

Eastern Daily Press

SERVING THE COMMUNITY
SINCE 1870

Vulnerable people need services close to where they live

It is well documented that Norfolk County Council is facing the prospect of making huge cuts and savings, on top of millions which have been made over the past few years.

So, the fact that the authority has been spending a quarter of a million pounds a year for transport, including taxis, because of a lack of facilities for people with complex needs and learning difficulties is worrying.

Worrying on two counts. The first is that it is not appropriate that some of those people – youngsters with disabilities – are having to make a 66-mile round trip from Thetford to Norwich to get support they need and are entitled to.

Now, the Hamlet Centre does fantastic work, but these young people simply should not be subjected to journeys of that distance.

The other worrying element is the sheer cost associated with transporting these people. At a time when the council is still considering closing fire stations in Heacham and Outwell and making cuts to care packages for vulnerable people, £250,000 is a lot of money which is being spent on taxis and buses. Money which could be used elsewhere, if there were local services available for those people.

The council's idea to turn the Elm Road Centre in Thetford into a community hub, where the people in the area who need access to adult social services can get support, is a good one.

The building has stood empty for years and, even though it would cost money to transform it, if it means young people no longer have to make such lengthy and costly journeys for services, than that would be money very well spent.

Legacy of the war

It is humbling to read of the courage shown by the pilot and co-pilot of the Flying Fortress lost off our coast in 1943, and now found through the efforts of North Norfolk Divers.

And it is astonishing to learn that the diving club is aware of some 20 other Second World War plane wrecks off the north Norfolk coast.

Sheringham's Forester's Centenary became known as the Airmen's Lifeboat during the war because she so frequently went to the aid of air crew in trouble.

The fate of B-17 42-29752 serves as a reminder of all the many lives lost off our coast in the war.

We support North Norfolk Divers' treatment of such wrecks as war graves – that is exactly what they are.

And we understand and respect their decision not to reveal the precise locations of such wrecks.

Cup success honoured

It may have taken months of research, but there were justifiable celebrations as the 1920 Beccles Town FC team was recognised.

The club was re-presented with the Suffolk Senior Cup – 95 years on from their victory in the final – on Saturday.

In a fitting tribute, the name of every player in that winning side has been inscribed on the trophy. Congratulations to all involved in making dreams a reality, and praise also to Suffolk FA for their efforts.

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.
(Ephesians 4:32)



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READER'S PICTURE OF THE DAY

iwitness24



■ Storm clouds approaching Wells, as seen by Richard Brunton. If you would like to submit a picture for possible publication in the EDP, visit www.iwitness24.co.uk

Those who think wong isn't an English word are wrong

Peter
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I reckon that if you ask most English-speaking people what the word spong means, they'll tell you that they don't know and will even question whether it's an English word at all.

Well, spong is an English word. It means a long narrow strip of land. The Oxford English Dictionary says it is obsolete, but I am sure there are Norfolk people who know it. The English Dialect Dictionary shows the word as being alive and well a century ago in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and East Anglia. (There's a Spong Hill south of North Elmham, famous as the site of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery.)

You might very well get the same sceptical reaction if you ask about the meaning of the word wong. Are you pulling my leg? Can that possibly be a real English word?

To answer that question, it helps to notice that there are two places in England called Wangford; they're both in Suffolk. The names have different origins, though. The Wangford near Thetford was originally Wain-ford, where wain meant wagon. But Wangford near Southwold is the relevant one here: the first part of the name comes from an Old English word "wang". It comes from an ancient Germanic root



■ Wangford, in east Suffolk: Its name has an interesting history, says Peter Trudgill.

meaning a field, meadow, or grassy place. According to the OED, the word has become obsolete in modern English – as it has in most other Germanic languages. The Scandinavian form "vang" is still known in Norway, but even there it is archaic and survives mostly in place-names.

But an English form of the word did survive, at least until recently, in dialect usage in areas of eastern England influenced by Scandinavian settlement. In the rural dialects of Yorkshire, Nottingham, Leicester, Northampton, Lincoln, Norfolk and Suffolk, the word seems to have applied particularly to low-lying and perhaps marshy meadowland. A Norfolk

correspondent to an 1856 issue of the journal Notes and Queries wrote: "I know five or six fields so named; they are all meadow, with a small rill of water rising in them". And there are still Norfolk field names which contain the word.

City people don't know field names, and they are usually not given on maps. But some people in rural areas of our county will know that our modern version of Anglo-Saxon wang is wong. For example, in our own Viking enclave, Flegg, we know of fields called Crosswong and Westwong, by Martham; and Haywong in Repps.

So Old English wang became wong. And wong really is a good English word.