

NORTON NEWSLETTER May 2026 ISSUE No 571

**** DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ITEMS 18th of the month ****

NEWSLETTER EMAIL

nortonnewsletter24@hotmail.com

NORTON SHOP WEBSITE

<https://www.nortonshop.co.uk>

FESTIVAL WEBSITE

<https://www.nortonfestival.org>

PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

<https://nortonsubhamdon-pc.gov.uk>

FRIENDS OF NORTON CHURCH WEBSITE

<https://nortonsubhamdonpc.co.uk/friends-of-norton-church>

VILLAGE HALL WEBSITE

<http://nshvillagehall.co.uk>

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT APRIL 2026

PLANNING: The Parish Council had no planning applications to consider at the April meeting.

NEWSFLASH – THE FIRST FOOD VAN IS COMING TO NORTON!

Finally! The first food van to visit Norton will be Somerset Catch who serve some of the best fresh fish and chips in the area, and we are very pleased they have agreed to include Norton on their route. Treat yourself to a classic seaside favourite right on your doorstep!

A traditional fish and chip van will be visiting Norton on: Monday, 1st June, 4.30–7pm in Norton Village School car park

Expect freshly cooked fish and delicious chips, all prepared to order and served hot. A proper traditional takeaway experience – simple, tasty, and just the way it should be! Please come along, support the van, and enjoy an evening off from cooking. The more support they receive, the more likely they are to return. Over the coming months, we hope to welcome a variety of visiting food vans to Norton, including Italian pizzas and other international food offerings.

Minchington Rec and New Recreation Ground

Update: Isn't Minchington Rec looking fantastic these days? The improvements are already very noticeable, and we've received many lovely comments from residents appreciating the work carried out so far. Somerset Landscapes are doing an excellent job bringing the grass management under control and, with the arrival of spring sunshine, the trees are beginning to flourish. It's wonderful to see the space coming

back to life. The newly installed hamstone boulders have also created a lovely seating area to sit and enjoy the surroundings. We were delighted to hear from a very kind resident who has generously offered to donate trees to replace those lost over the years along the avenue of cherry trees. This will enable us to complete the avenue, with planting planned for late autumn. We are extremely grateful for this thoughtful contribution to the village.

In addition, we are delighted to announce that Norton Community Matters has very generously pledged £2,500 towards the cost of a new double-cradle swing for infants and babies, replacing the unit that was removed by Somerset Council when they previously owned the recreation ground. High-quality play equipment is unfortunately very expensive, with the full unit costing approximately £5,500, but it makes a significant difference to children's health, happiness and wellbeing. Although the Parish Council does have some funds ringfenced towards the swings, we are still short of the total required. I will now be exploring further funding and grant opportunities to help enhance the play facilities at Minchington Rec, although this will take time.

If any resident would like to contribute towards the new swings to help bring the installation forward, any support would be very warmly welcomed. Please contact the Clerk as soon as possible via email at clerk@nortonsubhamdon-pc.gov.uk. At the main recreation ground, following the sad news that the two horse chestnut trees will need to be removed, we are pleased to report that two generous pledges have already been received to fund their replacements. The Norton and Chiselborough Flower Show Committee have kindly offered to fund one replacement tree, and Norton Community Matters has pledged to fund the other. Thank you to everyone for your generosity and continued support – Norton truly is a very special place.

Misuse of Dog Waste Bins in Norton:

It has been observed that some dog waste bins in the village are being misused. Some residents are bringing large carrier bags—and in some cases full bin bags—containing dog, rabbit, hamster and other pet waste from home and placing them in these bins. **This is not the intended use of these bins. Please refrain from doing this.** When bins are used in this way,

they quickly become full. This prevents dog walkers from responsibly disposing of waste and, as a result, bags are sometimes left on the ground beside the bins. This is also unacceptable and creates an unpleasant and unhygienic environment for everyone.

If a dog waste bin is full, please use the next available bin or take the waste home with you and dispose of it in your general household waste (black bin). Dog waste bins are provided by the Parish Council specifically for dog walkers to dispose of waste while walking in the village.

They are placed in convenient locations to support responsible use. These bins are not designed for household pet waste or large quantities of animal waste. All such waste should be disposed of in your general household rubbish or composted appropriately at home. Thank you for your co-operation in helping to keep Norton clean and pleasant for all.

Parish Council Update on Ham Hill

At the April meeting, the Parish Council raised several concerns about recent changes at Ham Hill:

- **New steel signage:** Concerns about safety, as modern roadside signs are usually designed to reduce injury if hit by a vehicle.
- **Damaged hamstone signs:** Disappointment that the large stone signs were damaged during reinstallation.
- **Alcohol licence application:** The council learned an application has been made for the visitor centre, believed to cover gift shop sales and alcohol at events. Concerns include public drinking in the area, especially with new outdoor seating.
- **Litter worries:** With bins removed, there are fears bottles and cans may be left around the site.
- **Impact on local pub:** Concern that alcohol sales at the visitor centre could affect trade at the Prince of Wales pub, already facing pressures common to rural pubs.

Somerset Council has agreed to meet with Chairs and Clerks from nearby parish councils (Norton, Stoke, Odcombe, and Montacute) to discuss concerns and hear community views. Somerset Council says it has also received a lot of positive feedback and wants a balanced discussion. Residents with questions or issues they'd like raised are invited to email the Parish Clerk or message me directly.

The next monthly meeting will be held on Monday 11th May at 7.30pm in the committee room, Norton Village Hall. Please note the annual Parish Council Meeting will take place

before the monthly meeting and will start at 7pm. Louise Brooks (Clerk to Norton sub Hamdon Parish Council) clerk@nortonsubhamdon-pc.gov.uk

CRAFTY CRITTERS will be meeting in the Reading Room on **Monday 11th May from 1.30 to 3.30pm**. Please join us for a couple of hours of crafting and friendly chat. £2.00 per session including tea/coffee and biscuits. Call Tricia on 01935 882646 for more information.

MOBILE LIBRARY AND BOOK CLUB. The mobile library will be in Chiselborough opposite the village hall on **Tuesday 12th May** from 9.30–10.00am and **in Higher Street Norton from 10.10–10.35am**. The book club meets the same day in the Reading Room. For more details contact Anne Fairweather on 01935 882620.

NORTON LADIES GROUP At our April meeting we learnt about the Stuckey family of Langport who founded Stuckey's Bank, the largest banking company for the South West. These days it is better known as Nat West.

A big 'thank you' to all the volunteers who helped serve the teas, and to all who made or bought cakes for the Plant Fair in April, very much appreciated.

Tuesday 12th May, 1.40–4.40 We shall be crafting on Ham Hill making bracelets from nettles. I am assured this won't hurt...too much. Meet at the Visitors Centre.

Monday 18th May, 7pm we welcome back Richard Kay, a very popular speaker, who will give his presentation 'Much More Than Matchstick Men, The Art of Lowry'.

Future activities: **Wednesday 17th June**, a clue-solving trail around Chard; **Wednesday 15th July**, 25 years of Norton Ladies Group celebration lunch with entertainment at the Lord Nelson. Sue Lowder 01935 881805

HAMDON HA! HA! COMEDY NIGHT Saturday 23rd May, 8pm, Lord Nelson: Wow – booking our professional comedy acts is getting very exciting! As a follow-up to the spectacularly successful February event, please start exercising your chortle muscles to avoid injury on May 23rd! **Doors open 7.45. Tickets: £12** available from a date to be announced – early May from the Nellie, otherwise from Hamdon/jokepit.com plus fee.

NORTON VILLAGE COFFEE MORNING The coffee morning at Peter and Marilyn Willsher's home was very successful, with an amazing £339.00 raised for church funds. Many thanks to

them for kindly hosting, and to all those who supported us by buying raffle tickets, contributing to the sales table, or making donations. Our next coffee morning will be at **10.45am on Wednesday 27th May at the home of Peter Prager, 17 Bramley Fields** when the theme will be 'Celebrate Summer'. Come and catch up on all the village news. Everyone is welcome and we look forward to seeing you then. Janet Hutton 01935 881566 and Debbie Bradley 07710 352194

NORTON BOULES As the football season drags to a close, our very sociable Thursday boules nights at Minchington Rec resume on **Thursday 7th May, from 6pm**. A boules set is available from the pub during opening hours.

Saturday 16th May, 4pm, Nellie Boules Race for teams of four. A cross-country boules event, we kid you not. Google 'Klootschieten', watch out for more from Nij the Norton Klootschieten Lainger, or just meet in 'the clubhouse' well beforehand to warm up for this inaugural event and find out what to do. Norton Boules Committee.

SAVE THE DATE Saturday 24th October, The Village Ceilidh in Norton Village Hall.

NORTON & CHISELBOROUGH FLOWER SHOW. This year we are delighted to sponsor Yeovil Freewheelers (Blood Bikes) who provide a free transportation service for the NHS nationwide. **Quiz Night at the Lord Nelson in aid of Yeovil Freewheelers, Sunday 31st May, 7.30pm for 8pm**. Please contact Helen on 01935 881473 to book a table before they are all snapped up! Six people maximum per table. Suggested donation £5.00 per head, plus raffle tickets on sale. See you there for a fun evening.

NORTON CHURCH SERVICES IN MAY

Sunday 3rd, no service at Norton
Sunday 10th, 9.30am Communion
Sunday 17th, 6pm Evensong
Sunday 24th, no service at Norton
Wednesday 27th, 9am Communion
Details of all services and information about the Benefice www.hamhillchurches.org and church notice boards.

WHIT WHEN? Whitsun used to be an important festival acknowledged by the whole community, and Whit Monday was a bank holiday. Whit Week was celebrated 'up North' as a time of rejoicing and holiday. Sadly, some years ago the standardisation of bank holidays led to many people thinking the May Bank holiday was 'Whitsun'. In fact, Whit Sunday depends upon the variable date of Easter and comes seven Sundays afterwards. This year **Whit Sunday is**

24th May. It is the Church's birthday – remembering the occasion when Christians 'came alive' (records Acts chapter 2) and were empowered to spread the Gospel. This is one of the occasions when we rejoice in the ways God guides and influences our lives.

NORTON TEDDY BEAR PARACHUTE JUMP

How brave is your teddy bear (or another cuddly toy)? Brave enough to parachute from St Mary's Church tower? If so, then prepare their parachutes (using a plastic bag and guidance) at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uA_qzmaDF8) and get ready for jump day **on Saturday 27th June before the Jubilee Garden party**. Watch out for further details and posters. Barry Eastley

NORTON COMMUNITY MATTERS is delighted to be organising the Summer Party at the **Jubilee Nature Garden on Saturday 27th June from 5pm to 9pm**. Make a date in your diary to come along and enjoy the entertainment, refreshments, local charities and organisations, and socialise with friends old and new! NCM is also very happy to support the lovely Crafty Critters knitters with their Poppy Project. If you should have any village projects that you would like help with funding, please do let us know (please include an idea of costings and of course please remember to give us your contact details in case we need more information). Email helloncm@outlook.com. **Our AGM will be on Thursday 16th July, venue to be confirmed.**

CHURCH FLAG The Union Flag will fly from the Church Tower on Wednesday 6th May for the King's Coronation anniversary. The George Cross will fly on Thursday 14th May for Ascension Day, on 24th May for Whit Sunday and on 31st May for Trinity Sunday.

FRIENDS OF NORTON CHURCH WINE CLUB

May winners are Alexia Hill, Jane Ashdown, Jackie Campbell, Richard Terrill, Charles and Sophie Campbell, Niall Clifford, Rober Vaux, Mary Batstone, Debbie Bradley, Roger Webb. If you are interested in joining the Wine Club, please contact Simon on 07943 971566 or email simonbradley@gmail.com.

SAY NO TO MOWING IN MAY! Give yourselves a break – leaving parts or all of your lawn unmown during May and onwards will allow wildflowers and wild grasses to flourish. Even the smallest patch of unmown grass provides food for butterflies and bees. You'll save yourself quite so much effort and our wildlife will be delighted. For more information visit: www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay/

POPPY CASCADE Crafty Critters would like to produce a Poppy Cascade to be displayed in the churchyard for Remembrance Day and need your help. As you can imagine, we'll require a lot of poppies! If you would like to knit/crochet a poppy, or more, we would be very grateful. We have some easy patterns for you to use, or you might find some on the internet. We have some red wool for anyone to use thanks to a generous donation from Norton Community Matters. There will also be a box in Norton Shop with patterns and wool. Please return any unused wool to the box for other knitters/crocheters. Completed poppies can also be left there. For further information contact Tricia on 01935 882646 or pj_walton@yahoo.co.uk. Many thanks from Crafty Critters.

JUBILEE GARDEN *Sincere apologies from the editors for missing Lynn's message below from the April issue.*

I must thank all you lovely people who sent me beautiful birthday cards, gifts and flowers. I do appreciate and love you all very much. When I walked up to the Jubilee Garden early on my birthday morning to feed the birds, I was brought to tears to see balloons in a tree and a new glass picture of a beautiful bluetit. Thank you all so very much, I am overwhelmed! I had such a great weekend and couldn't have asked for more. The garden has looked so lovely with all Digby's daffodils in flower – God bless you Digby, you are greatly missed. Lynn Orchard.

NORTON SHOP We hope our customers like the new-look counter, installed thanks to kind donations from our community and Parish Council. It should improve the workflow for you and the volunteers, and adjustments will be made as needed. We are very aware there is concern for a screen to be kept, and an improved version will be installed and tested as soon as possible.

SUMMER CLOTHING DONATIONS PLEASE

We had unusually warm weather in April and refugees in overseas camps were likely to have experienced the same. When deciding which clothing to give away, please consider those refugees whose only source of lightweight clothing is via aid. Refugee Aid from Taunton (Raft) hopes to receive clean, washable summer clothes for men, women, teenagers, children and babies, all sizes, plus suitable footwear for all. Blankets and sleeping bags are always needed as nights continue to be cold. New underwear and new toiletries and hygiene products for babies and adults are gratefully received. Suitcases are not needed at present, but many thanks to those who have donated them. Items which would not be suitable for refugees – vintage clothing, evening wear, smart day wear, wedding clothes etc. – can be sold by Raft online to provide funding for child refugees' projects in camps overseas. I received a very smart hat for Raft to sell and Raft are always glad to see me because of the great donations I deliver. Many thanks to all who donated winter clothing. Geraldine Downey 01460 271358

THE VILLAGE ART GROUP Our summer term has now begun, and we are looking forward to longer days and painting outside with lots of fresh artistic inspiration! Come and join a very friendly self-guided group of artists for painting, drawing etc. on **Tuesdays 7.30–9.30 pm and Fridays 10–12.30 during school term** at Stoke sub Hamdon Memorial Hall. FREE first visit to see how you get on! For more information on the group contact Andrew on 01935 823691 SSHTheVillageArtistsGroup@gmail.com Facebook: Stoke Sub Hamdon The Village Artists Group

VILLAGE DIARY OF EVENTS

Monday 11 May Parish Council Meeting, committee room, Norton Village Hall, 7.30pm

Monday 11 May Crafty Critters, Reading Room, 1.30–3.30pm

Tuesday 12 May Mobile Library and Book Club, Higher Street, 10.10–10.35am

Tuesday 12 May Ladies Group on Ham Hill, meet at Visitors Centre, 1.40pm

Monday 18 May Ladies Group, The Art of Lowry, Reading Room, 7pm

Saturday 23 May Hamdon Ha! Ha! Lord Nelson, 8pm

Wednesday 27 May Norton Village Coffee Morning, 17 Bramley Fields, 10.45am

Sunday 31 May, Quiz night in aid of Yeovil Freewheelers (Blood Bikes), Lord Nelson 7.30 for 8pm

Wednesday 15 July, Ladies Group, 25 years of NLG celebration lunch, Lord Nelson

Thursday 16 July, Norton Community Matters AGM

Saturday 27 June the fifth Annual Jubilee Garden Party

Saturday 24 October The Village Ceilidh, Norton Village Hall

