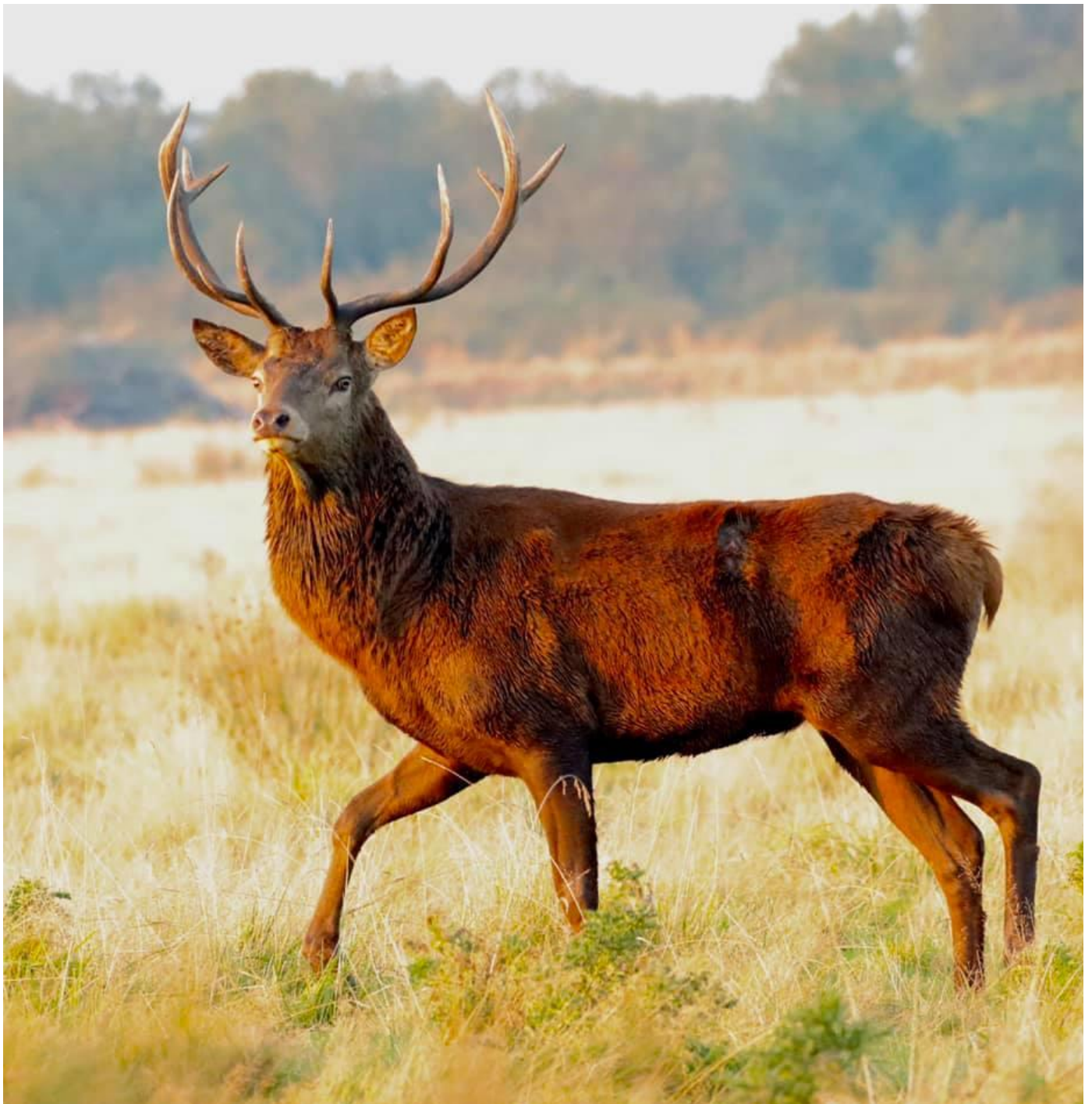


SOMERTON NEWS



November 2021



'Stag Night' at Horsey – photograph by John Crooks.
(For more photos of *'Wildlife on our doorstep'* please see pages 12 & 13.)

The monthly magazine for the parish of Somerton, distributed free-of-charge to residents and friends.

Climate Change

The last 18 months or so have been a period dominated by Covid-19, concerns for the environment and dramatic “weather events” – devastating fires in Australia and the Americas, floods in Europe and the Far East and soaring temperatures worldwide. In this edition we focus on the environment and climate change issues globally and locally.

COP26 in Glasgow

When you read this **COP26** will have started in Glasgow. It starts on 31st October and runs until 12th November under the presidency of the United Kingdom.

COP stands for Conference of the Parties – the parties in question being the 197 nations that signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1994. COP26, the 26th time they’ve met, comes a few months after the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change described global warming as a “**code red for humanity**”. The goal is to work together to reach “net zero” by 2050 – meaning no more greenhouse gases going into the atmosphere than are being removed.

The build-up of warming gases in the atmosphere rose to record levels in 2020 despite the pandemic, according to the World Meteorological Organization. The amounts of CO₂, methane and nitrous oxide rose by more than the annual average in the past 10 years. The WMO says this will drive up temperatures in excess of the goals of the Paris agreement. They worry that our warmer world is, in turn, boosting emissions from natural sources.

Flood risk in Broadland

On the evening of 4th November there is a Broadland Futures Initiative (BFI) presentation at Somerton Village Hall for future flood risk management in the Broadland area – a local risk that may be increased by climate change. *(Details on page 3).*

COP26 Coalition

On Saturday 6th November, starting at 1:00pm, there is a special event – **Global Day For Climate Justice** in Norwich organised by the COP26 Coalition Norfolk Hub. Participants should assemble in front of Norwich City Hall for a march to Chapelfield Gardens. *(Full details on page 9.)*

A unique view of Earth

A remarkable exhibition at St Peter Mancroft Church in Norwich gave people a feeling of awe for the planet, a profound understanding of the interconnection of all life, and a renewed sense of responsibility for taking care of the environment. *Gaia* provides us all with a new perspective of our place on the planet; a sense that societies of the Earth are all interconnected and that we have a responsibility toward one another. *(Please see pages 6 & 7.)*

We Will Remember Them



Remembrance Day
Thursday, 11th November 202

**Also remember that Covid-19
hasn't gone away.
Don't let your guard down.**

News from Somerton

Broadland Futures Initiative Information Evening

On Thursday 4th November, there will be a presentation from Broadland Futures Initiative (BFI) at Somerton Village Hall, kindly hosted by Somerton Parish Council. The BFI is a partnership for future flood risk management in the Broadland area.

Guest speakers from the Environment Agency, a leading partner in the BFI, will be sharing information on the background to the strategy, an update on the project so far, as well as the next steps for the future. There will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the presentation.

Further information regarding the BFI can be found here:

<https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after/climate-change/broadland-futures-initiative>

**Somerton Village Hall, Cottage Road, West Somerton, NR29 4DL.
Thursday 4th November 2021 at 7:30pm (car park open from 7:00pm).
Estimated finishing time is 8:45pm.**

Think about this – “We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.”

Horsey Road to be closed from 1st to 2nd November

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL has made a Temporary Traffic Order affecting the C643 Horsey Road from its junction with U69489 Staithe Road for 2540m north-westwards in the **PARISH OF SOMERTON** because of BT pole replacement works.

The road will be temporarily closed (except for access) from 1st to 2nd November 2021 for the duration of the works expected to be about 2 days within the period. (If necessary the restriction could run for a maximum period of 18 months from the date of the Order).

Penalty: £1000 maximum fine on conviction and/or endorsement for contravention.

Nothing in this Order shall make it unlawful for a vehicle which requires access, to proceed to a final destination situated within the length of the closed road.

In the event of the start date being delayed the new start date will be displayed on site in advance.

Alternative route is via: Somerton Road, The Street, Palling Road, Coast Road, Waxham Road, Stalham Road, Hickling Lane, Hickling Road, Sea Palling Road, The Street, The Green, Heath Road, Staithe Road, Potter Heigham Road, A149 Yarmouth Road/High Road, Repps Road, White Street, Somerton Road, Martham Road, Horsey Road (Hickling, Sea Palling, Repps with Bastwick, Horsey, Catfield, Martham, Potter Heigham, Somerton).

The person dealing with enquiries at Norfolk County Council is Vinnie Purdy (Community and Environmental Services) Telephone 0344 800 8020.

**Encore Theatre
Company**

Christmas Revue

Songs, Sketches, Quiz & Raffle



Hemsby Village Hall

**Friday 3rd & Saturday 4th
December
at 7:00pm**

**Adults £10, Children £6
The price includes Cheese,
Wine & Christmas
Crackers**

**Maximum of 6 adults per table &
tickets on sale from 1st November.
Available from Hemsby Sports &
Social Club or call 07754 993061.**

THE LION



Freehouse

**The Lion's Ladies
*Pamper Night***

**Saturday 13th November
6:00pm until 9:00pm**

Holistic Therapy by Helen

**Scentsy (Wax Melts &
Candles) by Victoria**

Nails by Wendy@JunctionGY

Body Shop & Jewellery by Lyn

Charity Raffle*

And Much More

***If you would like to donate a prize for the
Charity Raffle please contact Jane (393861)**

How was the “Fuel Crisis” for you?



Gaia at St Peter Mancroft Church in Norwich



Gaia is a touring artwork by Luke Jerram, a Bristol based artist, and was in St Peter Mancroft Church in the centre of Norwich throughout October. *Gaia* was the Greek goddess of Earth, mother of all life. *Gaia* aims to create a sense of the Overview Effect, first described by Frank White in 1987. Common features of the experience for astronauts are a feeling of awe for the planet, a profound understanding of the interconnection of all life, and a renewed sense of responsibility for taking care of the environment.

The artwork also acts as a mirror to major events in society. In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, *Gaia* may provide visitors with a new perspective of our place on the planet; a sense that societies of the Earth are all interconnected and that we have a responsibility toward one another.

The 6 metre diameter artwork is 2.1 million times smaller than the real Earth with each centimetre of the internally lit sculpture describing 21 kilometres of the Earth's surface. By standing 181 metres away from the artwork, visitors will be able to see the Earth as it appears from the moon.

Unlike the moon, which we have been gazing at for millennia, the first time humankind got to see the Earth in its entirety as a blue marble floating in space was in 1972 with NASA's Apollo 17 mission. At this moment, our perception and understanding of our planet changed forever. Hanging in the black emptiness of space the Earth seems isolated, a precious and fragile island of life. From a distance, the Earth is just a pale blue dot – home to us humans and so much more.

Continued on next page

Gaia at St Peter Mancroft Church in Norwich

The common features of the experience for astronauts are awe for our planet, a profound understanding of the interconnection of all life, and a renewed sense of responsibility for taking care of the environment.

It refers to the experience of seeing firsthand the reality of the Earth in space, which is immediately understood to be a tiny, fragile ball of life, “hanging in a void”, shielded and nourished by a paper-thin atmosphere.

From space, national boundaries vanish, the conflicts that divide people become less important, and the need to create a planetary society with the united will to protect this “pale blue dot” becomes both obvious and imperative.



*Australia in the midst of the ocean,
71% of the Earth's surface is water.*

97% of the Earth's water is found in the oceans (too salty for drinking, growing crops, and most industrial uses except cooling). 3% of the Earth's water is fresh.

At St Peter Mancroft (SPM) *Gaia* has been brought into their worship space to help them reflect on the beauty and fragility of our planet home, gifted us by God and entrusted to our care. They also take seriously the scientific evidence that climate change is caused by human activity. Yet despite the mounting evidence describing the serious impact of global heating, governments and corporations have found it difficult to take the action needed to address this threat.



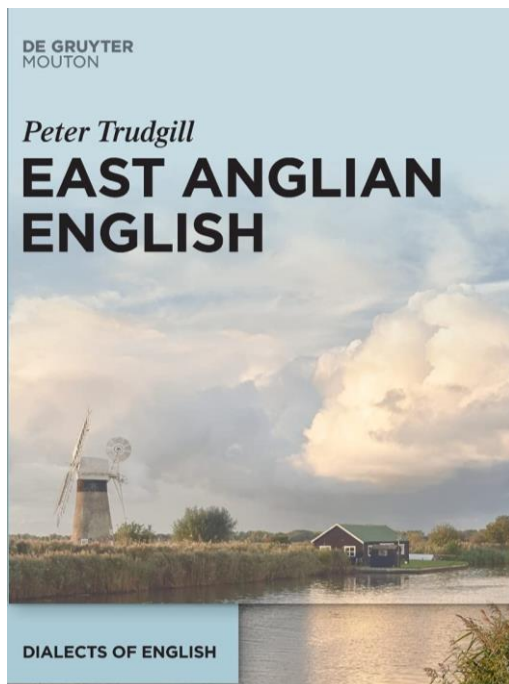
North Africa, Madagascar & the Arabian Gulf

SPM believes climate change is the defining issue of our time and the greatest threat to our wellbeing, globally and locally. Climate change is already driving conflict, poverty and migration. The UK and other western nations have grown rich through burning fossil fuels and the extraction of resources, particularly from the global south. Historically the UK is the sixth largest emitter of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases and the UK must take a leading role ensuring immediate corrective actions. A visit to *Gaia* at St Peter Mancroft brings this stark message home to all visitors.

Two books – *East Anglian English* & *The Norfolk Dialect*

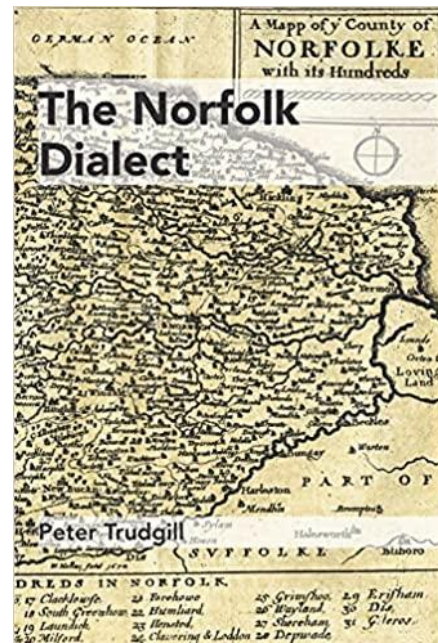
Peter Trudgill, Professor of Linguistics and Sociolinguistics, has recently had two books published. Peter has also written an occasional piece for Somerton News, made some suggestions to the editors about their grammar and was a prime mover in the process of obtaining permission for Somerton News to publish the late John Kett's Norfolk dialect poems on a monthly basis. Peter has another connection with Somerton – his great-great-grandmother Sophia Howes came from West Somerton and her mother was a Sophia Thain from Repps-with-Bastwick.

One of the books, *East Anglian English*, is the first full-scale scientific study of East Anglian English and the author has devoted decades to the study of the *speechways* of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex. He examines their relationships to other varieties of English in Britain, as well as their contributions to the formation of American English and Southern Hemisphere Englishes.



The book is published by De Gruyter Mouton, a specialist academic publishers based in Berlin, and is priced at a stonking £90. (A much cheaper paperback edition will be coming out next year.) So I guess if you want to dip into it now you'll have to set up an appointment at the Reference Library in The Forum.

A much more accessible (and affordable) publication, is *The Norfolk Dialect* (£9.95) and this looks at the linguist history of the county stretching back to pre-Roman times, the influence of the Saxon and Viking invasions, and the creation of a distinct dialect within the new English language that emerged. It examines and illustrates the differences and similarities with the Suffolk dialect demonstrating that such relationships are caused by not only geographical proximity but also inaccessible divisions that pass through regions such as the Fens.



The book discusses the development of dialect's vocabulary and grammar, how its origins follow similar patterns with other dialects spoken throughout England and the origins of place-names and their pronunciation.

Above all, the book shows that the Norfolk dialect is a version of the English language with its own fascinating history, unique structure and form that is worthy of respect and understanding, and, as such, needs to be maintained and cherished rather than lost to future generations.

If you've enjoyed reading John Kett's poems in Norfolk dialect, taken from *A Year Go By*, published monthly in Somerton News perhaps you should put *The Norfolk Dialect* on your Christmas list.

Global Day For Climate Justice



Rally Saturday 6 November 1pm at Norwich City Hall then march to Chapelfield Gardens

Speakers include: Jane Worsdale, Shannon Rivers, Caroline Riley, Mark Fletcher, John Sillett, Fiona Haworth, Ollie Sinha, Sabine Virani, Clive Lewis (TBC), Hannah Murgatroyd, Nick O'Brien, Catherine Rowett, Tim Glenton, with music by Terry Adams and others

We're bringing together movements from across the world to build power for system change. Join the protests wherever you are but if you're in Norwich please bring your placards, banners, music and passion and join ours here.

We are living through a period of multiple breaking points – from climate to Covid-19 to racism. We know that these crises not only overlap, but share the same cause. The climate crisis already means loss of lives, homes, livelihoods and ecosystems for indigenous communities and the poorest and most marginalised within countries and across the world. While those who have done the least to cause them suffer the most.

Justice won't be handed to us by world leaders or delivered by major corporations. Only we can imagine and build the future that works for all of us. The transformative solutions that we need to survive and build a more just and fair world can only be brought about by through collective action, solidarity and coordination.

The COP26 Coalition is bringing together movements from across the world to build power for system change – indigenous movements, frontline communities, trade unions, racial justice groups, youth strikers, landworkers, peasants, NGOs, grassroots community campaigns, feminist movements, faith groups.....

Now is the time to join the fight for climate justice. We need all hands on deck; in workplaces, communities, schools, hospitals and across national borders.

**If you can join us on Saturday November 6th at 1:00pm,
we would value your support.**

Cop26 Coalition Norfolk Hub

The monthly magazine for the parish of Somerton, distributed free-of-charge to residents and friends.

Bird Life by Judy Clift

The richness of birding as autumn turns into winter is with us. Some seasoned birdwatchers have lamented that this has been a disappointing autumn, but a trip down Holmes Road to the tank traps and then sea watching at Winterton was anything but disappointing.

Skeins of pink feet flew overhead; the floods on the field by the Commissioners drain held lapwings, golden plover and a single ruff. A great spotted woodpecker called from somewhere deep in an oak. The hedgerows yielded yellowhammers, chaffinches, linnets and reed buntings; over the fields towards Horsey were buzzards, marsh harriers and kestrels. To my delight one of the harriers proved to be a ring tailed hen harrier, a first for the season for me, and flying above it, a dozen late swallows heading south.

Nearer the dunes were skylarks in song, goldfinches, blackbirds and dunnocks. Unusually, not a stonechat to be seen.

The sea, watched for several hours, gave divers galore: mainly red-throated, a great northern and rarest of all a white billed which has stayed in the vicinity for several days.



Guillemot (Photo by Cley Birds Photo Gallery)

There were guillemots, razorbills and a couple of tiny blackbird sized little auks on the water. There were arctic skuas and bonxies (great skuas). There were gannets, a Manx shearwater and kittiwakes. Ducks too: a couple of goldeneye and three velvet scoter, flights of cormorants skimmed the waves, groups of herring gulls and greater black backed flew north with little urgency.

Near the shore a couple of snow buntings foraged, while turnstones and a lone purple sandpiper probed the top of a rocky groyne.

There were seals, not yet with pups, and the distant bellow of a rutting deer echoed across the marshes.



Photo by John Crooks

Back in the village, a handsome male ring ouzel flew across from the horse paddocks to the mill and disappeared into a bramble bush. Migrant blackbirds continued to arrive along with the first groups of redwings and a few siskins and bramblings. Three cranes called from the marsh south of Horsey Mill.

By the north broad, bearded tits called and scudded across the tops of the reeds, an unseen kingfisher piped and a heron took off clumsily from one of the red posts. Linnets sang from a hawthorn and skylarks from high in the air. A sparrowhawk flew fast and low behind the mill.

Dragonflies and butterflies still darted among the reeds.

Time now to wait for the winter swans to return, for a short eared owl to quarter the marshes again, for the whistling of wigeon and piping of teal to sound from the broad, and for wintering bitterns to find shelter from harsher continental weather. For fieldfares and redwings to feast on hawthorn and fallen fruit.

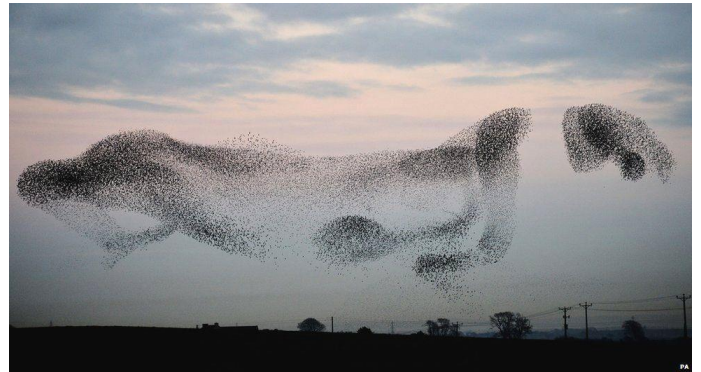
A Year Go By – A poem for November

Starlin's by John Kett

*There's so many on'em they fare t'daarken the sky.
Over filds jus' cleared o' the beet the starlin's fly.
Hear the rush o' their wings a-hurryin' by up there,
Cuttin' along t'rew the frorsty winter air.*

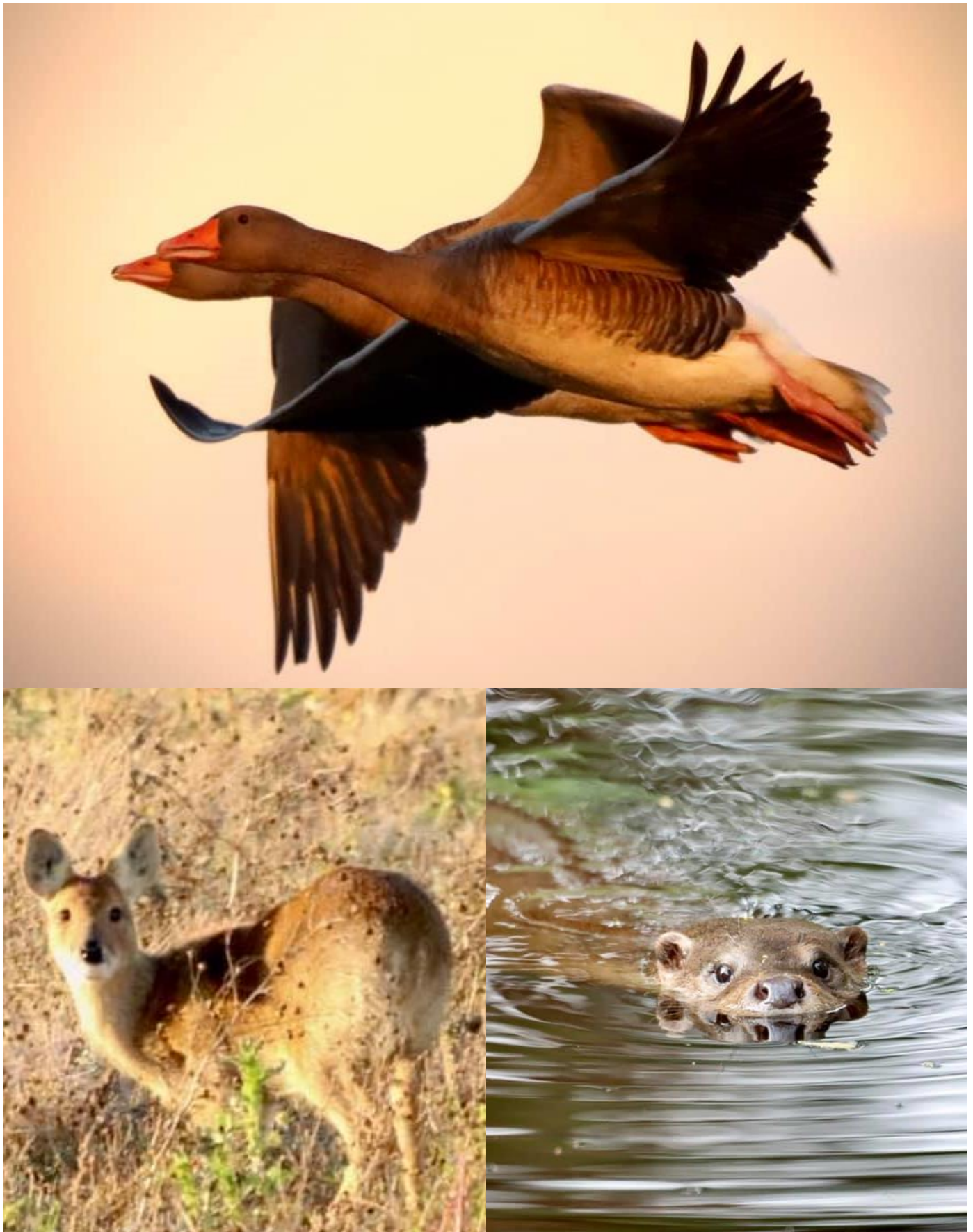
*Tha's a masterpiece, tew, how all on'em go like one,
Wheelin' an' risin' an' fallin' an' catchin' the sun.
Warkin' t'gather they tarn, t'gather they land -
One o' the mysteries we see, but don't understand.*

*Then up an' away, as the sun sink red in the west,
They find their trees, an' chatter, an' settle ter rest.
The stars come out . . . an owl call up o' the hill . . .
Now all's right quite . . . them thousands o' wings're still.*



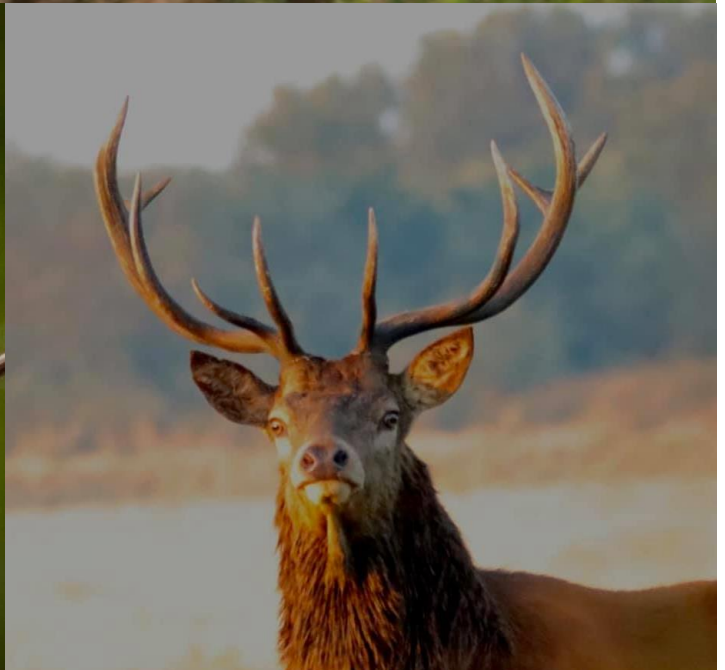
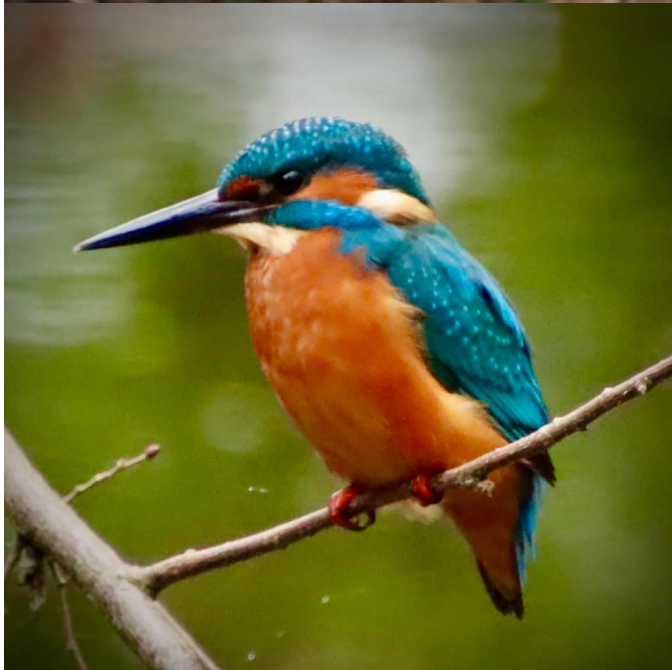
Starlin's is from **A Year Go By** by Norfolk poet John Kett, first published in 1981 (ISBN 0 9507820 0 9) and currently out of print. Second-hand copies are available through Amazon Books for about £5 per copy including postage. Worth tracking down a copy so you can enjoy just over 100 of John Kett's poems about the ebb and flow of the seasons in the Norfolk countryside. Last year we included 11 of John's poems after receiving permission from David Kett, son of John Kett. We are once again indebted to David, who was contacted during January 2021 and gave Somerton News permission to publish one of his late father's poems for each month for as long as we like. There are 8 or 9 poems for each month in **A Year Go By**, so our readers are in for a monthly treat. We would also like to thank Peter Trudgill and members of Friends of Norfolk Dialect for help in tracking down David to ask for his permission to publish his late father's poems.

Magnificent Wildlife on our doorstep



These stunning photos were taken by John Crooks on early morning and evening walks over the marshes. Clockwise from the top – a pair of flying greylag geese, an otter and an alert muntjac.

Magnificent Wildlife on our doorstep



Clockwise from top – 3 little egrets (photo by Patrick Goffin). Horsey's version of Landseer's *The Monarch of the Glen* painting and a kingfisher (photos by John Crooks).

News from St Mary's Church

Services at St Mary's West Somerton and All Saints Horsey in November 2021

Sunday	7 th	10:45am	Benefice Holy Communion – Winterton Church
Sunday	14 th	9:30am	Remembrance & Holy Communion – Horsey Church
Sunday	21 st	10:45am	Morning Praise – Somerton
Sunday	28 th	4:00pm	Benefice Advent Service – Somerton Church

Everyone is welcome at all our services. The churches will now be open each day from about 8:30am until about 4:00pm for visitors and private prayer.

For further information please ring the churchwardens on 01493 393579 or 01493 393314

Flowers in the church

Flowers were placed in the church during October in memory of **Eileen Burckitt**.

Retirement of both Priest-in-Charge & St Mary's Patron

On Sunday 24th October Father John Bloomfield announced his intention to retire from the post of Priest-in-Charge of the Flegg Coastal Benefice (the parishes of Hemsby, Horsey, West Somerton and Winterton) shortly after Easter next year. His last services in the benefice will be on Sunday 1st May 2022. John was appointed to his current post in March 2019. He was born on the Holkham Estate where his father was a shepherd and was ordained in 1987. He became a vicar at Littlehampton in Sussex before returning to his home county in 1998 to take over as vicar of St Edmunds Church in Hunstanton, where he stayed for two decades.

He shares his retirement date with St Mary's West Somerton's patron, the Dean of Norwich, the Very Reverend Jane Hedges. She was a deaconess before her ordination and was the first woman residentiary canon in the Church of England, at Portsmouth Cathedral. In 2006 she became the first female canon at Westminster Abbey, before taking up her present appointment in 2014. The Dean's farewell service will be on Sunday 1st May 2022 in Norwich Cathedral.

A visit from *Big Ted* (in his own words!)



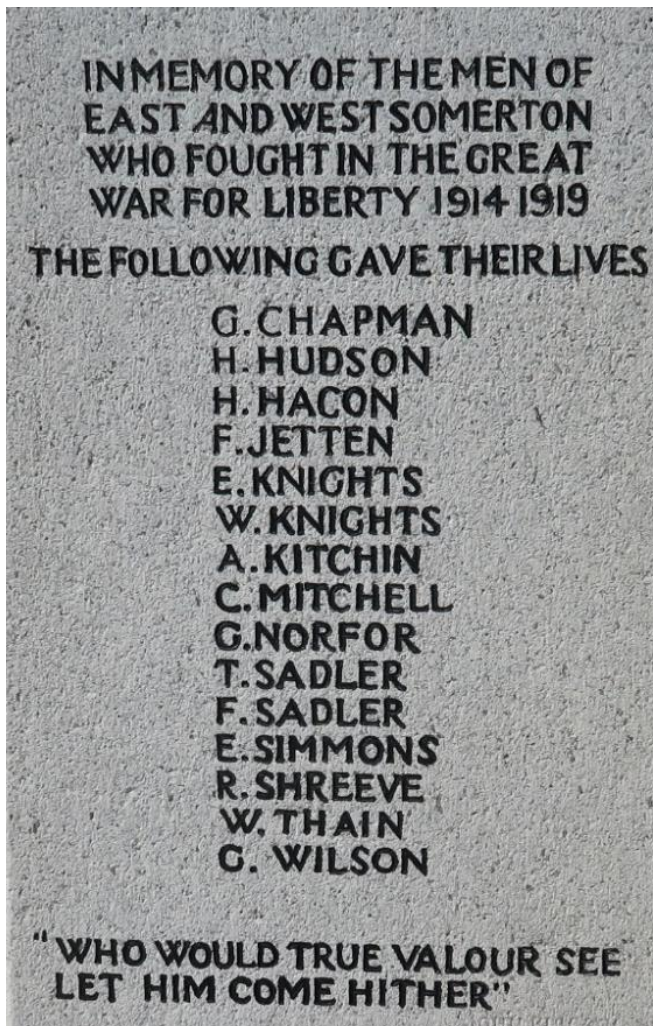
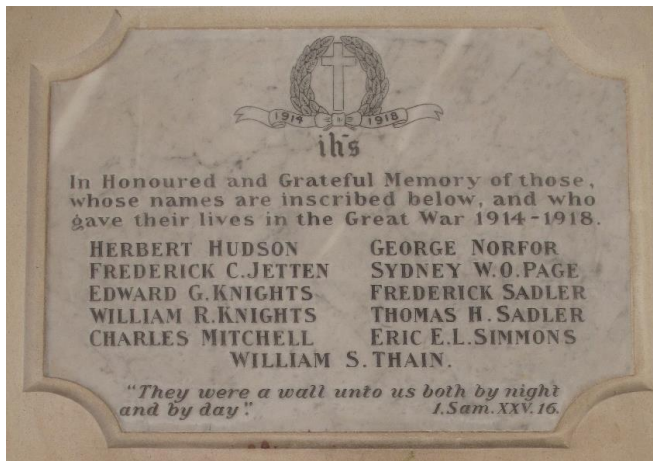
I recently visited the lovely church of St Mary's, West Somerton. I was travelling around bits of Norfolk and Suffolk and dropped in at various St Mary's churches along the way.

*West Somerton is the **352nd** St Mary's that I've visited since I started travelling around in July 2015! I really like it. I 'specially like the thatched roof and the round tower which becomes octagonal at the top (that must have been really tricky for the builders to do.).*

You can read the full report of my visit on page 18 and there are more pictures of me."

BIG Ted

Remembrance Day – Thursday November 11th 2021



The Royal British Legion (Martham Branch), through their representative Paul Strange, supplied the poppy wreath for Somerton's war memorial and the poppy wreath in front of the altar in St Mary's, flanked by 2 special commemorative kneelers, was provided by the Parochial Church Council.

Somerton News send our thanks to both the RBL Martham Branch and St Mary's PCC.



Lest We Forget

On the Somme battleground alone 12 young men from Somerton and Horsey died during the period from July 1st 1916 to November 1918, or died later from their wounds. Nine of those fatalities were in the initial battle in the 5 months, from 'The First Day of The Somme' on 1st July 1st to 30th November 1916, when 60,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers were killed or wounded.

Father John writes from Winterton Rectory

November always seems to be a sombre month with the dark evenings. And it's the month of the departed. The Church calendar starts us off with All Souls Day on November 2nd, when we pray for the departed. Then Bonfire night on the 5th and Armistice Day on the 11th, usually commemorated on Remembrance Sunday.

Remembering past people and events is nothing if we can't make the connections between those events and the present and shaping the future.

All Souls day, all the departed, though we may particularly remember our departed loved ones. But of course it's more than that, it's also about facing our own mortality, one day we shall be numbered amongst those 'faithful departed'.

November 5th has the burning of an effigy of Guy Fawkes. With the recent murder of Sir David Amess very much in mind, we need to remember those of every age who would upset the democracy we value. The remembering of Guy Fawkes and his attempt to blow up Parliament is nothing if we don't take any notice of those today who would do the same by murdering members of Parliament.

And Remembrance Sunday: We can understand how the situation in Afghanistan almost undermines all the efforts and sacrifices made by our military over the last twenty years. With the USA backing out we have let the Taliban take vulnerable people, especially the women, and cast them back into dark political days. "Am I my brother's keeper?" Cain asked God, after he had murdered his brother. The answer being yes, we aren't just to look after our own interests.

The most well-known quoted verse from the Gospel is "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son..." (John 3.16) God loved the world, not, God just loved our own country. However patriotic we are, as Christians we are to pray for the world, which is God's world. As Saint John would later write, "how can we say

we love God whom we have not seen, when we do not love our brothers and sisters who we can see?"

The past might be another country, as it has been said, but it is our own country in a previous age. Our own forebears. I often wonder what my own family forebears were doing when I recall particular events. Which or whose side were they own? From the perspective of history would I agree with them or not?

The character of November is changed from being totally sombre by celebrating on 1st November, All Saints Day. That commemoration changes everything from a Christian viewpoint. It proclaims that all the awful events of the past, and our natural sadness of grief, is overwhelmed by the glory of God in and through his Saints. They are the heroes of the Christian world who have overcome human selfish interests by living so close to God, that they already enjoy the heavenly vision, which we still strive and long for.

All Saints' Day reminds us that all of time is lived out within God's eternity; that all of the trials and sufferings of this present age will one day be over, and there will be a new heaven and earth, when tears, sickness, sadness and death are all gone.

With all our remembering, don't forget to begin with celebrating All Saints day. We are to look beyond all of this world's tragedies, and beyond our own individual mortal lives and contemplate the glory of Heaven when we shall see the true King.

Until then we continue to struggle, but calling on God through prayer, and assisted by his grace, and the prayers of all the saints who worship him in his presence.

Your priest and pastor,
Father John

Farming Diary by Zoe Brooks

A little bit of rain can go a long way! Field work was hindered at the start of October due to the different weather conditions - a lack of drilling because it was too dry, then a lack of drilling because it was too wet!

Whilst the moisture may have helped in the long run as difficult weeds, such as blackgrass, had an opportunity to chit (reducing the weed seed bank and minimising competition in crop), the strong winds prevented sprays from being applied to cereal crops that did manage to get drilled which delayed important herbicide applications to some crops.

Oilseed rape crops have established in varied states for many farmers. I have walked fields with patchy establishment (possibly due to lack of moisture and Cabbage Stem Flea Beetle damage) through to crops that are already well above knee height! Whilst we don't want crops that are too tall this side of Christmas the cold conditions will have a control on growth, and we'd much prefer to have a good crop now that we know we can commit to spending money on for the rest of the season.

Currently farmers are finishing the maize harvest, and many have started their sugar beet campaign. The Bury St Edmunds factory was the first to open its doors for the campaign this year on 16th September, followed by Newark, Wissington and finally Cantley on 12th October. With a new price offered to sugar beet growers next season, and good yields reported from the 2021 campaign so far, it will be interesting to learn how many farmers continue to grow sugar beet going forward.

There are also an array of carrots, parsnips, onions, and potatoes still being harvested across the county. Issues in the news about CO₂ production and fertiliser manufacturing/availability has seen a steep increase in the price of fertiliser which has put a strain on many farmers' finances this season. With a reduction in gross margin already, farmers will have to do what they can to maintain yield or market crops well to get a good return.

Rainfall figures for Somerton - Collected and compiled by Bob Falgate

Month	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
October	103	137	62	15	50
November	35	84	38	65	97
December	114	71	66	103	19
January	72	50	36	38	39
February	34	80	24	58	33
March	27	14	47	75	30
April	8	21	13	62	27
May	78	8	36	31	61
June	72	89	9	48	74
July	52	35	19	99	41
August	53	69	37	60	62
September	17	68	25	57	40
Total	665	726	412	711	573

*In the table the 'years' are 12 consecutive months and run from October to September
Recordings are in millimetres per month.

BIG Ted's visit to St Mary's Church on 19th October



West Somerton is the **352nd** St Mary's that I've visited since I started travelling around in July 2015! I really like it. I 'specially like the thatched roof and the round tower which becomes octagonal at the top (that must have been really tricky for the builders to do). I had my photo taken sitting on the lychgate and then I went inside the church and sat on the font for another photo (I like to do this when I can). I also saw the pictures and information about Robert Hales, the Norfolk Giant, who was seven feet six inches tall. I know I'm a BIG Ted, but there's no way I'm as big as that!

I used to live in St Mary's church in Plumtree, Nottinghamshire. My task was to keep all the other toys in order and be cuddled by visiting children. But I also had another job, as a Roving Ambassador for St Mary's. That means I got out and about from time to time. One of my special tasks was to visit as many other St Mary's churches as I could. I usually did this when I was away on my holidays, but sometimes I just took the day off and visited a local St Mary's.

I have now retired as a Roving Ambassador and moved from Plumtree to a lovely place in Leicestershire called Kibworth Beauchamp; but I still rove about a bit when I can, and I have a special T-shirt that lets people know who I am (actually, I have three T-shirts as they sometimes get grubby due to "falling incidents").

So far, I've visited over 350 St Mary's churches in 28 different English counties (and some in Wales as well). I've met some really nice people and seen some lovely churches. I've also met other bears who live in churches (there's one in the church in Blundeston, did you know that?). Unfortunately, there are an awful lot of St Mary's churches so I may not get to visit them all (and Auntie Fiona and Uncle Les who started all this rather wish they hadn't).

You can read all about me and the churches I visit on my website: www.bigtedonline.uk. It's got lots of lovely photos of me and my splendid fur. I'll be adding St Mary's, West Somerton to it very soon; after I've had a little snooze to recover from my exertions.

Decorating? Don't forget your screwdriver!

At about this time of the year when the days are shorter and the air has a definite cooler twinge my husband invariably turns his attention from the garden to inside the house. It has become quite a joke with our family that Dad will get out the paint and decorate a room before Christmas.

Last year it was the kitchen that was decorated. I must confess that it did need to be done as one side of the room was pink and the other side was green. This was not intentional it was just how things had worked out after the new kitchen was fitted – a few years ago.

The year before my husband decided that he would paint the hallway including its eight doors. When this was finished the carpet fitter was engaged and agreed to lay a new carpet before Christmas. I seem to remember that we had ten days to spare before the celebrations.



You might think that I would not agree to any more decorating at this time of the year. This year we have engaged the services of a builder to replace the bath, wash basin in the bathroom including installing a toilet in the bathroom as opposed to it being in a separate room which will be converted into a cupboard.

This work should start at the end of the month, possibly at the same time as our son and his wife and two children aged three and eighteen months come to stay for a few days.

Talking of our son leads me on to explain the title of this article. Two years after leaving home our son bought a terraced house, a short walk from the centre of Peterborough. Before buying the house my husband and I were, at our son's invitation, asked to look round the house to see what we thought of it. Imagine looking around a house where you walk into the front room off the street and find junk mail all over the floor. This was nothing compared to the kitchen where water from the bathroom had leaked through the ceiling.

My husband thought that our son should not entertain buying the house but our son was not put off. This was possibly due to the price of the house. Our son loves a bargain so he made an offer on the house. Everything went ahead and a few weeks later embarked on a holiday to New York that had been planned for a while with friends and then they continued on to Florida. Just before our son left for the US one of his friends rang me to say that a group of them had thought that they wanted to clean the kitchen of our son's house while he was in America and they wanted us to know.

On his return from America our son was amazed at the work his friends had done on the house and that spurred him on to do even more DIY. When he was younger and living at home I don't think I remember him ever wielding a paint brush or anything else that could be called DIY but now the only thing that was stopping him was a screwdriver. He commented on his next visit to us that you know you are not equipped for DIY when you haven't even got a screwdriver to enable you to get the lid off a tin of paint.

A few years down the line now, in fact a few more houses and a family and a different location, the humble screwdriver is again to the fore.

Continued on next page

by Margaret David

Now with seemingly endless DIY not to mention gardening our son makes regular visits to a local DIY store. Just before our recent visit to his home he had been buying some coving and a Stanley knife in order to cut the said coving.



On reaching the till and paying for the goods my son asked the person on the till if they could lend him a Stanley knife so that he could open his new knife and cut the coving (I don't know where he was going to do this.) The person replied that he couldn't do that as Stanley knives were dangerous. Eventually they did open the packaging around the knife. It was then that a screwdriver was needed as the knife needed to be opened with a screwdriver to enable the blade to be put in place.

After some negotiation the knife packaging was opened. Hopefully my son will realise that he needs to take a screwdriver with him wherever he goes.



Thinking about this it might just be the very thing to buy him as a Christmas present. I think I go and buy one now.

Margaret David

Ponder on this

By the time we see that climate change is really bad, your ability to fix it is extremely limited... The carbon gets up there, but the heating effect is delayed. And then the effect of that heat on the species and ecosystem is delayed. That means that even when you turn virtuous, things are actually going to get worse for quite a while.

Bill Gates

The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything.

Albert Einstein

In our September edition we asked, “How’s your Latin?”

“*te absente stercus flabellum tanguit*”

We are assured that it is Latin for,
“While you were out, the s**t hit the fan.”

Seals at Horsey by Rick Southwood

As we move into the winter season, the beaches on our coast have a rest from the summer madness. Nowadays the rest is a brief one, because we are now seeing the regular seasonal return of grey seals to their breeding beaches. And soon, the regular seasonal migration of many thousands of visitors to see them.

From the beginning of November grey seal cows start hauling up onto the beach ready to give birth, and soon after them the bulls follow. Each dominant bull claims a territory on the beach, and works tirelessly day and night for up to 8 weeks to ensure no other males enter his territory, sometimes engaging in spectacular fights. During this period these dominant males get to mate with any females in their territory, but they also don't feed or enter the water until their claim to the territory ends or there are no more females. It's a long 8 weeks!

The newborn pups have 18 -21 days to feed on their mothers' milk and increase their weight from around 15kg to 45kg, largely as insulating blubber. After weaning, the mothers leave them and they spend another 3 – 4 weeks living off these reserves and growing waterproof coats, before going to sea and learning to hunt their own food.

Disturbance by humans and dogs (both seen as predators by the seals) can lead to desertion by the mothers during the vulnerable feeding period, but even if the seals don't seem distressed, interruption of feeding can mean that the young don't put on enough weight. Similarly, if the young expend a lot of energy avoiding disturbance after weaning, they can use up their reserves. This can mean that they don't have enough insulating body fat, and won't survive for long in the cold waters of the North Sea.

Continued on next page



Photo by John Crooks

Seals at Horsey by Rick Southwood

The voluntary beach closure during November, December and January allows the seals to breed successfully, the ropes and fences guide visitors so that they can view the seals without disturbing them, and the volunteers make sure that the system works well for both visitors and seals.



Most of the rest of the year these seals are solitary and feed offshore often many miles from our shores. Many haul out in the early spring on the beaches to moult and grow new fur coats and this attracts many visitors as well. Although they are less vulnerable at this time, we still ask that visitors and dogs stay well clear.



Twenty years ago, a handful of seals bred at Horsey, with poor success, due to disturbance. By 2004 numbers had increased: Natural England staff began “wardening” the beach in 2004 and eventually set up the Friends of Horsey Seals (FOHS), now a completely independent charity. Many local people are involved and contribute to their growing number of 200+ volunteers.



The colony is now large (several thousand adults) and successful (around 2,500 pups born last season) and extends over 3½ miles of beach, from Horsey to Winterton. A corresponding increase in visitor numbers (80,000 – 100,000 every year) has increased pressure on the FOHS volunteers, who have risen to the challenge brilliantly.

The ropes and fencing are being put in place in late October, when the “wardening” begins.

Anyone wanting to help seals and visitors can contact FOHS via their website at;

www.friendsofhorseyseals.co.uk

Photos by John Crooks

In a country garden by Clare Agnew

The dahlias continue – I'd been away for a long weekend and the dinner-plate dark pink ones at the front were pretending it was late May. The various smaller ones at the back of the house (having been fiercely picked the weekend before for various reasons) had all rushed out in flower again, looking like a bunch of Edwardian ladies off to their first parties. The sweet peas at last have finished, but the dahlias and New Dawn rose nearby take one's mind off it

Back to the greenhouse – courgettes have given up for the year but the tomatoes continue to be in glut. I wonder if there's time tomorrow evening to make another batch of Sweet Chilli Jam – this time I may not have enough home grown chillies though so will have to cheat and use the bottle. Also in the greenhouse though are some very health knipnophia/red hot poker that I've grown from seed. The plants have got to a foot high and are bursting out of their pots, time to plant them in, I hope with the dahlias. I'm copying this idea from a very fine small courtyard garden I saw at the Chelsea Flower Show this September – the downside of copying their ideas is that the horticulturalists there are clever enough to hoodwink the plants into flowering to suit the Show, it may be that my particular dahlias and these particular red hot pokers don't normally co-incide. Ah well, we shall see what happens next September.

My two hens though, much to my sadness, are not laying at the moment. At least not where I can see. They did earlier in the summer chose to lay amongst some very fine blue *Salvia Uliginosa* (pointed out to me by Juno the Labrador, who rather enjoyed stealing them) for a few months before returning to their hut. I think I've looked everywhere within the walls, so either I've not looked carefully enough or they've just gone on strike. Or got too old, though I don't think so.

I've eaten the last of the beetroot and given up on the last of the various beans – but I shall try with the elderly rhubarb and cook him long and slow. On which note the apple trees appear very elderly and rather wonky this year, not just before they haven't been strimmed in between, but happily continue to bear some fruit. Enough for us and enough spare to take to the foodbank in Gorleston – though I do sometimes wonder if the recipients don't approve of all the bumps and lumps on home grown apples. Luckily I shall never know, and I shall go on taking them in until the season is finished.

I promised myself some apple juice this year (I gather there's a man with a machine in Scratby) but somehow £2/bottle felt a bit much and I haven't quite got round to it. We used to borrow Simon Peasley's hand powered press – but 2 litres of apple juice made by 4 people for a whole afternoon's work definitely didn't feel worth the effort. Not sure I would have made a good pre-electricity housewife

What else is out? The cosmos's are hanging on in there, but after being ignored for a week or so are looking rather scruffy. I shall have a blitz if I get a chance on Wednesday and see if they perk up for the weekend. I don't resent their state though, they have been astounding for 2 months nonstop. And I can look forward to the tidy pots (with tulips hidden below) soon and the self-seeders reappearing next summer with no effort on our part. My tulip orders have arrived, now waiting in dark sheds to be planted out, along with a new batch of daffodils. I planted up the Paperwhites last week and it was a great pleasure to see them putting their noses up above the compost when I went to the greenhouse earlier. I might do an experiment and bring some into the warmth of the house earlier than others to see what difference it makes. And I must get round to planting the amaryllises. A sad moment last week, foreseeing a much sadder moment to come soon – I always give one to my aunt Jean for Christmas and we compare/compete to whose is growing best. I'd wrapped hers up ready to go before hearing she's been taken poorly. The positive side of this is that it will always remind me of her, and her kitchen overlooking her garden, even of her adored but rather sharp teethed little terrier.

The hydrangeas continue to flourish as do the hellebores and my newish liquidambar are starting to turn colour. Though the trouble with going to stay in a fabulous garden in the west of Scotland is that the colours in the east just can't compete. The candyfloss trees there (*cercis* something) hit you with their smell as you drive past and how lovely it would be to get that strong butter yellow in the borders here. More planting needed perhaps, but one must also consider the limits of the site.

Clare

SOMERTON DIARY November 2021*You will receive a warm welcome at all these events!*

Day	Date	Time	Event	Location
Tuesday	2 Nov	7:00pm	Parish Council Meeting	Somerton Village Hall
Wednesday	3 Nov	10:00am	Friends Coffee Morning	Somerton Village Hall
Thursday	4 Nov	7:30pm	BFI Information Evening	Somerton Village Hall
Sunday	7 Nov	10:45am	Benefice Holy Communion	Winterton Church
Sunday	14 Nov	9:30am	Remembrance & Holy Communion	Horsey Church
Sunday	21 Nov	10:45am	Morning Praise	Somerton Church
Sunday	28 Nov	4:00pm	Benefice Advent Service	Somerton Church

SOMERTON DIRECTORY

St Mary's Church Somerton					
Priest in Charge	Revd John Bloomfield	393628	Church Warden	Pauline Burckitt	393579
			Church Warden	Peter Cator	749816
All Saints Church Horsey					
Priest in Charge	Revd John Bloomfield	393628	Church Warden	Jenny Downes	393314
			Church Warden	Reg Payne	393308
Village Hall			Parish Council		
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			Councillor	Ivan Wright	393898
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