



KINGS NORTON
TEAM PARISH

THE MAGAZINE
FOR CHURCH & COMMUNITY

December 2019

£1.50



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A Church of England Team Parish serving all in Kings Norton and Druids Heath through the Parish Church of St Nicolas and the District Churches of Hawkesley and Immanuel
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Copy for Publication

Please email items for
publication to:

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Please submit text in an editable
format, preferably plain text or
MS Word. Printed material
entrusted to the Parish Office
should be sealed and marked for
the attention of The Editor.

Submission Deadlines

Items for inclusion in the January
2020 edition must reach the
Editor by midnight on **Friday 6th
December**.

Items for inclusion in the
February 2020 edition must
reach the Editor by midnight on
Friday 10th January.



A visitor to St Nicolas' on a recent Sunday morning stopped to chat on his way out. He told me how uplifted he had felt by taking part in a well-attended service at a 'local village church'. Kings Norton is not unique among former villages in having retained its identity long after its absorption into an expanding city, but a sense of history and of being set apart are strong here. Maybe it's the fact that our parish sits astride the Birmingham-Worcestershire border. Until 1898, after all, an earlier version of that border separated it from the city next door, to which it had only relatively recently been connected by the railway. Maybe it's our remarkable historic buildings, to which so many feel such strong attachment. Or maybe, as one of our regular contributors has written in his splendid book, which really should be on your Christmas list if you have any connection with the place, there is 'something in the Kings Norton air' that makes it extraordinary (see the back page for details).

As befits such a special community, Advent and Christmas will be celebrated here fully, traditionally and in style, and not just in our parish church (which, by the way, only remains open and accessible because of the £1,000+ per month scaffolding that must remain in place until we can raise the money to make the roof safe, one of many major financial challenges facing the parish at the moment). **You'll find all the details on page 9.** Please join us for as many events as you can. Whatever the result of the first winter election since 1923, we will have much to celebrate, not least the annual reminder that, ultimately, we owe our rescue and our future not to political leadership or the lack of it, but to the Light Who Came Into The World to show us the face of the God who loves us.

The Editor

FROM THE RECTOR

The Gift of Christmas

Gifts come in many shapes and sizes. Some will be recognizable or anticipated, others reveal themselves fully only when all packaging is discarded or recycled. The giving and receiving of gifts is such a traditional part of the Christmas season it wouldn't be Christmas without them. At our annual Toy Service and St Nicolas' Day Festival (**Sunday 8th December**) St Nicolas' Church is filled with freely-given gifts from our members and the wider community for families in financial hardship. They are distributed by partner agencies in the South Birmingham area over the two weeks before Christmas Eve. Those who give the gifts do not know who will eventually receive them.

In this annual act of generosity and gift-sharing there are insights into the power of Christmas as a gift. The Christmas season is traditionally described as a 'season of goodwill' when our better natures are turned towards being charitable, conciliatory, generous and hospitable. In the words of one traditional carol, it is a time for bearing 'tidings (news) of comfort and joy.' Joy is meant to be a recurring theme of this season.



Joy is one of the hallmarks of the Christian life and is distinct from happiness. Happiness tends to be a warm emotional response when good things happen to us. Joy is an inner attitude of life, a quality of being positive and hopeful expressed in all circumstances, even in times of adversity and distress. Bringing comfort to those struggling with life is also a precious gift. How many of us have benefitted from kind words or actions freely given by friends, family or even strangers when times are hard?

People with an uncertain faith or none remark that we should not rely upon an annual mid-winter celebration to show goodwill, kindness and generosity to others; it should be an all year round experience. One can have sympathy with this viewpoint. However, human beings, in all cultures and faiths, mark their years with festivals and celebrations where people are encouraged to find release from the routine of their lives and join with family, friends and community to revel, party and rejoice in each other's company. This

communal outpouring of rejoicing lifts the spirits, enhances lives and provides a special bond for all involved. In doing so it affirms our common humanity and helps to unite us in our shared responsibility for the inclusion and well-being of all. Like all the best kinds of celebrations, Christmas is about breaking down barriers and wishing good to all.

If we look deeper into the Christian message of Christmas we find references to generosity and giving in the story surrounding the birth of this special child. His parents were unsure and even afraid of what was expected of them, yet they acquiesced in the message they received. The family which offered shelter to these same

parents as the child was about to be born in a place far from home demonstrated hospitality and compassion at a critical time. The offerings of the three mysterious travellers from the East (gold, incense and myrrh) were prophetic gifts indicating the child's destiny. The visit

of the shepherds signalled a child destined to be relevant to all regardless of status or the lack of it. In the politically unstable Palestine of the first century, Herod's rule depended upon his acceptance of the occupying Roman forces. When rumours of the birth of a

potential rival came to his attention, he deceitfully offered to pay his own tribute to the child when his identity and whereabouts were known.

At its deepest level, the story of Christmas is about an ultimate gift. Christians believe that the birth marked a universal turning point in human history because the God whom we endeavour to worship and proclaim (however imperfectly) became uniquely revealed in the life and message of Jesus of Nazareth. This lowly birth to humble parents in an obscure outpost of a vast empire became the gift to alter our perception of what God is and is not for the next 2,000 years or more.

‘The ultimate gift which Christianity has given to the world is a new way to know and love God.’

In his new book *Dominion; The Making of the Western Mind* (2019), historian Tom Holland surveys the historical development of Christianity from an obscure cult in Palestine to the most 'transformative and powerful' concept in Western culture and history. His conclusions are remarkable and though he writes as an 'historian with doubts' he acknowledges that our contemporary, more secular, world

remains saturated with the imagery and ideas of Christianity.

The ultimate gift which Christianity has given to the world is a new way to know and love God.

On behalf of all at Kings Norton Team parish we wish you a joy filled, peaceful and comforting Christmas.

Rev'd Larry Wright

AT A LOOSE END OVER CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR?
WILLING AND ABLE TO TRAVEL INTO BIRMINGHAM?

The *Visit Birmingham* website (visitbirmingham.com/whats-on) has all the latest details of events in December and January, including Christmas and New Year celebrations.



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Shared Reading

An Introduction

Shared Reading is a group activity in which people come together in a friendly atmosphere to read great books and talk about them.

Shared Reading is open to all. Thousands of people across the country now take part in groups every week in a range of settings, including community centres, hospitals, care homes, libraries, day centres and prisons.

Shared Reading has been recommended as a non-medical intervention that can improve well-being, reduce isolation and strengthen communities.

Everyone who comes to Book Break gets a warm welcome from the leader, something specially chosen to read together, a cup of tea, a biscuit or two, and stimulating conversation. We read everything aloud so people can just relax and savour the experience of listening if they wish. There's absolutely no pressure to read, to speak or to stay.

Shared Reading is not like school, or a standard 'book group'. We come to share thoughts and feelings prompted by the book, not to be clever and show off literary knowledge. Group members' personal preferences and



responses are recognised and valued at all times. This helps us to connect with the literature and with each other.

Our long-term ambition is to make Shared Reading available in every part of Birmingham through the development of a network of committed volunteers and supportive partners. We are hoping initially to recruit six new Reader Leaders to run groups at three venues across the city. These could be libraries, community centre, care homes. Free training and ongoing support will be provided for suitable candidates.

For more information, contact **Tony Manville** at tony.manville@gmail.com or call 07 756 432 024.

CHRISTMAS 2019

Ways To Get Involved

The Christmas Challenge

We will be collecting gifts to support our local children's homes, the Sweet Project and the Central Baby Bank. We accept donations of new or used items in excellent condition that are unwrapped. You can drop gifts into St Nicolas' Church or the Parish Office or bring them to the Toy Service at St Nicolas' Church on Sunday 8th December. An Amazon Wishlist has been available since early November. Please check the parish newsletter for details.

Advent

We will be collecting Advent calendars for the Sweet Project. Please place them in St Nicolas' Church or take them to the Parish Office. Alternatively, you may wish to complete a reverse Advent calendar by putting an item of food into a box every day during Advent to donate to the Foodbank.

The Posada

During Advent, our Posada figurines will be travelling from home to home. If you would like to host them, please look out for the rota in St Nicolas' Church or contact the Parish Office. This year, to highlight the plight of the homeless, we will be continuing the Posada after Christmas, echoing the story of the flight of the Holy Family to Egypt.

To Bethlehem

Come and see our new Christmas production. See our website for more details.

Christmas Services

Sunday 8th December 10.30am

St Nicolas' Day Toy Service at St Nicolas' Church

Saturday 14th December

'To Bethlehem' at St Nicolas' Church & Druids Heath Library

Sunday 14th December 10.30am

Christingle Service at Hawkesley Church, Shannon Road

Sunday 15th December 4pm

Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at St Nicolas' Church

Friday 20th December 3-5pm

Carols At Kath's at Kath's Cafe, Druids Heath

Friday 20th December 5pm

'Night of the Stars' at St Nicolas' Church

Saturday 21st December 2pm

Knock Knock Nativity at St Nicolas' Church

Sunday 22nd December 10.30am

Carol Service at Hawkesley Church, Shannon Rd

Sunday 22nd December 6pm

Carol Service at Immanuel Church, St Nicolas' Place

Christmas Eve 5pm

Crib Service at St Nicolas' Church

Christmas Eve 11.30pm

Midnight Communion at St Nicolas' Church & Hawkesley Church, Shannon Road

Christmas Day 9am

Christmas Morning Service at St Nicolas' Church

Christmas Day 10.30am

Christmas Morning Service at St Nicolas' Church & Immanuel Church, St Nicolas' Place

Kings Norton's Walter Hyde

A PIONEERING TENOR AHEAD OF HIS TIME

These days there are several classically-trained singers who have spread their wings beyond opera into more accessible fields such as musicals and even pop songs: people like Russell Watson, Alfie Boe and Andre Bocelli.

Kings Norton's own Walter Hyde was a hundred years ahead of them and his first serious efforts at singing were as a chorister in a local church, quite probably St Nicolas' itself.

Walter was born on 6 February 1875, a third son for Henry Michael and Elizabeth Hyde, née Hiley. His grandfather Charles and Henry were well-known and successful local carpenters, but music was their abiding interest.

Walter was excused carpentry as a child, and spent many happy hours singing Mozart with his father and brothers by the piano. As adults, they all would become tenors. 'I smile sometimes when I recall that four male voices equally divided the tenor,

soprano, contralto and bass roles,' said Walter in his memoirs: 'Ever since I can remember I have been devoted to music. I always had at the back of my mind the desire to be a public singer.'

His memories of those early years are both fond and amusing. 'My earliest recollection of things musical is going to church one Sunday morning with my father, who was principal tenor in the choir. I was presented to an elderly, dignified gentleman, who asked me to sing "Doh, re, mi". With all the assurance that the mature age of six could command, I stammered, "Yes, sir."'

'There was a touch of comedy behind all this, because the smallest surplice was much too large for my tiny body. However, it was placed upon me, and I walked up the aisle with the other members of the choir, holding huge folds of starched linen in my, then small hands. I was a choir boy. At that early age I could read, and before I could tell the time I could read music.'



When his schooling was over, in 1895 he became one of the first students at the newly re-organised music department of the Birmingham and Midland Institute. 'I remember my first singing lesson. It was in a class with some thirty other tenors,' he commented later. 'Lessons were sometimes amusing, sometimes painful. I won't go into details, because the poor fellow who gave the lessons shot himself soon after I joined the class.'

Despite this unfortunate start, Walter won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music, where he studied composition under, amongst others, the great hymn-writer Joseph Parry. He also studied harmony and orchestration.

He then embarked on his performing career, developing that versatility for which he was to become internationally famous. From 1901, he was performing in a wide range of roles, appearing in London's West End in light opera and musical comedy. He quickly developed a powerful performing style and his first major breakthrough came in 1908 during a performance of Wagner's Ring cycle in England at the Royal Opera House. Most of the opera cognoscenti had expected something special from well-known singers such as Hans Richter and Percy Pitt, but, in a completely unexpected way, they were out-performed by Walter, who was, after all, only perceived at that time as a young English tenor from musical comedy: not the most likely qualifications for a bona fide Wagnerian hero.

From late 1911, Walter began to develop an international profile. He went to America, where he stayed for some two years touring in light opera and singing solo in concerts. In 1912 he appeared as the title character in the light opera Robin Hood in New York before taking it to Canada.

He returned to England and proceeded to perform across a remarkable range of genres, bearing in mind that tenors in those days normally focused entirely on opera and other serious classical works. As the First World War started, he even joined a touring concert party called Firing Line, making a particularly memorable debut not in a grand

concert hall but in the Pavilion Theatre in Torquay.

He proceeded to work with the most famous names in music, including the great conductor Sir Thomas Beecham, and sang in the first performances in English of such famous works as Bizet's *The Fair Maid of Perth* and Puccini's *Girl of the Golden West*. But he never relinquished his reputation as a Wagnerian hero: his roles included the demanding role of Siegmund in *The Valkyries* at London's Drury Lane in 1918.

He spent another ten years ploughing a unique musical furrow and decided to retire in 1928, making his last performance in the Leeds Triennial

Festival. Even after that, he continued to make a major contribution to the world of music. He took up an appointment as Professor of Voice at the Guildhall School of Music in London, where he taught a new generation of performers, several of whom went on to become household names, such as Sir Geraint Evans and Owen Brannigan.

Walter died in Hampstead, London at the age of 76 on 11 November 1951. Though few recordings exist, it is possible to hear his inimitable voice, most easily on You Tube.

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Sustainability 7

In the 7th article in this series, Sylvia Fox takes a whimsical approach to Christmas.

There is a certain element of tongue-in-cheek in this one, but a real message too.

The presents are wrapped in old copies of the Lapland Times, tied together with biodegradable twine. Santa's airborne sleigh is pulled by flying reindeer, his train is hydrogen-powered and his other, motorised sleigh is powered by electricity from renewable sources. The reindeer dung is used on the organic vegetable patch that grows the roast tatties, sprouts and carrots.

The pigs in blankets were ethically sourced from a woodland pig farm where the pigs are used to turn over the land under the trees to reinvigorate the rare flowers and encourage bugs, pollinators and butterflies. The nuts and soya alternatives were grown in organic fields and nut orchards by workers

who were paid a fair wage.

The breakfast eggs came from the free-range hens who roam underneath the solar-panels of an energy farm. The hens and turkeys are guarded from predation by alpacas, whose wool has been turned into clothes, which we gave as presents that were wrapped up in recycled copies of the Lapland Times.

If we can begin to combine the wisdom and non-greed of our forebears, with the technological and scientific knowledge of our current and future researchers and students, then this circle of life can actually become a reality. We can live in harmony with our planet and worship its Creator for many more Christmases to come.

Happy Christmas

Sylvia Fox

THE TROUBLE WITH HAPPINESS

It's that time of year again. Turn on any radio or television or log on to your favourite web page and Merry Christmas marketing blares forth replete with images of grinning children dancing around mounds of gifts, lovers in rapturous embrace clutching velvet jewellery boxes and lavishly-decorated dinner tables groaning under the weight of a feast that would have made even Henry VIII blush. Yes, that season that should be, for a Christian like myself, a time to feel tingling all over in anticipation of the birth of Jesus. It's a happy time, isn't it?

In my first half-term of theological studies as a new ordinand (trainee priest), I was enrolled in a Christian ethics course which amounted to a whistle-stop tour of a sampling of the theories that Christian ethicists employ to grapple with the thorny issues faced by the Church and society: euthanasia, abortion, same-sex marriage, climate change and on and on.

It is important to state up-front that none of the theories we explored were infallible; all were fraught with counter-arguments designed to further our thinking and to help us wrestle with the issue at hand.

A theory that caught my eye was one developed in the 18th century by philosopher and social reformer Jeremy Bentham. *Utilitarianism*, as Bentham's theory is dubbed, posited that 'nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*'. Bentham argued that, in decision making, the most ethical outcome is the one that promotes the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. On the face of it, this seems like a noble quest; surely pursuing happiness can't be negative. Can it?

Thinking back to our Christmas advert assault, what are the advertisers

trying to sell me? Is it merely a toy, or a bauble or a roast meal, or is it an idea that my Christmas *happiness* (and overall contentment) can be delivered in brightly-wrapped packages or served up on a platter?

When I remember that the warm, fuzzy feeling which overcomes me when my children delight in a gift or my husband snoozes contentedly on the sofa after Christmas dinner will wear off, I am tasked with finding happiness in something much more permanent than what is being pushed by retailers. In the words of the Grinch, 'It came without ribbons! It came without tags! It came without packages, boxes or bags!... Maybe Christmas, he thought, doesn't come

from a store. Maybe, Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more.'

So, I turn instead to the humble manger. There is great happiness there, without a doubt, but there is also something more lasting. A promise. A promise that when the tree comes down and the Christmas shine wears off, Jesus won't be put back in the boxes and stored until next December because He is more than just the 'reason for the season', he's the reason for Spring, Summer and Autumn too.

That, to me, is true happiness.

Tammy Tearoe

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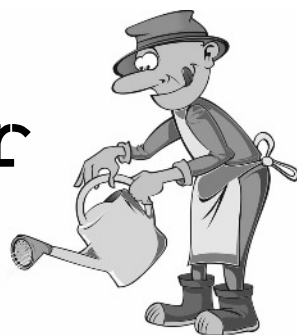
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In Search of Winter Colour

Seasonal tips from a green-fingered reader



Why are the Blackpool Lights like a bed of chrysanthemums? Because they both extend the season! You see, the holiday season in Blackpool is extended for two months in the autumn and the visitors and their money flock in to admire a million light bulbs artfully arranged along the seafront. Wrap up well if you intend to walk along the promenade!

We need some gardening attractions to extend the beauty of our gardens to brighten the otherwise depressing months of October and November, so here are a few suggestions. Monty Don, no less, has stated that the winters are starting later and getting milder. This is good news if you want to leave plants like dahlias in the ground over winter instead of storing them.

Regular dead-heading will extend flowering until the first hard frost. This is true for dahlias and many shrubs including larger flowered hebes and some climbing roses. If you plant hardy fuchsias fairly deep they will get through the winter particularly if you arrange a small heap of compost and leaf litter over the dormant plants. Flowering will continue until the end of November.

The star of the late Autumn is without doubt the chrysanthemum. The larger

chrysanthems need staking and other time-consuming attention so the Korean single and semi-double spray or mound shaped varieties are a better bet.

Some varieties benefit from being trimmed back to about 20 cm in May, sometimes known as the 'Chelsea crop'. This will ensure bushy plants with lots of buds opening to flower in October to November.

There are three bulb plants that brighten the late autumn. Just be careful not to dig them up during weeding. *Amaryllis belladonna* and *Nerine bowdenii* (which can be raised from seed) send up beautiful umbels of pink flowers before their leaves





and this characteristic is shared by the giant crocus-like flowers of *Colchicum autumnale*. As I am writing, the Winterbourne Gardens in Edgbaston Park Road have a beautiful display of rare and choice *Nerines* (photo above) in the alpine house. Very pretty! Lastly, *Cyclamen hederifolium* will flower until the very edge of winter, even under trees.

Whilst we are on about flowers for the Autumn, the **plant of the month** has to be *Rudbeckia fulgida* 'Little Goldstar' (photo left) There are other cone flowers but this one is not too tall and forms a clump ready for splitting after a few years. It's recommended by the RHS too.

Garden tree of the month is the *Paulownia* (right) named after the Grand duchess Pavlovna. In early summer, it bears a profusion of lilac-coloured, foxglove-shaped flowers. This is one of the most beautiful garden trees and you may be wondering why you've never seen one. Look a little harder at the fine house and garden at the corner of Maryvale Road by the mini round-about. There is even one planted on the roadside of Bristol Road

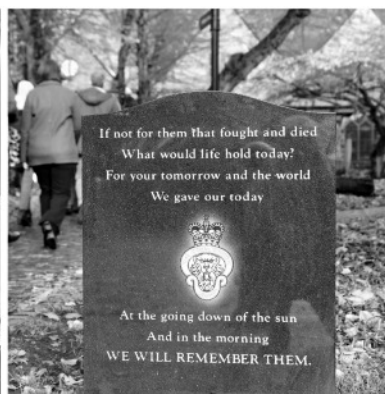
South on the left, heading towards Longbridge. They are not cheap to buy, but plant one where the roots are a little sheltered and you will be the envy of all your gardening friends. Other commercial varieties are available for growing in warmer climes and, as a species which bears leaves one metre across, are the fastest-growing tree on the planet : 5 metres in a year! They are also ideal for making plywood.

Vegetable gardeners may wish to think about growing some tomato plants outside next year. *Tigerella* was seen doing well this year and, if you have a greenhouse, consider growing some of the multi-coloured salad tomatoes. They look great alongside the lettuce and taste good as well.

Wishing you all a mild winter and a very happy Christmas.

Adam the Gardener







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WHAT'S ON IN KINGS NORTON?

Our guide to the best of Kings Norton's lively community life starts here. In this section of the magazine, you will find:

- A list of **Societies, Clubs and Venues** active in and around Kings Norton
- A summary of the **regular services and activities** organised by the church in this parish
- A detailed **Diary of Events** organised over the coming month by the organisations listed and others.

We divide the publicity which we offer to the local community into **advertising and listings**. We charge for **advertisements** placed by local businesses who are seeking to attract paying customers. Meanwhile, in *Societies, Clubs and Venues* and the *Events Diary* we print, free of charge, **listings** of events organised by local social or charitable groups, together with their contact details and a brief description of their aims.

To add your organisation's events to our *What's On* guide for next month, contact Michael Kennedy (michaelkennedy@talk21.com) by the submission deadline shown on page 3. To advertise in the pages of this magazine, contact The Editor, David Ash (editor@kingsnorton.org.uk). Details of advertising charges are available on request or can be viewed on the magazine page of the parish website at www.kingsnorton.org.uk.

Societies, Clubs & Venues

Contact information for Kings Norton organisations and locations that offer opportunities to get together for events and/or to meet people who have similar interests.

LOCAL INTEREST GROUPS

Kings Norton History Society www.kingsnorton.org.uk, clivehartwell48@sky.com

The Society's meetings take the form of talks covering a wide variety of subjects of historic interest, concentrating on the West Midlands region. We also run day visits to places of historical interest. Meetings are normally held in St Nicolas' Place on the last Monday of the month, unless otherwise specified, from September to May. Membership is £12.50 per annum. Talks are free of charge to members. Visitors are always welcome but a charge of £3 per talk is made.

Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve www.fknnr.org.uk, Amanda Cadman on 0121 624 3865 or 07 887 512 382

An informal pressure group to lobby for environmental improvements in and about the reserve. We organise a weekly working party on site (the Tuesday Workout from 10.30 to 1.00 pm, open to all) to manage the Reserve, to increase biodiversity and habitats and to enhance its value for both people and wildlife. We also organise guided walks. Dates and meeting locations are on our website.

Friends of Historic Kings Norton www.kingsnorton.org.uk, fhkn@btinternet.com, St Nicolas' Place 0121 458 1223

We raise funds for the restoration of the historic buildings that are known collectively as Saint Nicolas' Place (SNP), through membership subscription and events organised by the group. Members receive regular newsletters containing updates about SNP and listings of Birmingham-wide heritage events. Membership is £10.00 per annum or £7.00 for those not in full-time work. We also arrange guided tours of the Saint Nicolas' Place Heritage Buildings.

Friends of Kings Norton Park friendsofkingsnortonpark.blogspot.com, info.foknp@gmail.com

The Friends of Kings Norton Park and Playing Fields are a group of local volunteers who come together regularly to improve and protect the Kings Norton Park and its neighbouring playing fields. We plan activities and events which aim to make a positive difference to the recreational experience of the people who use these spaces, and we liaise with organisations, including the City Council, which organise events in the parks.

The Fields Millennium Green Trust www.fieldsmillenniumgreen.btck.co.uk, Maggie Sweet 0121 628 1247, sweetc5@sky.com

The Trust and its volunteers meet regularly to maintain and improve the Millennium Green. We work closely with the National Trust who, with their young Urban Rangers and others, organise a programme of training and conservation activities. We usually work on Saturdays fortnightly from 10.30 am to 3.00 pm, and sometimes during school holidays.

SOCIAL CLUBS & SOCIETIES

Kings Norton Seniors' Club St Nicolas' Parish Office, 0121 458 3289

The Seniors' Club is for men and women aged 65 and over. We meet at Saint Nicolas' Place every Wednesday from 1 – 3 pm and have a varied programme of events.

Kings Norton Women's Fellowship Carol Devic 0121 458 7667, St Nicolas' Parish Office 0121 458 3289

A group for women of all ages. We meet on the first Thursday of every month from 2-3 pm at Saint Nicolas' Place and offer a variety of activities.

Kings Norton Women's Institute

The WI is now the largest voluntary women's organisation in the UK. It plays a unique role in enabling women to take part in a wide variety of activities and to campaign on issues that matter to them and their communities. To accommodate the preferences of members, the Kings Norton WI activity is divided into afternoon and evening groups, each of which meets once a month at the Friends' Meeting House, Watford Road, Cotteridge.

Women's Institute (Afternoon group) *Sally Saunders 0121 458 6019*. Meets every third Tuesday of the month from 2pm till 4pm; (Evening group) *Marion Atkin 0121 441 5817*. Meets every third Monday of the month 7 pm for 7.30 pm.

Kings Norton Rotary Club *Colin Guy 0121 444 2020, colinguy1930@yahoo.co.uk*

Rotary is an international network of clubs for business and professional men and women, both active and retired. Clubs are committed to helping local and overseas communities. The local branch meets most Tuesdays for lunch and fellowship at the Kings Heath Cricket Club, 247 Alcester Road South, Birmingham B14 6DT. Visitors are welcome at most meetings, but should contact Colin Guy in advance.

Bournville Townswomen's Guild *Sue Davis 0121 608 0646*

South Birmingham only has two local Townswomen's Guilds and the appropriate one for ladies in Kings Norton is the one based in Bournville, established 65 years ago. A flourishing Guild, it covers parishes within a five mile radius and several current members come from Kings Norton. The group meets every fourth Monday of the month at the Friends' Meeting House in Bournville from 2.00 pm to 4.00 pm.

Kings Norton 41 Club *Michael Bunn 07 831 775 473*

We are a group of former Round Tablers which meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the KN Tennis Club for dinner and a themed talk. Any former members, or former Round Tablers, interested in joining us please make contact beforehand.

Kings Norton Supper Club *Annette Dickers 0121 459 2700 ardickers@outlook.com*

We meet every month at Kings Norton Golf Club for a two-course evening meal with coffee followed by a speaker. Membership is £12 per annum plus payment for the supper.

Kings Norton Society *Annette Dickers 0121 459 2700 ardickers@outlook.com*

We are a group of very sociable people of all ages (not a youth club), now in our 59th year. We meet once a month at Kings Norton Tennis Club, usually on the last Friday of the month. Attendance normally averages 40 people or more. We have supper and a varied programme of events.

SPECIALIST INTEREST GROUPS

U3A (University of the Third Age) www.u3a.org.uk, knu3a.membership@gmail.com

Kings Norton's local U3A was successfully established in the first few months of 2017. The U3A is a nationwide organisation based on local groups providing opportunities for retired and semi-retired people to come together and develop their interests. Run on a voluntary basis, it sees members sharing their knowledge and experience with others in interest groups through informal activity sessions covering a wide range of subjects and activities.

Spoken Trend tom_mccann@hotmail.co.uk and on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @spokentrend, Tom McCann

Spoken Trend is King's Norton's first regular venture into 'open-mic' spoken word and performance poetry. Launched in January 2017, it is already attracting a significant audience. It gives participants of all ages, many completely new to the activity, the opportunity to perform their own works in front of like-minded people. It takes place on the first floor of the Bull's Head pub on the last Wednesday of every month. Those wanting to perform should check in from 7.00 pm. The event is free for performers while spectators pay a £3 entry fee.

Kings Norton Photography Society www.kingsnortonphotographicsociety.com

Membership is open to men and women of all ages, from beginners to advanced. We meet at Kings Norton Tennis Club most Wednesday evenings from 8.00 pm-10.00 pm throughout the season (October – April inclusive) with a varied programme of events and outings.

Kings Norton Patchwork and Quilting Group Sally Barney 07778 025725 or Deirdre Barker 07980 284416.

We welcome people of all levels of ability. The group meets every Tuesday in term time at the Friends' Meeting House in Bournville from 10.00 am till 3.00 pm.

Birmingham Philatelic Society www.birminghamphilatelic.co.uk, Robert Shaw, 0121 415 5226

We are a group of stamp and postcard collectors, sharing our hobby through displays, buying and selling material, auctions and visits. Everyone with an interest is welcome including beginners. Our daytime meetings start at 2.00 pm at the Friends' Meeting House in Cotteridge.

Greenlands Chess Club www.chess.com/club/greenlands, Richard Collett 0121 458 7617 or 07874 216935

We are a small, friendly chess club, meeting most Tuesdays from 7.00 pm at the Greenlands Social Club in Longbridge Lane. We have members of all standards playing friendly or competitive league chess. New members are always welcome. There is a fee of £2 per night (the first two visits are free) or annual membership is £40.

Kings Norton Fundraising Group for St Mary's Hospice www.birminghamhospice.org.uk
suebarkerdavis@gmail.com, Sue Davies 0121 608 0646

We are a local group of volunteers who raise money to care for people living with life-limiting illnesses, their families and carers in Birmingham and Sandwell. We organize fundraising activities such as regular charity quizzes and stalls at local festivals. We also aim to raise awareness of the wide range of services offered by the hospice. We meet locally at 7.00 pm on the 2nd Monday of each month so, if you might like to join us or can spare a couple of hours occasionally to help, please contact Sue (as above).

Kings Heath Horticultural Society bron.salway@blueyonder.co.uk

Kings Heath Horticultural Society is the local horticultural society for Kings Norton residents. It usually meets at Manningford Hall on Bells Lane, B14 5TJ. We have a wide range of speakers on gardening-related topics. We also hold two informal shows, spring and summer, where members display and then vote for their favourites. We meet from March to December, usually on the first Monday of the month at 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm start. Membership costs £6 annually plus £2 members' entrance fee per meeting, or £3 for visitors. For more information please email Bron Salway.

Mentor Link www.mentorlink.org.uk, Elaine Southall 0805 937347,
elaine.southall@mentorlink.org.uk

Mentor Link is a children's charity supporting vulnerable and distressed children and young people. It works with schools across much of the West Midlands, including Kings Norton. It is seeking locally-based volunteers to help its work for one or two hours a week. Full training is provided.

SPORTS & EXERCISE CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS

Health Exchange www.healthexchange.org.uk, 0800 1583535

Health Exchange creates an ongoing dialogue with the Birmingham community about health and wellbeing. It advises local volunteers who wish to offer relevant activities. A Health Exchange-supported walk, lasting for up to two hours with a break, takes place every Friday from 10.30 am, beginning in the car park of Kings Norton Park. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact walk leader Sally Saunders on 0121 458 6019.

South Birmingham Ramblers www.sbramblers.co.uk

Every week we meet up in Kings Norton Playing Fields Car Park to car share to the start of our walks. These are between 5 and 11 miles on various days of the week. For our current programme, please see our website and contact the walk leader for further details. For those interested in gentler exercise, we also have fortnightly mini walks on Tuesdays of approximately 2 miles, starting at 10 am: please contact Jenny (0121 444 4094) for further information.

Active Parks, www.beactivebirmingham.co.uk, 0121 464 2012

Active Parks, part of the City Council's Birmingham Wellbeing initiative, works in partnership with various organisations in order to offer a wide variety of free physical activities across Birmingham parks. With the Friends of Kings Norton Park group, depending on the season, it offers a range of local events, from jogging to Tai Chi, normally meeting in the Westhill Road car park at Kings Norton Park.

Kings Norton Tennis Club, Grange Hill Road B38 8RE www.kingsnortontennis.co.uk, 0121 458 2351

Our members benefit from all-year round use of tennis courts (except on rare occasions when club matches or coaching take priority) and access to members' club nights. Membership fees are lower than many clubs in the area, with discounts for couples as well as families.

Kings Norton Motorcycle Club www.evoice.org.uk/knmcc, Gordon Green 07504 676766

Formed in Kings Norton in 1944, we are a family-friendly motorcycle club with interests ranging across all types of motorcycles, from classic to modern. Some members take part in trials, scrambles, and hill climbs. We meet weekly on Thursdays at the Woodbourne Sports and Social Club in Rumbush Lane, Earlswood from 8.00 pm onwards. There is a thriving programme of social activities.

Kings Norton Golf Club Brockhill Lane B48 7ED, www.kingsnortongolfclub.co.uk, 01564 826789

We offer one of the premier golf courses in the West Midlands, set in 220 acres of beautiful parkland and featuring 27 holes of championship standard, a par 3 short course, a putting green and practice facilities. Applications for membership are welcome. Our impressive Grade 2 listed Weatheroak Hall clubhouse is also a popular venue for weddings, private parties and marketing events. Throughout spring and summer 2018 the club is running a series of lessons for ladies who want to get in to golf. Participants do not need any special golf gear, clubs and balls are provided. The cost is £25 for 5 lessons. More details on the Home and Ladies' pages of our website.

Push Bikes www.pushbikes.org.uk/event/bournville-gentle-cycling, John & Hilary Porter 0121 477 2156

Push Bikes is a Birmingham campaign group for better cycling, encouraging people who are not regular cyclists to get on their bikes for easy and sociable outings. Routes, normally of 10 to 12 miles, are mostly traffic-free, exploring local paths and parks and going at the pace of the slowest participant. New riders are always welcome. The nearest local group to Kings Norton meets at 10.00 on Saturdays at Rowheath Pavilion, Heath Road, B30 1HH.

Black Adder Clog Morris, blackaddersecretary@gmail.com or find us on Facebook

Morris Dancing is an ideal way of having fun and keeping fit. Dancers and musicians, beginners or advanced, men and women are welcomed by Black Adder. We meet most Thursdays

(except August) from 8.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. in Selly Oak Friends' Meeting House at 930 Bristol Rd South, Birmingham B29 6NB. If you want to come along, please email us to check we're meeting that week.

COMMUNITY CENTRES & VENUES

Saint Nicolas' Place, 81 The Green B38 8RU, www.saintnicolasplace.co.uk, info@saintnicolasplace.co.uk, 0121 458 1223.

Kings Norton Library, Pershore Road South, Birmingham. B30 3EU kings.norton.library@birmingham.gov.uk, 0121 464 1532

Druids Heath Library, 1 Idmiston Croft, Birmingham B14 5NU, druids.heath.library@birmingham.gov.uk, 0121 303 7171

The libraries provide a wide range of books, CDs and material for all ages including community information and local history. There are also meeting rooms for hire and internet access. The Libraries organise a range of regular events including activities for children and other specific interest groups.

Bells Farm Community Centre, Bells Farm Close B14 5QP, www.bellsfarm.org.uk, 0121 433 3532

Greaves Hall, Greaves Square B38 9LX www.opkn.co.uk/greaveshall, 0121 448 8760

Hawkesley Community Centre, 51 Edgwood Road B38 9RN, www.facebook.com/HawkesleyCommunityCentre, 0121 399 0122

The centre organises a number of regular activities. Each Monday, between 5.30 and 7.30 pm, we offer exciting free activities for young people aged 11-17: just turn up. We also have a weekly Wellbeing Wednesday lunch for those aged 50 and over, with a free activity, costing £5.50. Please book in advance. We also run a drop-in centre for young adults aged 18-25 for help with job applications, or just a cup of tea and a chat. You can bring children, but please ensure they are supervised.

Manningford Hall, Bells Lane B14 5RY, www.manningfordhall.com, 0121 430 6005.

MUSIC VENUES

Tower of Song, 107 Pershore Road South, B30 3JC, www.towerofsong.co.uk, 0121 486 1300

We are a thriving music venue, created by a team of local volunteers and featuring music to suit all tastes. Most shows start from 8:30-9pm. Every Wednesday we have Rea River Roots and every Thursday is our Crossroads Blues Club. Please check our website for information on all events.

The Church in the Parish

We are a Church of England Team Parish in partnership with the Methodist Church, serving all in Kings Norton through St Nicolas Parish Church and Hawkesley and Immanuel District Churches.

**We believe that the church in Kings Norton exists
To be a worshipping transforming partnership in Christ
To live out God's radical hospitality for all
To be equipped for work in God's world**

St Nicolas' Parish Church

on The Green, Kings Norton, B38 8RU

Sunday	9.00 am	Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
	10.30 am	Holy Communion (with "Oasis" for 7's-11's)
2nd Sunday	10.30 am	Parade Service or Morning Worship for all ages
	12.30 pm	Holy Baptism (1 st and 3 rd Sundays of the month)
	6 pm	Evening Worship (see below)

Every Sunday evening we offer prayer, music and quiet. 1st Sunday: Taizé Prayer, 2nd Sunday: Holy Communion with Prayer for Healing, 3rd Sunday: Night Prayer (Compline) and Reflection, 4th/5th Sundays: Evening Prayer or Creative Worship.

Mon & Weds	9 am	Morning Prayer
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Hawkesley Church (Anglican & Methodist)

at Hawkesley Academy on the corner of Shannon Road and Old Partway, Kings Norton, B38 9TR

Sunday	10.30am	Worship and Children's Activities (5-11's)
		1 st & 3 rd Sundays Morning Worship
		2 nd & 4 th Sundays Holy Communion
Tuesday	10am	Hawkesley Coffee Morning (every two weeks)

Immanuel Church

at Saint Nicolas' Place, 81 The Green, Kings Norton, B38 8RU

Sunday	10.30am	Worship (with "Oasis" for those at Primary School)
1 st & 3 rd Sundays		Holy Communion;
2 nd Sunday		Joint service with either St Nicolas' or Hawkesley
4 th Sunday		All-Age Worship

During the Week

We open Saint Nicolas' Church as much as we can so that all may share God's peace and promise in a space where they have been found and trusted for centuries. There is a place for you within its story. Please pray that more will know it as a safe place for prayer and healing, where sorrow and joy are held in God's love. **All are welcome.**

Wednesday 10.00 am - 12.00 noon : **Open Church**
Thursday 6.30 pm – 8.00 pm : **Marriage and Christening (Baptism) enquiries** in Saint Nicolas' Church
Saturday 10.00 am - 12.00 noon : Coffee and "Knit & Natter" in St Nicolas' Church

Children's Activities

Bumps & Babies: for new and expectant parents, in St Nicolas' Church every Monday from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm. **Tiny Tots:** for 0-5's and their parents or carers every Thursday at 9.00 am in St Nicolas' Church.

Children are welcome at all services in all our churches. We offer All-Age worship and special activities for children on certain Sundays.
Please see our weekly newsletter for details.

Growing in Faith

We are exploring fresh ways for all to grow in faith, those making their very first step, those who have made many and those who are rediscovering God's love after times of change. Please ask in each church or see our website for details.

Help us to keep our Parish Church open

It costs almost £1,000 a week to keep St Nicolas' Church open. We welcome all financial support through donations and especially through regular Planned Giving. Do ask for details and, if a taxpayer, ask how you can Gift Aid your offering.

Christening (Baptism) and Weddings

Saint Nicolas' Church is open on Thursday evenings between 6.30 pm and 8.00 pm for enquiries about Christenings & weddings. This is an opportunity to make a booking to talk about these services in more detail.

**More details at www.kingsnorton.org.uk
parishoffice@kingsnorton.org.uk 0121 458 3289**

Events Diary Dec 2019

Monday 2 December

- Bournville Townswomen's Guild, Friends' Meeting House, Bournville, 2.00-4.00 pm
- Kings Heath Horticultural Society, Manningford Hall, Bells Lane 7 pm for 7.30 pm: Richard Churchley – 'Christmas Songs through the Ages: from Boars Head to Bing Crosby'

Tuesday 3 December

- South Birmingham Ramblers: two-mile gentle walk, Kings Norton Playing Fields car park, 10.00 am
- Kings Norton Patchwork & Quilting Group, Friends' Meeting House, Bournville 10.00 am- 3.00 pm
- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve conservation workout, 10.30 am -1.00 pm (for venue see website)
- Funday Tuesday for babies & under 5s, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am
- Creative Writing Group, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 am -12.30 pm
- U3A (University of the Third Age) Monthly Meeting & Christmas Party, St Joseph's & St Helen's Church Hall, Station Road, Cotteridge, 2.00 pm
- Greenlands Chess Club, 7.00 pm
- Kings Norton Supper Club, Kings Norton Golf Club, 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm

Wednesday 4 December

- Coffee morning, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- Local History Group, Kings Norton Library, 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm
- Kings Norton Seniors' Club, Saint Nicolas' Place, 1.00-3.00 pm: Christmas lunch. Old Rose & Crown.
- Rea River Roots, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Thursday 5 December

- Kings Norton Women's Fellowship, St Nicolas' Place, 2.00-3.00 pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Friday 6 December

- Health Exchange local walk, Kings Norton Park car park, 10.30 am (all walkers, especially new participants, please check with Sally on 0121 458 6019)
- Kings Norton Library, 2.15-2.45pm: Crafty Tales for the Under 5's

Saturday 7 December

- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- Code Club for 8-11 year olds, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- Book Group, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am

Sunday 8 December

- Kings Norton Tennis Club Christmas lunch, 12.30 pm. Four course meal, £27.50 pp. Booking essential, contact Lorraine Langdon on 0121 459 0944.

Monday 9 December

- Bournville Townswomen's Guild, Friends' Meeting House, Bournville, 2.00-4.00 pm
- Kings Norton Fundraising Group for St Mary's Hospice Quiz, Stirchley United Social Club, 41 Hazelwell Lane B30 2PR, 8 pm

Tuesday 10 December

- South Birmingham Ramblers: two-mile gentle walk, Kings Norton Playing Fields car park, 10.00 am
- Kings Norton Patchwork & Quilting Group, Friends' Meeting House, Bournville, 10.00 am- 3.00 pm
- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve conservation workout, 10.30 am -1.00 pm (for venue see website)
- Funday Tuesday for babies & under 5s, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am
- Creative Writing Group, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 am -12.30 pm
- Greenlands Chess Club, 7.00 pm

Wednesday 11 December

- Coffee morning, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- Kings Norton Seniors' Club, Saint Nicolas' Place, 1.00-3.00 pm: Decorations for Christmas
- Rea River Roots, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Thursday 12 December

- Black Adder Clog Morris, Friends Meeting House, Selly Oak, 8.00 - 10.00 pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Friday 13 December

- Health Exchange local walk, Kings Norton Park car park, 10.30 am (all walkers, especially new participants, please check with Sally on 0121 458 6019)
- Kings Norton Library 2.15-2.45pm: Crafty Tales for the Under 5's

Saturday 14 December

- Christmas Festival, The Green, St Nicolas' Place & St Nicolas' Church
- Farmers' Market, The Green, 9.00 am – 2.00 pm
- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- Friends of Historic Kings Norton charity book sale, St Nicolas' Place, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm
- Code Club for 8-11 year olds, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am

Monday 16 December

- Kings Norton Women's Institute (evening group), Friends' Meeting House, Cotteridge, 7.00 pm: Bingo & Christmas Food
- Kings Norton History Society, St Nicolas' Place, 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm: David & Pam Humphries 'Those Damn Tin Cans' – a talk about prefabs

Tuesday 17 December

- South Birmingham Ramblers: two-mile gentle walk, Kings Norton Playing Fields car park, 10.00 am
- Friends of Kings Norton Nature Reserve conservation workout, 10.30 am -1.00 pm (for venue see website)
- Funday Tuesday for babies & under 5s, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 -11.30 am
- Creative Writing Group, Kings Norton Library, 10.30 am -12.30 pm
- Kings Norton Women's Institute (afternoon group), Friends' Meeting House, Cotteridge, 2.00-4.00 pm: Christmas Festivity

- Free Christmas Themed Art & Craft Workshop for Adults, Kings Norton Library, 2.15 – 3.15 pm
- Greenlands Chess Club, 7.00 pm

Wednesday 18 December

- Coffee morning, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- Kings Norton Seniors' Club, Saint Nicolas' Place, 1.00-3.00 pm: Carols in Church
- Rea River Roots, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Thursday 19 December

- Black Adder Clog Morris, Friends Meeting House, Selly Oak, 8.00-10.00 pm
- Kings Norton Motorcycle Club, Woodbourne Social Club, Earlswood, 8.00 pm
- Crossroads Blues Club, Tower of Song, 8.30 pm

Friday 20 December

- Kings Norton Library 2.15-2.45pm: Crafty Tales for the Under 5's

Saturday 21 December

- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start
- All-day Drop-in Christmas Crafts for Children, Kings Norton Library
- Code Club for 8-11 year olds, Kings Norton Library, 10.30-11.30 am
- (Kings Norton Library closes at 5 pm for holiday period, re-opening on Thursday 2 January at 10 am.)

Thursday 26 December

- Kings Norton annual fun hockey matches in Kings Norton Park (by play area): juniors at 10.30 am, seniors at 11.00 am. All players welcome: come suitably dressed, sticks are provided. Games followed by mulled wine. Kings Norton Tennis Club bar then open from 12.30 pm

Saturday 28 December

- Push Bikes, Rowheath Pavilion, 9.45 am for 10.00 am start

Tuesday 31 December

- South Birmingham Ramblers: two-mile gentle walk, Kings Norton Playing Fields car park, 10.00 am

Saint Nicolas' Place Weekly Diary

Monday

Pilates with Julia 09.30 - 10.30 am

Rainbows 5.30 pm

Guides 7.00 pm

Zumba 7.00 pm (Verity 07 966 690 476)

Cantare Community Choir 7.30-9.00 pm (Rebecca 07 803 900 154)

Kings Norton History Society 7.30 pm (last Monday of the month)

Tuesday

Slimming World 9.30 am-11.00 am & 5.00 pm – 7.00 pm (Nicola 07 875 555 958)

Rhythm Time 9.30 am – 12.30 pm (Vicky 0121 447 7632)

Circle Dancing 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm (Jan Davies 0121 476 1301)

Brownies 6.00 pm- 7.30 pm

Wednesday

Extend Exercise Class 9.30 – 11.00 am

Sophie Rey Yoga 11.15 - 12.15 am (07 929 603 972, hello@sophiereyyoga.co.uk)

Kings Norton Seniors' Club 1.00 pm-3.00 pm (contact Saint Nicolas' Place Office)

FSK Karate 4.30 pm – 6.00 pm (07 703 754 900)

Deeley's Dragon Martial Arts 6.30-7.30 pm

(enquiries@beeches-martialarts.co.uk)

Pilates 7.15 - 8.15 pm

Thursday

Kings Norton Women's Fellowship (first Thursday of month) 2.00 -3.00 pm

Brownies 6.30 pm-8.30 pm

Total Pilates 6.30 pm-7.30 pm (Pauline Austin 07 773 782 463)

Yoga Really Works Pregnancy Class 6.30 - 7.30 pm

Friday

Illumination Youth Theatre 4.00 – 5.30 pm

(ages 5-10); 5.30 - 7.00 pm (ages 11-18)

(Melanie 07 766 724 834)

Yoga Really Works Stretch & Relax with Baby 11.00-12.00 noon

Saturday

Feel the Rhythm Dance School for children and young people 10.00 am-1.00 pm (Donna 07 788 528 504)

Kings Norton Farmers' Market

The Green, Kings Norton,
Birmingham B38

2nd Saturday Each Month

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2019
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OCTOBER 2019 FUNERALS

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life." (*John ch.3 v.16*)

1st October	Reginald John Sumner		In.CY
3rd October	Raymond Street	79	SN.Bu.CY
8th October	James Evans	87	SN.Bu.KN
11th October	Anthony John Hill	86	SN.Cr.RD
22nd October	Hilda May Rayner	94	SN.Bu.CY

SN : Service at St Nicolas' Church, **Cr** : Cremation, **Bu** : Burial,
CY : Churchyard, **In** : Ashes interred, **RD** : Redditch

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How to stay fit into your 60's and beyond

Ageing is inevitable and is influenced by many things, but keeping active can slow ageing and increase life expectancy. Evidence shows that ageing alone is not a cause of major problems until you are in your mid-90s. And strength, power and muscle mass can be increased, even at this advanced age. So here are my top exercise tips for people in their 60s and older, at different levels of fitness.

For lifetime fitness fanatics

If you fall into this group, you are in the minority. You are robust, likely to be a “super-ager” and you are doing wonderfully. You are certainly optimising your chance of living longer and ageing successfully.

Generally, this is when you reap your reward from a lifetime of keeping active. With your healthier metabolic, skeletal, cardiovascular and immune systems you can probably outperform people decades younger.

Keep up the kettlebells, spin classes, rowing, triathlons or manual work such as gardening, whatever you like to do. You can keep challenging yourself physically. Mix your routine up: a combination of aerobic and resistance

work as well as an activity to challenge your balance is ideal.

Maximise health benefits by swimming outdoors and as part of a community. You might want to try sea swimming, although it's not for everybody.

But watch out for chronic overloading, that is, diversify your exercise programme by incorporating cross-training. For example, if you are a runner, incorporate cycling or swimming to avoid overloading any part of your body.

Recovery after strenuous exercise is slower as you age and can take up to five days. So exercise smart.

Make use of the great outdoors.

For the averagely fit

You are doing well, so keep going. Long-term consistency is the key for benefits. You don't necessarily have to join a gym, just keep building meaningful physical activity into your day. For example, walk briskly to the shops to get your groceries, keep up gardening and be active around your house. Even repeating simple stair climbing is a great exercise.

If you are suffering from hip or knee pain, walking may be painful, so try cycling or water-based exercise instead.

Coupling physical activity with social engagement can optimise its benefits, so try yoga or a dance class. Incorporate some outdoor exercise for an added mental health boost

The main thing is to avoid long periods of sitting. Also, ideally, continue to do the exercise you enjoy. Try to steadily build up your level of aerobic exercise at a level where you build up a sweat and feel slightly out of breath .

Often strengthening and flexibility exercises are neglected, so try to include these type of exercises where possible.

For the unfit or unwell

You may be managing complex chronic conditions, which make it more difficult to exercise. Or it may be that exercise is not a habit for you. If you have several chronic conditions, you may need clearance from a doctor to exercise and specialised exercise advice from a physiotherapist or other exercise professional.

If you are experiencing three or more of the following: unplanned weight loss, exhaustion, slowness, weakness of grip and physical inactivity you may be considered frail , which will leave you vulnerable to even minor health stresses. But it is never too late to build more physical activity into your daily life.

Even reducing time spent sitting and doing a little exercise will have major health benefits, doing any type of

activity at all is better than none . Even chair-based exercises or practising sit-to-stand can be a great start.

Feeling a bit out of breath with exercise is normal and some initial aches and joint pain are fine. But if you ever feel chest pain or severe discomfort, you need to see a doctor straight away.

If you have a set-back such as a chest infection or fall which results in a hospital admission, get up and moving as soon as is safely possible. Even a few days of bed rest can result in major decreases in strength and fitness.

If you have surgery scheduled, being as active as possible before being admitted to hospital and start moving as soon as possible afterwards will help your recovery. It may also prevent complications that could prolong your hospital stay.

If you are diagnosed with cancer, keep active, even during treatment , such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy, and during recovery . If you have other common chronic conditions, such as heart or lung disease, keep as active as your condition allows.

Just remember, whatever your state of health, it's never too late to reap the benefits of being more physically active.

Julie Broderick

*Assistant Professor of Physiotherapy,
Trinity College, Dublin.*

Originally published in 'The Conversation' at bit.ly/2KyvawL and reprinted with permission.

Druid's Heath Comes To St Nicolas' Church



At the beginning of November, St Nicolas' Church was privileged to host an exhibition of the history of Druid's Heath Estate.

A local community artist, Jayne Murray, who facilitates creative social cohesion projects in Druid's Heath, spent a year compiling oral and photographic stories of the Estate with residents. No-one had previously documented how Druid's Heath has developed from farmland, to post-war pre-fab housing, to one of Birmingham's accommodation projects housing people re-located in the City's slum clearance strategy.

In the wake of the Druid's Heath

regeneration project, through which Birmingham City Council plans to alter housing on the estate dramatically, it is particularly important to record local history and personal perspectives. Eleven of the fourteen tower blocks which punctuate the landscape are due to be demolished and replaced with low-rise housing over the next ten years. Druid's Heath has already experienced much change as its secondary school, three pubs and the British Legion have all closed down.

With the wonderful help and practical skills of Sylvia Fox, the exhibition was ready for viewing between Sunday church services on 3rd November.

Those present were able to enjoy local history with their coffee. From Monday 4th to Wednesday 6th, we were delighted to welcome a variety of guests through our doors. They included two classes from Broadmeadow School, who happened to be in the area researching a Kings Norton history project, and Sheila and Des Workman from All Saints' Church, Kings Heath, who saw the exhibition advertised on Facebook. Sheila lived in Bells Farm when she was a child so is personally connected with the history of Druid's Heath.

I was also delighted to welcome the regular Kath's Café Wednesday group members to St Nicolas', relocating our share and prayer session, held within a backdrop of Druid's Heath memories, to our lovely church

For those who missed the exhibition,

Jayne Murray has produced the first ever book of Druid's Heath, created from the same personal histories and photographs. Copies are available through A Level Playing Field at <https://bit.ly/36MVAUF>

We would really welcome your continued prayers with and for the Druid's Heath Estate. Here's a prayer offered to God during the exhibition week.

Loving, living God, thank you for the Druid's Heath community. Thank you for its colour and vibrancy, its texture and life. Thank you that it's together with the people of Druid's Heath that we're asked to build your kingdom of justice, peace and fullness of life.

We hold before God the people and situations in Druid's Heath that are crying out for justice and peace, those who are





longing for freedom from oppression and the joy of new life.

Help us to receive the diverse community of Druid's Heath as your gift to us, your creativity to celebrate, your people to love, your kingdom come.

Help us to see Druid's Heath as you do, attentive to the parts that need mending, the signs of your coming, the glimpses of redemption.

And help us to say 'Yes!' at the tops of our voices to all that you ask us to be and to do with and for the community of Druid's Heath.

Amen

Adapted from An Urban Expression
Daily Liturgy © Urban Expression: PO
Box 35238, London E1 6YA

Rev'd Catherine Matlock



'When I offered to play the part of Scrooge in the Nativity Play they turned me down! I can't think why. My thespian talents used to be much admired. There must be a way in which I can help my local church.'

'Where there's a will, there's a way, Edgar. Where there's a will...'

It's never too late to be generous. Talk to one of the clergy about remembering Kings Norton Team Parish in your will, or enquire at the Parish Office.

A Reverse Advent Calendar

As we journey through Advent, you may wish to try a “reverse” calendar. Instead of opening a door each day, you place an item of food into a basket, bag or box instead; but please begin a week early, so that the Foodbank gets it during the week before Christmas. Alternatively, you could save the parcel up until mid-January, deliver it to St Nicolas' Church or to another collection point near you in weekly instalments.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Tin of fruit | 13. Carton of long-life milk (blue) |
| 2. Tin of custard | 14. Carton of long-life fruit juice |
| 3. Tin of rice pudding | 15. Bottle of squash |
| 4. 500g bag of sugar | 16. Jar of honey |
| 5. Jar of jam | 17. Packet of cooking rice |
| 6. Tinned or microwave pot pudding | 18. Jar of pasta or cooking sauce |
| 7. Tin of tomatoes | 19. Jar or bag of instant coffee |
| 8. Tin of spaghetti pieces or hoops | 20. Jar or bag of instant hot chocolate |
| 9. Tin of fish(preferably not tuna, so that we get a mixture) | 21. Tin of peas |
| 10. Tin of ham | 22. Tin of carrots |
| 11. Tin of corned beef | 23. Tin of sweetcorn |
| 12. Packet or bag of instant potato | 24. A 'free-from' item (gluten free, lactose free, vegetarian) |

Of course you may vary the contents if you wish, but please avoid pasta, noodles, baked beans, biscuits and tea. We have lots of each. Please also avoid Christmas specific items as we get rather too many and need the essentials instead. We cannot accept items containing alcohol, however small the percentage.

I am keenly aware that this entire list could be quite pricey too, so the budget version might run something like this, with the same list for each of the four weeks.

Tinned veg (x1); tinned tomatoes (x2); tinned spaghetti; tinned custard; tinned rice pudding; bag/box of cooking rice.

PRE-WAR PRESENTS

'Philofax' is one of Kings Norton's longest established residents, whose family moved into the area in 1934, when he was four years old. Here is the first of a series of reminiscences about his Kings Norton childhood, this time about Christmas presents and how they helped him spend the long evenings when there was no TV or internet.

Before Christmas, a visit to Father Christmas (never Santa Claus) in Lewis's (on the corner of Corporation Street and Bull Street) was a must. I had mixed feelings not only about coming face to face with the grotesque chubby fellow, but I was also scared of the large blown up funny-faced balloons guarding his grotto!

Like everyone else, I loved having presents, but best of all was actually waking up to receive them on Christmas morning, usually very early. I was fortunate to have parents who could afford to make my stocking reasonably full, and I recall with particular pleasure receiving my first Hornby train set and my first Meccano construction set. The former was frequently added to with extra trucks and tracks: during the winter I looked forward to the better weather when I could play with the upgraded layout on the lawn. My Meccano



was Outfit No. 5, which meant that, though several simple constructions were possible, to make more elaborate structures the set needed to be augmented. Mine never was, and I was quite envious of friends who possessed Outfit No. 6 and upwards!

Most Christmases, I would have a Mickey Mouse Annual, which kept me entertained on many a winter evening with its quizzes and



brainteasers. I was very sensitive to some of its macabre stories, for example, one about a little boy cutting open a toy bear to see what was inside, only to be haunted by a dream in which the enlarged bear, knife in hand, was advancing on the boy to turn the tables. Those images stayed with me for ages!

Two presents that were to have a seminal bearing on my future development* were a large jigsaw of a map of the world and a set of 'Newnes Pictorial Knowledge', incorporating a World Atlas. The former, which was a present in 1937 or 1938, on completion contained small slits on each country, together with a set of small cards each bearing the name of a capital city. As a competitive game, players had to

match each city with the correct country and consequently, in a short time, I was near perfect in knowing the capitals of each country and coincidentally learning the positions of most countries on the map in relation to their neighbours. By far my greatest pleasure was reading and learning the World Atlas from cover to cover. I became so engrossed in maps that when I was only eight years old I drew a scaled up version of a map of the world onto a large roll of paper. The atlas, which I still have, also helped me to follow the course of the war over the next few years.

Philofax

(*the author went on to have a career in education)

Join in the hockey fun on Boxing Day!

One of Kings Norton's most enjoyable festive events is the Boxing Day hockey game in Kings Norton Park. It's a tradition that has lasted for several decades, always played on the field by the children's play area.

All local people are welcome to attend, either as spectators or players. It's very informal, and neither athleticism nor hockey skills are required. No prior arrangements are needed. Those who would like to play are simply asked to turn up in appropriate gear. Hockey sticks are

provided. Spectators should ensure they have enough room inside for a glass of mulled wine after the event.

There will be a junior match starting at 10.30 a.m. and a senior game beginning at 11.00 a.m. Organiser Dinah O'Flaherty says 'We hope to have enough people for eleven-a-side games, but if not we just improvise!'

For those with even greater stamina, the bar at Kings Norton Tennis Club on Grange Hill Road is open from 12.30 p.m.

HANDBELL MUSIC FOR CHRISTMAS

Wednesday 11th December from 10.30 to 11.30 am with lunch at 12 noon. St Nicolas' Church. Free entry and retiring collection for Church Roof Appeal and Handbell Restoration costs.



Eroica Camerata

Eroica camerata return to St Nicolas' Church in January with a concert in their symphonic series playing Tchaikovsky's *Romeo & Juliet* and 1st Symphony, plus Berlioz' *Les Nuits d'Eté*.

The Giant Card

During Advent, at the back of St Nicolas' Church, there will be a giant Christmas card once again. We would encourage you to use this to send your Christmas greetings to those of your friends who attend church, rather than giving individual cards.

The money saved from the purchase of individual cards will be donated to a charity. We are choosing 'Embrace the Middle East' again this year. They do valuable work providing practical, health and educational support in and around Israel-Palestine. They are often the only provider of help to everyone, regardless of nationality or creed.

Last year we raised £90 and bought 6 olive trees for a Palestinian farmer. The presence of trees on the land means that it is slightly less likely to be



confiscated by Israel.

What could we buy this year? Maybe toilets at £30 each? Or providing families with food? Ante- or post-natal care? There are lots of alternative gift options.

Take a look at their website **www.embraceme.org** for ideas for your own Christmas shopping.



Saint Nicolas' Place
81 The Green
B38 8RU

Café : Mon-Sat 9.00 - 4.00
Shop : Mon-Sat 10.00 - 3.00
Tours : Fri-Sat 11.00 & 2.00

Weddings, functions, corporate
& community events.

www.saintnicolasplace.co.uk
0121 458 1223

Sacred Spaces

The Thoughts of a Lay Minister

My daughter has recently been fortunate enough to spend six weeks travelling. One of the places she visited was Uluru, sometimes known as Ayers Rock, a large sandstone rock formation in the Northern Territory of Australia.

You may remember it from the 1980s and the case of the 'dingo baby' Azaria Chamberlain, featured in the film 'A Cry in the Dark'. But the rock is actually a sacred place to the local indigenous people to whom it was returned to by the Australian government.

The indigenous people don't climb it or photograph parts of it, particularly the ancient paintings, and request that visitors don't either. Sadly, the majority of visitors don't abide by this request. So much so that this October climbing Uluru was banned.

I wonder how we would define a sacred place. The dictionary definition includes 'holy', 'sacred', 'regarded with reverence, awe and respect'. I wonder where, in this country, we would consider to be our sacred places. It

could be somewhere like Stonehenge or one of our ancient cathedrals

or a place of natural beauty. But I wonder if we would truly consider these sacred and how far we would go to protect them. I wonder if there is one that we would recognise as a nation or if we have our own personal sacred place.

'I wonder where, in this country, we would consider to be our sacred places.'

Today, with cameras on our phones, we are very used to photographing anything and everything and are often surprised if

we are asked not to. Like those tourists at Uluru, we often ignore the request.

But it is not just places that are sacred. This Christmas, we share the sacred story of the birth of Jesus. We tell it in many ways from the light-hearted to the traditional. But the message at its core is one of the most important to us as Christians. God With Us, God made human in the form of a baby. It is a story that should fill us with reverence



and awe, a fact that we try to remember in all the services we hold and in the events we put on during the month of December.

Reverence and awe are important in helping us to ensure that Christmas remains a religious festival, not a secular one. That doesn't mean that we don't also enjoy the secular parts of

the holiday. We remember, though, that at its heart is the story of the humble birth of a baby, a king born in a stable.

I hope that, this Christmas, you are filled with reverence and awe.

Happy Christmas!

Pauline Weaver

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2019

MARRIAGES & BLESSINGS

7th September

Michael Brian Healy & Ann Lesley Gibson

13th September

Adam John Owen & Emma Joyce Kathleen Upton Wells

29th September

Dean & Janet Wagstaff (Blessing)

20th October

Jacob Laurent & Namina Groza (Betrothal Blessing)

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OCTOBER 2019

BAPTISMS

6th October Ellie Louise Walker-Barnett
Freddie John Appleby

"BAPTISM marks the beginning of a journey with God which continues for the rest of our lives, the first step in response to God's love. "

The Baptism Service, Common Worship



Where can you find ... up-to-the-minute parish news; tickets for local events (bookable online); the churches' weekly newsletter; past editions of this magazine; details of Sunday services; contact details for the Parish Office; a Who's Who of the Ministry Team; information about booking a wedding; advice on planning a funeral; a parish map... **24 hours a day? ***

* Why, the parish website, of course: www.kingsnorton.org.uk. Give it a try!



To Bethlehem!

Join us this
Christmas to
experience the
Nativity on a
journey to
Bethlehem

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the St Nicolas
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Wags & Wobblies

How do you keep yourself entertained during a long sea voyage if you've seen it all before? Eddie has some tips.



Liners at sea would, on occasion, bring to light the 'wags' and the odd 'wobbly'. Let me explain.

The Canberra was *en route* to Australia. On each Sunday, the Captain would hold a short church service for the passengers in one of the ballrooms. Just prior to the proceedings, a recording of church bells would be broadcast on the ship's tannoy system. One dear old lady told the Deck Quartermaster that she really enjoyed the bells. Somewhat

mischievously, he explained that the bells were situated in the ship's two funnels, and she believed him!

At dinner that evening, the same lady was seated at the Captain's table. She told him how much she enjoyed Canberra's 'funnel bells'. The steward who was waiting on that table told us all later that the Captain had had a spluttering coughing fit as the other guests had tried to hide their smiles.

One of the popular events on board was Crossing the Equator, which was celebrated on deck around the swimming pool. At the appropriate moment, King Neptune would appear with his court, at which point volunteers would be sentenced to be covered in gunk and dropped into the pool. They would later receive certificates to say that they had 'crossed the line'. The event would be organised by the Staff Captain, who would ensure that no accidents could occur. A prior arrangement was usually made that, at the end of the ceremony, he would also be thrown into the pool. So, half way through the ceremony, he would quietly slip away

to change into an old, white uniform and hat.

Alas, on this occasion, the wags had been at work and a few young, male passengers had been briefed. They grabbed our poor Staff Captain and tossed him into the pool before he had had a chance to get changed! He later questioned the group involved and wanted to know who put them up to the ducking. Needless to say, several members of the crew had been involved, but the secret was kept by all.

On that voyage, one of the first-class passengers, a middle-aged lady travelling alone, became quite unpopular. Her complaints were endless and she was never satisfied. Her cabin steward told us all that she was driving him nuts, despite his best efforts to be patient and helpful. The lady firmly stated that she would not be giving any tips to the crew. One morning, her steward delivered the usual early tray of tea to her cabin. As he entered, he received the usual tirade of complaints. When she was not looking, he placed a small, plastic item on the

carpet and left. A few minutes later, his call light was activated.

He knocked at the lady's door and entered. Madam was screaming and pointing her finger at the floor. 'What's that, steward?'. 'Oh, Madam,' he replied, 'it looks like dog poo.' Then he picked up his realistic toy, put it to his lips and said, 'It tastes like it too'. Madam's screams increased in volume. Eventually, the ship's doctor had to be called to give her a sedative injection!

Chris, the steward, found himself up in front of the Captain. He was logged and fined a small amount. He was also seen for a week with mop and bucket in the crew quarters. What a wobbly, indeed! He said it was worth it. Madam, meanwhile, was moved to another cabin.

Eventually, Chris was back at his job, by which time, of course, he had become the talk of the ship's crew, with lots of laughter all round.

Eddie Matthews



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CONTACTS

If you cannot find what you are looking for here, you will probably find it on the parish website (www.kingsnorton.org.uk). Alternatively, please ask questions at services, during Open Church or at the Parish Office.

81 The Green, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B38 8RU
parishoffice@kingsnorton.org.uk 0121 458 3289
www.facebook.com/KingsNortonTeam

THE MINISTRY TEAM

Team Rector	The Revd Larry Wright
Assistant Rector	The Revd Eliakim Ikechukwu
Parish Lay Minister	Pauline Weaver
Curate (Pioneer)	The Revd Catherine Matlock
Hon Assistant Priest	The Revd Jayne Crooks
Methodist Minister	The Revd Nick Jones
Readers	David Ash, Fay Fearon, Ruth Howman, Parisa Pordelkhaki
Lay Preacher	Steve Wright
Music Ministry	Sylvia Fox
Pastoral Care Team Coordinator	Chris Gadd

THE CHURCH WARDENS

St. Nicolas' Church	Peter Hay & Julie Hill
Hawkesley Church	Jim Clarke 0121 550 3455 or 07 939 838 086
Immanuel Church	Sue Hartley

OTHER CONTACTS

Parish Administrator & P.C.C. Secretary	Judy Ash
Finance Officer	Catherine Dehghani
Safeguarding Coordinator (0121 459 6185)	Clare Dean
Regular Giving	The Revd Jayne Crooks
Church Facilities Manager	Sylvia Fox
Flower Arranging (0121 486 2837)	Alison Blumer
Oasis (Sunday School) Tiny Tots & GPS	Pauline Weaver
Oasis (Sunday School) Immanuel	Nicky Moorcroft

MUSIC

Church music, choir training and handbells are overseen by Sylvia Fox (07 778 449 170). Choir practices : Fridays (tuition 4.45 - 6.30 pm, juniors 6.30 - 7.45 pm, adults 8 - 9 pm). Handbell practices : Mondays 3.30-4.30 pm (number notation & sheet music) and 7.00 - 8.00 pm (number notation only). Please phone first to check we are meeting.

BELL RINGING

Catherine Taylor

Bells are rung for the Sunday service at St Nicolas' Church from 10.00 - 10.30 am. Ringers of all abilities are welcome. Newcomers are particularly encouraged. If you are interested in finding out what bell ringing is all about, please contact us in advance via the Parish Office so that we can arrange your welcome.

UNIFORMED ORGANISATIONS

Scouts and Cubs

198th Birmingham St Nicolas'

Alan Haynes (Group Scout Leader) 07 534 615 489

198thscouts@gmail.com

Tuesdays at Oddingley Hall,

Oddingley Road, B31 3BS

Beavers (6-8yrs): 5-6 pm

Cubs (8-10½): 6.15-7.45pm

Scouts (10½-14): 8 pm

Guides and Brownies

Rainbows: Mondays 5.30 - 6.30 pm

Brownies (188th Birmingham): Tuesdays 6.00-7.30 pm

Brownies: Thursdays 6.30 - 8.00 pm

Guides (247th Birmingham): Mondays 7.15-9.00 pm

Guides and Brownies

at Hawkesley Church Centre

Rainbows (1st Kings Norton): Mondays 5.30 pm

Brownies (259th Birmingham): Wednesdays 6.30 pm

Guides (141st Birmingham): Thursdays 7.00 pm

www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested

Hawkesley Church Primary Academy

Shannon Road, Hawkesley, Kings Norton, B38 9TR 0121 459 6467

Headteacher: Vicky Sumner



Remembrance Day poppy cascade by the W.I. At St Nicolas'



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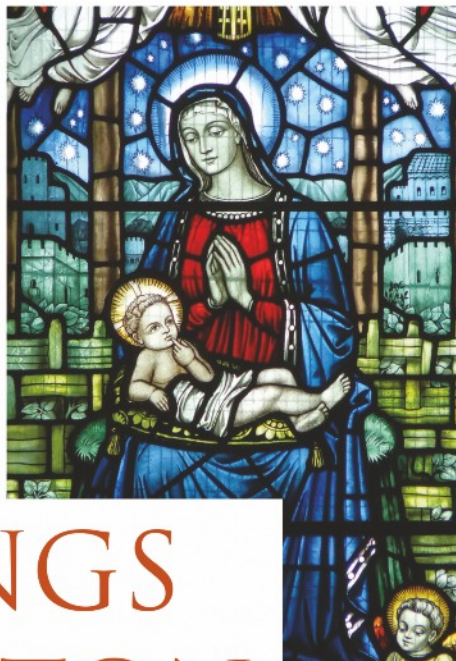
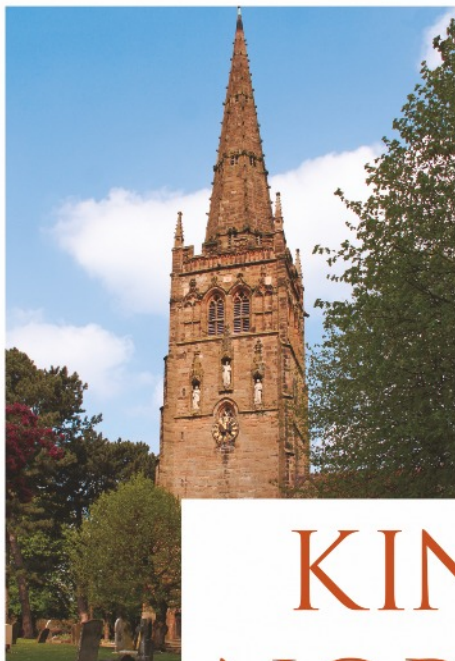
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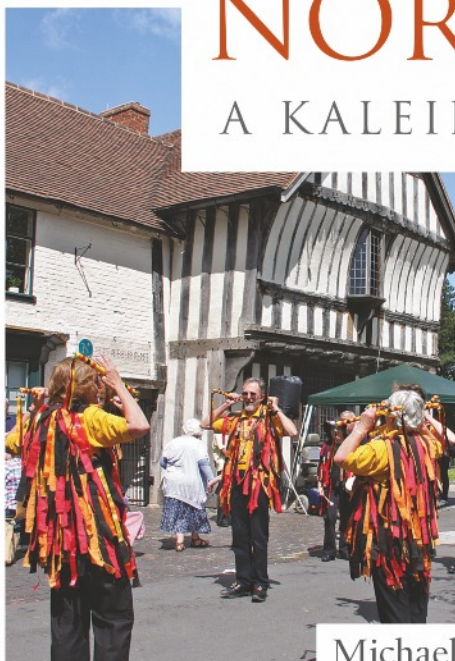
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A KALEIDOSCOPE



Michael Kennedy

The Kings Norton Parish Magazine is edited in Serif PagePlus X9 and printed by
Positive Group (Midlands) Ltd, 26 Castle Road, Kings Norton Business Park, Birmingham B30 3HZ.
Tel: 0121 459 3454 www.positive-print.co.uk Email: sales@positive-print.co.uk