

# MARLINGFORD AND COLTON COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Issue 4, February 2023

## GRAPEVINE ONLINE

By way of a reminder, this Newsletter is being produced primarily for those in our community that either do not have or choose not to have access to the Internet.

However, for those who may be not familiar with these arrangements, don't forget that *The Grapevine* is produced as a hard copy publication, five times a year, in March, May, July/August, October and December/January.

The plan therefore is for editions of this Newsletter to be produced in months where *The Grapevine* is only published as an online edition, i.e., February, April, June, September, and November.

If you would like to be added to *The Grapevine Online* circulation list, please contact the Editor, Annette Hudson, on [anneteah57@gmail.com](mailto:anneteah57@gmail.com)

## ARTS AND CRAFT GROUP

Our first get together for 2023 was on January 25<sup>th</sup>. Thereafter, these are the dates up until Easter:

- Feb 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>,
- March 8<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>
- April 5<sup>th</sup>

All sessions will be in Colton Village Hall, from 10.00 to 12.00.

In the next few weeks Art activities will be the focus. There is no need to have done art before.

If you prefer to bring your own art or craft project, whether crochet, sewing, card making or anything else please do. Or just come for coffee and a chat and see what we do

Rosanna Ellis.  
[rosannaellis@btinternet.com](mailto:rosannaellis@btinternet.com)

## COUNCIL VACANCY

Following our previous notices in Grapevine, and the Community Newsletter, the Parish Council is still keen to invite interested residents to become Councillors. If you are interested in local issues and want to make a difference in your community, being a Councillor could be for you.

We would be particularly keen to welcome newly arrived residents, keen to get to know their neighborhood, and its workings, a bit better.

If you are interested in seeing what the role entails, why not come along to one of our meetings. Alternatively, feel free to contact our Clerk, Maria Hutson on 01603 850118, or by email to [marlingfordandcoltonpc@gmail.com](mailto:marlingfordandcoltonpc@gmail.com) or our Chairman, John Morse on 07760 557488 or by email to [johnmorse\\_mcpc@outlook.com](mailto:johnmorse_mcpc@outlook.com).

## PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET 2023/24

At the January Parish Council meeting the Council set the budget for 2023-24. The precept was set at £10,900, an increase of 4% from the previous year. The precept is the portion of money from residents' council tax that is allocated to the parish council. More information can be found on your council tax bill which will be sent out by South Norfolk Council in the spring.

It was agreed to allocate money towards the maintenance of both Marlingford and Colton church yards and additionally to support the production of Grapevine magazine. Regrettably, it was not possible to allocate funds to the Community Car Scheme so, unfortunately, this service is no longer available to the residents of Marlingford and Colton.

## MARLINGFORD CONSERVATION AREA

With spring around the corner work is planned on Marlingford Conservation Area to continue to make it a space for all to enjoy and where wildlife can thrive. To allow this it is hoped various jobs be undertaken over forthcoming months including clearing overgrown areas and building wood piles to act as habitats for wildlife.

Help is needed from volunteers for this to be possible. If you would like to get involved, please contact the clerk on [clerk@marlingfordandcoltonpc@gmail.com](mailto:clerk@marlingfordandcoltonpc@gmail.com) to register your interest.

## PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PUBLIC INCLUSION

Parish Council Meetings are usually held on the second Tuesday of the month at 7pm. There is no meeting in February, the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March at Colton Village Hall

At each meeting there is an opportunity for members of the public to speak and raise any issues they may have. You are also welcome to simply come along and listen to the meeting. Councillors look forward to welcoming residents to the next meeting.

## COLTON AMENITY AREA

Following previous updates, now that Spring is approaching, we are keen to see increased usage of the Amenity Area. We are hoping to upgrade, augment and hopefully replace, some of the equipment and, to that end, one of our younger residents, eight-year-old Elona Moore, has on her own initiative offered to start a Just Giving page to contribute to the fundraising effort. To support Elona's efforts, please see: [www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/coltonplaygroundfundraising](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/coltonplaygroundfundraising)

Elona has already secured generous gifts for a prize raffle, which will form part of the fund raising, from The Goat Shed, Barnham Broom Hotel Golf & Spa, Viking Nurseries, Norwich Family Golf Centre, UEA Sports Park and Morrisons in Wymondham. She has also already secured a very generous donation from Honingham Thorpe Farms.

Whilst there are some limited funds available from within the Parish Council, we are hampered from applying, for example for Heritage Lottery funding by virtue of the very short nature of the current lease, so Elona's personal efforts are truly inspirational.

We will provide more details in the next edition of this newsletter and will in future provide updates on how she is getting on with her fundraising.

## HOW TO CLAIM £200 TO HELP WITH OIL (AND LPG & BIOMASS) HEATING COSTS

Heating our homes this winter is at the forefront of most Britons minds right now. But while the government has announced a price freeze on gas and electric prices, no such freeze has been announced on heating oil.

With an estimated 1.6 million relying on heating oil in the UK, presumably including the majority of properties in Marlingford and Colton, it might leave many of those affected wondering why they've been left out in the cold. Oil prices are said to have more than doubled in the last year from £458 for 1,000 litres in September 2021 to £1,008 in September 2022,

Although not well publicised, there is help for those who don't use mains gas for heating. An Alternative Fuel Payment was announced as part of the energy price guarantee whereby domestic consumers will be able to claim an extra £200 one-off payment, over and above the £400 energy grant that is already being paid, if they are not connected to the gas grid. This applies to users of alternative fuels such as Oil, LPG, and Biomass (though sadly not wood), to heat their homes.

The government says the £200 payment will be automatically paid to all homes not connected to mains gas. It indicates that this is to be via electricity companies, automatically deducting the additional amount off your electric bill. Thus, if you are currently paying for your electricity by a Direct Debit arrangement, you will receive the £200 automatically, in February 2023. In the event however that you are not paying for your electricity this way, you will have to make a claim to receive the £200. In this situation, go on the [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) site, and follow the links, for further information.

## HELP WITH LIVING COSTS

You may be struggling with living costs for a range of reasons. A leaflet has been produced by Norfolk County Council, which tells you what support is available and how to get advice. In our villages, a copy is posted on the notice boards, and further copies are available confidentially from our parish clerk. You can also find this information on the website [www.norfolk.gov.uk/costofliving](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/costofliving) If you don't have access to the internet at home, you can go online at any of the Norfolk libraries.

## VOTER ID ISSUES

You may have heard that the government is changing the method by which voters can prove their identity when casting their ballot in the forthcoming local council elections in May. The government has produced a list of suitable forms of ID, and you should bear in mind that if you do not have one of these items, you will not be allowed to vote. Please visit the website [www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk) for more details, or contact our Clerk, or our chairman, for more information and a list of applicable forms of ID.

**We would appreciate your comments on any of the issues raised in this Newsletter. Please contact any of the Parish Council, whose details will be found on the Notice Boards in both villages, or our Clerk, Maria Hutson on 07759 534885, via our website: [www.marlingfordcolton.wixsite.com](http://www.marlingfordcolton.wixsite.com) or by E-Mail to [marlingfordandcoltonpc@gmail.com](mailto:marlingfordandcoltonpc@gmail.com)**