Norton-juxta-Kempsey

PARISH NEWSLETTER

Congratulations…

… to Littleworth resident, Rita Twining, who celebrated her 100th birthday recently.

Rita was brought up in Redhill, Worcester and after the war worked in London for a short time. She and her late husband moved to Littleworth in 1950 and Rita has lived in the same house ever since.

Rita has always been involved with the church, serving as a member of the PCC for many years as well as being the church representative on the original parish hall management committee. She has a remarkable memory and can tell many tales about the people who have lived in Littleworth and Norton over the last 75 years. She remembers Orchard Grove being built in the early 1950s and the Hidage around 1980.

To those of us who know Rita as a neighbour, she is the very best. Always very active and ready to help others or just to make sure we are alright. When her next door neighbour had a broken leg, Rita was one of the first to go round to make sure he had food and drink supplies.

Five years ago, Rita was the first person to sign up for the Norton Connector community bus service and she still regularly uses it with a group of ladies nearly every week to go to Tesco. To mark her momentous birthday, the Parish Council and Worcester Wheels presented her with a special bus pass to give her free travel on the Norton Connector.

Rita asked to send thanks and appreciation to all friends and neighbours in the parish who kindly remembered her birthday. She received a huge number of birthday cards including the traditional one from the King and Queen.

Happy 100th Birthday Rita!

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The 2026 NALC Star Council Awards

A Day of Celebration at the House of Lords

On 24 February 2026, the historic halls of the House of Lords played host to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Star Council Awards. It was my privilege to attend this prestigious ceremony, which has become a hallmark event for recognising the vital work of Parish and Town Councils across the country. The afternoon was a vibrant gathering of councillors, clerks, MPs, and national stakeholders, and the air was thick with anticipation as we celebrated those who have demonstrated exceptional talent and innovation in supporting their communities. NALC Vice-President Baroness Natalie Bennett of Manor Castle delivered an inspiring speech, praising the dedication of local councils as the backbone of community life, and the event served as a hub for the sector to collaborate, share ideas, and find fresh inspiration for local projects. Competition was fierce, with an esteemed panel of judges tasked with selecting winners from a highly impressive pool of nominees, and while I didn't take home the top prize this time, I am incredibly proud to have been nominated alongside such dedicated public servants. A huge congratulations goes to Cllr Jonathan Dryland of North Cerney Parish Council, who was named Councillor of the Year. Seeing the incredible impact my peers are making across the UK has only further fuelled my commitment to our community. As they say -there is always next year!

Nigel Huddleston MP for South Worcestershire and Cllr Kevin Fincher, on the terrace at the House of Lords.

Free home improvements available for eligible Worcestershire residents

The Warm Homes: Local Grant scheme offers a range of fully funded improvements, including insulation, upgraded heating systems, heat pumps, solar panels and energy efficient windows and doors. A free technical survey will identify which measures are most suitable for each property.

To qualify, households must either have a gross annual household income of less than £36,000, receive means-tested benefits, or live in a pre-qualified post code area. Eligible homes must have, or be assessed as having, an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of D to G. The EPC assessment is provided free of charge.

Worcestershire County Council is delivering the scheme in partnership with local energy charity Act on Energy, alongside Worcester City Council, Wychavon District Council and Malvern Hills District Council.

If you think you might qualify, or know someone who might benefit, it's easy to apply. For more information, full eligibility criteria and to register your interest, visit the Warm Homes Local Grant pages of our website below. To speak to an energy advisor, contact Act on Energy's free advice line on 0800 988 2881.Wychavon Town Supplementary Planning Document.

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/environment/sustainability/tackling-fuel-poverty

NJK School News

Community Engagement and Environmental Responsibility

At Norton Juxta Kempsey CE Primary School, we believe that education reaches far beyond the classroom walls. Over the past term, our pupils, staff, and families have been working together to make a positive difference in our local community. From volunteering initiatives and fundraising events to partnerships with local organisations, our school continues to grow as a place where kindness, collaboration, and community spirit thrive.

Community Litter Pick with Little Litter Warriors

This week, our pupils have taken part in a fantastic two-day community litter picking initiative around the school and the surrounding areas, including The Parish Hall. On both Tuesday and Wednesday, classes worked together to collect and sort litter, demonstrating exceptional teamwork, enthusiasm and care for our environment. We are incredibly proud of the way they conducted themselves—they have been truly fantastic ambassadors for the school. This event forms part of our ongoing commitment to caring for our environment and taking pride in our local community.

During the clean-up, pupils made an unexpected discovery: the oldest piece of litter collected was a crisp packet dating all the way back to 1988! This remarkable find served as a powerful reminder of the long-lasting impact that waste can have on our environment and sparked thoughtful discussion among the pupils.

We are delighted that Karen from Little Litter Warriors joined us once again to support the pupils. Her guidance, practical tips, and infectious enthusiasm made this a valuable and meaningful learning opportunity for everyone involved.

Thank You to Our Wonderful Parent Volunteers

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all the parents who generously gave their time last weekend to help erect our new bee skep, kindly donated by The Bee Friendly Trust. Their support, enthusiasm, and willingness to lend a hand have helped bring this special project to life, and we are extremely grateful.

This initiative follows the fantastic work our NJK Eco-Reps have been undertaking with The Bee Friendly Trust over recent years. Representatives from the charity visited NJK to teach pupils about the vital role bees play in our ecosystem and how small actions can make a significant difference in supporting pollinators.

As part of the project, pupils also decorated a beautiful bee skep, that was displayed at Worcestershire Parkway Train Station. It was a wonderful opportunity for our school to contribute to a community-wide effort to support local wildlife and to showcase the creativity and commitment of our pupils.

We would also like to express our heartfelt thanks to the parents and staff who have so generously given their time to help revamp the pond area, using the £1,000 awarded through the Tesco Community Grant. Their hard work has transformed this space into a vibrant, thriving habitat that will support outdoor learning, biodiversity projects, and pupil wellbeing for years to come. We are incredibly grateful for the shared commitment to improving our outdoor environment and creating opportunities for pupils to connect with nature.

Green Spaces Update

It's been two years since we published **"A Green Vision for Norton-juxta-Kempsey Parish."** Since then, the Parish Council's Green Spaces Working Group has been busy turning those ideas into reality. As we started 2026, we wanted to share the progress we've made in making our parish a more vibrant, natural place to live.

Local Landscapes & Habitats

We've focused heavily on accessibility and biodiversity in 2025. Key highlights include:

● **The Green Lane:** Situated opposite the Parish Hall, this lane has been fully refurbished, restoring a charming local route for walkers. The bridleway has been cleared and is now much easier to navigate.

● **Kings Meadow:** To mark the Coronation, a portion of the field next to the Stonehall bridleway has been fenced and cleared. We have now seeded this area with wildflowers and refurbished the pond, creating a vital wetland habitat as part of our wider renewal strategy.

● **Woodland Management:** The copse on the south side of the Parish Hall has been cleared of overgrown brush. We've reseeded the area with a shady woodland mix and bulbs, and installed "insect hotels", bespoke habitats for birds, bats, bugs, and bees.

Flourishing Flora & Fauna

Our "Green Vision" isn't just about views; it's about a working ecosystem.

● **The Apiary:** Our bees are thriving! Thanks to our volunteers, the apiary field has been replanted with pollinator-friendly trees and flowers. The result? A regular supply of delicious local honey throughout the summer.

Bringing Our Vision to Life

● **Wildflower Verges:** Keep an eye out for more colour on your walks; the verges of the parish playing fields have now been seeded with wildflowers to support our local insect populations.

● **The Outdoor Gym:** Located by the Sergeants Mess at Brockhill, this facility encourages us all to get outside and enjoy the fresh air, a core part of our "green" philosophy.

Looking Ahead

Behind the scenes, we worked with **National Highways** (following a major grant) to add technical detail to our long-term plans. We are also in the process of resolving long-standing land ownership issues. Once settled, these will clear the way for our next big ambitions: a **Community Orchard** and a series of **Tranquillity Trails**.

We Need You!

These projects are fuelled by two things: grants and people. While we continue to hunt for funding, we always need more hands on deck.

Whether you'd like to join the **Working Group** to help plan the future or simply want to help out with a specific "dig" or project, we would love to have you.

Interested? Please contact our Parish Clerk, **Sam McMichael**.

Five years of the Norton Connector

Do you realise it is more than five years since we started the Norton Connector, our community minibus? Since then the service has made more than a thousand single trips and carried over 4000 passengers.

We launched the service with an event at the parish hall in September 2020 during which our MP, Nigel Huddleston, cut the ribbon to declare the bus open.

Worcester Wheels have magnificently run the service for us since the start. Without them the idea of a community bus service would probably never have got off the ground.

We were very fortunate to get funding initially with a Community Legacy Grant from Wychavon District Council and also our then County Councillor, Rob Adams. In the following years we had several grants from Worcestershire County Council. Today the service is fully subsidised by the Parish Council which enables us to keep the fares low.

And not surprisingly the Norton Connector has evolved over those years. The original plan was a timetabled service several times a day between Parkway Station and St Peters Tesco. We even had our own bus decorated as the Norton Connector, which turned out to be operationally not very flexible. Nowadays Worcester Wheels use whichever of their fleet is available to run a when-you-want-it on-demand service which not only covers the parish, but also goes into Worcester, to the bus station, doctors surgeries and the hospital.

Many of our passengers are older residents who do not drive, but we also carry groups who are going out together, perhaps for a lunch or shopping trip, and do not wish to drive.

So, if you know friends or neighbours who need transport, or a group who want an outing, tell them about the Norton Connector - available to Norton-juxta-Kempsey residents 8am-5pm Monday to Saturday.

Phone Worcester Wheels on 01905 450654 to book a trip or to find out more.

South Worcestershire Development Plan Review

South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR) and Wychavon Town – What is going on as of 24th March 2026:

- The consultation on the Main Modifications to the SWDPR has ended and the final confirmation has been received from the inspectors. Wychavon DC and the other South Worcs councils will almost certainly formally adopt the SWDPR by the end of March, i.e. by the time you read this.
- On March 23rd the government announced Wychavon Town will not be an official "New Town", but Wychavon DC have said this makes no difference and Wychavon Town will go ahead.
- Three outline planning applications for various parts of Wychavon Town (aka Parkway Garden Town) have been submitted by developers.
- Another developer (Wain Estates) is currently carrying out a consultation exercise regarding its proposals on land east of Abbotswood railway bridge.
- The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Wychavon Town has also completed its consultation period and we now await changes, if any, arising from the consultation. The SPD sets out in more detail Wychavon District Council's aspirations for the design of Wychavon Town. Developers are required to "have regard" for the SPD in their planning applications.
- Worcestershire County Highways are continuing with traffic modelling to forecast the impact of Wychavon Town on our roads. Wychavon DC expect to submit an outline Strategic Infrastructure application by the end of 2026 detailing the required major road changes.
- Norton-juxta-Parish Council has commented as appropriate on all planning applications and consultations
- We will give a latest update at the Annual Parish Meeting on 7th May 2026 in the Parish Hall.

Commitment to Wychavon Town remains

Wychavon has confirmed its commitment to developing Wychavon Town after the Government announced it would not be one of its flagship New Towns.

The proposed development around Worcestershire Parkway Railway Station was one of 12 sites the Government was assessing following the New Towns Taskforce Report. The Government has now confirmed just seven locations will be taken forward as New Towns during this Parliament, with Wychavon Town not on the list.

Wychavon Town will still be part of the Government's New Homes Accelerator programme and will receive specialist support from Homes England, the Government's housing and regeneration agency, to unblock barriers and speed up delivery of new housing and infrastructure.

Several planning applications have already been submitted for Wychavon Town and will be considered later this year. A consultation on the Infrastructure Planning Application, to ensure Wychavon Town has the schools, roads, and other facilities needed to support new housing, will take place this summer.

Cllr Emma Kearsey, Wychavon's Executive Board Member for Planning, Infrastructure and Urban Design, said: "We began work to deliver Wychavon Town long before the Government decided it would include us in its New Town programme, so this announcement changes nothing for us. However, the process behind this decision has been shambolic and simply doesn't stand up to scrutiny.

Wychavon Town is better placed than several of the locations on the list to deliver the kind of infrastructure-led development the Government says it wants. The assessment used to justify this decision contains clear inaccuracies

while ignoring strong evidence supporting the site in the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review, which has been tested through public examination.

In contrast to the Government, our work on Wychavon Town has been built on partnership and proper consultation. We have worked closely with Homes England, landowners and local communities, giving people real opportunities to have their say and shaping proposals around that feedback.

We remain committed to delivering Wychavon Town and are confident we are well placed to move forward. The Government has indicated support will still be available for Wychavon Town and we will be seeking assurances about what this means in reality, particularly around funding. But really ministers need to explain how a process that should have been guided by evidence - including the findings of their own Planning Inspectorate - has ended in such a deeply questionable decision."

Wychavon Town will see 10,000 high-quality, energy-efficient homes built on the site, with 5,000 of them delivered by 2041. There will also be a new town centre, four parks, primary and secondary schools, a sports hub and sports pitches, a GP and healthcare centre, flexible community spaces and 50 ha of employment land.

Visit www.wychavontown.co.uk to find out more.

Your church needs you!

A few years ago there was a big national campaign to support our libraries with the banner - USE IT OR LOOSE IT. The campaign made the good point that while everyone is mostly supportive of Libraries and very keen that they should be there - less people were going to them.

The same could be said about the church. Most people I speak to talk very warmly about the church and are so pleased that the church in the village is active and part of our community. Most parishioners are positive and expectant of the church being part of their big life events - we love marrying people, baptising babies and see it as an immense privilege to support people in their times of grief.

St James is support by a wonderful group of people who attend on Sundays, they give generously and work tirelessly to ensure that the church remains open, structurally sound and looking beautiful. It is not always easy as an old building has many needs and on top of our normal bills we also have to give a certain amount of money to the Diocese each year.

When I speak to people about my concerns there tends to be a genuine wish to help and an offer to attend events etc. However there are 2 things the people could do that would really make a difference to our church community and I hope you don't mind me mentioning them.

1. Come along on a Sunday morning - it doesn't have to be every time. But maybe come a few times a year or every other month. There is such a wonderful group of people to meet, hymns to be sung and a sermon to agree or disagree with. We meet for an hour at 10.30 with coffee afterwards on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month.

2. Give a regular donation to the church. A few pounds a month (or more) would make a huge difference. We receive no money from any other sources other then what is given by those who support the church.

It is your church and we exist to our serve our community - if you can help us that would be amazing,

Every blessings

Rev Kat

If you would like to make a donation to St James' Church please use the details below...

Lloyds Bank

PCC Norton

Sortcode: 30-99-90

Account Number: 01274835

5th April
Easter Sunday
10.30

All Welcome
St James, Norton

Please join us for a

Strawberry Tea

(Strawberries and cream, scones with jam and cream, cakes, tea or coffee)

Friday 5th June
2:30 pm
St James' Church, Norton

£10 per person
Strictly limited numbers – advance purchase required

Tickets available from
Christine Grant
01905 820187

Rev'd Kat Mepham
07512222635
revkat@severnside.church

Worcester Norton Shooting Club

Norton Barracks Brockhill Lane Norton Worcester WR5 2PP

Our Club

Situated in the Worcestershire countryside, on the site of the old Norton army barracks, we cater for a wide range of shooting disciplines, including:

Air Rifle and Pistol • Archery • Cannon • Gallery Rifle • Mini Rifle • Muzzleloading Rifle and Pistol • Practical Shotgun • Sporting Rifle • Target Rifle • Long Barrel Pistol & Revolver

Our Ranges

Freeman - Outdoor 50 yard range, 8 covered firing points and 12 target lanes
Charlemont - Outdoor 25 yard range, 6 covered firing points and 10 target lanes
Farrington - Outdoor 25 yard range, 6 covered firing points and 10 target lanes
Heston - Outdoor 30 yard air rifle/pistol range, 6 covered firing points and 6 target lanes
Dancox - Outdoor air rifle and archery field target range, about half an acre in area
Cambrai - An adaptable area for Practical Shotgun shooting

Membership Intakes !!
Due to high demand and a full intake list of 100 people for 2026 we are currently not accepting applications for membership. This will be reviewed later in 2026.

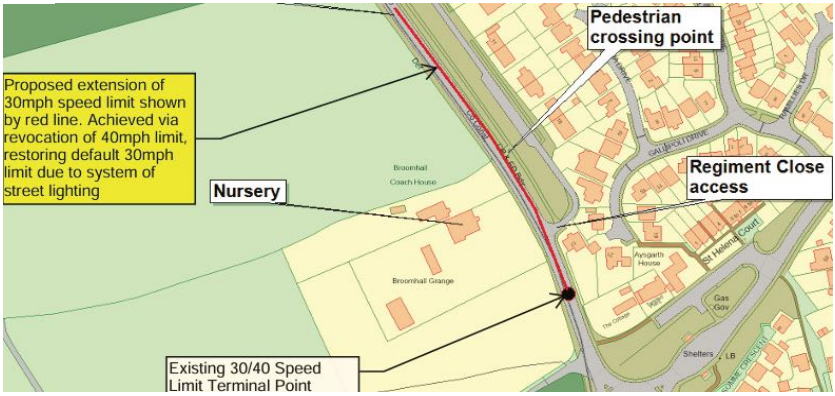
Home Office Approval CFP10/1/7/4/1/2/1/2/3/96
West Mercia RFD348

www.wnsc.co.uk

National Rifle Association of United Kingdom

30mph Speed Limit on Norton Road

We are pleased to advise that following work by your Parish Councillors, Highways Worcestershire have now reduced the speed limit to 30mph outside Little Treasures Day Nursery as shown in the plan below.



Norton-juxta-Kempsey Neighbourhood Plan Review

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a vision and plan for a neighbourhood, in this case the parish of Norton-juxta-Kempsey covering Littleworth, Norton, Brockhill, Hatfield and the surrounding open country. The Neighbourhood Plan sits alongside national planning policies and the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) to provide a range of policies to support a more specific vision of a neighbourhood as agreed by residents, local businesses etc.

An adopted Neighbourhood Plan has statutory power to help control some development and must be given regard whenever a planning application is considered.

We should however be aware that a Neighbourhood Plan does not have absolute power to prevent development and will be over-ridden by strategic planning decisions such as Wychavon Town at Parkway station. However, its great strength is to help prevent random speculative developers looking to make a fast buck building houses anywhere and destroying the local character of a neighbourhood. It also helps to protect the parish should more strategic plans such as the SWDP become outdated or the district council be unable to demonstrate an up to date 5-year land supply which is a major national planning requirement.

The existing Norton-juxta-Kempsey Neighbourhood Plan was developed over three years by a steering group made up of residents and Parish Councillors. The plan was adopted formally in 2021 and since then has influenced many of the planning applications which have been submitted in the parish

So why do we need to review it?

It is always good practice to review something every few years, many things are changing, and we need to be sure the Neighbourhood Plan is still fit for purpose in today's world.

Continued...

…In particular the SWDP is itself being reviewed with a vision out to 2041 and it would seem sensible to give the Norton-juxta-Kempsey Neighbourhood Plan the same view out to 2041 as well as making sure that the Neighbourhood Plan is aligned with the policies in the SWDP review.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also being looked at as part of the government's rethink about planning and again we need to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan is aligned with whatever changes in the NPPF.

Lastly in the five years since adoption we have been made aware of some parts of the existing Neighbourhood Plan which could be improved. The approach to housing policy needs to be reconsidered to strengthen our position against unwanted speculative development. We have also identified some additional policies we would like to add in to the Neighbourhood Plan subject to consultation with the parish.

You might ask why the Neighbourhood Plan needs to align with the SWDP and NPPF? No Neighbourhood Plan will be allowed to be adopted which conflicts with either of these. The Neighbourhood Plan is not an independent parish plan; it forms one part of the whole national planning structure to manage development throughout the country.

How are we approaching the review?

Norton-juxta-Kempsey Parish Council has formed a Working Group of parish councillors and other interested residents to carry out the review. The group are all unpaid volunteers giving up their own time in the interests of the parish.

Support and Funding

The Working Group is being advised by an independent consultant, David Nicholson. David has had a long career in local government planning and now specialises in consulting on neighbourhood plans. David was selected by the Working Group after interviewing several possible alternative candidates.

In the past the government has provided grants to pay for the preparation of NPs. The current government, for whatever reason, withdrew this funding in 2024. However, Wychavon DC has stepped in to offer its' parish and town councils funding for creating

and reviewing neighbourhood plans. Norton-juxta-Kempsey has been granted such funding, for which we are duly grateful, and this has enabled us to proceed with the review at this time.

The funding will cover consultancy costs and other expenses such as printing. The intention is there will be no cost to the Parish Council budget.

Timescales

There are several factors outside of our control, but we anticipate the whole review will take around 12 months from when we started at the beginning of 2026.
After the Working Group has prepared the revised Neighbourhood Plan, it then must go to the Planning Inspectorate to be examined to make sure it complies with all relevant legislation etc. Time taken for this is completely out of the Working Group or Wychavon's control.

As a resident or local business will I get involved?

The short answer is yes, if you want to.

There will be a survey of all residents and businesses to seek views on the proposed main changes and new policies. There will also likely be a specific search to identify sites where, if pushed, we might one day be prepared to accept a small amount of housing development within the parish. It must be stressed at the moment such development is thought to be unlikely, but the Working Group believes we must take every step possible to protect the parish from nasty surprises in the future and there are some circumstances where this could be important.

Lastly when all the work is done and the reviewed Neighbourhood Plan is completed, there will be two consultations of all residents, the first by the Working Group and then by Wychavon DC. Later It is possible the planning inspectors may insist there is a referendum of all residents to agree to the new Neighbourhood Plan before formal adoption by Wychavon (or whatever unitary authority we have by then!)

And we are always happy to have volunteers to help the Working Group, whether that is to help drafting parts of the new NP, delivering leaflets or anything else. All help gratefully received, please contact our Parish Clerk, Sam McMichael.

We're here so your loved one can stay home, where they want to be. Where things are safe and familiar and they have the best chance to live a full and meaningful life.

Whether it's everyday companionship or everyday errands, Live-in Care or Home Care visits, our highly-trained Care Experts will give your loved one the support they need to live in the place they feel best: home.

See how we can *support you.*

It's good to *be home*

Call us for a friendly chat on

01386 575800

Or email

worcesterandwychavon@bluebirdcare.co.uk

Find out more

Dates for your diary

(All dates below may be subject to change)

Norton Parish Hall

10 April	Eat Greek Worcester
24 April	Hooked and Cooked
15 May	Smokey Dough Pizza
29-30 May	Ale & Cider Festival
12 June	Eat Greek Worcester
17 July	Smokey Dough Pizza
7 August	Taco Banditos
14 August	Eat Greek Worcester
9 October	Eat Greek Worcester
7 November	Annual fireworks display

The Sergeants' Mess

4 April	Taco Banditos pop up
25 April	Eat Greek pop up and Motown Night
14 June	Community Games
27 June	Hand Stretched pizza pop up
4 July	Live music event
18 July	Taco Banditos pop up
21 August	Hooked and Cooked pop up
29 August	Taco Banditos pop up
31 August	Party on the pitch
19 September	Eat Greek pop up
17 October	Hand Stretched Pizza pop up
24 October	Annual fireworks display
7 November	Eat Greek Worcester pop up

Your Parish Council

PARISH COUNCILLORS

Chairperson: Cllr Kevin Fincher
Vice Chairperson: Cllr Ally Job
Cllr John Waizeneker
Cllr Peter Richmond
Cllr Martin Pollard
Cllr Colin Arrow
Cllr Chris Dawson
Cllr Claire Brooks

Norton-juxta-Kempsey
Parish Council

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Telephone: 07955 756 528

Assistant Clerk: Miss Katy Watkinson

Email: assistantclerk@nortonjuxtakempseyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Telephone: 07510 933931

If you have some parish news you would like considered for the next edition of the NJK Newsletter email the Clerk, Mrs Sam McMichael