am-10pm. Photo ID needed
May 3 Litter pick. Meet at Social Club car park 2pm.
May 3 Crafty Burger Van at the Social Club 5.30-8pm
May 4-6 Sandringham Food, Craft & Wood Festival
May 4 *Sir Tim Rice – My Life in Musicals* @ King's Lynn Corn Exchange 7.30pm
May 5 Recipharm Grand East Anglia Run (GEAR) 10K, King's Lynn from 9.30am
May 6 BANK HOLIDAY
May 8 Houghton Festival Residents' Zoom Meeting 6pm See p10 for details
May 8 *Paul Young – Behind the Lens* at Princess Theatre, Hunstanton. 7.30pm
May 11 Hunstanton Fun Dog Show 11am at Glebe House School. <https://www.thebarkingbugle.co.uk/the-hunstanton-fun-dog-show/>
May 11 The Manfreds at Princess Theatre, Hunstanton. 7.30pm
May 12 RAF Bircham Newton Heritage Centre 10-4pm
May 12 Brass Band Concert, Sandringham, 2-4pm
May 17 Crafty Burger Van at the Social Club 5.30-8pm
May 18 Plant Lovers' Day @ Creake Abbey, 10-4pm
May 18 King's Lynn Cocktail Festival @ Duke's Head Balloom, 7-11pm
May 26 Pageant of Motoring at Sandringham 10-5pm
May 27 BANK HOLIDAY
May 27-28 Hanseatic Festival of Watersports, King's Lynn
May 31 Afternoon Talk: The Allied Landings on D-Day, Lynn Museum, 2-3pm



Bircham Over Time

The Birchams are first properly documented in the Domesday Book of 1086, as Bircham Newton, Bircham Tofts and Bircham (well actually they appear in their Latin forms) and of course the object of the Domesday Book was to itemise the ownership of land and to count villagers, acreage, and farm animals. Almost 750 places in the county are named. Saxon Norfolk was handed over in the years after the Norman Conquest to many French nobles for services offered to William I and the new ownership of land was duly noted. Actually the details for Norfolk and Suffolk were entered into a separate volume, the Little Domesday.

Norfolk was divided into "hundreds" and the one we belong to was Docking. Eleven places are noted there: Bircham Tofts was the smallest with just 10 households, Bircham Newton had 19, and Bircham 21. They were dwarfed by Titchwell and Stanhoe, and somewhat surprisingly by Shernborne with 64. Top of the list came Fring with 74.5 households. Docking had only 20.

The Tofts was owned by Bishop Odo of Bayeux; Newton was owned by Ralph of Beaufour; and Great Bircham by Ralph of Beaufour and William of Ecouis — they all replaced men with Saxon/Scandinavian names. In fact Ralph owned a lot of Norfolk (he was thought to be especially closely associated to William the Conqueror). Odo was believed to have fought at the Battle of Hastings and appears on the Bayeux Tapestry.

Current Bircham — Who Are We?

Row forward to the last three censuses and we appear to have a shrinking community. According to the last three censuses (2001, 2011 and 2021), we've dropped from a populace of 586 to 439. We also have fractionally more men than women (224/215) living here across the three communities.

The age profile is also interesting. To put it bluntly: we're elderly! And, while there are a number of youngsters, there are relatively few people of working age (at least at the bottom end of the spectrum). Here's the details:

<i>Aged</i>	<i>Individuals</i>	<i>Aged</i>	<i>Individuals</i>
80+	34	30-39	27
70-79	82	20-29	23
60-69	87	10-19	46
50-59	65	0-9	30
40-49	45		

Water-Aid Spring Lunches Update

A big thank you to everyone who attended the lunches, and thanks also to those who kindly sent donations. In total we raised £345 for Water-Aid.

We very much appreciate your support.

Sue, John & Sally

Bircham Social Club

We welcomed Pete Elliott back behind the bar after a three-month break in Australia. He was greatly missed but the Club was fortunate to have several other "volunteer" bar and maintenance persons to keep trading during his absence. The two bar rooms have now been named "Bowman's Bar" and "Chelle's Bar" in honour of President Paul and Treasurer Michelle, both of whom passed away in late 2023.

Bingo nights are continuing into the summer months and we are looking forward to the coming season when both cricket teams will be in action. The Crafty Burger Van is visiting every other Friday 5:30-8:30pm, offering a varied menu of meat and vegetarian options. Other entertainment evenings are planned for the coming months. Allcomers welcome!



Norfolk Dialect

This month we look at how the several waves of Dutch and Flemish immigrants into the county over the centuries have influenced the Norfolk dialect.

The Norfolk coast, being easily accessible from Holland, was an obvious destination for those from the Low Countries fleeing from religious persecution or looking to make a new life. As well as the larger ports, places such as Blakeney, Burnham, Cley, Hunstanton and Wells all saw regular trading vessels from the Low Countries.

In the 16th century Elizabeth I positively encouraged Dutch weavers to settle here, believing that their skills would provide a boost to the economically critical woollen industry. As well as making significant contributions to weaving and the woollen industry, they also left their mark in other areas, such as architecture, printing, shipping, fishing and land drainage. No surprise then that their presence was, and still is, evident in the local version of the English language.

Examples of some Norfolk dialect words of Dutch origin that survive right up until today are:

crowd	to push
dwile	cloth (see page 10)
fye out	clean out
plain	town/village square
push	spot/boil



As well as vocabulary, the "Strangers", as the 16th-century lot were known, may have affected grammar too. For any grammarians out there, specifically how verbs are conjugated for the third-person singular form. To put that in simple terms, in Norfolk dialect you would say "he go" instead of "he goes". Over the 16th and 17th centuries, the old *eth* form, "he goeth", died out to be replaced by today's "he goes". But, peculiarly, in the Norfolk dialect neither ending is used: it is simply "he go". This form appears only in East Anglia with the theory that it was due to the influence of the Dutch settlers.

LR

Help Wanted: Bircham Lakes

Bircham angling lake has a special place in my heart. I have spent countless blissful hours waiting at its shores amidst a blanket of birdsong for my float to disappear into its depths behind a fearsome perch.

I am now preparing an article about the lake for an angling magazine. Unfortunately, many of the folk who knew about the site's history are now fishing the ponds of Paradise and their knowledge has gone with them. I was therefore wondering whether any of the residents of Bircham can remember anything about the original digging out of the lake and the changes that have been made since? If anyone can help, could they please contact me at enterpriseio@btinternet.com. I am sure that a glass of something refreshing at the King's Head would be a suitable reward.

Adrian Riley



VILLAGE SCREEN CINEMA
at Amy Robsart Village Hall, Syderstone



The Great Escaper (12A) showing April 27 at 7.30pm

A true life story of near-nonagenarian Bernie (Michael Caine), who skips the country to join D-Day commemorations in France. Irene, his wife (Glenda Jackson), waits stoically at home. £4 per film (advance booking/pay on door).

Contact 01485 578171 or syderstonecinema_ARVH@outlook.com for further details.



MOBILE POST OFFICE

The scheduled stop at Bircham Social Club, Church Lane are as follows.

Monday	10:45-11:30
Tuesday	10:45-11:30
Thursday	10:45-11:30
Friday	12:10-12:55

MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE

Friday April 26/May 24
Stops at:

Monks Close	15:15-15:35
Village Shop	15:45-16:00
Social Club	16:05-16:15
Windmill Hill	16:20-16:35

BUS 33/33A

To Hunstanton (from King's Head): Mon-Fri
07:36 10:36 13:36 17:16; Sat 8:21 10:36
13:36 15:41
Return from Stand A Bus Station

To Lynn (from Bircham Stores): Mon-Fri
07:22 09:23 12:23 15:38 15:43; Sat 09:23
12:23 15:38 17:08
Return from Stand E Bus Station

GREAT MASSINGHAM AREA COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME

Offering a reliable door-to-door car service,
7 days a week for anyone without personal
transport. Book on 01485 520823
Please give at least 2 days' notice

Bircham Weather

The succession of wet months finally came to an end in March when just 35mm of rain fell and we have to go back to June 2023 to find another one with below average rainfall. It was slightly warmer too with an average maximum temperature of 11.8°C in spite of it beginning on a decidedly chilly note. In fact, up until the 11th the temperature only managed to breach 10°C during two days with a maximum of 6.4°C on the 3rd followed by an air frost and minimum of -0.2°C on the 4th. The low temperatures were sustained by an easterly wind that blew for a good part of this period but from the 12th it was all change to the more familiar Atlantic airstream with a warmer feel.

Of course this brought with it a more unsettled weather pattern, particularly during the run up to Easter when the 23rd and 24th saw a NW gale along with the 28th being the wettest day of the month when 6.4mm of rain fell. However, Good Friday and the Saturday brought mainly dry conditions with sunny periods and a temperature peaking at 14.8°C, before rain and a high of just 11.4°C returned for Easter Day. A curate's egg maybe?

Bryan

Bircham in Bloom

Bloomers' have been active since the last meeting. Primulas have been planted around the War Memorial and in the Bus Shelter planters, and the roses in the Jubilee Garden have been pruned. We have plans to plant cineraria near the entrance to the church, buddleia and climbers in the playing field entrance, and some native plants in the Fring Triangle.

Huge thanks go to Richard, who has used his pressure washer to great effect on the signs by the road entrances to the village.

New members are always welcome, particularly now that Spring has arrived and there is lots of work to do! Please join us if you can at 9.30am on Tuesday April 30 at Bircham Stores.

Fakenham Men's Probus Club

"Fakenham Mens' Probus Club is a monthly lunch club for retired, semi-retired and soon to be retired men from all walks of professional, business and executive life." They meet on the second Monday of every month at the Gallow Fakenham Sports Centre. They provide talks (recent ones have been on the Lusitania and How to be a Roman Empress) and lunch and socialising of course.

They are welcoming new members: see www.fakenhamprobus.org.uk
or tel 01328 887466



Bircham Banter

Next Banter session is at St Mary's, Great Bircham on Thursday May 2 from 2-30 to 4pm. Do come along for a relaxed chat, drinks and quite possibly some cake (!) among friends.

Sue

Speedwatch (Part 2)

As most residents know, there is a team of volunteers that conducts Speedwatch sessions in the village, normally four sessions per month. Most are conducted at The Spinney close to the south end of the village, since this is the location with the maximum flow of traffic. However, we also do sessions at The Pond on Stanhoe Road and recently we tried a site on Docking Road, in response to a request from a local resident. All positions have to be approved by the police.

Our objective is obviously to slow down traffic and make our village a safer place in which to live. Also, the more information we can feed back to Norfolk Police the greater chance we have of getting more measures taken to reduce traffic speeds. We have succeeded in getting a Sam2 sign which flashes when a speeding vehicle passes. This is moved around to various locations in the village. The camera does not record registration numbers and cannot therefore be used to prosecute speeding motorists. Ultimately, we would like to have a speed camera that is directly linked to the police so that prosecutions can be effected.

So, what are the conclusions from our speed watch efforts?

- 30 As a general rule, we find in our speed watch sessions that approaching 10% of motorists drive at over 34mph. This percentage may have dropped slightly over the past year or so.
- 30 This % drops at times when we get long convoys of traffic through the village. This is particularly noticeable in the summer with holiday traffic.
- 30 However, the Sam2 records show that as much as 20% of traffic through the village is travelling at over 34mph. This suggests that when we are doing the speedwatch, with required warning signs out, traffic is going more slowly.
- 30 On our sessions offending vehicles are recorded and the results of each session are passed back to the police for action.
- 30 In Docking Road, we get virtually no offenders travelling north (after the sharp bend on the junction with Stanhoe Road) but with those travelling south, after the reduction from the 40mph limit down to 30mph, we get closer to 20% of offenders.
- 30 Many motorists greet us with a friendly wave. However, we do also get a small number of angry motorists who stop and express negative views on our efforts. If that gets in any way aggressive we are obliged to report it to the police, who do take firm action.
- 30 The rate of offenders per hour on our sessions is one of the highest in Norfolk.

Any feedback from residents is, of course, welcome. Please contact
Hugh Kemsley hughkemsleyuk@gmail.com 07770 742386 Speedwatch Co-ordinator.

Stanhoe & Barwick WI

Our May meeting is a Members'-only Social, but you are most welcome to join us in June for:
Thursday June 6: Lizzie Scott, "Life as a 1930s scullery maid at Blickling Hall".

Our charge is £5, which includes refreshments. Our numbers have increased recently with three new members from the Birchams. If interested in joining them and us, please contact Valerie (01485 576261) for further details.

St Mary's 100 Club Draw

Please contact John or Sally on 01485 779669 or email lsallyjohn@gmail.com for details of how to enter each month's draw

APRIL RESULTS: 1st prize no. **82**; 2nd prize no. **13**.



Back Page Sports Report

DWILE FLONKING: the true meaning of sporting endeavour

A lesser-known sport but one nevertheless associated with (East) Norfolk is the strangely named dwile flonking. Essentially a pub sport, it seems to have evolved in the 1960s and centres on a group or gathering smacking each other around the face with beer-soaked cloths. These men (well, obviously it's men!) are accompanied, musically, by accordions. It has shades of Morris dancing (there are sticks – drivellers – to carry the cloths on), linked with shrovetide football and even hints of The Wicker Man. Rules appear to be, well..., arbitrary, but with more than a passing nod to musical chairs. That is, the music stops, which is the signal for the unwary to be flonked. The loosening of the rules may be derived from the effects of having drunk said beer beforehand, one cannot tell, but inebriation is no barrier to participation; it is, frankly, unavoidable. Teams of twelve, dressed in pork pie hats, with trousers gathered at the knee with string and smoking clay pipes (honestly, we're not making this up) persist until exhaustion takes hold.

BIRCHAM CRICKET CLUB

Junior Cricket, held every Friday on the playing field.

Age 11 and under (soft or hard ball) – 5.30-6.30pm; 11 and over (hard ball) – 6-7.30pm
£3 per session – all welcome, and no commitment.

Tea/coffee/cold drinks; ice creams! See our Facebook page @birchamcricket

CAR WASH – April 20 from 10am at Bircham Windmill

Leave your car with our willing volunteers while you stock up on bread and buns! We'll be setting up with our sponges to raise funds for the cricket nets – thanks to Elly and Stevie for allowing us to use their facilities.

HUNSTANTON SOAP BOX DERBY

Teams are invited to register for the annual soapbox derby to be held in Hunstanton on Sunday September 22, 11am-5pm. Teams of up to 4 can enter and there are four age categories: under 13, under 16, adult, and veterans (50+). Entry fees range from £20-£25. There's also a 'Concours d'elegance' award for the best-looking kart. Could budding engineers and daredevils in Bircham submit a team (or more) for this event? A great way to put the Birchams on the map!!

For more information, see https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/news/article/1624/on_your_marks_get_set_go_its_time_for_teams_to_register_to_race_in_the_hunstanton_soap_box_derby_2024

Houghton Festival

Houghton Festival is scheduled to take place between August 8-11 and concessionary tickets are available to local residents at www.houghtonfestival.co.uk/residents. Note that there will be a small amount of traffic disruption at the time. The organisers are holding a meeting over Zoom for local residents who have any questions. The date is May 8, at 6pm, and the Zoom meeting link is <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87467064361?pwd=twRRh4a6LTSYHJmqkSGHdaXLB5mMin.1>

Thanks

Last but by no means least, we're tendering thanks hither and thither. First up, another successful couple of trips were made to Houghton Hall in March to take a look at the records there. Our very grateful thanks on behalf of all who have gone over the past few months to Lord Cholmondeley, for not only the wonderful gesture of making the documents available to all but also his interest in the villagers and for his fine hospitality. Second up is, of course, Hugh Rayner, who organised the visits, providing the connection to Lord Cholmondeley and for... well... just being there. Your hard work is much appreciated.