

Castle Acre Parish Council

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NEWSLETTER TO ALL CASTLE ACRE RESIDENTS

29 March 2020

Dear Residents

The Parish Council hope you found the Information Letter delivered to all households last week to be useful. The Parish Council has decided to issue a newsletter, published both online on the village website - castleacre.info, click on https://www.castleacre.info/images/downloads/Parish_News_Updates_Apr20.pdf as well as in print. The online version will be updated weekly. If you are unable to view the updates electronically, please call our Parish Clerk, Libby, who will print off a version for you and arrange for one of the village volunteers to put it through your postal slot.

By keeping residents informed and by offering help, the PC hopes it will relieve the tedium of being in doors. Please e-mail Libby with any helpful comments or suggestions, plus ideas for existing or new 'at home' activities - or post on our Facebook page, set up originally for the Neighbourhood Plan but now open to other postings. Click on <https://www.facebook.com/castleacreneighbourhoodplan> Activities might include online quizzes, book group discussions through Zoom and so forth.

Volunteers

Some residents have already volunteered to help with food deliveries, prescription collections etc. The PC is very grateful. Libby is holding a database of volunteer's names. Please contact her and she will allocate a volunteer to assist you. **We still need more volunteers. If you think you can also assist by phone or online from home with advice on business operations, work/employment issues or social concerns, please give your details to Libby.**

On a more general basis, Community Action Norfolk, Voluntary Norfolk and Momentum (Norfolk) are working with Norfolk County Council and local health providers to recruit volunteers for a county wide effort to respond to the Covid-19 crisis. They want to hear from people who have the skills to volunteer in health and social care roles, which have been identified as priority areas, but also welcome anyone who wishes to volunteer to help those in their local communities. Go to <https://www.voluntarynorfolk.org.uk/volunteering>

Information about Coronavirus

www.nhs.uk/coronavirus and www.gov.uk/coronavirus are trusted sources of information.

Listen to Radio Norfolk for local news and updates.

Norfolk County Council advice to residents:

- Only accept help from someone you know and trust.
- Never give anyone your cash card or credit card and PIN – always give cash and ask for a receipt.
- If someone is doing shopping for you, provide them with a list and budget, based on what you can afford.

- It is your home and you do not have to agree to anything a visitor may ask.
- Never deal with unknown cold caller.
- If you are in doubt, or feel pressurised or threatened close the door, call a friendly neighbour or in an emergency ring 999

Help for local businesses

New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, via the New Anglia Growth Hub, is offering free advice and guidance to local businesses, experiencing supply chain issues, order or booking cancellations, a reduction in sales, or any other challenge. Businesses should contact the Growth Hub to speak to one of their qualified business advisers offering free support and advice to help businesses to access the support measures put in place by the Government. E-mail growthhub@newanglia.co.uk or telephone [0300 333 6536](tel:03003336536) (Mon- Fri 9am-5pm).

Donate

Anyone looking to donate money to help those in need should contact either:

- Norfolk Community Foundation, working alongside partners, has established the Covid-19 Community Response Fund to support our local charities working hard on the ground to keep vulnerable people safe and well. Further information can be found at: www.norfolkfoundation.com/giving-philanthropy/.
- The National Emergencies Trust (NET), in partnership with the British Red Cross, has launched a fundraising appeal, to raise and distribute funds to support communities made most vulnerable by the Coronavirus outbreak. Further information can be found at <https://donate.redcross.org.uk/appeal/national-emergencies-trust-coronavirus-appeal>

Avoid scams

Unfortunately, some people just have to take advantage of the vulnerable. Recent cases highlighted by Trading Standards include: taking cash for grocery shopping and never returning; sending text messages referencing Coronavirus; emails claiming to be from the 'Department for Education' about 'free school meals during school closures'; telephone cold calls claiming to be from the 'Coronavirus Trust Fund'; telephone cold calls claiming to be from 'Lloyds Bank' referencing Coronavirus. Please be cautious, if it looks too good to be true, it will be.

Benefits

If you need advice on claiming benefits, go to www.citizensadvice.org.uk and click on Benefits. There is a wealth of information there to assist you, including how to apply for Universal Credit. This website has a comprehensive guide to how to cope with issues thrown up by the Coronavirus, including detailed help about avoiding scams. Norfolk Citizens Advice is aiming to offer advice through Adviceline, email and webchat. See the website on how access these.

Parish Council news

The Parish Council met on 14 March for its usual monthly meeting with one resident in attendance. The February Minutes were approved (see https://www.castleacre.info/images/downloads/minutes_feb20.pdf) The March Minutes would normally be approved at the 16 April meeting but this has been cancelled.

The next PC meeting, including the Annual Meeting, is set for 14 May at which Cllrs will vote on co-opting a new Cllr. In these uncertain times, Cllrs agreed to approve any outstanding invoices for payment and any planning applications by e-mail. These will be published online in a shortened Minute, along with the March Minutes.

Nearly all 'Matters Outstanding' have come to a halt. There is no news from Holkham on when the building work on the 19 new dwellings off the Massingham Road will start nor progress on registering more public rights of way. Highways' projects are in limbo, though BT plans to close part of Newton Road on 14 April to upright the telephone pole and Anglian Water to close High Street from 6 April for drainage works – both to be confirmed subject to the latest Coronavirus diktats.

Planning: Cllrs supported ref: 20/00212/F – conversion of brick studio into granny annexe at Norfolk House, Newton Road. Cllrs will consider application ref: 20/00419/F - single storey rear/side extension at 65 Bailey Street – by circular e-mails before 9 April. Go on the Borough website if you wish to comment on this application, copy to Libby, please.

The VE Day Celebrations, due to be held on 8 May, are postponed. The organisers would like to thank all residents who offered to help in so many ways. Supplying equipment, food of all kinds including cakes and an impressive list of those willing to entertain us. The celebrations will go ahead, so all offers will be called upon again soon.

Neighbourhood Plan: please don't forget to complete your consultation response form by 27 April.

For contact details of all your Parish Councillors, go to https://www.castleacre.info/parish_news.htm or call Libby.

As stated before, at times like these, the incredibly strong village community spirit comes to the fore and we see the best in people, helping the most vulnerable who need to isolate themselves. Thank you.

Please respect social-distancing and stay safe.

Martin Hickey, Chairman, Castle Acre Parish Council