

Eastern Daily Press

SERVING THE COMMUNITY
SINCE 1870

A11 opening is a joy – but let's keep up transport pressure

Norwich City fans will find it hard to see any silver linings today. But today heralds arguably one of the brightest moments in the life of the city, county and region.

The opening of the A11 bypass at Elveden is something for us all to celebrate.

It means countless thousands of drivers will no longer see the beautiful buildings of that idiosyncratic village. But it is possible that the endless tailbacks through Elveden have resulted in familiarity breeding contempt.

Put simply, we are all tired of being held up on the A11. And this bypass unplugs one of the most notorious blockages.

Dualling of the remaining stretch of the A11 is coming up fast on the rails – meaning faster, stress-free journeys to and from Norfolk are almost upon us.

However, as Hoseasons managing director Simon Altham says, this is not the time for us to sit back, satisfied with our efforts.

It took decades to get to this point, as we endured interminable obfuscation from Whitehall, and battled against the odds to get our region the road it needs.

We must now keep up the pressure to improve journey times and service quality on our railways – and hammer away about the need for dualling of the A47.

Norfolk is a social, economic and tourism powerhouse that is in the process of roaring into life.

But only when all of the transport links are fast and efficient will it be able to fulfil its potential.

So let's be grateful for today's breakthrough, and keep insisting on more of the same.

We must help the police

The rise in the number of cannabis farms being found in our region is an eye-opener – and it is of deep concern. The decent people of Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire want nothing to do with such places – nor with the devilish criminals behind them.

What is particularly worrying is that these production centres are being set up in innocent-looking homes in our towns and villages, bringing organised crime into quiet communities.

It is encouraging that police are finding so many locations, and taking the drugs and the producers out of circulation.

But it is clear that they need help. Each of us has a duty to be the eyes, ears and noses of the police, to help them sniff out and snuff out cannabis farms and drive them out of our region.

Fight to the end, City

Barring a miracle, Norwich City will be playing in the Championship next season. But, even if a miracle does not occur, the fans deserve to see a superhuman effort from the players in the final two matches. A repeat of the second half against Liverpool will lift morale: a repeat of the second half against Manchester United will invite scorn. If we are going down, let's go with some long over due fight, not a whimper.

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He is the one who forgives all your sins, who heals all your diseases.
Psalm 103:3



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READER'S PICTURE OF THE DAY

iwitness24



■ Graham Bedford sent us this delightful rural scene of red deer at Briggate. If you would like to submit a picture for possible publication in the EDP, visit www.iwitness24.co.uk

It may be in the past but it still matters how you say it

Peter
Trudgill



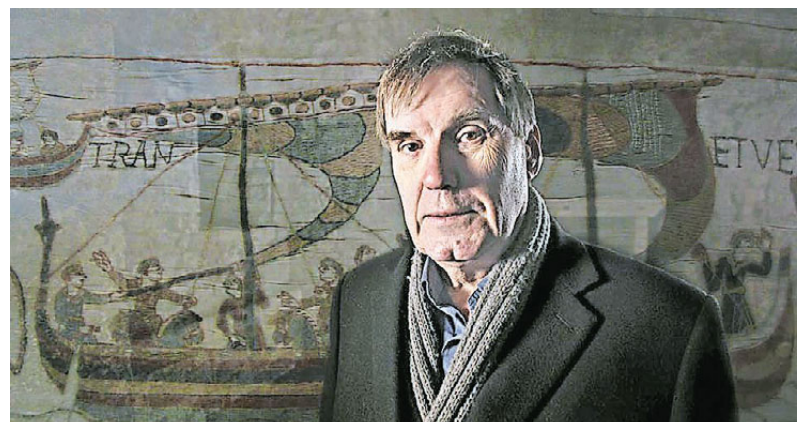
email: newsdesk@archant.co.uk

All languages work by analogy. If they didn't, we wouldn't be able to learn them. Once small children have learnt that the plural of boot is boots and the plural of shoot is shoots, then by analogy they can work out that the plural of root is roots – and so on.

Occasionally this gives them the wrong result, since the plural of foot is not foos. But languages can only tolerate a certain amount of that kind of irregularity or they would be unlearnable.

Sometimes when languages change, they change as a result of analogy. The past tense of the verb to snow in the Norfolk dialect isn't snowed, as it used to be, but "snew". This is an innovation we developed through analogy with blow-blew and know-knew.

And this is probably the same thing that has happened with Professor Robert Bartlett's pronunciation of words like thrown, mown and known. Correspondents to the EDP who have watched his BBC TV programme *The Plantagenets* have wondered why he says "throwen", "mowen" and "knowen". One correspondent's suggestion was



■ Robert Bartlett used old pronunciation in his BBC TV programme.

that Robert was speaking Middle English. Middle English was the form of our language spoken from about 1150 to 1500, and if Robert had been clever enough to speak fluent Middle English, we would have had a very hard job understanding him. If you've ever heard somebody read Chaucer in the original 15th-century pronunciation, you will know what I mean. (If you haven't, there are plenty of linguistic scientists about who would be glad to demonstrate. And there are recordings on the internet, though unfortunately they weren't actually made by Chaucer.)

So, no, Robert Bartlett wasn't doing that, though it is true that the past participle of know in Middle English could be

"knowen". Some dialects of English which have this pronunciation may therefore, possibly, have preserved it from earlier stages of the language – some Norfolk speakers say "knowen". But the "knowen, throwen" pronunciation is very common in modern Australia and New Zealand English; and I think the most likely reason is that this is once again an innovation that is due to analogy. If people have started saying "knowen" and "throwen", this is as a result of drawing an analogy with words like given, chosen, and ridden.

If the past participle of fall is fallen, and the past participle of rise is risen, why shouldn't the past participle of mow be "mowen"?