



Parish Council Matters

At the July meeting we welcomed our new County Councillor, Julie Costley. She has an interest in speeding and highways issues, which is keeping her busy in many parishes including ours!

The Council's financial position remains reasonably healthy and so we were able to fund the resurfacing of the Tofts trod by the County Highways Department. A complete solution to the drainage problems with installation of new drains has proved to be prohibitively expensive but this new surface of crushed asphalt and better weed control will be an improvement.

From three competitive tenders, we committed to having a tarmac area laid at the bottom of the road track leading to the playing field. We also discussed the siting of two additional bus stops in the centre of Great Bircham. These will have stop signs and a kerb and pavement for safe access by wheeled chairs and buggies.

Would you be willing to serve the village as a parish councillor? There are still vacancies and the broader the range of experience on the Council the better. Full details are available on the PC website.

The next meeting of the Parish Council is on **Wednesday 30th September**, starting at **7.30pm** in **Bircham Social Club**.

If you wish to discuss a Parish matter, please attend the meeting or write to the Clerk.

Email: clerk@bircham-pc.gov.uk

Post: Hall Farm, Sedgeford Road, Docking, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE31 8LJ

Website: bircham-pc.gov.uk

Newsletter Thoughts

We've a nice little line in stories about eggs this month but have chosen a cooling dessert for summer – more usually associated with the winter months – that doesn't have them in: Portuguese rice pudding. We've a review of the previously trailed *Mythos* by Stephen Fry, since thanks to the epic Christopher Nolan blockbuster *The Odyssey* we're on a Greek-themed hot summer. And talking of scorching summers, we revisit an explosive incident in Lynn from that historic summer of 1976.

It's only two minutes since the end of the football World Cup, but the new 2026/7 season is now upon us. We're crossing our fingers for a good nine months for the Linnets. We've also got lots of news about fun days out that should see us all through to the end of this summer.

Note: should you be organised and have the Lynx 33 bus timetable to Lynn (as published in this rag) pinned to your noticeboard, then please be aware the timetable has changed again! Please switch to the new version on page 8. Buses to Hunstanton remain unchanged, save the fact that the Saturday service starts later than the weekday one.

Do remember that the *Bircham Times* can be delivered to parishioners by email. You can email us at news@thebirchams.uk to request that (or for any other matter). In addition, we publish, in advance of the paper copy and in Full Colour, on the 15th of every month on our website: www.thebirchams.uk



UK Government Emergency Alert

Well that alert around 7pm on Friday August 14 certainly startled some people. At least I wasn't driving around a five-lane roundabout at the time, like one complainant. And I didn't drop my dinner, as many did due to the time of day. Sounds like it was "interesting" if you were on a train or in a theatre/cinema, as the alerts weren't completely synchronised, so reportedly carried on for up to 40 minutes in those scenarios. In Wales, the Welsh version was received before the English, so learning the language might save your life seems to be the conclusion, if you happen to live there. Given that the warning was to alert us to the danger of setting fire to our tinder-dry country, I particularly liked one person's comment that the alert startled him so much that he dropped his lit cigarette (a little poetic licence going on there, I think).

GEEK WARNING – the rest of this article may cause you to glaze over. Unless you have geek tendencies, feel free to move along.

Personally, I didn't recognise the sound or associate it with the phone that was buried among a load of other stuff. I thought maybe some piece of equipment was warning me that it was about to blow up due to the current unfeasibly high temperatures. Or maybe we'd had another brown-out that triggered the UPS. We had to acquire an uninterruptible power supply (UPS) to keep the *Bircham Times* server running during the fairly frequent power outages we get in the Birchams – just a second or so is enough to knock out a sensitive electronic device. In the past couple of weeks, the UPS alarm has gone off twice due to brown-outs. In a black-out, the power goes off completely. During a brown-out, the power stays on but the voltage drops below the recognised limit. Unless the drop is significant, most things keep working, as they can work within quite a wide voltage range, so you would not normally notice at all.

Many of you will remember when the UK mains was nominally referred to as 240 volts. Then, in the 1990s, to harmonise with Europe, who were nominally 220 volts, we dropped ours to 230 volts. That meant manufacturers could build electrical equipment that would confidently work in both the UK and Europe. When we changed to 230V we also widened the tolerance from 6% to 10%, meaning the voltage you get in your supply should be between 216 and 253 volts. There is a proposal to change that to 207-253 volts, which would fully align with Europe. In which case our UPS alarm may be sounding rather more frequently!

Wells Festival of Literature

This is your advance warning that tickets are now on sale for the week-long Wells Festival of Literature, the region's premier festival about books. As ever, there are numerous speakers, including talks with Jonathan Dimbleby, Sara Wheeler, Oz Clarke, Kate Williams, Dan Cruickshank and Lady Hale, all discussing their latest written endeavours. Standard tickets are on sale for £12.50 per session (£10 for Friends of WFL). For the full list of attendees and ticketing see: <https://wellsfestivalofliterature.org.uk/>



Dersingham Cinema



Films are shown monthly at 7.30pm at Dersingham Village Centre, opposite St Nicholas' Church in Manor Road. The price of entry is £6 (for under-16s, £3). Entry includes tea, coffee, squash. Bar drinks available.



Tuesday August 25 *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (PG) starring Audrey Hepburn and George Peppard. The 1961 classic romantic weepy based on a Truman Capote novella.

Tuesday September 29 *The Roses* (15) starring Olivia Colman and Benedict Cumberbatch. Life seems easy for picture-perfect couple Theo and Ivy: successful careers, a loving marriage, great kids. However, a tinderbox of fierce competition and hidden resentments soon emerge when Theo's career nosedives and Ivy's own ambitions take off.



Dow Chemical Explosion

The long hot summer of 1976 wasn't just memorable for the unyielding heat but in Lynn it was the date of an industrial chemical explosion at the Dow factory on June 27.

At approximately 5.10pm on that Sunday there was an explosion within the Clopidol plant that killed a 24-year-old worker and caused extreme damage to the site, scattering debris far and wide. Mercifully, the explosion caused no damage or injuries further afield than the immediate environs. The explosion was caused by a detonation of drying Zoalene at a temperature of around 120°C. Zoalene was a poultry feed additive; just the word sounds dangerous to us! Damage to the plant was estimated at £1m.

An electrical sub-station was buried in the blast. There were also two petrol storage facilities nearby; and of more concern there were inhabited cottages close to the plant and two schools within three-quarters of a mile. There were then, as there are today, bungalows along Estuary Road and homeowners were quite rightly anxious about their siting, especially since the factory had largely grown up around them.

Debate raged in the pages of the local papers over the future of the plant and a campaign was launched to have it closed down. However, as was noted at the time, there were – as well as the aforementioned petrol storage units – other chemical facilities in the area in addition to timber yards and closing them all down was never considered an option.

And if the name Dow seems familiar... for those with long memories it was also the company that ultimately became responsible for the clean up and compensation after the Union Carbide gas leak at Bhopal in India in 1984 that led to thousands of deaths and more than half a million injuries.

Seasonal Fire Precautions

Your annual reminder that the ground is currently tinder dry and extremely flammable. For the time-being, please avoid bonfires (certainly unattended ones), barbecues, discarded matches and cigarettes, discarded glass items and so on.

Our closest fire stations are at Sandringham, Heacham and Massingham. They are on-call manned stations, meaning that firefighters are available in their homes or workplaces rather than at a fire station, though like their full-time colleagues they are trained to use the various appliances. There are vacancies at all three for on-call firefighters. Recruitment dates take place regularly throughout the year and naturally full training, uniform and an "annual on-call fee" is provided. If interested, you can apply via the following link.

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/oncall>

Dates for the Diary

Bircham Windmill 10-4pm

RAF Bircham Newton

10-4pm (alt Suns)

RAF Sculthorpe 10-4pm (1st Sun month til Nov)

Anmer Social Club Coffee, cake and chat, Mondays 10-12. Contact 07947 580555

Snettisham Park Daily, 10-4pm

Houghton Hall & Grounds

May 2 until Oct 4

Sandringham House and gardens from Mar 28

Aug 15 Adults Only Date Night, Pensthorpe 6-9pm, from £9.95

Aug 16 Pentney Lakes Car Show 10-4pm

Aug 16 Battle of the Bands, Hunstanton, 12-6pm

Aug 20 Viking Warrior School Workshop, Lynn Museum, 10.30-12 or 1-2.30pm, £5

Aug 21 *Twelfth Night* at Burnham Deepdale, 7pm, £15/£9.50

Aug 22 Frontline Festival at the Walks, KL, Fire, Rescue, Police, 10-5pm

Aug 23 40s/50s Weekend, Tues Market Place, 11-4pm

Aug 27 Family Fun Day, Hunstanton

Aug 29 Summer Gift Fair, Creakle Abbey

Aug 29 Merchants Market, Tues Market Place, KL, 9-3pm

Aug 29 Creatures of the Night (adults only), Pensthorpe, 7.45-10.45pm, from £16.95

Aug 29 Hunstanton Craft Fair, Town Hall, 10-4pm

Aug 30 Music in the Market Place, KL, 11-4pm

Aug 30-31 RAF Bircham Newton Open Day 10-4pm

Aug 30 Ride N Norfolk @ Fakenham, 15, 25, 36, 52, 66 or 100 miles



Foodie Fare

PORTUGUESE RICE PUDDING (ARROZ DOCE)

This traditional Portuguese dessert can be eaten warm, but is usually served cold, so perfect for a summer's day.

Many versions of the recipe call for the addition of egg yolks to provide extra richness, but we are keeping things simple here and leaving them out.

This recipe should provide enough for four individual servings.

INGREDIENTS

100 g short-grain rice (such as paella, risotto, pudding or similar)
350 ml water
650 ml milk (preferably whole fat)
180 g granulated sugar
Peel of 1 lemon (keep the pieces large for easy removal)
Pinch of salt
2 cinnamon sticks
1 tsp vanilla essence
Cinnamon powder for garnish



METHOD

Add the water, lemon peel, a cinnamon stick and a pinch of salt to a saucepan: a heavy-based one helps to avoid burning. Bring the water to a boil then reduce to a low heat, remove the cinnamon stick and stir in the rice.

Simmer the rice for around 12 minutes or until most of the water is absorbed. Stir from time to time to keep the rice from sticking.

In a separate pan, add the milk, vanilla essence and a cinnamon stick. Bring to a boil, then take off the heat and remove the cinnamon stick.

When the rice is cooked, add the milk to the rice pan. Cook on a medium-low heat, stirring occasionally for about 20 to 25 minutes.

Remove the lemon peel and stir in the sugar. Cook for around a further 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is thick and creamy.

Pour into four individual serving dishes and allow to cool, then decorate with cinnamon powder.

LR

It's not like the UK or Europe in general can lay claim to owning rice puddings. In their own different ways they appear in myriad world cultures, such as "eight treasure" in China, where a mound of rice pudding is surmounted with beautiful decorations of fruits, nuts and raisins (eight of them) soaked in honey. In India and the Middle East they use saffron and rosewater (Iranian rice pudding – or Zerde – is a vivid gold thanks to the saffron content); Indian Kheer is flavoured with almonds, sultanas and cardamom and is a favourite at Indian weddings.





Great Bircham – the Horse

There once was a serious local racehorse by the name of Great Bircham. He was foaled in March 1986 and was running mile races as a bay gelding three years later. His sire (father) was Show-a-Leg and his dam (mother) the French mare Galignani. Great Bircham's trainer was Willie Musson, who was based at Newmarket. In total he had nine races, but unfortunately was never a winner, finishing in third place on two occasions... though he was notably ridden by US jockey Steve Cauthen.

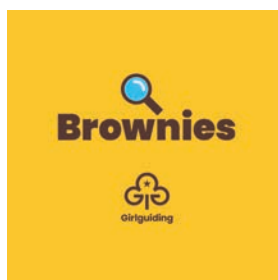


First Docking Brownies

We are a friendly, small group meeting at the Ripper Hall on Wednesdays, 5.15-6.45pm, during term time. The cost is £10 per month, or £2.50 per session. We are receiving a grant from Jack's Lane Wind Farm. Currently, we have ten girls aged from 7-10 years. When they are aged ten they can move on to Guides in Hunstanton or Heacham, Snettisham, Dersingham or Sandringham.

Local girls aged 7-9 yrs are encouraged to join us, by a parent making an enquiry on the Girl Guides website: girlguiding.org.uk.

The Brownie leader lives in Great Bircham and our assistant leader and young leader live in Monks Close. We would be happy to contact you by email or telephone if your daughter may be interested. Message me on 07963 181573.



Each term, we work towards Brownie badges, we have outings to places like Pensthorpe, a museum or the local parks. We raise money for various charities and have speakers to inform us about e.g. hedgehog and seal rescue organisations! Once a year, we have a Pack Holiday with a two-night sleepover at an interesting place in Norfolk. We have a District Thinking Day celebration in February, and this year we ran a rugby coaching session. We also attend Remembrance services in Docking church and take part in local fundraising events. There is also a Girlguiding garden this year at the RHS Sandringham Flower Show.

The Brownies are organised into groups of five or six, currently Butterflies and Squirrels. Each new Brownie learns her promise and then gets enrolled a few weeks later. We were excited to see a new range of Brownie uniform being launched at the end of July, for Brownies who will join us in September. Brownies restarts on September 9.

Rosemary Rayner

Barn Owl

Dates for the Diary

Sept 3 Snettisham and Titchwell Bird Safari (inc lunch), 9-3pm, £81-£111
Sept 4 Terrarium Workshop, Sculthorpe Moor, 1-3pm, £35
Sept 4 Open Air Film Night, Tues Market Pl, King's Lynn
Sept 6 60s and 70s Weekend, King's Lynn, 11-4pm
Sept 11-13 Brancaster Staithe Sea Shanty Festival @ Jolly Sailors/White Horse/Burnham Deepdale, 11am
Sept 11, 18 Hunstanton Lighthouse Visit, various times from 10.30am, <https://norfolkhods.ticketsolve.com/ticketbooth/shows>
Sept 12 The Drifters, Princess Theatre, Hunstanton, 7.30pm, £32.50
Sept 12-13 Sandringham Game & Country Fair, 10-6pm, £23/£8
Sept 13 King's Lynn Classic Car Day, 11-4pm
Sept 13 Too Much Too Young: The Story of 2-Tone, Princess Theatre, Hunstanton, 7.30pm, £29
Sept 13 King's Lynn Heritage Open Day
Sept 17 Walking Tour of the grounds of Hunstanton Hall, 10am and midday, <https://norfolkhods.ticketsolve.com/ticketbooth/shows>
Sept 19 Pewter Pilgrims Workshop for Adults, Lynn Museum, 10.30-2.30pm, £10
Sept 19-20 Heritage Open Days, Narborough Bone Mill
Sept 20 Hunstanton Soap Box Derby, 9-5pm
Sept 20 RAF Bircham Newton Open Day, 10-4pm
Sept 26-27 Big Machinery Weekend, Pensthorpe, from £12.95
Sept 25 Pablo Fanque's Fair and the Victorian Circus, Lynn Museum Afternoon Talk, 2-3pm, £2
Sept 27 Run Sandringham half-marathon, 5K and community mile, from 9am



Toddler and Baby Group

A toddler and baby group is held on Wednesday mornings during term time from 9.30 to 11am at Hunstanton Methodist Church in Austin Street, Hunstanton PE36 6AL

For further details ring 01485 298316

All are welcome!



St Mary's 100 Club Draw

AUGUST RESULTS: Here are the latest draw results: 1st prize no. **99**; 2nd prize no. **97**. (1st prize wins £25; 2nd prize £10).

Many congratulations to the winners!

Sally

Bircham Banter

Next Banter session is on Thursday September 3 from 2.30 to 4pm in St Mary's, Great Bircham. Do come along and join with the regulars for chat, tea/coffee and very good cake, especially if you are new to the village. You'll be made very welcome!!

Pauline

Stanhoe & Barwick WI

Forthcoming events to be held at the Stanhoe Reading Room, Cross Lane, PE31 8PS at 2pm.

September 3 A talk by Diane Clark about Norfolk Accident Rescue Service.

Visitors are always welcome. Our charge is £5, which includes refreshments.

Contact stanhoeandbarwickwi@gmail.com for more details about events and membership

Sky at Night

In August, on the 28th, there is a partial LUNAR eclipse running from 02:23 and reaching a maximum at 05:12am and facing roughly SW. This one you are at liberty to watch with no other precautions than being careful when stumbling around your garden in the dark!

JBB

News from 1941

The *Lynn Advertiser* from April 18, 1941 gave this exceedingly short news item. [There was a war on you know!]

"The children of Great Bircham school have collected 250 eggs for Lynn Hospital."

We assume from chickens and ducks rather than the pigeon eggs that are so beautifully gathered and scoffed by all those modern-day feral cats!

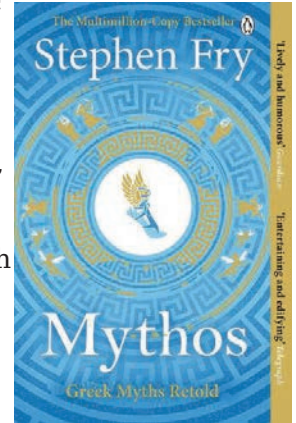




Curl Up With a Good Book

Mythos: Greek Legends Retold (2018) by Stephen Fry.

Yes, we are on the Greek legend bandwagon, inspired by the new filmic epic from Christopher Nolan. In *Mythos*, Fry takes us on the journey from Chaos, the beginning of Creation and tells the wondrous tales of Greek legend. Often gory, treacherous and savage, we encounter the order of beings responsible for the heavens, sleep, the night-time, the sky, the underworld. We learn that Ouranos (Uranus) was gelded by his son Kronos with a scythe, whose discarded genitals became Aphrodite; Kronos, fearing a prediction that he too would be murdered by his child decided to eat his children as they were born, one by one – was deceived by wife Rhea (also his sister, such is the nature of things) into eating a boulder instead of his last-born Zeus.



Later we discover the gods, the Muses, the Cyclops, the Fates, the Hecatonchires... And for those who are interested in language and the origins of words, Fry engagingly points out the characters who gave us the words for "geriatrics" (Geras), "hypnotise" (Hypnos) and "euthanasia" (Thanatos).

Since this is written by the polymath Fry, it is of course full of facts of interest but he laces the retellings with modern-day examples to help our understanding. The endless characters can be dizzying but again Fry gently jogs our memory of what we have just read when we are trying to disentangle the father-son, mother-daughter, wife-sister relationships, and of course the tales are rollicking and amusing. Recommended for every person who missed out on a classical education as well as for those that didn't. Fry proves in this tome that he is a natural-born storyteller. There's also an illustrated hardback version of the book for that space on your coffee table, not to mention a CD-audio product read by Stephen himself.

If you find yourself hooked on the themes and Fry's delightful storytelling try other titles in the series: *Heroes* (2019); *Troy* (2021); and *Odyssey* (2025). And if not exhausted by this "Greek tales summer", seek out the trilogy by Pat Barker in her retelling of the Greek myths from the women's point of view, viz: *The Silence of the Girls* (2019); *The Women of Troy* (2022); and *The Voyage Home* (2025). Natalie Haynes similarly approaches the Greek legends from a women's perspective: try *The Children of Jocasta* (2017); *A Thousand Ships* (2019) (on the Trojan War); *Pandora's Jar* (2020); and *No Friend to This House* (2025).

And if you develop a voracious appetite for all this treachery, love, gore, plotting, brutality, triumphs and just plain bizarre goings-on from gods and mortals, why not dip into the originals, with Homer's verse works *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days*.

Ovomancy, or Egg Divination, and Witchcraft

Talking of eggs, ovomancy – using eggs to tell the future – is one of the oldest forms of divination, likely because of the near-ubiquitous source of eggs and secondly because of their links to birth and new life.

In 1583 after the deaths at sea in Wells of a number of sailors (an habitual risk of the job, presumably), a local Lynn woman was arrested and accused of drowning the men, though she had no attachment to them and was not in the vicinity at the time.

The "boiling seas" of the storm that drowned the unfortunate mariners were dragged up by "Mother Gabley", who had been caught with a pail of cold water and some eggs that were "boiling", despite there being no recognised heat source. This was enough to convict her of "homicide by sorcery". History doesn't record what happened to her next. According to the law she should have been executed by hanging, a spectacle carried out in Tuesday Market Place, but the record is not intact. It's another sad example of attributing an easily explainable event – a storm at sea – to an innocent and, most likely vulnerable, elderly woman!



MOBILE POST OFFICE

Scheduled stop at Bircham Social Club, Church Lane is 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

Fridays Jul 17/Aug 14/Sep 11
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 (new timetable from June 1)

To Hunstanton (from King's Head): Mon-Sat
07:36 (not Sat); 08:36; 10:36; 12:36; 14:36;
17:06

Return from Stand A Bus Station

To Lynn (from Bircham Stores): Mon-Sat
07:33 (not Sat); 09:18; 11:18; 13:18; 15:18;
17:18

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

RECYCLING CENTRE

For pre-booking your visit at **any** Norfolk centre:

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/62632/Norfolk-Recycling-Centre-bookings>

Or phone 0344 800 8020

Bircham Weather

After April had appeared certain to end the year as the driest month with just 5.4mm of rainfall, along came July to eclipse it with a mere 2.1mm. Measurable rain fell on only two days: 0.4mm on the 2nd and 1.7mm on the 26th, although most people would have been unaware of either event as both occurred at around 4am.

The month was also remarkable for producing two heatwaves, defined in North Norfolk as three consecutive days with maximum temperatures exceeding 26°C. The first of these lasted from the 6th to the 10th when three days saw temperatures exceed 30°C while peaking at 32.5°C on the 9th. The second occurred between the 28th and 30th when a maximum of 34.0°C on the 29th claimed the highest temperature of the month. However, we were unable to match the UK's hottest location which was to be found in Coton in the Elms in Derbyshire where the temperature reached 35.0°C, although the village is probably better known for holding the distinction of being the point furthest from the sea in any direction anywhere in the United Kingdom.

Overall, our maximum temperature failed to reach 20°C on only three days, resulting in an average of 24.9°C, some 2.4°C above the long-term norm and it's also worth noting that every summer month so far has been warmer than average. Equally noteworthy was the mean overnight minimum temperature of 15.3°C, an impressive 2.9°C above average. With the jet stream remaining weak and positioned well to the north of the UK, along with high pressure dominating for much of the month, it was hardly surprising that sunshine was the prevailing theme and outnumbering cloudy periods by approximately two to one. While July's weather proved ideal for holidaymakers it was less welcome for others looking to the sky for some needed rainfall.

Bryan



Tech Skills for Life

Do you need to book appointments, buy things online, or apply for jobs, but struggle with your device or data? Do your children need to do their homework, but you do not have a laptop or Internet access at home? Need some help with a task like filling out an online form? Or want to learn more about staying safe from scams? Whether you're a beginner or have been online for a while, Tech Skills for Life is here to help! Our friendly community tech coaches will help you find new ways to use the Internet that will help you in your everyday life. Call 01485 536420 Mon-Fri or Tech Skills for Life – Norfolk County Council <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/article/76842/Digital-inclusion>



Warehouse Taproom at Setchey Reopens

The very long awaited reopening of the Warehouse Taproom at Beers of Europe in Setchey, to the south of Lynn, took place at the start of August. It's a soft relaunch so the full menu is not available, currently, but with promises to return to the good old days in the near future. The Taproom was hit by a fire back in October 2024 that gutted the bar and restaurant.

A rotating selection of beers and other drinks, food menu, beer garden, not to mention the Beers of Europe warehouse and the Warehouse Antiques & Collectables (complete with book store and Steiff animal display) as well as the monthly farmers' and craft market make this a place where there is plenty to do.

<https://thewarehousetaproom.co.uk/>

Bressingham Steam & Gardens

If you tire a little of the beach, garden centres or traditional museums this summer then this might be the place for you and your family instead.

Bressingham Steam & Gardens is a little distance from here but is home to a host of steam-powered engines and artefacts, including steam engines, Victorian funfair gallopers, traction engines, locos, narrow gauge railways and museum. There's also a cafe and 17 acres of gardens.

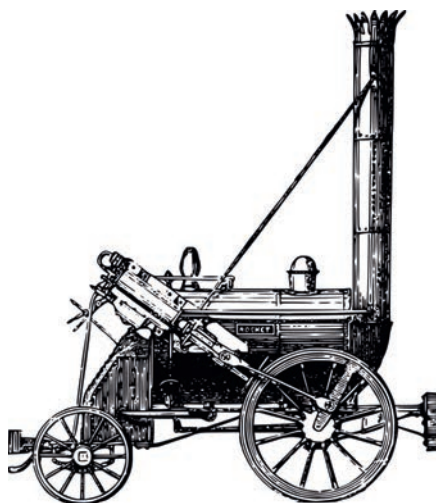
The site is open until November 1 but not all attractions are available on every day. Use the url below to check timetabling details.

In addition there are special events:

August 29-30 Festival of Transport
September 11 Nights at the Museum
September 20 Model Railway

Oh and if you still miss tours around a garden centre then there is one next door, the Bressingham Garden Centre with a restaurant for refreshments.
<https://bressingham.co.uk/>

If you get bitten by the steam bug (or your little ones do), then there is also fun to be had at the Forncett Industrial Steam Museum at Forncett St Mary NR16 1JJ. They have "steam up days" on the first Sunday of every month. Exhibits include the Tower Bridge Engine and the Soame Steam Cart.





Snail Racing

In July, Grimston Cricket Club held the annual World Snail Racing Championships with the victorious gastropod, Snailer Swift, taking home the title, covering the 13.5in distance in a time of 3 mins and 13 seconds. Snailer's "owner and trainer" was Sam Pemberton.

Bircham Bowls

What a cracking season we're having. After a few washed-out days in June we've managed to conclude the first part of our competitive season ahead of target. To crown the overall winner from our three divisions we're now in the throes of the best eight players participating in a playoff. By early September we'll have a club champion.

Continuing the season for everyone else, our annual knockout tournament is being run alongside the league playoff. The winner will receive a super shiny trophy donated to us by a villager. We are honoured to be trusted with something very personal as this particular trophy was won frequently by him while playing elsewhere.

Even though many of the greens we play on around the area are in an appalling state from drought, we are blessed that Houghton has its own private water source that keeps the one we play on reasonably well nourished.

Curiously, Houghton Hall has a water tower that is an historical 18th-century Palladian structure, designed for Britain's first prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole. Built between 1731 and 1733, it functioned continuously until 2003, achieving what was long considered the longest record of service for any daily-use private water tower. Slightly less distinguished, our club relies on three volunteers who keep the greens in good order. Thank you guys!

Welcome to the "New Look" Linnets

There's lots happening down at The Walks for King's Lynn Town before the start of the new football season, starting with the name of the place, now known – for sponsorship purposes – as The Docherty Walks. The manager, Paul Caddis, is new-ish; there's loads of new signings; and while the kit remains blue and yellow there are snazzy changes with the 8:56 Foundation* advertising on home shirts and Charmed Interiors on the away blue jerseys.

The new season in National League North started with a one-all draw against Harborough Town.

* The 8:56 Foundation is a mental health charity founded in memory of Lee Calton who lost his life to suicide. A King's Lynn supporter, Lee and his mates would catch the 8.56 train out of Lynn to follow the Linnets around the country. <https://856foundation.org.uk/>

Tour de Tapping

If you marvelled at the cyclists in last month's Tour de France, why not consider taking part in Norfolk's very own Tour de Tapping, on behalf of the Tapping House respite charity? As per last year, you can choose to cover 20, 50 or 100 miles and do it all at once or in smaller bite-sizes.

You can choose:

The Tulip Trail (20 mi ... a gentle ride, perfect for little legs or relaxed riders);

Journey of Joy (50 mi ... a moderate challenge for those wanting to go the extra mile);

Legacy Loop (100 mi ... a mighty ride for those ready to go the distance).



Entry is free but the charity asks that you raise £20 in sponsorship (for which you receive a certificate) or a minimum of £40 for which you also get a medal. Sign up asap. The virtual event ends on August 31.