

SHOULDHAM NEWS

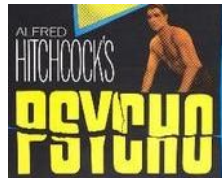
Vol. 16 No.2 Autumn 2017



Lights, camera action!



There was a time in Shouldham when autumn provided a chance for the village to take a breather, between the exertions of an action-packed summer and



the frantic preparations for Christmas. No

longer! We've barely had time to recover from yet another hugely successful King's Arms Beer, Cider, Gin and Music festival, held on the Green at the beginning of September, when a series of Autumn events is upon us.

One of the first of these is Shouldham's very own Film Show: two classic films screened in Colts Hill Barn on Saturday October 7th. Then on October 28th, a Village Craft Fair will take place in Shouldham Village Hall, providing an opportunity for some early Christmas shopping. And one of the highlights of November will be the renowned Autumn Quiz, held in the village hall on Saturday November 18th.



You will find details of all these events and more in the 'Dates for Your Diaries' section of this newsletter. Please try and support as many as you can – by doing so you'll be helping to contribute to Shouldham's famous community spirit.

qu?z

School meals service enters its second year!

Congratulations to all the team at Shouldham Community Enterprises and to our wonderful school cooks on providing school meals for St Martin's Academy for an entire year. The meals are freshly cooked in the newly equipped village hall kitchens and transported to the school each day by dedicated volunteers. Few villages could provide such a service to its school children – and this is yet another reason why Shouldham has become the envy of West Norfolk!

Volunteers needed!

Your community café needs you! The café attached to the King's Arms is run entirely by volunteers, but we need more people to join in this enjoyable and rewarding work. Just call in to the café and offer your services – you'll be made most welcome by the friendly group of staff.

Ladybirds

The Ladybirds (formerly the Shouldham Women's Institute) meet on the third Tuesday of every month – come along and find out more. Contact: Sandra (Post Office): 01366 347789; or Lorna (Spring Lane): 01760 337089.

Advertising in *Shouldham News*

Shouldham News accepts advertising. The rates are:

Classified (up to three lines): £1

Quarter page: £10

Half page: £20

Full page: £40

For further details, or to place an ad in the Winter edition (deadline Sunday 19th November) please contact John Dovey (347802/ jdovey@btinternet.com).

Shouldham News is published four times a year and distributed free of charge to all households in Shouldham and Shouldham Thorpe.

Advertise for the whole year (4 issues) and get 25% off

HAIR RAISING!

It's true that the longer you live in Shouldham, the more you find that people here have done some amazing things. And this is also true of many of the children of course, one such youngster being 11-year-old Charlie Gibson who, when I admired her new hairdo, quietly told me the story. Here's what Charlie said:



'I watched videos of people on my laptop and thought I'd like to do that. It's a really nice thing where another boy or girl who has no hair, would have mine. Mine was getting long anyway and I was just getting fed up with it. I'd been asking my Mum for a long time and we both decided it was time to do it.

I had it done at a hairdresser. She washed my hair with no conditioner, blow-dried it and plaited it with two rubber bands and then cut it. She cut off 12 inches, (which is a foot!). It was a shock! I'd had long hair for so long. But I enjoyed it being short, especially as I was going on holiday.

Then people wanted to sponsor me, although I hadn't thought of that in the first place. We opened a 'Just Giving' page (which is still open, at www.justgiving.com CharlieGibson10) and we had such a surprise... about £300 was raised, which goes directly to Just Giving Little Princess, which makes and styles the wigs and gives them to children who need them. One friend had already done this before me and another after, and now some more of my friends are thinking of doing it.

'I'm happy, glad, proud, yes I'm proud. I've got used to my short hair and I think of the children who will have the wig soon. I won't know who they are, but sometimes they are told whose hair it was, but not always. I try to imagine what my hair looks like and how they feel wearing it.'

Wow Charlie! You are an amazing Shouldham villager and we are very proud of you. *Chris Lawrence*

Glass recycling bin

Please could people refrain from dumping rubbish around the glass recycling bin on the playing field. Some people don't seem to be able to respect the facilities that are provided. *Alan Austin*

Shouldham Film Show



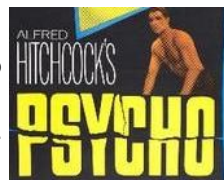
Hold on to your popcorn: Shouldham is about to get its very own film show! Two films will be screened on Saturday 7th October in Colts Hall Barn (just off the Green).

The matinée performance (start time 2.15pm, show ends at about 5.45pm) is a classic family film – *The Magnificent Men in*

Their Flying Machines.

The evening performance (start time, 7pm, show ends at 10pm) is one of the great Hitchcock thrillers: *Psycho*.

Tickets for one performance cost £4, or £7 for the two performances. There will be refreshments of hot dogs, drinks, popcorn and ice cream. 'B' movies, advertisements and news items are also included.



Shouldham Village Craft Fair

Due to popular demand, the Village Craft Fair is back. It will take place on Saturday 28th October in Shouldham Village Hall from 9.30am until 1pm. We hope it will again provide an opportunity for all you crafty people of Shouldham/Marham/Fincham and surrounding areas to bring along your homemade jams, soaps, knitted items, baking; garden produce; art work and crafts – all sorts of home-made goodies – making those wares available to the public. Perhaps a Christmas theme will creep in. Alternatively, just come along and have a browse through all the lovely goodies.

If you would like a table (or share a table) the price is £5. This is to help with costs towards hire of the hall. Registering interest allows the organisers to make sure there is enough space (tables etc) in the hall. If you are interested, please contact Maureen Austin on 01366 347433 or email: maureen.h.austin@gmail.com



Flower Festival thanks



A big thank you to all the ladies who made delicious cakes, scones, sandwiches, sausage rolls and biscuits for the teas at the Flower Festival. Special thanks to Domonique for all her help and to Tosh for his help with the signs, tables etc. Thank you everyone.

Jennifer Malby

Norfolk County Council – Parish Partnerships

Each year local councils are invited to submit bids for highway improvement schemes. For 2017/18 the fund is £300,000 with Norfolk County Council funding 50% of the cost of successful bids. There is also a very welcome additional £86,000 contribution from Safety Camera Partnership (Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies) towards road speed activated signs. Town and parish councils contribute the balance.

Shouldham Parish Council in partnership with Norfolk County Council have previously funded a SAM2 sign and village TRODs.

Schemes and projects that are covered:

[Vehicle Activated Signs \(VAS\) - fixed](#)

[Speed Awareness Message \(SAM2\)](#)

[School Keep Clear markings](#)

[Trodden footway \(low-cost footpath\)](#)

[Bus shelters](#)

[Village gateways.](#)

The Parish Council will consider projects to be submitted at their next parish council meeting in October. If there is a project from the list above that you would like the parish council to consider, please contact the parish clerk, Helen Carrier shouldhampc@gmail.com, by Monday 16th October 2017.

News from All Saints' Church

Autumn quiz

This 21st annual Autumn/Winter event will be held in Shouldham Village Hall on the evening of Saturday, 18th November, starting at 7pm. To book a table (up to six persons), please contact Ann Hullah, annhullah@btinternet.com or on 347814. The fee is £4 per person and please bring your own refreshments. It is advisable to book early as this has proved a popular evening. All profits to Shouldham church funds.

Christmas at All Saints

As has been our practice in recent years, it is planned to place Christmas trees in memory of loved ones in the church at the festive season. These will need to be in place before the Carol Service on Thursday, 14th December at 7pm. Please contact Ann (above) if you intend to decorate a tree in this way. We are also pleased to announce that Midnight Mass is scheduled to be held here on Christmas Eve at 11.30pm: a service that we have not had at Shouldham for some three years. Everyone will be most welcome at both these services.

Flower Festival

Having been blessed over the August Bank Holiday period with three warm and gloriously sunny days, this year's festival was a truly great success. First, the arrangers really excelled themselves in the ways they interpreted the theme: *A Labour of Love*. A very wide range of occupations/pastimes/activities were portrayed in some most colourful displays – so diverse, that visitors expressed continued amazement at the imaginative creativity on show.

Ask yourself (dear reader) how you might describe (in flowers and a few accessories) such dedicated labours as those of: a Dressmaker; Confectioner; Author; Miller; Tree Surgeon; Hotelier; Cobbler; Nanny; and Ironmonger – just to name at random some of the artisans that figured in this year's arrangements. These were supplemented by two outstanding displays on the font and altar, as well as those on the window sills. It is also encouraging that three contributions were by young people; and the *Ladybirds'* long display near the choir stalls attracted many favourable comments.

All such skills are at the very core of this festival, so we both applaud and thank the arrangers for their outstanding hard work. Just as importantly, the co-organisers wholeheartedly thank and recognise the vital support of the numerous sponsors whose financial generosity helps fund the flowers and so makes possible this entire event.

The amount of hard work that goes into this festival cannot pass without mention. Although it may seem a little unfair to identify specific people, a few have made significant contributions over many years, and this year more so than ever before. Jennifer Malby (plus helpers) did the usual sterling work with catering; Wendy Ash marshalled the team for the sale of bric-a-brac; the raffle-ticket sellers were rarely at a loose end; and our grateful thanks to Drs Garner for their kind supply of water. Special thanks to everybody who donated food, prizes and items of all sorts. Again, the 'tent and table-carrying' men exerted all the necessary physical effort; and Chris Lawrence was a real tower of strength, both in sorting out the tent goods and in disposing of the unsold items. Because a wedding followed immediately after the festival, it was impressive how rapidly the arrangers managed to clear away their flowers, which made cleaning and re-ordering the church much easier.

Finally, our thanks to everyone who came to enjoy the wonderful flowers and make the event the amiable, social occasion for which Shouldham Flower Festival is known across this locality – and well beyond. After expenses, the total takings amounted to almost £2,050, a sum which All Saints' PCC acknowledges with sincere gratitude.

A Sonnet to Flowers (and Arrangers) – in the style of William Shakespeare

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day,
Thou art more lovely, with beauty more bright,
Rough cuts do spoil the finest of displays,
And freshness is but draining out of sight.

Sometimes the colours seem to drift apart,
And often holes within the green appear,
To bend the stems are the arranger's art,
And every effort brings me close to tears.

But thy eternal summer will not fade,
Nor lose the beauty with which thou growest,
Keep fresh and stay the way that you were made,
Joyful in the garden that thou knowest.

So long as hands can labour, and eyes can see,
So long I'll love to work alongside thee.

EJS

Weddings

Two marriages have taken place here recently, namely between: Daniel Prescott and Celine Aubry on Saturday, 2nd September; and Leonard Moss and Jade Smith on Monday, 11th September. We take this opportunity to wish both couples long and happy lives together.

Ann & Brian Hullah

Dates for your diaries

Saturday 7th October, from 2pm, Colts Hall Barn, Shouldham: **VINTAGE FILM SHOW**. Two classic film screenings with supporting 'B' movie, ads and news, plus food and drink. *Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines* (U) will be screened at 2pm, and Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (15) will be screened at 7pm. Tickets £4 per performance, or £7 for both.

Monday October 9th, 8pm, King's Arms: **POEMS & A PINT**. A congenial evening in the King's Arms for lovers of poetry. This month's theme is: 'Light'.

Saturday 21st October 21st, Stowbridge Village Hall: **MAGPIE CENTRE QUIZ WITH HOG ROAST (AND VEGETARIAN OPTION)**. Teams of four to eight people, or you can make up a team on the night. Licensed bar. Tickets £10 each, including hog roast plus salads and deserts. Advance booking essential. Call 01553 828935 or email c.dudley@success-in-english.co.uk

Saturday 28th October, 9.30am-1pm, Shouldham Village Hall: **LOCAL CRAFTS DAY**. Light refreshments available. If you would like a table to sell your homemade crafts (£5 per table), please contact Maureen Austin (01366 347433/maureen.h.austin@gmail.com).

Monday November 13th, 8pm, King's Arms: **POEMS & A PINT**. This month's theme is: 'Parents and parenting'.

Dates for your diaries

Saturday November 18th, 10am-4pm, Stowbridge Village Hall: **MAGPIE ART & CRAFT FAIR**. Refreshments served all day. Stalls £10 each (table and two chairs provided). To book, call 07725 163758.

Saturday 18th November, 7pm, Shouldham Village Hall: **AUTUMN QUIZ**. To book a table (up to six persons), please contact Ann Hullah, annhullah@btinternet.com or on 347814. The fee is £4 per person and please bring your own refreshments. It is advisable to book early. All profits to Shouldham church funds.

Sunday 19th November: SHOULDHAM NEWS DEADLINE. The final date for copy for the Winter edition. If you have any news, views or details of forthcoming events (up to early March 2018), please contact Phil Harriss (01366 347244 or 01844 238868/philharriss@icloud.com). Or pop a note through the door of 'Dunromin' on the Green. Electronic, colour copies of the newsletter can be found at www.shouldham.info, Shouldham Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Shouldham>) and on the Shouldham Parish Council website: <http://shouldhampc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk/category/newsletters/>

Sunday 10th December, performances at 2pm and 6pm, Shouldham Village Hall: **PETER PAN!** Shouldham's 3rd annual pantomime. Adults £4, under-16s free. Entrance by ticket only. Box office opens 1st November. Tickets from the King's Arms or the Chalk & Cheese, or by contacting seebnige@live.co.uk.

Monday December 11th, 8pm, King's Arms: **POEMS & A PINT**. A congenial evening in the King's Arms for lovers of poetry. This month's theme is: 'Wild spaces'.

Thursday 14th December, 7pm, All Saints' Church, Shouldham: **CAROL SERVICE**.

Village Hall bookings

Shouldham Village Hall, complete with its brand new kitchen, is now available to book for your parties and events. Please could village organisations remember to book their dates as soon as possible, by phoning Ann Ayres on 01366 347669 or email Annayres@btconnect.com

Downham Market Lecture Society

Just three years from now, one long-established local group will be celebrating its centenary. Downham Market Lecture Society, formed in 1920, has offered adult education courses in the town on a wide variety of topics.

For many years the Lecture Society has run courses on Thursday evenings, but from October it will be offering daytime lectures in Downham. New attenders are always welcome and no homework is required! The Society takes pride in the diversity of its subjects and the quality of the lectures. Last year's topics included 'A Close Study of Classic Films' and 'A History of Gardens and Gardening'.

Starting in October the Lecture Society is offering a series of six Wednesday morning lectures on the fascinating subject of 'Royal Wills 1509–2008'. This intriguing topic is presented by Michael Nash of the University of East Anglia (UEA), tutor for the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) and Royal Historian for BBC Radio Norfolk. Michael has published many articles on historical and legal matters. Each week the sessions will look at different aspects of royal wills including how accepted rules to the succession came to be diverted, the differences between state and personal property, and the controversial question of preventing public access to royal wills.

The course is being held at the Downham Heritage Centre, The Old Fire Station, Priory Road, Downham Market PE38 9JS starting on Wednesday 4th October at 10am to 11.30am. Fees are £27 for the six weeks or £24 for concessions. For more information, check out the Society's website on www.dmlsocsoc.org.uk. Enquiries may also be directed to 01366 382455 or alternatively, email adeny@btinternet.com.

Poems & a Pint

Poems and a Pint is a congenial evening in the King's Arms for lovers of poetry. It takes place on the second Monday of every month at 8pm. Bring along any poem(s) you'd like to read. We set a theme each meeting, but we always have time to read poetry unconnected to our theme and discuss. You don't need to read out a poem – you can simply come and listen and join in the talk. And of course anyone who writes their own poetry and would like to share it is always welcome. Our next meeting is on Monday October 9th and our theme (in relation to Diwali in October) is 'Light', with future themes including 'Parents and parenting' (Monday November 13th) and 'Wild spaces' (Monday December 10th).

New residents

After a decade of living in Spain, we are ready for a new adventure in Norfolk where we plan to live.

We have had some wonderful holidays in Norfolk and our preferred area is within 10 miles of Shouldham/Swaffham/King's Lynn.

We are very lucky in that we already have a place to stay temporarily in Shouldham (my favourite village!) when we arrive in early October. From there we will look for either a more long-term rental (preferably single storey, and maybe furnished), or we may even short-circuit the process and go straight to a new, single-storey, home.

We would welcome any ideas or suggestions/possibilities. Please private message me or phone (WhatsApp) +34 662525469 and speak to John or Maggie.

Many thanks

Maggie Chocqueel-Mangan

PS We also have a little old dog who is diabetic and blind and we hope he will be relocating to Norfolk with us too! He is a little darling, he's house-trained – and he's Spanish. *Olé!*



November brings a

Happy Birthday

Ron Large

Gardener Supreme

From all your friends in Shouldham
(but especially from Shelley, Adam and Maddy)



THE SHOULDHAM PANTO TEAM
PRESENTS
(AN ENCHANTING VILLAGE ADAPTATION OF)
PETER PAN



IN YET ANOTHER SPECTACULAR PANTOMIME

SUNDAY 10TH DECEMBER 2017

SHOULDHAM VILLAGE HALL

MATINEE PERFORMANCE - 2 PM

EVENING PERFORMANCE - 6 PM

ADULTS - £4

CHILDREN UNDER-16 - FREE

ALL PROCEEDS ARE DONATED TO THE VILLAGE HALL

ENTRANCE BY TICKET ONLY

BOX OFFICE OPENS 1ST NOVEMBER TICKET SALES FROM THE
KING'S ARMS, THE CHALK AND CHEESE

OR BY CONTACTING seebnige@live.co.uk

*It's fun, there are goodies and baddies , dance routines, audience participation
and as always at the end of a show, a surprise guest visitor for the children.*

Looking forward to seeing you.

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PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHRISTMAS MARKET

5:30 - 8 PM

FRI 10 Nov 2017

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or marhamvillagepreschool@hotmail.com

For more information please visit our website

www.marhamvillagepreschool.co.uk

The Annex, Cherry Tree Academy Junior, Hillside, Marham, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE33 9JJ



Organisations, clubs and services

Please contact *Shouldham News* if any of the details below change.

All Saints' Church

Vicar: Interregnum.

Church wardens: Brian and Ann Hullah (347814/annhullah@btinternet.com/ bbhullah@btinternet.com).

Bell ringing: practice night Thursday 7-8.30pm; contact Brian Hullah (347814).

Bowls Club

New Clubhouse, Fairstead Grove, Shouldham (01366 347550). Whist drives on Fridays at 7.30pm.

Bus services

Shouldham has a bus service (the No.39, Monday to Saturday) to Marham and King's Lynn, run by Lynx (<http://www.lynxbus.co.uk/> 01553 611955). There are also occasional bus services (the No.51) run to Norwich and Downham Market by Eagle Coaches (01760 755641/ www.eaglescoaches.co.uk).

Good Companions

A social club for the village's older residents, meeting on the third Wednesday of each month from 2pm to 4pm in the Village Hall. Contact: John Beckwith (01366 347853/ jbeck-with1@btinternet.com).

Knitting and Nattering

This lively group meets every Monday from 3pm to 5pm at The King's Arms to knit, natter (and sew) and to enjoy tea and homemade cake from the café.

Ladybirds (formerly Shouldham Women's Institute)

Contact: Sandra (01366 347789) or Lorna (01760 337089).

Scouting

2nd Runcton Holme & Watlington beavers & cubs. Meet at Runcton Holme Scout Hut next to the school in Runcton Holme. Contact: Bob Keens (01553 810855/

Organisations, clubs and services

Rainbows. For girls aged five to seven. Meet at Runcton Holme Scout Hut 4.30-5.30pm Thursdays. Contact: Poppy (Jane Rose-Land; 01366 347452/jsroseland@gmail.com).

Brownies. Meet at Runcton Holme Scout Hut 6-7.15pm Thursdays.

Contact: Brown Owl (Mandy Randle; 01366 388554/mark.randle@tesco.net).

Guides. Meet at Runcton Holme Scout Hut 7.30-9pm Thursdays.

Contact: Guide Leader (Sarah Mac; 01366 501942/sarahjmack@hotmail.co.uk).

Shouldham Football Club

Website: www.shouldhamfc.co.uk

Chairman: Phil Riedlinger 07881545357/priedlinger@btinternet.com; vice-chair: Nigel Nixon (01366 347288); welfare officer: Nicola Smith (07867 523896/nicolasmith@piersjacablttd.com); secretary: Anne Goodenough (07443 046104/annegoode-nough@hotmail.com).

Shouldham Oil Syndicate

Contact Mike Mann on mann@dsv-uk.co.uk to be added to his mailing list

Shouldham Parish Council

Contact: Helen Carrier, parish clerk (07828 437087/ 01366 387443/shouldhampc@gmail.com). Website: <http://shouldhampc.norfolkparishes.gov.uk>

Shouldham Post Office

Westgate Street, Shouldham (01366 347789). *Open* 9am-1pm, 2-5.30pm Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri; 9am-noon Wed; 9am-1pm Sat.

Shouldham Thorpe Allotment Society

Contact: Graham Addly grahamaddly@aol.com.

Toddler Group

Contact: Angela (angelajcaley77@googlemail.com).

Village Hall

Contact: Ann (01366 347669/ annayres@btconnect.com).

Organisations, clubs and services

Village Events Committee

Contact: Maureen (maureen.h.austin@gmail.com).

Businesses

If you would like your Shouldham-based business included in this directory, please contact *Shouldham News*.

Chalk & Cheese

Contact Andrew & Bridget Archibald, 1 Eastgate Street, Shouldham (01366 348039/
info@chalkandcheesenorfolk.co.uk/www.bed-and-breakfast-west-norfolk.co.uk).

Elizabeth Fitzgerald Carter – Artist

Figurative paintings and drawings in a variety of media. Also printed fine-art cards. Commissions accepted. Contact 01366 348116 or shouldhamthorpe-artist@sky.com

Keith Matthews Accountancy

Contact 01366 347848/ keithjmatthews@aol.com).

King's Arms www.kingsarmsshouldham.co.uk/ 01366 347410

Now owned by Shouldham Community Enterprises (SCE). SCE and Support Our King's Arms (SOKA) can be contacted by emailing info@kingsarmsshouldham.co.uk. To book a meal at the pub, please phone the manager, Ian Skinner, on 01366 347410.

Keep up with the news!

If you would like to keep up with news happening in our village and the local area, between the three-monthly editions of *Shouldham News*, please send your email address to philharriss@icloud.com. This will entitle you to an electronic edition of this newsletter – in colour! You can also find out what's happening in Shouldham by joining the village Facebook page on: <https://www.facebook.com/Shouldham/>



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Magpie Centre news

After a very successful Craft and Country Fair in August at Wallington Hall, which raised more than £4,000 for the Magpie Centre, home of West Norfolk Riding for the Disabled Association, plans are already underway for an even bigger and better event next year.

The Centre is now well into its autumn riding and carriage driving programme, with around 114 lessons being given every week to people of all ages and levels of physical and learning disability. If you know of anyone who might like to participate, just call the Magpie Centre 01553 810202 and request an application form.

Saturday 21st October sees the fifth of our ever-popular Quiz-with-Hog Roast (and vegetarian option) evenings, at Stowbridge Village Hall, Downham Road, Stowbridge PE33 0EP. Teams are of four to eight people, or you can make up a team on the night. A licensed bar will serve beer, wine, cider and soft drinks. Tickets are £10 each, which includes the fabulous hog roast, plus a vast selection of salads and desserts. Advance booking essential. Call 01553 828935 or email c.dudley@success-in-english.co.uk

Moving towards Christmas, you can do your shopping in comfort at the Magpie Art and Craft Fair on Saturday November 18th (10am-4pm), again at Stowbridge Village Hall. Refreshments will be served all day. Stalls are £10 each (table and two chairs provided). To book, call 07725 163758.

As another gift idea, why not donate a year's sponsorship of one of our lovely ponies? Little Pebbles, a favourite with our tiniest riders; Ruby, a big Irish mare who takes good care of adult riders; or Teddy, our smart driving horse – all are available for sponsorship. For just £12.50 or £25 a year, the sponsor receives a photo of 'their' pony, plus a sponsorship certificate, and news updates. For more information, visit www.rda-westnorfolk.org.uk, or call the Magpie Centre on 01553 810202 for a sponsorship form.

Watlington Medical Centre news

Volunteering enriches the soul

As I am writing this, I reflect on my busman's holiday as the volunteer medic on an activity holiday for disabled adults in Devon. I am truly impressed by the other volunteers, who have given up their holidays to assist people with disabilities ranging from severe quadriplegia to Down's Syndrome. The age range of the helpers is 18-60 with the majority being students or newly qualified. None of them is a carer in their normal lives, yet they have immediately adapted to the needs of others, and are constantly looking out to see who needs help with feeding, moving or assistance with floating in a swimming pool.

Cont over page

I have asked most of the helpers what they get out of the holiday and without hesitating they respond that the pleasure they get from seeing the delight and sense of achievement in the people they are helping is their greatest joy. These are ordinary people who have volunteered and obtained a huge sense of satisfaction from being able to help in an environment which they are not used to. With all the negative stories in our media, it gives great hope that we are still able to take time to assist our fellow humans.

It does not take a lot to volunteer and there are plenty of charities that are constantly looking out for helpers, some on a one-off basis and others looking for a greater commitment. Age should not be a factor and I would encourage people not to wait until they retire before looking for opportunities to volunteer. Get involved and help – you may be surprised by the sense of achievement you yourself can attain through spending a little of your time helping others.

With Autumn approaching, we are heading into flu jab season. We actively encourage as many of our patients to have a flu jab, especially those aged over 65 or those who have chronic diseases. You might be offered a flu jab by a pharmacy and although we would encourage you to have a jab, please ensure you let us know as we have access to your medical records and need to keep them up to date. We have enough flu jabs ordered to ensure we can vaccinate all vulnerable patients and those who request it. If you are a carer, looking after someone, on a paid or unpaid basis, you qualify for a free flu jab. This would help us reduce the risk of passing flu on to our vulnerable community. The Influenza vaccination campaign has been extended to children, and over time the age group of children being offered the nasal vaccine will be extended. Please can you ensure you get your children vaccinated so as to avoid an influenza epidemic. The true flu is a very dangerous disease. We will be running Saturday morning clinics *on 14th October and 18th November*. Please book with reception from early September.

While there are almost daily stories about how the NHS is buckling under constant pressure and increased demand, Watlington Medical Centre is very proud that we are still able to offer our patients access to doctors or Advanced Nurse Practitioners on a daily basis. On occasions we may not be able to offer you an appointment with the doctor of your choice at the time of your choosing, as we have prioritised the demand for patients who have requested same-day appointments. There is no easy answer to how we can continue to provide access to all patients, but we have found our telephone triage system allows us to assess the problems and provide a timely appointment. We thank you for assisting us with this.

We are moving with the times and our new robotics system is being installed in our dispensary. This should streamline our medicines supply service and, we hope, free up more time for our pharmacy team to assist with medication reviews and continue to provide smoking cessation services. We are very proud that Watlington Pharmacy has the highest success rate throughout Norfolk for smoking cessation. Well done to the team.

Dr Philip Koopowitz

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