

Village Viewpoint

The Magazine of Northamptonshire ACRE
Action with Communities in Rural England

THE 2015 SUMMER /AUTUMN EDITION



The beautiful Elizabethan Lyveden New Bield near Oundle

In this edition:

- Our Low Barn is open
- Who is the Best Village of 2015?
- Our Rural Wellbeing Service is on the road
- We need you for our Good Neighbours
- Read Parley Pole: a novel of village life and intrigue
- Parish Special Constables are recruiting
- Defra issues Rural Productivity Plan
- How Giving and Getting can help you
- Find out how CornerDrop can stop those missed parcel days
- Funding news including:
 - ⇒ Broadband connectivity vouchers
 - ⇒ British Gas funds village hall energy efficiency measures
 - ⇒ Sita fund opens

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Registered Charity No. 1080038
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NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ACRE

(Action with Communities in Rural England)



Become a Trustee of Northamptonshire ACRE and help us make a difference

Do you have some time to spare? Are you interested in helping rural communities improve their quality of life especially for the disadvantaged?

We are a countywide, independent charitable organisation, working with rural communities for a sustainable future and our mission is to eradicate social isolation and deprivation in rural and other areas. We are based at the Hunsbury Hill Centre and are part of a network of rural community councils across England.

**VOLUNTEERS
MAKE A
DIFFERENCE.**

We manage various outreach projects and a well used community venue from which we work. We are looking for enthusiastic volunteers with an interest in community development, charity governance, business management, fundraising, training, health services, youth work or rural issues to serve on our Board of Trustees. The role involves being a part of the governance management and other responsibilities of a trustee. Most meetings are held at our offices and travel expenses can be reimbursed.

This is an opportunity to contribute your knowledge and expertise to the development and management of a dynamic and responsive organisation and improvement of our local communities, while developing new interests

For an information pack please contact us by email:

acre@northantsacre.org.uk

or

telephone: 01604 765888

For an informal discussion please contact

**Gareth Lugar-Mawson, Chair of Northamptonshire ACRE
on 01604 765888**

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Village Viewpoint is the magazine of Northamptonshire ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England). The views and opinions that appear in Village Viewpoint are not necessarily those of the Editor and ACRE staff. While contributions for publication are welcomed, publication cannot be guaranteed. Advertisements are accepted under ACRE conditions regarding rates and copy/artwork. Published by Northamptonshire ACRE.

ACRE NEWS

Weedon Bec named Best Village of 2015

Around 50 villagers and other guests gathered one evening to hear the results of the 2015 Northamptonshire Best Village Competition. They were announced at the Presentation Evening Ceremony held on Tuesday 14th July at the Hunsbury Hill Centre, Harksome Hill, Northampton. This Competition celebrates community spirit and the quality of life in the County's villages.

David Laing, President of Northamptonshire ACRE and H.M. Lord Lieutenant of Northamptonshire presented delegates from the winning villages with cups and certificates. The village of Weedon Bec was the overall winner of the competition gaining the prestigious title of the 2015 Northamptonshire Best Village. Representatives of Weedon Bec are seen here receiving their trophy from David Laing.



The Judges commented that Weedon Bec was an extremely welcoming and vibrant community. They felt there was an over-riding sense of warmth and generosity in the village where every single person mattered. The village of Syresham was the overall Best Villlage runner up. The full results were as follows:-

OVERALL WINNERS:

WINNER ~ Weedon Bec

Runner Up ~ Syresham

Third ~ Rothersthorpe

SMALL VILLAGES

Winner ~ Rothersthorpe

Runner Up ~ Lois Weedon and Weston

Highly Commended ~ Moreton Pinkney

MEDIUM VILLAGES

Winner ~ Syresham

Runner Up ~ Flore

Highly Commended ~ Cottingham

LARGE VILLAGES

Winner ~ Weedon Bec

Runner Up ~ Stanwick

Highly Commended ~ Blisworth & Mawsley

NEWCOMERS CUP

Winner ~ Moreton Pinkney



Seen here are the winning villages:

Weedon Bec, Syresham and Rothersthorpe, along with County Co-ordinator Barron Walton on the far left, David Scudamore and David Laing on the right.

The Best Village Competition is run entirely by local volunteers and is based at Northamptonshire ACRE. The Competition looks at all aspects of village life: community and social activities, sustainability, the provision for the younger and more senior residents, the village website, local business involvement as well as tidiness and the welcome visitors receive. The Competition is sponsored by Hollowell's Funeral Plans whose generous support since 2010 has ensured that villages continue to be provided with the opportunity to enter this important Northamptonshire annual contest.

David Scudamore, Chair of the 2015 Best Village Competition, commented: "We congratulate every village that entered the 2015 Competition. It is noticeable that successful villages bring the community together to decide on what to show the judges and how to manage their village visit. Yet again the judges had great difficulty in deciding on the winning villages reflecting the high quality of Northamptonshire's rural communities. We would like to thank every village for making the judge's visits both informative and enjoyable."

The County Co-ordinator, Barron Walton was delighted with the 2015 Competition and added: "The village of Weedon Bec is a worthy winner of the Northamptonshire Best Village Competition and is an excellent example of the County's rural communities. It is pleasing to see successful villages from across Northamptonshire and we hope to see more communities entering this high profile Competition next year, particularly from the north of the county".

entering this high profile Competition next year, particularly from the north of the County where representation was limited. We are still looking for new judges and would be pleased to talk to any prospective judge about what is involved. We would like to thank Hollowell's Funeral Plans whose generous sponsorship ensures the continuation of this Northamptonshire Competition."

For further information regarding the competition in Northamptonshire, please contact Barron Walton on 01327 312950 or via email at Barron.Walton@northantsacres.co.uk or David Scudamore on 01604 762230.



Hunsbury Hill Centre Low Barn re-opens

In the Spring edition of the Village Viewpoint, we reported that the re-build of the Low Barn (previously called the Derrick Dunn Room), which burnt down in November 2013, was finally complete. And to celebrate this we had an official re-opening of the Barn.

Our new President and the Lord Lieutenant of Northamptonshire, David Laing, very kindly agreed to open the Low Barn and gave a lovely speech before cutting the ribbon. Once the Low Barn was opened, attendees were able to enjoy a good spread courtesy of our on site catering partner, Impressions Caterers.

The Low Barn is ideal for small meetings, accommodating from 25 people in a board room layout up to 50 attendees in a theatre style, with wifi, screen for presentations and wheelchair access. Plus we have fabulous views over South Northants to enjoy and free parking.



We have very good rates for local councils, third sector organisations and community groups, so if you are interested in booking the Low Barn for a meeting, please contact Sarah Clarke on 01604 765888 or email sarah.clarke@northantsacres.org.uk.. Why not give us a call!



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Our Wellbeing Service is on the road!

Since the beginning of May our Big Lottery funded Rural Wellbeing Service has been going out to several villages in East Northants. This four year project, covering the county of Northamptonshire, will help tackle issues of social isolation and loneliness in older people by taking our information bus out to villages offering **FREE** advice and support. The service will also aim to set up a countywide network of volunteer Good Neighbours who will continue the delivery of support to older people in their communities.



If you have been in the vicinity of Collyweston, Warmington, Nassington, Easton on the Hill or Oundle over the last few weeks, you may well have seen our bus (shown here) out and about in the villages. Linda, our fieldworker who is on board the information bus, has been giving advice, resources and support to older

people, carers and others in these villages. Where more specialized support is required, she is able to signpost people to the most appropriate agency to meet their need. We then follow up the referral to the other agency to check the person's needs have been met.

Among a number of referrals, Linda has helped a 96 yr old in an isolated village receive a library at home service, arranged for Care and Repair to put in grab rails and give energy help to a vulnerable lady living alone and provided wet room advice and information to a older couple. She has also started to recruit several potential Good Neighbours.

We are looking to recruit a network of volunteers, Good Neighbours, who can continue the support in the village that has been started by the fieldworker on the information bus. We have more information about Good Neighbours on the following pages.

If you are interested in knowing when the information bus might be in your area, please check the timetable on our website at: <http://northantsacre.org.uk/rural-wellbeing-service/information-bus-timetable/>. And

if you would like us to come to your village to talk about our Lottery funded project and how your community can get involved, or would like to enquire about the bus visiting your village, then please email wellbeing@northantsacre.org.uk or tel. 01604 765888.



Could you be a



Good Neighbour?

**Do you enjoy talking with people?
Are you a good listener?
Do you have some time to spend in your
local community?
Could this be YOU?**

For more information contact Linda Hook

Mob: 07808 330549

Tel: 01604 765888

Email: wellbeing@northantsacre.org.uk

Website: <http://northantsacre.org.uk/rural-wellbeing-service/good-neighbours/>



Northants ACRE's Lottery funded Rural Wellbeing Service provides free support for older people in rural communities in Northamptonshire

What is a Good Neighbour?

A Good Neighbour is a volunteer helping to provide older, often isolated and lonely people living in rural areas with opportunities to participate in social activities, develop new relationships and feel a sense of being part of their own community. A caring individual who is able to offer friendly advice to people with all kinds of different support needs and to signpost them to organisations and groups that can help. Interested? Then please read on...



What will I be required to do?

- ♦ Visit and talk to older people in the community
- ♦ Carry out occasional surveys to establish people's views on current and future services and the quality of life in their communities
- ♦ Help to set up new activities, events and services within the community
- ♦ Signpost or refer individuals to voluntary and statutory organisations for additional help and support where appropriate
- ♦ Attend information and training events

What do I need to get involved?

- ♦ A desire to help older people
- ♦ Good communication and listening skills
- ♦ Flexibility and reliability
- ♦ Access to transport

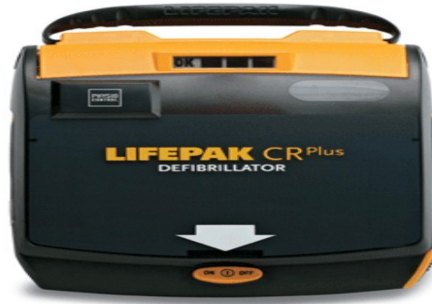
You will be asked to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to volunteer in this role, which is paid for by Northamptonshire ACRE..

What's in it for me?

- ♦ Good Neighbours make new friends
- ♦ Good Neighbours will help to reduce social isolation and loneliness in their community.
- ♦ You will be helping with community cohesion by being a Good Neighbour
- ♦ Full training will be given

If you would like to find out more about this opportunity and the Rural Wellbeing project please visit our website at <http://northantsacre.org.uk/rural-wellbeing-service/> or email wellbeing@northantsacre.org.uk.

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Bulk Oil Buying Scheme

As you may be aware, Northamptonshire ACRE runs a Bulk Oil Buying scheme. This is for anyone who uses oil or Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) for heating and would like to save money on their heating bills.



Many people in rural areas are without mains gas and are therefore reliant on oil. Most individual orders are small, and are consequently at the mercy of high pricing by the oil companies. Fuel poverty is commonly higher amongst those in rural areas and those reliant on oil.

To help combat this, we launched the **Bulk Oil Buying Scheme** in October 2011, which has so far helped save our members over £60,000 against the average prices quoted since it started.

- Membership to the scheme is £20 a year but we are confident you will save that on your first order.
- Last month the price we obtained on heating oil was **36.94 per litre** against an average of 45.40 ppl. Members who ordered **750 litres saved £63.45** against the average price.

To see a table of how much members save each month, visit our website: <http://northantsacre.org.uk/latest-prices/>. If you would like more information or would like to join the scheme, please email: oil@northantsacre.org.uk or tel. 01604 765888.

Liquid Petroleum Gas Scheme

We have expanded the Bulk Oil scheme to offer LPG in cylinders and bulk tanks to members, at no additional membership cost. This is in conjunction with Swift Energy Consultants Ltd and FloGas.

Current prices for cylinders are:

- 13kg Butane: £26.75
- 19kg Propane: £29.00
- 47kg Propane: £59.75

All prices include VAT and delivery.

LPG bulk tank supply:

- **STOP PRESS:** We are able to offer a great new 2 year deal for anyone moving to an LPG bulk tank supply. Call us on 01604 765888 for more information. If you are not a member of the scheme and would like more information or are interested in joining, please tel. 01604 765888 or email: oil@northantsacre.org.uk.





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Please quote reference VIL2 when calling

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COMMUNITY FACILITIES UPDATE

Cotterstock Village Hall refurbishment

Congratulations to Cotterstock Village Hall Committee who have overseen the refurbishment of their village hall, which was originally the local Church school in 1876. The hall is a meeting place for the active Cotterstock community and over the years, wear and tear has taken its toll.

With the aid of a generous grant from WREN of £60,000 and local funding raising that amounted to another £10,000, Cotterstock has been able to restore and repair the floorboards and roof, install a new plumbing and heating system and insulation. The kitchen, windows and doors have been updated and all this has been done while preserving the historic and beautiful fabric of the building as can be seen in this photo, where it has been dressed for a recent wedding.



If you are interested in hiring Cotterstock Village Hall or any other village hall in your area, Northamptonshire ACRE maintains a Contact List with details of halls, their facilities, hire charges and contacts. If you would like a copy, please email Frances.harris@northantsacre.org.uk.

Should Village Halls be Listed as Assets of Community Value?

The Community Right to Bid gives community groups a chance to save assets which are of importance to their community. This could include the village shop, pub, community centre or recreation ground. This is done by listing them as assets of community value. Some village hall committees have asked whether a village hall should also be listed.

National ACRE's legal adviser believes there is ultimately no need to list a village hall that is already in community ownership, because charity law offers the protection needed. However, there is a valid need to list assets that are of community value but not in local ownership such as church and county/district council property.

Provided the Village Hall Management Committee has a secure interest in its hall (freehold or leasehold) no such listing is needed. But, even if a village hall were to be listed, nothing untoward should result from the listing.



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Irrecoverable VAT on Village Hall Refurbishment

'The Voice of Village Halls'



In June, our sister organisation, the National Village Halls Forum, issued a press release regarding the issue of irrecoverable VAT. This can be a big problem for village halls.

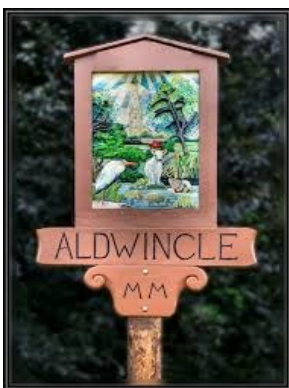
Our Community Facility Advisor is aware of an actual case where VAT had a very real impact on a village hall that recently undertook a major improvement project. The VAT bill came to an astonishing 14% of the total gross cost of refurbishment. Given a funding shortfall, the village hall committee had no option but to register for VAT. In so doing, the committee could claw back the VAT - a short-term gain but with a long-term price to pay.

VAT registration means a commitment of twenty years of charging VAT on income from a hire of the hall but minimal VAT-able running costs against which to reclaim VAT. Add to that the additional complexity (and legal liability) of keeping accounts caused by VAT registration, it's no wonder village halls (or parish councils) think twice before undertaking major building and renovation works. And this is against a background of dwindling sources of grant funding.



The full press release can be viewed on the National Village Halls Forum site at: <http://www.nvhf.org.uk/>.

Auld Wincle Arms hall opens for business!



Congratulations to the team at Aldwincle Village Hall on the reopening of their recently refurbished village hall, the Auld Wincle Arms (aka the Village Hall!).

The hall has had the installation of a brand new stainless steel kitchen, new toilets and a complete redecoration throughout and is now open for use. All of the refurbishment was made possible by a generous grant from WREN of £26,777.

If you are interested in having a look at the refurbished hall, please contact Bernard Lowe: btlowe@josterberry.plus.com or tel. 01832 720671.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTY

B-Fast: Bucks First Aid & Safety Training



B-F.A.S.T is a family run organisation of fully trained first aiders who offer **FREE** fun family first aid & resuscitation workshops for communities. These 2 hour sessions are fast paced, interesting, interactive and fun to help members of the public appreciate the difference they can make to saving lives. Attendees learn life saving skills and gain the

confidence to use them.

Activities are suitable for anyone aged 7 and upwards. Primary aged children just need to bring someone to help them. As they are practise based sessions, people need to come dressed to get involved. All B-FAST requires is a space, such as the school or village hall, in which to hold the training session. Why not visit their website and watch a short video of their work to find out more about the courses they offer and how you can book onto one: <http://www.b-fast.org.uk/>.

B-FAST also works with the national charity Community Heartbeat Trust putting Public Access Defibrillators into communities. If you would be interested in having one, then you can call them on 01908 766191 or 01296 712434 for more information.



FREE Crochet Club

Every Tuesday

1.00pm-3.00pm

At

The Community Hub (next to DSLV)

Hawke Road

Daventry

No need to book, just turn up! Beginners welcome!

Please contact Jo Miller at DDH on 01327 707500 or email volunteering@ddh.org.uk for more information.

Parley Pole: All about a village

A novel about Parish Councils and everyday life

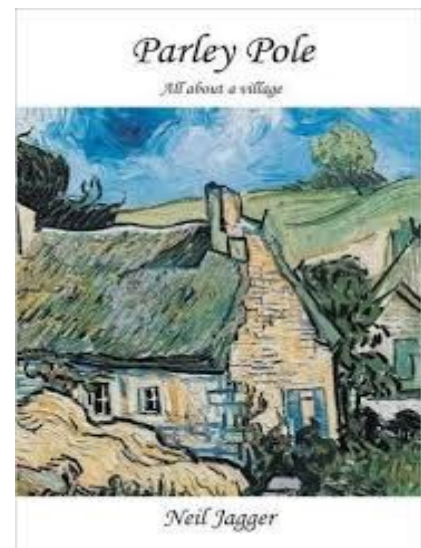
Fish nibbled at the bloated face.

To whom does the body in the stream belong? Was violence involved? Fear takes hold and a relaxed way of life becomes suspended during a protracted murder investigation...

Like many villages in the county, Milton Malsor is in a vulnerable position regarding the expansion of Northampton and the imposition of the 60,000 houses. The Parish Council has fought off many warehouse developments, resisted a minerals site, forced a proposed secondary school to be built at Grange Park where it is needed, developed a Parish Plan and then a Neighbourhood Plan (with a small housing area having very necessary affordable homes), all to protect the parish from random housing and to keep the village's character and surrounding green fields.

Neil Jagger, a parish councillor in Milton Malsor, decided to put all his knowledge and experience of the difficulties and intrigues that happen in a village into a novel, which has recently been published. The book, '**Parley Pole: All about a village**' is set in a fictional rural village (surprisingly similar to Milton Malsor) and sets out the inner workings of the various village institutions over eight seasons.

The embattled parish council is covered as above with its more mundane responsibilities like: the full burial ground, the closing of the post office, the appalling state of the roads and pavements, rat running and speeding; the run down village hall; the overambitious parochial church council; the understaffed care home. All leavened by a village fun day, a school fete and the effect of a murder and its slow solving on the villagers, two love stories, a wedding, farming, pheasant rearing and the interaction of lots of local characters. So life in a normal, average Northamptonshire village!



The novel helps to explain modern life in a rural village with its good and bad points as well as providing an insight into how the planning system works and what parish councils actually do. If you would like to read more of Neil's book, you can purchase it from Amazon and other retailers for £8.99. ISBN no. 10 1785072137



'Smarter, Greener Businesses' event

Discover environmental best practices, network with local organisations & save money

Wednesday 30 September, 9am-1pm
iCon Environmental Innovation Centre, Daventry

Businesses can pick up innovative ideas to help them save money and reduce their impact on the environment at a networking event in Daventry.

The free event has been organised by Daventry District Council in partnership with Investors in the Environment (iie), the national not-for-profit environmental accreditation scheme.

- 9am: Arrival, networking and refreshments
- 9.30am: Welcome from Alice Ellis, Environmental Improvement Officer, Daventry District Council
- 9.35am: Greening your Business with Kim Coley, iie
- 10.10am: Success story with Robert Buck, IKEA Distribution
- 10.40am: Networking and refreshments
- 10.55am: Success stories from iie members
- 11.35am: Low carbon technologies with Nick Bolton, Electric Corby
- 12.05pm: Networking and lunch
- 1pm: Close

Book your place today!

Spaces for the event are limited, so please call Kim Coley on 01733 866436 or email kim.coley@iie.uk.com or david.knight@iie.uk.com to reserve your free place.



"The networking and promotional possibilities within iie are brilliant!"

Robert Buck,
IKEA Distribution

www.iie.uk.com



Parish Special Constables & Speed Watch

Excessive speeding and dangerous driving continue to be familiar concerns to residents of many villages throughout Northamptonshire. Whilst the Community Speed Watch Scheme, up until now has been one way to tackle this within villages and communities, the role of the Parish Special Constable could change the way this scheme currently works leading to more effective and more immediate results.



For those who are not familiar with Speed Watch, it is a locally driven initiative where active members of the community come together, with the support of the Police to monitor vehicle speed and driver behaviour. Whilst this scheme is educational, it is

not enforcement in itself and requires the powers of the police to ensure the necessary penalties are issued.

Community members can now change the way this scheme currently works and ensure these concerns are handled more quickly and effectively by having their very own **Parish Special Constable**.

- ♦ Parish Special Constables are an exciting new voluntary opportunity with Northamptonshire Police
- ♦ It gives local people the chance to be involved in making a real difference within their community.
- ♦ Villagers have said they want a police service that is more local, visible, engaged and preventative. Parish Specials are designed to meet these community needs.
- ♦ They are fully warranted officers working with regular police officers, parish/town councils and community groups to help resolve issues important to the local community
- ♦ They patrol their area in uniform, speaking to people, providing reassurance and discouraging crime and anti-social behaviour.
- ♦ They can choose to work in their own community or in neighbouring ones.
- ♦ And they can issue penalties for speeding on the spot!



Essentially Parish Special Constables will become the known 'go to' point for local community issues, providing a clear link between the communities and the police and work with other partners in the parish.



By having a Parish Special Constable in your village, the role can be integrated with the work of the Speedwatch scheme so that where a driver is found to be speeding above the limit, the Parish Constable can issue a penalty on the spot. It also allows them to instantly update community intelligence on force systems. More importantly though, the scheme will have an individual who is familiar with the community in

which they police and has the powers and links to be able to take action where necessary.

If you would like any further information on becoming a Parish Special Constable please email SpecialsRecruitment@northants.pnn.police.uk or go to <http://northantspolicespecials.co.uk/> for more details.

For more information about Speed Watch or to register your community's interest in being part of the programme, please check the Community Safer Roads website: <http://www.northants.police.uk/#!/SaferRoads/9776> or you can email engagementandeducation@northants.pnn.police.uk.

Northamptonshire Rural Action

While we are looking at Parish Special Constables, don't forget that if you live or work in a rural part of Northamptonshire, Rural Action is being developed for you as a collaboration between Northamptonshire Police and the community to support crime prevention and community resilience.

If you join Rural Action, you can receive crime alerts, witness appeals and other information relevant to the area in which you live or work.



The Rural Action logo has been developed to help people recognise when work is being done to help make Northamptonshire the safest place in the country. The brand will be visible on vehicles such as police cars and on signs throughout the county. Rural Action has also been created to be developed for use by local community initiatives.

If you join Rural Action you can sign up to receive crime alerts, witness appeals and other information relevant to the area in which you live or work. And you can also confidentially log details of any incidents you may notice in your area that will contribute to local police intelligence gathering. For more information and to sign up go to: <http://www.northamptonshireruralaction.co.uk/>

NATIONAL NEWS

New National Rural Crime Network launched

[Latest news](#) [Events](#) [Blog](#) [FAQs](#) [Get involved](#) [Contact](#)

NRCN

National Rural Crime Network

[Why are we here >](#) [Best practice >](#) [Our work >](#) [Research >](#)



On the subject of rural crime, a new network that has been launched to provide greater recognition and understanding of the problems and impact of crime in rural areas so more can be done to keep people safer. The National Rural Crime Network (NRCN) aims to ensure the voice of the countryside is heard by championing a better understanding of crime in rural areas and showing new, effective ways to help to keep rural communities safer.

NRCN is funded by 28 Police and Crime Commissioners and their member Police Forces (including Northamptonshire's own PCC Adam Simmonds), each contributing an initial sum of £2,000 together with £1,000 sponsorship from the insurer NFU Mutual.

Find out more at: <http://www.nationalruralcrimenetwork.net/>.

Rural Productivity Plan unveiled by Defra



Under the government's first ever Rural Productivity Plan, issued by Defra, rural communities will be allowed to build starter homes for local residents. The 10 point plan sets out measures to boost the rural economy by investing in education and skills, increasing wages, improving infrastructure and connectivity, and simplifying planning laws for rural businesses and communities.

Measures include amending planning rules to allow starter homes to be built on Rural Exception Sites for the first time, which the government says will allow local areas to allocate more sites for starter homes, specifically for people who already live in the area, or have an existing local family or employment connection.

The plan can be viewed at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/454866/10-point-plan-rural-productivity-pb14335.pdf.

However since its publication on 20th August, there have been a number of concerns and queries raised including a worry that it might not be focusing on the right issues and may not support all rural communities (see the Rural Services Network article: <http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/analysis/whats-not-in-the-rural-productivity-plan>) and that the plan lacks ambition on rural broadband.

Regarding broadband, the plan says the government is committed to delivering superfast broadband of at least 24Mbps to 95% of UK households and businesses by 2017 with decisions on further broadband rollout to be taken in the Spending Review in November. The plan says: "By the end of 2015, access to standard broadband will be available to anyone unable to get a service of at least 2Mbps, through the option of satellite broadband."

The Country Land and Business Association policy director, Christopher Price, acknowledged that the plan would help the countryside to thrive – but warned that better broadband was still needed. "The challenge of delivering improved productivity in our rural areas is different to that in our towns and cities. Unfortunately this latest plan still falls short of giving rural communities and businesses the confidence that the universal service they are crying out for will be achieved."

It will be interesting to see how well the plan does deliver what it promises.

£8m fund available for rural tourism

A further £8m in funding has been made available by the government for rural tourism businesses. The funding is to help businesses unlock the huge potential for growth in the countryside and will build on the government's first ever Rural Productivity Plan (see above). Grants available under the scheme can help people expand and develop new food processing facilities and individual grants worth upwards of £35,000 depending on the individual project will now be offered in another 11 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas.



The funding is being made available under the Growth Programme: grants for the rural economy programme, which provides funding to help projects in England that create jobs and help rural economy growth. These grants are funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) manages the grants, working with LEPs. More details at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/growth-programme-grants-for-the-rural-economy>

[Giving and getting website](https://www.givingandgetting.net/)

We have been approached by an organisation that is offering what we feel is a great idea. The Giving and Getting website is a recently launched **FREE** website <https://www.givingandgetting.net/> that enables people to give and get support, help and favours from neighbours and friends and across generations.

Most of us have no problem asking friends or neighbours for help occasionally with the little things such as putting our bins out, taking in our parcels, or watering the plants. But it is often harder to ask when the favour is bigger, for example lifts to and from the station or airport, sorting out our computer or taking us to the hospital or clinic. And for many people in villages, this can be even more difficult. Having appropriate and accessible practical support networks in their communities could help improve a more isolated person's quality of life.



Giving and Getting is a website that enables people to develop support networks of friends, neighbours and volunteers who will help each other, while having the potential to link people across ages to support each other.

How does the Giving and Getting Website work?

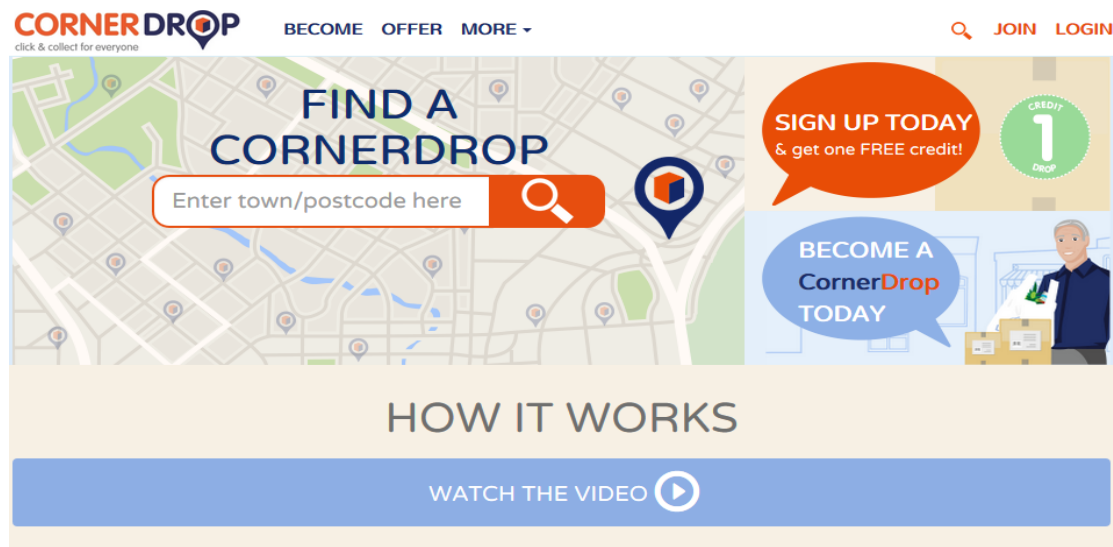
It operates on a simple token based system that automatically moves tokens between members and keeps track of how many you have. On joining each member is given 50 tokens and members spend tokens by getting the help they want and receive tokens by giving help and favours requested.

Each member is able to give and get with other members who are in their inner, middle and outer circles. If you get an offer or request from someone you don't know, you can see how that person links back to you by looking on the 'Your circles' page, which gives peace of mind. Best of all membership is free and there is no charge to use the site!

For more detailed information go to the Giving & Getting website at: <https://www.givingandgetting.net/> and check the '**More Information**' or '**FAQs**' links at the bottom of that page.

CornerDrop

Are you a retailer in rural area who would like to increase your footfall? Looking for new opportunities to increase the services you offer to your customers? Or are you a resident who is fed up of waiting in for that important parcel to be delivered? Or getting yet another letterbox card about your missed delivery? If so CornerDrop might be of interest to you. We were recently sent details of this new business. You may know of a retailer who might be interested.



CornerDrop is an online click and collect service that aims to allow any local retailer or business to become a parcel drop for residents in their area while getting paid for this. It could also help increase footfall to the business. When a resident orders an item online from a retailer, they can specify the location they want their parcel to be delivered to provided it is a member of the CornerDrop scheme. They can then pick up the parcel at a time that is convenient to them.

Rural retailers:

Any rural retailer, such as a community shop, pub or Post Office can become a CornerDrop location. It is free of charge to join and for every parcel you accept, you are paid £0.50 (+VAT) from CornerDrop. You complete an application form and should be able to take parcel deliveries within a week. You are provided with marketing materials, customer leaflets and point of sale material.

How does CornerDrop fund this?

The money to pay for the service to the local retailer comes from transactions between online retailers and/or customers. Online retailers and customers purchase codes directly from www.cornerdrop.com to use on any website, in order to specify where the parcel is delivered. Funding from this is passed on to the CornerDrop retailer where the parcel is delivered. More information at <https://www.cornerdrop.com/>

Are you worried about Tax?

Approaching 60 or older?
On a modest household income?

TAX **HELP** **for** **Older People**

Is a free service provided by qualified tax advisers,
who offer friendly, jargon free & confidential advice in personal tax.

For an appointment call

0845 601 3321 or
01308 488066

Visit: www.taxvol.org.uk

Tax Help for Older People is a service provided by the Charity Tax Volunteers, a company limited by guarantee
Number 4894491 Registered UK Charity No. 1102276 Company registered office: Artillery House,
11-19 Artillery Row, London, SW1P 1RT

FUNDING NEWS

Faster broadband connection vouchers for SMEs



Are you a small or medium sized enterprise? Are you fed up of your slow broadband holding back your business? Want to upgrade but the connection costs are putting you off? You may be eligible to apply for a government grant of up to £3000 to install faster and better broadband. The grant, in the form of a connection voucher, is part of the government's broadband transformation across the country.

To see if you are eligible, go to <https://www.connectionvouchers.co.uk/> and enter your postcode. Because this is part of the government's [Superconnected Cities](#) scheme you may find that you come up as being part of Coventry! You will then get two options to apply for a voucher:

1. An off the shelf deal designed to make the application simple with no forms
2. Specific quotes from a broadband supplier in your area and the completion of an application form for your chosen supplier.

There are two amounts available: up to £400 for businesses who want fast fibre to the cabinet broadband and up to £3000 for those who are looking for fibre to the premises or Ethernet broadband. The vouchers cover the connection charges and the router.

Connection Vouchers will be made available on a first come, first served basis until 31 March 2016, but the money is going fast.

vInspired Cashpoint Reopens for Applications

If you know of a young person aged 14-25 who has an idea that will solve a problem in your community, then vInspired Cashpoint is there to help. They could get up to £500 to turn their idea into reality.



- ♦ Project is run by 14-25 year old volunteer in the UK
- ♦ It has a clear community benefit
- ♦ The main aim of the project is not to fundraise
- ♦ The project is either completely new or something done before but can be done differently
- ♦ At least two 14-25 year old volunteers help the applicant out
- ♦ Project costs £500 or less and vInspired cashpoint is the only funder

More information at <https://vinspired.com/cashpoint>

British Gas Energy Efficiency Fund

This fund has been created by British Gas as part of the settlement of an investigation by Ofgem, concluded in April 2014, into British Gas' breaches of its Standard Licence Conditions. It is designed to help micro-businesses manage their energy costs in the long-term, by providing free expert advice and energy efficiency measures to small/micro businesses.

If your business is eligible, you will receive a free on-site energy survey, as well as fully-funded installations of energy saving measures **valued up to £6,000 per business**, helping you save money on your energy bill. At the Hunsbury Hill Centre, we have recently most of our loft insulated (with sheep's wool as it is a listed building).



Don't be put off by the references to micro-businesses. We contacted British Gas staff who recommended you ring them to see if they can help and that is exactly what Naseby Village Hall committee did. British Gas confirmed their village hall would qualify. As a result, Naseby Village Hall were successful in obtaining a grant under which they had £5,000 worth of work done on the hall, ranging from new efficient lighting to energy efficient insulation.

The bonus of this fund is that British Gas does all the work, through a company called Sustain. You discuss with Sustain what energy efficiency measures you need then you sit back and let Sustain get on with it. And wait for your bills to go down!

For more information contact British Gas on 0800 316 4318 or look at their website: <https://www.britishgas.co.uk/business/energyefficiencyfund> and remember, they have to spend this grant so do it sooner than later!

Other Energy Funds

- **Rural Community Energy Fund (RCEF)** supports rural communities in England to develop renewable energy projects which provide economic and social benefits to the community. The fund will provide up to approximately £150,000 of funding for feasibility and pre-planning development work to help projects become investment ready. The fund is being delivered on behalf of the government by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP). Applications will be reviewed on a monthly basis and there is no set deadline for bids <http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/rural-community-energy-fund>

- Urban Community Energy Fund (UCEF)** is the urban counterpart to the RCEF and was launched on 13 November 2014. UCEF is a £10m fund to kick-start renewable energy generation projects in urban communities across England. Community groups will be able to access grants and loans to support renewable energy developments. Grants of up to £20,000 are available and UCEF will also provide loans of up to £130,000 to develop planning applications and a robust business case to attract further investment. From April 2015 application deadlines will be on the last Friday of every second month beginning on 24 May. <https://www.gov.uk/urban-community-energy-fund>



- Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive** from Ofgem is a government financial incentive to promote the use of renewable heat. Switching to heating systems that use naturally replenished energy can help the UK reduce its carbon emissions. People who join the scheme and stick to its rules, receive quarterly payments for seven years for the amount of clean, green renewable heat their system produces. The scheme is open to anyone who can meet the joining requirements. It's for households both off and on the gas grid. The incentive has two schemes - Domestic and Non-Domestic, which have separate tariffs, joining conditions, rules and application processes. More information: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/domestic-renewable-heat-incentive/about-domestic-renewable-heat-incentive>



Green Deal funding stops

Please Note: as from July 23rd 2015, the government has stopped funding to the Green Deal.

The Green Deal was a Government scheme set up to help homeowners pay for double-glazing, solid wall insulation, boiler upgrades and much more from projected savings on energy bills.

New applications for Green Deal loans are no longer being accepted, (unless your application was received before 3.30pm on 23 July). Existing Green Deal loans are not affected and will continue to be repaid as normal.

Martin Lewis' Money Saving website has some interesting information about this: <http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/green-deal>.

Sita Trust



Enriching nature, Enhancing communities

SITA Trust is an ethical not-for-profit funding organisation that distributes funds contributed by the recycling and resource management company SITA UK, for the improvement of the natural environment and community life. It funds projects in any of 100 funding zones around qualifying sites owned by SITA UK.

The SITA Trust currently funds two programmes:

The Communities Programme: This programme aims to fund projects that make physical improvements to community leisure facilities and historic buildings / structures in any of 100 funding zones around qualifying sites owned by our donor, SITA UK..

- ♦ **Primary Fund:** grants of up to £50,000 for projects with an overall cost of not more than £250,000. Projects must start within 6 months of funding being awarded.
- ♦ **Smaller Projects Fund:** Grants of up to £20,000 for projects with overall cost of less than £40,000. Projects must start within 3 months of funding being awarded.

The next deadline is 12th October 2015 with the notification date of 19th January 2016 for the Smaller Projects Fund and 19th February for the Primary Fund.

Accessing Nature Programme: This programme provides funding for projects that improve physical access to a natural outdoor space resulting in increased opportunities for people to experience and enjoy wildlife.

- ♦ **Accessing Nature Fund:** Grants of up to £50,000 where the project has an overall cost of no more than £100,000. Projects must start within 6 months and complete within 12 months of funding awarded.
- ♦ **Core Criteria Fund:** the project must be based at a single site located in England and it must create or improve the physical access to a natural outdoor space. The project must result in an increase in the number of people who visit the outdoor space to experience and enjoy wildlife.

The next deadline is 28th September 2015 for both funds with a notification date of 19th February 2016.

One thing to note: Before SITA releases funding to any supported project, you need to get an eligible third party to reimburse 11.5% of the cost of the project through a payment called the Contributing Third Party payment (CTP) . This is unique to the Landfill Communities Fund. It is because SITA UK only receives a partial tax credit against the donations they make to the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF). This leaves SITA UK with a deficit that is recovered through the CTP payment, which must originate from a person or organisation that doesn't directly benefit from the project.

Other Funding Streams

London Marathon Charitable trust funding programme

The London Marathon Charitable Trust supports organisations and communities that are committed to inspiring and increasing the numbers of people regularly taking part in sports and physical activities. They fund projects in the areas in which London Marathon Events Limited organises events, which includes South Northamptonshire. If you are in the south of the county, why not check out their website to see what they fund and how much: <http://www.lmct.org.uk/>



Clothworkers Foundation

The Clothworkers Foundation provides one-off grants for the purchase of specific and pre-determined capital item(s), or service(s) for a particular project. "Capital" means tangible items or work; things that can be seen and used. This includes buildings purchase/renovation/construction fixtures and fittings and equipment including office equipment and vehicles. Your organisation needs to fit within or more of their programme areas in order to qualify. More details at: <http://foundation.clothworkers.co.uk/> .



Lloyds Bank Foundation switches to Grants Round approach

For 2016 the Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales is switching to a Grant Rounds approach from its existing rolling enquiries. This is to help applicants by providing fixed deadlines for applications and decisions and will ensure that all enquiries receive a full decision within six months of submitting a funding enquiry. The Foundation is closed to new funding requests during September 2015 but re-opens on **Monday 5th October**. Three grant rounds will operate in 2016 with decisions at the end of **March, July** and **November**. More details of the eligibility criteria at: <http://www.lloydsbankfoundation.org.uk/how-to-apply/eligibility-guidance>.

Asda Foundation

The Asda Foundation is a charitable corporate Foundation making independent grants throughout the UK. The Foundation aims to transform communities, improve lives for people and communities in the UK both now and in the future. It supports programmes that do this through Significant Community Projects, Chosen by You, Top-up Funding, Colleague Hardship Fund and our Partnerships. Find out more at: <https://www.asdafoundation.org/>



Northants free funding website

This is the first place to start if you are looking for funding: <http://www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/northants/>

Christmas Party Nights

The Hunsbury Hill Centre

£34.95 per person

Mulled wine on arrival

Entertainment provided by Style Events

Delicious four course festive meal

Starter

Stuffed Portobello Mushroom: Filled with smoked bacon & camembert, topped with a savoury crumble

Locally Produced Pate: Served with a crisp salad, melba toast & finished with a balsamic glaze

Roasted Parsnip & Sweet Potato Soup: Topped with double cream, butter croutons & fresh parsley

Intermediate

Lemon & Orange Sorbet: Scented with grande marnier

Main Course

Honey Roast Breast of Turkey: roast chestnut & cranberry stuffing, pigs in blankets, yorkshire pudding, roast gravy

Roast Beef: Seasoned with dijon mustard, served with yorkshire pudding & roasted shallot sauce

Root vegetable & Chestnut Wellington: Served with a apple smoked cheese cream sauce

Dessert

Raspberry Meringue Roulade: Garnished with chantilly cream & fresh mint

Steamed Christmas Pudding: Served with brandy sauce or custard

**Join us for festive fun this Christmas season
in a beautiful 18th Century barn conversion
overlooking the picturesque Nene Valley**

For more details call Sarah

01604 702444 or 07967 127090

The Hunsbury Hill Centre,

Harksome Hill, Northampton, NN4 9QX

www.hunsburyhillcentre.co.uk

£10.00 deposit per person



Parish Council Membership

Membership is excellent value at £35 per year and assists the charity to sustain its work providing you with the following benefits:

- 5 hours free Telephone & Email support per year on a range of topics including funding, grant applications and community engagement.
- Discounts on visits from our Rural Officer or Community Facilities Advisor
- Electronic copy of our Annual Report
- Priority invitations to Northamptonshire ACRE's social events
- Invitation to attend Annual General Meeting
- All members can promote their news or events on our website, via our E-bulletin service or in our magazine, free of charge.
- 10% Discount on off peak bookings at the Hunsbury Hill Centre
- Discounts on our 'charged for services' including Community Led Planning packages.
- **Discounts on OCSI Profile reports highlighting key statistics in your area**
- E-bulletins providing you with essential information about grants and funding.

You can also request practical advice on a range of rural issues such as:

- Community Led Plans and issues arising there from
- Broadband, rural services, Energy Saving
- Health and wellbeing issues
- Community website training
- Community Speedwatch

Plus you get to join others in voicing your opinion on matters affecting you and your community.

Please contact Elaine O'Leary on 01604 765888 for further details on any of the above or go to:

<http://northantsacre.org.uk/available-services/northamptonshire-acre-memberships/parish-council-membership/>



Community Facilities Membership

Membership is excellent value at £40 per year and assists the charity to sustain its work providing you with the following benefits:

- 5 hours free Telephone & Email support
- Discounts on visits from our Rural Officer or Community Facilities Advisor
- Electronic copy of our Annual Report
- Priority invitations to Northamptonshire ACRE's social events
- Invitation to attend Annual General Meeting
- Advice on Funding and application processes
- All members can promote their news or events on our website, via our E-bulletin service or in our magazine, free of charge
- **Discounts on OCSI Profile reports highlighting key statistics in your area**
- £10 off [Bulk Oil](#) membership for Community Buildings in Northants.
- Electronic copy of our bi - monthly newsletter, dedicated to **Village Halls & Community Buildings** with all the latest news on grants, legal regulations, charity news, maintenance and administration information affecting community buildings.
- **Free electronic copies of ACRE Village Hall Information Sheets.**
- **Exclusive to Community Facility members!** You are entitled to a 20% discount on ACRE's model documents for village and community halls, including a model hiring agreement and a model deed of trust.

In addition, our trained Community Facilities Advisor offers:

- Assistance and practical advice with hall/charity management,
- Access to specialist legal advice and information on legislation
- Funding and grant application support and advice
- Policies & Procedures

Please contact Frances Harris on 01604 825888 for further details on any of the above or go to:

<http://northantsacre.org.uk/community-facilities-membership/>

The Hunsbury Hill Centre



The Perfect Venue for Business or Pleasure

The Hunsbury Hill Centre is a beautiful 18th Century setting overlooking the picturesque Nene Valley. It's an idyllic quiet location full of unique character with converted barn, farm buildings, courtyard & landscaped lawns.



If you like the idea of a countryside escape that's only 2 miles from Northampton town centre and the M1 then the Hunsbury Hill Centre is the perfect venue for you...

Suitable for up to 150 guests, with disabled facilities and ample parking we cater for a diverse range of private and corporate events in Northampton including conferences, training, presentations, parties, awards evenings, AGM's, wedding receptions, garden parties, medieval banquets, BBQ's, hog roasts, line dances, theatre productions and more. Catering and licensed bar are available.



For 2016 & 2017 prices, information and availability please visit the website, www.hunsburyhillcentre.co.uk or contact the Events Team on 01604 702444

or email: info@hunsburyhillcentre.co.uk

Northamptonshire ACRE Contact Details

“Working with you to promote active communities”

Rural Team	
Manager	Elaine O’Leary (01604) 825881
Community Facilities Advisor	Frances Harris (01604) 825888
Rural Officer	Elaine O’Leary (01604) 825881
Rural Wellbeing Fieldworker	Linda Hook (01604) 825889
Rural Wellbeing Administrator	Gill Correa (01604) 825883
Best Village Competition Coordinator	Barron Walton (01604) 765888
Administration & Support	
Administration Officer	Sarah Clarke (01604) 825880
The Hunsbury Hill Centre	
Events Team	(01604) 702444 or 07967 127090 Email: info@hunsburyhillcentre.co.uk
Email unless stated: firstname.surname@northantsacre.org.uk	
The Hunsbury Hill Centre Harksome Hill Northampton NN4 9QX Tel. 01604 765888 Registered Charity no: 1080038 Company Limited by Guarantee no: 3937576 www.northantsacre.org.uk	

The NACRE team is always ready to listen, offer advice
and support to rural communities.
NACRE welcomes sponsorship and donations.