

News from County Councillor Dr Marie Strong **Binham Parish Council 19.09.2016**
Wells Division (Glaven, Priory and Walsingham Wards)
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If you have difficulty reaching me please persevere – my faithful Blackberry has been sentenced to replacement with a new ‘gizmo’ with which there are a few hiccups.

Cherry Tree Corner:

I will present the petition asking for steps to be taken to improve the traffic flow at Cherry Tree Corner (junction of the B1105 and the A148) at the EDT Committee meeting at County Hall on Friday 14 October.

Memory Walk:

The Memory Walk for carers and people with dementia took place at Holkham on Sunday 18 September '16. Considering this was the first walk we (Wells Dementia Friendly Community Group) our first event walk (next year already timetabled) it was very successful with 84 people, mainly taking the long walk. Lovely weather, lovely surroundings, lovely people. (Next year already timetabled provisionally Sunday 17 September.)

Cockthorpe Mobile ‘Telephone Mast: People from across the division have reported problems and whilst I gather that Vodafone and 02 have continued to transmit from the Cockthorpe mast there have been ongoing problems regarding EE and Three. I have been able to provide some assistance to the Corporate Affairs Manager for Ericsson UK Ltd and whilst he assured me a solution had been completed I am now reassured having received an email from a Cockthorpe resident to say all was in order including 4G.

North Norfolk Food and Drink Festival: Congratulations to all those providers and suppliers of excellent produce particularly the considerable number of stall holders from our local parishes. The beautiful location of Holkham’s walled garden did justice to the displays of food and beverage and we came away with a trolley full of provisions.

Concessionary Bus Passes and the Coasthopper:

Understandably I have been asked again if passengers with a concessionary pass can make a contribution to their journeys – the answer is that the Government will not allow the county to take any money regarding a concessionary bus pass. However in relation to funding the good news is that not only has the Coasthopper’s level of service been maintained but due to commercial use of the route the operator is investing in new vehicles and the service continues to require no reliance on subsidy from the county – this means the county can support other bus services which would not otherwise be viable.

Devolution for Norfolk and Suffolk: Unfortunately I have to confirm press coverage that the devolution process continues to become more and more confusing – including a statement that North Norfolk residents will not be given a vote in respect of a mayor. The briefest statement I can make is that Norfolk County Councillors across the political spectrum have given strong if cautious support to devolving powers and finance down from government but have no enthusiasm for setting up an additional tier of local government with a mayor. However I am confident that when NCC has its final debate on devolution councillors will give serious consideration to the consultation together with views expressed at town and parish council meetings and by individuals across our urban and rural divisions. As I write a date for the final vote has been set for Thursday 3 November – but is under consideration because some councillors are away at a conference regarding Adult Social Services.

Hi-tech Access to Library Services: Just to impress ‘techie’ readers I offer the latest tool from NCC’s library service which has launched Spydus Mobile, a free app that residents can download onto their smartphone or tablet to access library services and manage their membership at any time ‘on the move’. To download Spydus Mobile for Apple and Android devices visit the App Store or Google Play and select Norfolk Library and Information Service.

For now all good wishes
Marie Strong