

# Norton-in-Hales

## Monthly Messenger July 2018



Website: [www.nortoninhales.org](http://www.nortoninhales.org)



### Dates for your diary

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> July     | Praise and Worship at 11:15am, St Chads<br>(Mark 5:21-end)  |
| Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> July     | Morning Prayer at 11:15am, St Chads<br>(Psalm 123; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13)  |
| Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> July  | Norton in Bloom Monthly Meeting, 7:30pm at the<br>Hinds Head. All Welcome   |
| Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> July    | Family Service at 11:15am, St Chads<br>(Mark 6:14-29)   |
| Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July    | Holy Communion at 11:15am, St Chads<br>(Ephesians 2:11-end; Mark 6:30-34, 53-end)   |
|                                 | Village Litter Picking, meeting at 10.00 am at the bus shelter. Please<br>come along and join in – equipment will be provided |
| Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> July | Heart of England In Bloom judging of Norton in Hales  |
| Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> July    | Family Communion at 11:15am, St Chads<br>(Ephesians 3:14-end; John 6:1-21)  |

### Tuesday Coffee Mornings

In the village hall from 10am – 11.30 everyone welcome.

### Village Festival

The organisers of the village festival would like to thank all the people who helped on the day to erect gazebos and set up stalls. A special thank you to Dean for the loan of a marquee and A R Richards for supplying the fencing and road cones. The day was a great success and the weather was on our side.....unlike last year! Thanks to all who came and took part in the second annual festival and we hope to see you all again next year.

### Message from David Rigby

I completed the charity cycle ride on the morning of 10th June, with the result that the Hope House Hospice near Oswestry will be £800+ better off. Not only this: if the other 300+ riders were to be the recipients of the same kindness and generosity as you have demonstrated you will see the potential for a significant gift for one of the most wonderful charities on the planet. Fingers crossed.

I have a confession to make: I enjoyed the whole process enormously. It was a most enjoyable 39 miles, ridden in glorious weather and in the lovely countryside of North Shropshire. On behalf of the Hope House Hospice I should like to thank all the local sponsors who gave to this outstanding charity. David Rigby

For any contributions to the Monthly Messenger, please email [hannahmariahague@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:hannahmariahague@yahoo.co.uk)  
Deadline for submissions is the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.



## ***A View from the Vicarage***

Summer is here! And for a change the weather seems to be agreeing and is seasonable. With the sun shining and longer days, we want to be outdoors, enjoying that sunshine and warmth. Gardens are in full bloom and the colours are magnificent. A few weeks back, I was away on a retreat in Germany during which we went for a walk through the hilly terrain surrounding the retreat centre. It was a spectacular day with sunshine, a gentle breeze, and all of God's glory spread out before us to enjoy. At one point, I stopped and was mesmerized just by the number of shades of green spread out before my eyes. It made me realize how often I don't see the beauty of God's creation.

What else do I miss? Day after day, I go through my routine activities, going from place to place. I am either so preoccupied with where I am going or thinking about other things which need doing, that I am not sure I fully appreciate the here and now. Time passes so quickly—at least that's what I hear so many people complaining—that we get caught up in work and doing things. It can get so hectic sometimes, I wonder how productive we are in what we are so busy doing. While that is important in one sense, it begs the question: "What are we missing?"

Take time out. Go off on a retreat if necessary but take some time to evaluate your life and decide what's important. My list usually starts off with knowing God through my relationship with his Son Jesus. While in Germany, it struck me: if that is so important, what am I doing to maintain, strengthen, and grow that relationship? Sadly, I realized that I wasn't really doing enough! What scared me, though, was the thought that I was really taking it for granted. Yikes!!

It is so easy to slip into the fast pace of everyday life in doing things, that it's equally easy to miss time developing a relationship which I deem so important. To know God, I must read the Bible. That's where we learn about him and his love for his creation. When I preach on Sunday mornings, I am sharing insights into God through his Word which make it all relevant to daily life. I encourage everyone to read a passage of Scripture each day and allow it to speak to you in a personal way.

But isn't that true for any relationship? We only grow in our connections with one another by being with the other. Talking, listening, sharing. We can encourage, support, and challenge one another, as we grow in our relationships. Without relationships, we are isolated and alone. Loneliness can make us sad, and that sadness can develop into depression. We get lost in the darkness and lose sight of our hope in this world and in this life. That's not a nice place to go.

How do we get there? Simply by being caught up in doing things rather than being with others. We want to accomplish this or that, but forget about relating with those around us, including family and friends. Bit by bit, we isolate our selves and often don't even realize it's happening. My retreat was focused on God and his love for us in the group. We talked together, we ate together, we worshipped together, and we prayed together (and for each other). It was an amazing sense of intimacy and God was at the centre of it all. What a blessing it was for me.

And that is what church is all about—relationship within the family of God. Whenever we come together (individually or collectively) with God, we experience the depth of his love for us and his creation. We share that with each other which in turn helps us share it elsewhere. God's love—including his mercy and grace offered through the death and resurrection of his Son Jesus—is a solid foundation for life. But as with all foundations, it cannot be neglected, or it will deteriorate and collapse.

Jesus said, "Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." [Matthew 11:28] So if you are feeling lost in the commotion of this world, then come and join us at St Chad's any Sunday morning at 11:15am. If you are feeling wobbly in your relationships, come and experience the soundness of God's love for you. It can make a tremendous difference in your life and your relationships.

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# Norton Nature Notes

21<sup>st</sup> May to 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018

Chris Green

At 8.30am on the 7<sup>th</sup> June a long unseen summer visitor arrived in the village. For many the unmistakable call of this bird is one of the enduring signs of spring, yet unfortunately it is now rarely heard. It is of course the cuckoo and Alastair was very keen to inform me that his father, Graham, heard and saw one in the tall fir trees to the side of the railway bridge. It eventually flew over to a nearby wood and would have been a male as only they call like this. Graham and Alastair have not heard the cuckoo in the village for at least 15 years, the nearest location where they have seen one being the Hales area. Have you heard a cuckoo this year?

Jean P at Betton reported having a remarkable morning on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June. Three young jays were eating peanuts from a feeder only a few metres from her lounge window. Jean reports that jays have been very rare visitors to the area with only the odd flash of turquoise to be seen as these shy birds move between hedgerow and copse. Jean also reports that nuthatches are back and feeding well too, along with the other finches and tits. Later in the month Jean contacted me again to say that she had lost two great spotted woodpeckers in successive days and a baby rabbit, but that there was still many great spotted woodpeckers feeding. Jean is not sure what took the woodpeckers but there were only a few feathers left – it was therefore probably a sparrow hawk. A crow was also seen taking a recently fledged blackbird, it took off with the it in its mouth closely followed by the parents. What a racket those blackbirds make when they're in danger!

I was getting worried that swifts may not return to our village this year, and others had also expressed concern at their decline over the years. Thankfully a few pairs can now be seen in the flying above the rooftops – they arrived in late May. You will not see them perched or at rest and will need to spot them among the swallows and house martins when in flight. Look for sickle shaped wings and a dark silhouette. These birds are fast and live life on the wing, this includes preening and sleeping. Should our pairs breed successfully the young will be on the wing for the first few years of their life, in fact, they will only make landfall when it is time to breed. A fascinating bird that is more closely related to the hummingbird than to its close friends the swallows and martins. I could happily stand and watch them all day.

Hares are present to the north of the village and yellowhammers can be seen along the road from Betton to Norton. In early June, Tom S, Cam M and myself came across a pair of juvenile nuthatches foraging along on old wall in the centre of the village. We were with a few metres of the birds and could appreciate their plumage and the actions of the parent bird when feeding the fledgling.

Richard J has sent me details of five very healthy looking kestrel chicks that were ringed in his box on the 6<sup>th</sup> June (white colour rings as well as traditional metal rings). At least four have fledged successfully. This compares with four last year and five the year before. This site has produced ringed chicks for 17 of the last 19 years. Richard has commented that kestrels are not doing well nationally so this is very positive for the area. Richard also reports that goldfinches have been feeding off forget-me-not seed heads. Indeed many locals have commented to me about the abundance of goldfinches in and around the village. They are very active and vocal so we should enjoy their company.

I saw a solitary red kite on the afternoon of the 16<sup>th</sup> June at 4pm. The raptor was gliding quite low over the cricket field – low enough that the russet and white of its plumage could be seen in the sunlight as it gracefully tilted and turned. Unfortunately I was square leg at the time for the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI and couldn't watch it for long, not wanting to drop anymore catches.....

Roger P identified a dragonfly in his garden, a green emperor, that was unfortunately not in a good state. Its tail and mouthparts had been eaten so possibly a small bird had something to do with its death. Roger has kindly shared some images so that the intricate wings and colour of the body can be seen – these will be on the Nature Notes page of the Norton-in-Hales website (along with some other photos of local wildlife including the jays observed by Jean) . Roger and Sally P have also enjoyed watching red and blue damselflies visiting their pond.

Shannon has spoken to me about her regular sightings of barn owls over the year to the north of the village. She has seen these birds in flight and perched on fence posts. This sighting means that have now had reports from all sides of the village which is superb.

During the week in which I have drafted this report the dawn chorus alarm that I enjoy through the window has started to dwindle. The song thrush is still the first to provide a burst of song at around 4.15am from a top a nearby conifer. Others, such as the dunnoek, blackbird and wren, are now less likely to follow in song. Mornings will sadly become quiet again for a while very soon, with only the chirping of house sparrows, who seem always to be active and may well be on their third brood, providing natures early morning soundtrack.

Thanks for all your sightings. Keep your eye out for butterflies and bats.



# Norton in Bloom Newsletter

## July 2018

### Heart of England In Bloom judging of Norton in Hales, 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018

You will probably be aware that the village is entered into the Heart of England In Bloom competition this year. Although we last won 'Champion of Champions' in Britain in Bloom, we have to start again this year at regional level!

Judging of the village will take place on the morning of Wednesday July 25<sup>th</sup>.

Final details are still being worked out and will be delivered in a separate leaflet. However, the main judging area will be from the entrance of the village on Drayton Rd, along Main Road with small diversions, to the central village area. From there the judge will be driven to the pool and river and returned to Napley Drive having looked at the area. Then they will be taken across the big green and into the playing fields.

We would ask that everyone contributes to the success of the village judging by having their front gardens looking as tidy and impressive as possible on the day. The road sweeper will be in the village on the afternoon of 24<sup>th</sup>. Roadside verges will be cut and the greens mown immediately before the day.

There is a lot of litter on roads approaching the village at present.

To support the judging day a litter pick is being organised for Sunday 22nd July, meeting at 10.00 am at the bus shelter. Please come along and join in – equipment will be provided.

***Thank you*** to everyone that attended the bat talk in May and who has supported the group at the events we have held so far this year.

### Jobs for July

Check clematis for signs of clematis wilt

Care for houseplant while on holiday

Water tubs and new plants if dry, but be water-wise

Deadhead bedding plants and repeat-flowering perennials, to ensure continuous flowering

Pick courgettes before they become marrows

Treat apple scab

Clear algae, blanket weeds and debris from ponds, and keep them topped up

Order catalogues for next year's spring-flowering bulbs

Give the lawn a quick-acting summer feed, especially if not given a spring feed

Harvest apricots, peaches and nectarines

Check greenhouse temperatures

The Norton in Bloom group meets at The Hind's Head every month.

This year meetings will take place on the second Thursday in the month at 7.30pm. New members are very welcome.

**The next meeting is on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> July**