

County Council News

County Councillor Dr Marie Strong

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Remembrance Sunday:

There will be details elsewhere about the laying of wreathes and I would simply add how moved I was when present at the Wells Congregational Church for the re-dedication of the WW1 memorial to those lost at war who had attended the Wells County School. Those named, coming from Wells and the neighbouring villages, would have been only a few years older than the members of the local Brownie pack who scattered poppy petals from the balcony of the church. The youngsters are to be congratulated on the lovely gesture carried out with dignity beyond their years.

Road Closure - B1105 Two Furlong Hill 5 week closure commencing Monday 5 January 2015:

Whilst I have with vigour questioned the rationale for the five week closure of a section of Two Furlong Hill the decision remains. Highways have explained that 'the closure is to facilitate the connection of a foul water sewer pipe from the Hopkins Homes development to the nearest connection point on the sewer main at the junction of A149 Burnt Street. Due to the proximity of other utility services, particularly a gas main, there is no other option but to install the sewer pipe in the carriageway. Regrettably, the narrowness of the carriageway at this point means that health and safety regulation will not permit the road to remain open during the works. Overnight working is not an option due to the proximity of residential property. The trench would need to remain open at non work times, which will prevent the road being opened up to traffic.' I am also told that discussions have taken place regarding a number of our businesses and alternative routes agreed. If any business is still concerned please contact me. A map has been published showing the official alternative route but along with other locals, bearing in mind safety factors, I shall be seeking a shorter route.

Mitigation for Building Development:

I am understandably being asked when the improvements in Church Street and Burnt Street, agreed in mitigation of the housing development, will be carried out. Planning permission for the development had conditions applied requiring approval of the improvements prior to the commencement of works on site. Whilst I am informed there has been a delay with this stage there is also the requirement that there should be no occupation of dwellings prior to the completion of

works. Since apparently some of the properties are near to completion I have asked that the process be speeded up.

#### Mill Road Speeding:

Following complaints about speeding on Mill road and after discussion with the area Police Inspector it was agreed to install a 'Minute Man' from Friday 7th November to Monday 17th November 2014, recording all traffic movements during that ten day period as follows:

Drivers travelling towards Wells: Total number of movements 7,474. Percentage of drivers not exceeding the posted speed limit of 30 mph or exceeding it by so small margin so as not to attract prosecution was 71 % = 5,294.

Percentage of drivers exceeding 40 mph and warranting prosecution was 10% = 751.

Drivers travelling towards Holkham: Total number of movements 7,939. Percentage of drivers not exceeding the posted limit of 30 mph or exceeding it by such a small margin as not to attract prosecution was 93.4% = 7,415 of which 69, just under 0.9%, were travelling just over 40 mph.

Total movements in both direction = 15,413 of which 12,709 were below prosecution = 82.5% compliance. 5.3% were travelling greater than 40 mph.

#### Mobile 'Phones:

Today Vodafone announced a further thirty successful communities in the Sure Signal competition and this time seven, Croxton, Horning, Loddon, Salhouse, Saxthorpe, Reepham and Martham, are from Norfolk. From a total of 60 places across the entire United Kingdom Norfolk now has 11. Delighted as I am for all our successful communities what we want of course are good signals across the county and I am pleased to say that representatives from Three, Orange and T-Mobile have agreed to meet with the working group I Chair during the first week in December and 02 at a later date. Along with my fellow working group members we are pursuing good mobile provision with serious intent. As will be imagined despite recent publicity there is not an easy answer to the problem but we will not be discouraged in our task.

#### Better Broadband for Norfolk Update (October 2014)

BT has now provided access to fibre based broadband infrastructure for over 100,000 Norfolk premises. The good news for us is that better broadband is beginning to reach more of our rural division. Please remember to regularly check the website [www.betterbroadbandfornorfolk.gov.uk](http://www.betterbroadbandfornorfolk.gov.uk) to see which parishes will be next upgraded. When your town or parish is named ask your ISP (internet service provider) what they can offer you in terms of speed and at what cost. Then as with all 'purchases' shop around. Understandably installing the infrastructure includes digging up roads, paths and pavements. (Tip: goods for sale, tables and chairs, A boards etc should not officially be

sited on pavements so when you know work is about to start I suggest you remove such items until the work is over.) Parish Councils will in future be given information of upcoming works to share within their parish. However if a parish council or individual faces a problem in our division please contact me because I may be able to find a solution or at least provide you with accurate information.

Warm and Well:

NCC again has a campaign offering tips for staying warm and well; signposting vulnerable people to existing services, funding, information and advice. Top tips to share with vulnerable relatives, friends and neighbours, together with links to services and support will be available at: [www.norfolk.gov.uk/warmandwell](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/warmandwell) or by calling 0344 800 8020. And to support communities looking after the vulnerable we have re-launched the Warm and Well Fund totalling £25,000. Grants of up to £2,500 are available for projects that help those in the community who find winter the biggest challenge, including the frail elderly, people with chronic medical conditions and the homeless. This campaign will be in two phases, December and January, and will be advertised by radio and press.

With good wishes for a peaceful and happy Christmas.

Marie Strong