

Train improvements are welcome but more work is needed

It sounds like good news for long-suffering train passengers.

Abellio Greater Anglia is improving rolling stock as part of a £12m refurbishment programme.

The first completed carriage will be part of the 9.30am Norwich to London Liverpool Street service today.

It boasts new carpets and upgraded loos – among a raft of benefits hailed as a “significant step forward” by bosses.

All this comes at a time when Network Rail is spending £15m on improving track and overhead lines on the route.

And bosses say they are confident this weekend engineering work will not spill over into Monday mornings.

This is all to be welcomed and is to the credit of both companies.

However, a little good news does not negate years of problems faced by commuters.

Travellers pay increased ticket prices each year, but still services are delayed or cancelled – with trains increasingly viewed as unreliable.

This is not something that is forgotten as soon as a positive news story pops up.

What commuters want, and need, is consistent progress and improvement.

And with their franchise up for renewal next year, Abellio Greater Anglia still has work to do.

Improving train carriages so commuters can travel in comfort is a step in the right direction.

But one train set does not make a franchise bid, and we will be watching closely.

Early detection vital

Feeling out of breath after rushing to catch a bus or carting a heavy load is not uncommon, but for thousands of people in the east of England breathlessness is a daily occurrence – and often ignored as nothing serious.

That's the message from Public Health England today as it launches a national campaign urging anyone who suffers breathlessness while doing routine activity, from getting dressed to climbing a flight of stairs, to head to their doctor.

As with so many medical conditions, early detection can make a huge difference.

Breathlessness could be a sign of being a little unfit or overweight, but it could also be the symptom of long-term illness such as heart disease.

And that is why we're joining local GPs and health experts to encourage anyone who gets easily out of breath to seek help sooner rather than later.

Bees play a major role

The bee population has been in decline due to shrinking habitats, pesticides and increased parasites.

This is a great cause for concern as bees play an important role in our environment and we must support them.

Therefore, it is a shame to learn Sheringham Town Council felt that it needed to ban the keeping of bees on its allotments because of health and safety. Is this really the way forward?



I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths.
Proverbs 4:11



READER'S PICTURE OF THE DAY



■ These curious donkeys caught sight of Tom Newell in their field at Aldeby and decided to wander over – just in case. If you would like to submit a picture for possible publication in the EDP, visit www.iwitness24.co.uk.

Such a small word with such a big story behind it



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Where words come from is something which many people find very interesting.

There is something rather fascinating about the fact that the etymology of the word person lies in the Latin word persona, which meant the role taken by an actor in a play.

Persona originally meant mask: Roman actors wore masks made of wood or clay which depicted the face of the character they were playing.

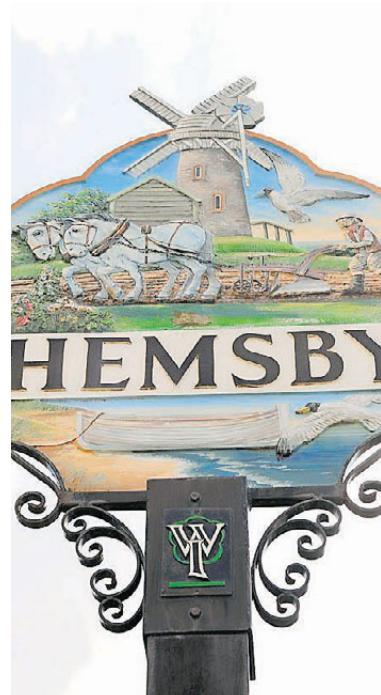
The word probably originally came from Latin per-sonare, where per- meant through (as in percolate) and sonare meant to sound (as in resonate) – the actor had to speak through the mask.

Two-and-a-half millennia later, this two-part compound Latin word has turned into a single English word with a very different meaning.

The portion of our English vocabulary that descends from Latin includes lots of rather grand etymologies like this.

But what about some of our humble little Germanic-origin words?

Every word, however small, has to have come from somewhere.



■ What's in a name?

words! In Anglo-Saxon, but was butan. It originally meant ‘outside’ and then later on ‘unless’; and it came from an earlier form, be-utan.

In our West Germanic parent language, utan ‘from outside’ was derived from ut ‘out’ – so the second element of modern but has the same origin as modern out.

And the be- part is just as interesting. There was an ancient Indo-European word bhi.

This came down into Greek as the second element of am-phi ‘round’, as in amphitheatre, and it also appeared as the second part of Latin am-bi, as in ambidextrous.

The corresponding form in ancient Germanic was the adverb of place bi, also meaning ‘around, about’.

This developed through time down two different paths.

In one direction, it became the Scandinavian word by, meaning a settlement – the area around a place where people lived.

We can still see this today in many English place-names ending in -by which are found in areas settled by the Danes.

In Anglo-Saxon it became bi meaning ‘by, near, in’ – which survives as our modern word by.

But Anglo-Saxon bi also had a weak, unstressed form be- which occurred in compounds like be-yond, be-neath, be-before and be-tween – and be-utan.

It's astonishing but true that the b- in but and the -by in Hemsby were originally the same word.