

Great Ringstead News and Views

Autumn 2026



Photograph by Hanneke Robson

Welcome to the autumn “News and Views”

As your new Editor, I have lived in our Village for 32 years, so I feel I have earned my stripes! As I started to collect articles for this edition I listened to some interesting comments. One was that this is “the church” magazine. It isn’t, although with my churchwarden’s hat on I do contribute.

All residents in the village are welcome to express their views, comment and contribute, and indeed we have some interesting articles to read here. Feathered and 4 legged, wild, and not so wildlife featuring.

The parish council also use “News and Views” to let us know what is going on, if we don’t read it we can’t complain we didn’t know!!

So read on and enjoy

Kate Bulmer

The Village Hall

Committee are hosting

Halloween Race Night on
Saturday 31st October 2026 at 7pm

These events are always great fun and well attended, so please make sure you buy your tickets in advance.

There is also the opportunity to sponsor a horse (£5) or race (£10) contact Melanie Hutchinson 01485525525 melanie.hutchinson@hlhlttd.co.uk for details.

If you can supply a raffle prize, please contact Jane Barnett janebarnett200@btinternet.com or bring along on the night.

RINGSTEAD VILLAGE HALL

HALLOWEEN RACE NIGHT

SATURDAY 31ST OCTOBER 2026

DOOR OPEN AT 7PM
TICKETS £3

BRING YOUR OWN DRINKS

Tickets available from
The General Store
Melanie Hutchinson
Debbie Rice

In aid of Ringstead Village Hall
Registered Charity No. 284104

Our pets groomed and photographed by Lucy Tagg



In August 2025, Rocky's Farm was constructed by Kevin Russell of Ringstead Landscapes. Misty, Cookie, Kiki and Coco clearly love their new home.
Photograph by Ray

Happy Bunny Club is a rabbit subscription box founded in 2015 by Georgina and Edward of Docking Road, Ringstead. Since then, we've shipped more than 100,000 rabbit subscription boxes to over 50 countries, packed with tasty treats, fun toys, chews and enrichment goodies to help keep pet rabbits happy, busy and thoroughly spoiled. You can find out more at www.happybunnyclub.com

A new dog/or three on the patch

By Rosalind Fenton

Three greyhounds with long gangly legs arrived in Norfolk, unpacking their bags. Up Peddars Way, sniffing every hedge and blade of grass, making friends with whomever they passed.

The rabbits ran, the horses grazed, and the pygmy goats looked quite amazed.

Along Holme Beach, the sea rolled in; the seabirds passed above the sands so vast. The crew were happy as could be, nosing through seaweed and shells by the sea. Living their best life, their Norfolk adventure had begun: *"We feel so alive!"*

Onto Barrow Common they went, looking for bunnies, time well spent!

Such a grand view, high above the sea, three cheery greyhounds where they were meant to be.

Gorse and heathland, what a sight! Panoramic Brancaster Staithe standing out so bright.

Three sleepy hounds, time to rest their heads.

With big, happy sighs, they tumbled into bed.

In their dreams, they played and chased: *"We are home for sure! We love you, Ringstead!"*

Peddars Meadow

A huge boost for the Peddars Meadow project with Gary Hibbert, the knowledgeable NWT warden of Holme Dunes, and guide for Wild Ken Hill, stepping in to bring the meadow up to chalkland meadow standard. His knowledge of plants, insects and moths is extensive.

Interesting finds have already been made and we are thrilled to have his help.

For further information, please contact Hanneke Robson

The Garage Studio Norfolk, Ringstead PE36 5LA thegaragestudionorfolk.co.uk



Parish Council News

Bill Jacob, Chair of Ringstead Parish Council

Melanie Hutchinson who volunteered to take on editing *News & Views* when Pauline Atkinson moved to France in 2022, has decided to stand down from this important role in the life of the village. We are very grateful to Melanie for having taken this on and maintaining continuity, and for persuading people to contribute to this valuable link in the village, which volunteers deliver to every property in the village.

News & Views is funded by the Parish Council, and printed by the Borough Council's printing unit, but is independently edited by a volunteer. Kate Bulmer has kindly volunteered to take over editing *News & Views* and will welcome your contributions to sharing news and views among permanent and part-time residents and visitors.

As the Parish Council customarily doesn't meet during August there are only two months of news to report

Playing Field

The Playing Field is a dog-free zone, in order to protect children's health. To remind people of this and that the Playing Field should not be used by motor cyclists or e-bikes, notices to that effect have also been placed on the access to the Playing Field from Chapel Lane.

Highways

The continuing problem was noted of soil being washed down Peddars Way South and Docking Road, filling the highway surface drains and causing flooding. It was agreed to again draw this to the attention of Norfolk County Council Highways Department.

Chalk Pit

The Council is in the process of renewing its lease for the Chalk Pit in the Downs, as a public amenity for residents and visitors, from the Trustees of Great Ringstead Allotment Charity. In preparation for this Simon Lee, our Parish Clerk has undertaken a Health and Safety Risk Assessment on the site to enable the Council to secure public safety liability insurance for the site. As a first step towards mitigating risks, the Council has paid for a new safety fence along the top of the quarry face, and provided warning signs against starting fires, including on portable BBQs. Further expenditure will be required to provide better emergency access signage, and regular inspection of the site. We would welcome offers from volunteers to establish a monthly rota to inspect the Chalk Pit. If you are interested please contact me.

Community Improvement Levy

Following the June *News & Views* suggestions were made for works to restore the two ponds in the village, to repaint the village sign, provide additional play equipment on the Playing Field, and providing additional seating. Research suggests that grants may be available to landowners restoring eligible ponds, and that ours may be eligible, so the Council agreed to draw this to the attention of the relevant landowners. With the unplanned significant additional capital expenditure required to ensure the Chalk Pit is a satisfactory public amenity it was agreed not to follow up the other suggestions at this stage.

Great Ringstead Allotment Charity

The Council nominates the four Trustees of the Charity to serve for a period of three years, which is renewable. At its meeting on 14th September Kate Bulmer, Bill Jacob, Noel Shelley and Andrew Martin Smith were nominated to serve for the coming years.

Vacancy for a Parish Councillor

The Council has advertised for a volunteer to fill a vacancy on the Council until the next elections are due in May 2027.

www.ringsteadnorfolkparish.gov.uk

clerk@ringsteadnorfolkparish.gov.uk



Lynx bus service 33b

This new service runs from opposite The Gin Trap to Hunstanton 4 times a day (9.51, 11.51, 13.51 and 15.51 Monday to Saturday, but not bank holidays)

Visit Hunstanton, no worry about parking, connect with buses to King's Lynn, QEH or the Coastliner.

Thanks to Mr Howland and Kevin Russell for cutting back the hedge now that the birds have flown their nest.

Confessions of a second home owner

By Gavin Howard

It's now over 5 years since my wife Lucinda and I have owned a Ringstead property. Lockdowns had gradually worn away the resolve I had that owning a second home took away property from locals and meant that we would go abroad for holidays less often as we would feel as though we had to go to our holiday home at every opportunity.

We were blessed to find the house next door to the shop which for many years had been a holiday let. It has a great charm, as all Ringstead properties do, but best of all was yards away from a pint of milk and the cheery smile of Leah together with the worldly wisdom of Nathan.

I knew it was the right place for us when we were greeted by my old schoolmaster, the late, great John Crofts, on setting foot inside St Andrews for Communion on a Sunday. Wow, what a fellowship. Anyone coming across this ministry if they take the short walk up the hill is blessed indeed.

Our family lives in Cambridge, not a million miles but a world away from North Norfolk charm. It's a great city but there is a far greater sense in Ringstead that the people who live here have a clear vested interest in how the village operates and they really put the effort in. For this reason we decided to be part of Open Gardens in June and I didn't quite know what I had let myself in for. Naively, I had put out a chair and Sunday paper for myself but didn't sit down once all day, except for a delicious lunch up at the village hall. What an event.

It's true indeed that we go abroad less often as this patch of Norfolk has more and more to offer all the time. Now we have a cafe right next door as well as the myriad of breakfast options springing up all over the place. A bracing swim at Holme followed by coffee and a bun makes every day in Ringstead feel like the holiday which it is for us.

So thank you Ringstead for all you offer and all of the care which is taken by its residents to maintain this special place.



A Christmas Tipple

A recipe from Emma Shears

150g (5oz) dark-brown sugar
150g (5oz) mixed fruit
1/2 orange (zest and juice)
5 cloves
1 cinnamon stick
1 vanilla pod, seeds scraped
1/2 tsp nutmeg
1 tsp mixed spice
1 litre of Vodka



Put ingredients in a bottle and top up to the litre mark with vodka. Leave to infuse, for 2 months. Strain and bottle, just in time for Christmas.

Ringstead Bowls Club

Roger Pincott

At the end of the league season Ringstead finished a creditable second in division two. A big thank you goes out to all players as it was a difficult season due to a shortage of players on a number of weeks, but we did manage to field a full team for each match.

I have decided to stand down as green keeper and a club meeting was held to discuss a way forward. No discussion has been taken but a working group is looking to start winter preparation very soon. If there is somebody in the village who has greenkeeper experience and would be willing to give us some advice, please contact me.

A sad goodbye

Our lovely spaniel Sally died on 29th April, and my beloved husband Bernard on 7th July.

Kate thanks everyone for their cards and messages of condolence, with especial thanks to David and Melanie Hutchinson and the team at St Andrew's for refreshments after Bernie's funeral.

Bernard Birch

With Bernard Birch's death Ringstead lost one of the stalwart members of our community. The esteem in which he was held by the people with whom he had worked and in the village was marked by the large congregation at the church for his funeral.



He will be much missed, and our sympathy goes out to Kate.

St Andrew's Church, Ringstead

My thanks to all who donated gifts at our recent Harvest Festival for Hunstanton and District Food Bank. I delivered a fantastic quantity of tinned and dried food, also household cleaning materials and toiletries to our local branch. Thank you.

We have worked throughout the year to keep the churchyard, the flower border and the driveway tidy, and your help would be much appreciated on Saturday 7th November to tidy the area around the War Memorial. Those who feel outside work is not for them will be most welcome to help in church, there's always a cobweb (or hundred) to get rid of as well as dust and leaves. Refreshments afterwards.



Do join the short service of Remembrance at the War Memorial on Sunday 8th November at 10.50. Coffee, cake and a chat in church afterwards.

Church services here in Ringstead to which all are invited take place most Sundays at 9am and at 10am on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays. A 5th Sunday sees us join with members of the other churches in the Benefice in a united service.

For details of services please see notice board on church drive and on the Hunstanton and Saxon Shore Benefice website: saxonshorebenefice.co.uk

Kate Bulmer 01485 791293 or email: cwringstead@saxonshorebenefice.co.uk

Mobile Library visits Ringstead on Thursday every 4 weeks. Docking Road at 10.15 - 10.30 and Holme Road 10.35 - 10.55. October 15th, November 12th and December 10th.

Village Hall

Jane Barnett, Chairperson

We recently hosted the Crowland walking group for tea and cakes which was very well received.

The Village Hall is available to all residents to hire for events, meetings etc.

The hourly hire rates for the hall are:

- Ringstead Residents £10
- Commercial £12
- Half a day £30 (4hours)
- Whole day £50 (8 hours)

To hire the Hall please contact the booking secretary, Mr. Roger Pincott on 525522

If you are holding an event at home, we also have crockery, tables and chairs, and display boards that are available for villagers to hire.

Carpet Bowls

Carpet Bowls will resume on Wednesday 7th October in the Village Hall from 2pm to 4pm, with a break half way through for tea/coffee, biscuits and a chat! Please feel free to come and join us.....we are a friendly group who enjoy meeting new people. There is a small charge per person to cover the hire of the Hall and refreshments.

Nature Notes

Beach-nesting birds

By Ringstead Resident, Stephen Pocock.

I am sure many will have encountered the notices about beach-nesting birds along the shore between Old Hunstanton and Holme and seen the cordons set up to protect favoured nesting spots. Along with a good number of others, I volunteered as a beach warden over the spring and summer to help the NWT monitor the breeding areas, explain to beach users about the cordons and discourage people and their pets from disturbing nest sites and chicks as much as possible. The birds in question are oystercatchers, ringed plovers and little terns and they lay in very basic scrapes on higher parts of the beach. They are at risk from high tides, various predators, as well as unwitting beach users and free-running dogs.

I am pleased to report that our efforts were very successful this year. There were more breeding pairs of ringed plovers than have ever been previously recorded (24) and more chicks successfully fledged (22). Thirteen pairs of oystercatcher nested but only 4 chicks fledged -- not many but encouraging nonetheless as these are the first successful fledglings since 2022. Little terns nested in areas where they previously had not and 14 pairs raised 9 chicks successfully -- another record.

All told, a pleasing result to set against the steep decline in these birds' numbers in North Norfolk over the past 50 years. We hope for further movement in the right direction next year.

Spotted in Ringstead this summer

Hobby, Cuckoo, Raven, Female Montagu's Harrier, Marsh Harrier, Red Kite, Buzzard, Kestrel, Sparrowhawk, Green and Great Spotted Woodpeckers, nesting Greenfinches, Goldfinches and Linnets (a flock of 20 seen on one occasion)

Our Summer with the Oystercatchers

By David and Helga Lendrum



During the very hot, dry months of June and July, our garden at the end of Peddars Way South became the home for a pair of Oystercatchers with their single chick. The adults pushed their long, orange beaks deep into the soil and withdrew them holding a little worm or grub at the end - how they knew where to find them is a mystery! A ritual emerged: one adult extracted the worm from the lawn before placing it on the ground in front of the beak of its mate, who would then pick it up and drop it in front of the beak of the chick. In this way the chick learnt to eat from the ground.

The lawn soon became too hard for the adults to penetrate and find food, so we fed the birds with dried mealworms soaked in water to soften them.

The Oystercatchers took a strong liking to the mealworms, which we sprinkled on the grass, and the same ritual of feeding the chick ensued. Eventually, the chick learnt to find the mealworms independently.

One day, we were surprised to hear an insistent knocking sound coming from the kitchen. When we investigated, we found the culprit was one of the adult Oystercatchers, which was banging with its beak on the glass door. At first, we thought it was attacking its reflection in the glass but we soon realised it was demanding more mealworms. When we obliged and put some out, the knocking ceased and it did not happen again until they were all eaten up.

As the weeks went by, the chick grew from being half-size and fluffy into its full adult size. Its beak grew longer and more orange (only the black tip remained) and the legs and feet became a grey-pink. The back, however, stayed grey and didn't yet turn into the jet-black of the adult plumage.

We also observed how it learnt to fly. One afternoon, the parents were standing on the roof of our house, calling the chick who was nervously walking up and down on the ground along the side of the house. The chick called back. The calling and the running along the wall of the house went on for quite a long time as the chick did not dare to fly up. Eventually, it raised its courage, and the family was united on the roof. After it learned to fly, we would often see them perched on our roof, waiting for their next plateful of mealworms.

Later, after a rain shower had softened the ground, the chick was taught to feed itself. The lessons went like this: The mother speared its beak vertically into the grass, wiggled it in a vertical motion and pulled out a morsel. The chick observed the action of the mother and eventually understood and successfully extracted its first worm.

When the chick was able to feed itself independently, the mother slowly weaned the chick off by being absent for longer spells while the chick stayed in our garden. It was very moving to see how enthusiastically the chick greeted the mother after her absence of half a day. Apart from the loud calls and answers, the chick ran towards the mother, when she appeared, and rubbed its beak against that of the parent who returned the 'kiss'.

The beginning of August marked the last time we saw them - we hope they are now enjoying a plentiful supply of shellfish and sandworms on the beaches at the coast!

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Views expressed in this newsletter are the contributors and not necessarily the views and opinions of the editorial team. The team reserve the right to edit articles as appropriate.

Do get in touch with your news and views. Without them this publication does not exist. The winter edition will be delivered in mid December, copy please by November 13th to katie.kb65@gmail.com or ring me 01485 791293.