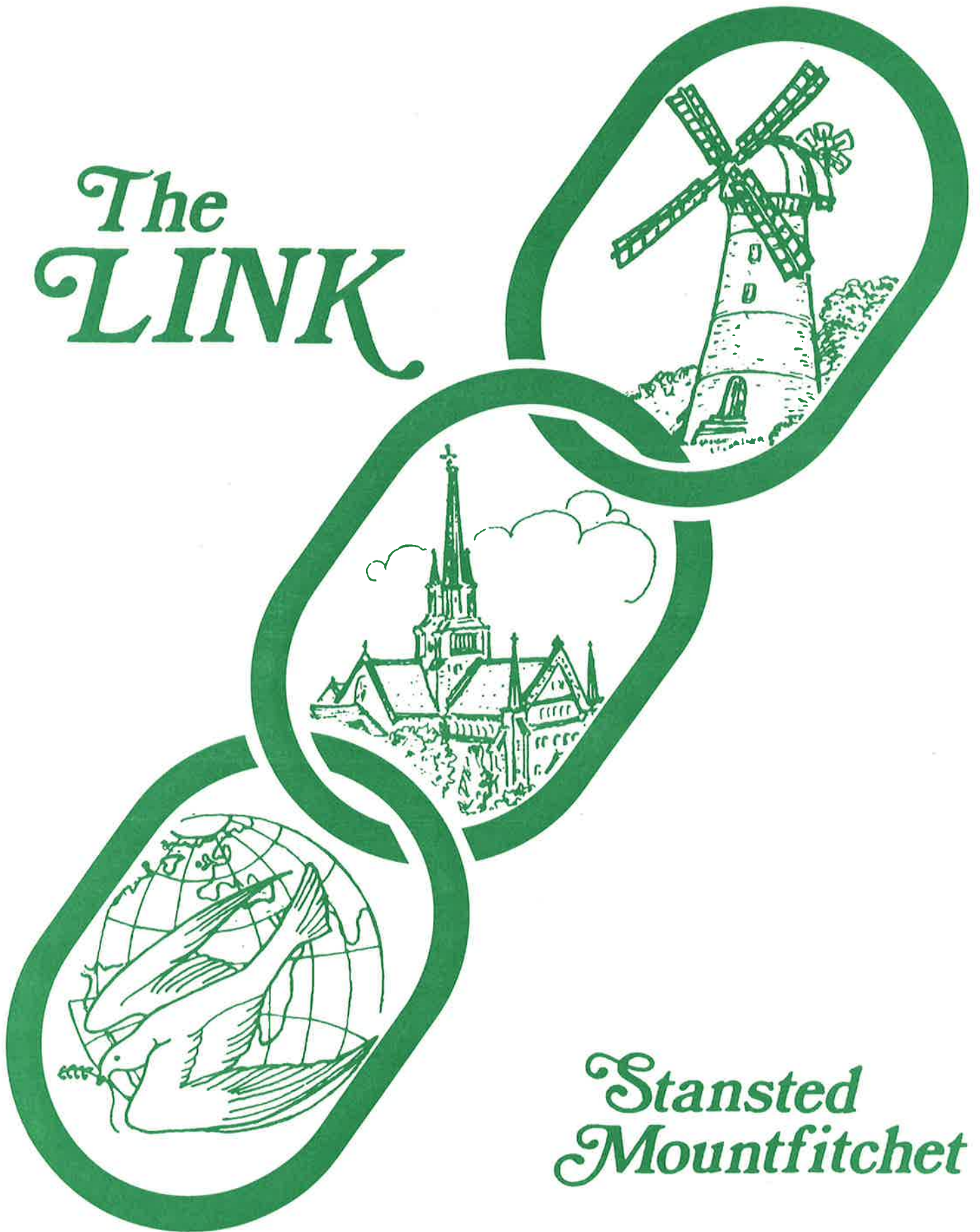


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...and carry on re-cycling



The Link (price £3.50 per year) is published monthly by Churches Together in Stansted

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by 15th July for publication on 31st July



All enquiries are welcome at **The Church Office** located upstairs in St. John's Church Hall, Stansted CM24 8JP

Monday	Open from
Wednesday	9:00am-12:00noon
Friday	

(01279) 815243
church.office@stansted.net

Administrator
Mrs Elizabeth Jennings

Open Door Service

All-age Ecumenical
Worship meets in June
at
St John's at 11:00am

- **6th June** All-age communion
- **20th June** All-age worship and baptism.

The view from beneath

The photographs of American soldiers abusing prisoners in Iraq gave me pause for all sorts of reasons, not least because some of the soldiers are Christians.

It has been an interesting turn of events that, while I was growing up, my teachers were predicting the end of religion. Belief in God was a throwback to magical thinking and feudal society, so I was taught. Yet, it turns out these days, religion is as much of a force in world events as it has ever been.

I think that blaming soldiers for these abuses is to treat the symptom but not the cause. Soldiers are everything and nothing; we have no idea how they are prepared, if at all, for the complexities of the roles they are expected to fulfil.

What I have found deeply troubling is reading how fundamentalist Christianity has permeated the centres of power in the United States. The absence of any US commitment to environmental politics, for example, can be traced to a deeply held belief in the current administration that, if Jesus is coming back to judge the world and reduce it to a cinder, why bother saving the rain forest? The same idea of judgement encourages a sense of the world being divided into the saved and the damned, the good and the bad: we are good, and all the evil in the world is Out There somewhere.

Once you take on this mindset, then the abuse of prisoners follows from this. The only circumstance in which abuse can be justified is that *they* are the enemy and *they* represent all that we consider to be evil. Once you've made that decision, the rest is easy, they have no rights, they can be treated however we feel like, they deserve whatever they get, we are the righteous, we are the

chosen. It doesn't matter if you lock suspects up in Guantanamo Bay for two years with no basic human rights.

Keeping all the evil in the world Out There somewhere is very comforting. Some Christians have grown huge church congregations by gathering those huddled together, set apart from the evils of the world. I want to take a different Christian view.

Deep at the heart of Christian faith is a view of life from the perspective of the victim. Imagine how Christian faith looks to the prisoner on the receiving end of a GI boot. Maybe two years ago he was on the receiving end of one of Saddam's boots, now it's a Christian one. How do we look to them, what must they make of the wonderful new world and values that liberation has brought.

Christianity says that it is possible to do something about the evil in the world. You don't stop evil by deciding it is only to be found somewhere else, and that it's source is somebody else. When Christians gather to worship, we routinely make the space to consider how we look to others, and to allow God to show us the evil within ourselves.

I can say, and I believe, that Saddam Hussein is an evil man, and I don't expect anyone to disagree with me. But I can keep saying that, and the world doesn't change, we just feel cosy that the evil is being committed by someone else.

What happens if I ask what an Iraqi prisoner sees when he looks at me, or looks at people who act on my government's behalf? What does he think of the values of my world, as he sees them acted out on him? What happens if I ask whether there is any truth in what he describes when he looks at my world? And what can I do about it?

AS

Diary

Sundays
8:00am Holy Communion
9:30am Parish Communion
with Sunday School
11:00am Open Door Service
(1st & 3rd Sunday of the month)

Wednesdays
10:00am Holy Communion
followed by coffee
7:30pm Intercessions and
Night Prayer

Groups

Lazer Group is a 12-16 youth group which meets weekly on Sunday evenings at 7:30pm for activities in the church hall. The evening concludes with candlelit Night Prayer in the chapel in church.

Prayer Group for Healing meets monthly in the parish. Contact the office for details of meetings.

Housegroups The current housegroup is devoted to issues around understanding Holy Communion, the characteristic Christian rite. Special attention is being given to admitting children to receive communion. Please contact the Rector or the Church Office for details.

D-Day 60th

A Service to Commemorate those who fell at the Normandy Landings will be held at the Stansted War Memorial in the Memorial Gardens on June 6th 2004 at 3:00pm (St John's Church, if wet)

After the service, refreshments will be available at the Day Centre, Crafton Green.

Rector
Revd Andrew Spurr
The Rectory
St. John's Road
Stansted Mountfitchet
Essex, CM24 8JP
phone/fax
(01279) 812203
rector@stansted.net
Day off: Thursday

Open Door Service
(Ecumenical All-Age
worship)
Mrs Frances Richards
phone
(01279) 812748
richkidz@waitrose.com

Director of Music
Mrs Glynis Morris
phone/fax
(01223) 263640
church.music@stansted.net

Church Hall Bookings
Secretary
Mrs Joy Lambe
(01279) 817937
joy@stansted.net

Honorary Assistant Priest
Canon Derek Jackson
phone
(01279) 652664

Sunday School
Mrs Sandra Wood
(01279) 647054
sandra@stansted.net

Lazer Group
Mr Gary West
phone
(01279) 815243
gary.west@zetnet.co.uk

Housegroup
Lyn Hillier
(01279) 303598

(continued)

Registers for April

Weddings

- 17th Simon Battson and Clare Noble
- 17th David Robert Tucker and Jane Oliver

Funerals

- 7th Mabel Phoebe Florey age 84
- 16th Sylvia Isabelle Felix age 78

Summer Sale

Our Summer Sale and Afternoon Tea will be held in the Church Hall on Saturday 12th June from 2.30pm to 4.30pm. Proceeds are in aid of the refurbishment of the Church Hall committee rooms. There will be lots of super items to buy plus a splendid tea. Admission £1 including refreshments.

St John's, Stansted 

Hill Chili

7 - 10 pm Friday 18th June

'Sonia's Place' 31 Chapel Hill

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Supper (vegetarian on request)

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Masses Saturday 6.00pm
Sunday 9.00am and 10.30am
Holy Days of Obligation 8.00am and 8.00pm
Tuesday-Saturday 9.30am

Confessions
Saturday 10.00am
and by appointment

Baptisms
By appointment

In June, two important feast days are celebrated; the Roman calendar celebrates Corpus Christi on Thursday 10th June, the Celtic calendar celebrates the feast of St. Columba on 9th June.

Corpus Christi was instituted in the Roman calendar by Pope Urban VI in 1264. In the Middle Ages, ordinary people were unable to follow the subtleties of the theology of the 'Real Presence', but were able to express their devotion to the Blessed Sacrament in more concrete ways. Processions were organised in which the Host was carried and venerated with great honour and splendour. The organisation of processions was still taking place right up until 1939, and for a short while in the 1940s and '50s, but have now mainly ceased, except within church grounds. The processions originated in Liege, in Belgium; the prime mover was Juliana of Mont Cornillon.

We all know the story of St. Columba and of his landing on Iona; as he was dying, he blessed the island and gave this prophecy – "This island will become a wasteland and will be fit only for animals, but the time will come before the end of the world when this island of Iona will be restored as a place of Christian mission." That prophecy had to wait centuries to be fulfilled, but it has been in our time.

One of the practices introduced by St. Columba was the need for a 'Soul friend', or the word that was used was 'Anum chara'. Because at that time everyone was part of a community, they would each have their own particular 'Soul friend', who loved them for what they were, whom they could trust and did not have to pretend to be something that they were not, someone who really walked with God. Who would you choose, or perhaps the question should be, with whom would you share all those innermost thoughts and feelings, both the highs and lows of your life?

If we are honest with ourselves, none of us can manage very well on our own. As we live our Christian lives in our own communities we discover for ourselves our own need for a 'Soul friend' and discover that one of the great strengths of the Christian life is having that person close to you.

If you want to find a 'Soul friend' the best way is to be one yourself, to be ready to open yourself to other people, with all your emotional 'hang ups'; put your soul and life in the hands of another; that surely has to be the Christian way.

As we celebrate these two great feast days this month, we celebrate the presence of God in our lives and in our community.

Francis Mercer



METHODIST

Meets in Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

Minister Rev'd Keith Page
2 South Road
Bishop's Stortford
Tel: 01279 654475

Secretary Mrs Catherine Dean
49 Recreation Ground
Stansted
Tel: 01279 813579

Email methodists@stansted.net

All services start at 9.30am unless otherwise stated

Services and preachers for June

6th Rev'd Ronald Crewes
13th Rev'd Keith Page – Holy Communion
20th No morning service
Church anniversary service at 3.30pm led by Rev'd Jim Gill. Followed by a 'bring and share' tea.
27th Joint service at 10.30am at United Reformed Church led by Rev'd Janet Tollington

There will be a fellowship meeting on Thursday 24th June at 8.00pm at 7 Blythwood Gardens.

UNITED REFORMED

Chapel Hill

Minister

Rev'd David Simpson
11 Church Manor
Bishop's Stortford
CM23 5AF
Tel: 01279 504900

Contact

Mrs Janet Townsend
58 Chapel Hill
Tel: 01279 812593

Preachers for June

6th	2.30pm	Rev'd David Simpson
13th	10.30am	Dr P Cressey
20th	10.30am	Rev'd David Simpson – Communion
27th	10.30am	Rev'd Dr J Tollington – Joint with Methodist

Dates for your June diary

5th	10.00am - 12 noon	Coffee morning and mini market
6th	3.30pm-5.00pm	Afternoon Tea
7th	6.00pm-8.00pm	Pilots
21st	2.30pm-4.00pm	Monday Club (mystery tour)
	6.00pm-8.00pm	Pilots

On what must have been the coldest and wettest day in April Howard Reeve, a member of our congregation, walked from his home in Elsenham with a friend to Ongar and back; a distance of 45 miles, to raise money for Elephant pumps. £200 provides a pump to bring clean water to small African villages, and Howard's aim was to finance five pumps. The final total raised is not yet available, but so far it stands at just over £1000. WELL DONE HOWARD!

We hope for a better morning weather-wise on 5th June as we plan to have our coffee morning outside. There will be bric à brac, books, cakes and a raffle for you to buy. Come and join us from 10.00am. All proceeds to the hall refurbishment fund.

Janet Townsend

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill

Clerk Mrs Anthea Lee
24 Lea Close
Bishop's Stortford
Tel: 01279 656707

Meeting Sunday, 11.00am

Hope

Of the three great Christian qualities I always feel that Hope is given a lower priority than Faith and Love, and yet it is such an essential ingredient in our lives. As St. Francis stresses in his famous prayer "Where there is despair let me sow hope". Any of us who have experienced despair know how vital it is to be given some hope – some glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. I always remember a solicitor friend saying that when dealing with distressing cases he always tried to ensure that his client left the office on a note of hope.

Recently, at one of our Quaker General Meetings (these cover Meetings over a large part of East Anglia) we had a speaker from Quaker Social Action to talk about their work in East London. We were rather expecting a distressing account of crime and drugs, etc. On the contrary, we had an inspiring account of a project 'StreetCred' which creates facilities for groups of women (about six or seven in each group) to share their hopes and talents and realise creative projects. 'StreetCred' gets legal and business advice for them, and has small funds which can be applied for and, where possible, repaid. Two participants in the scheme came with the Speaker – in fact did most of the speaking – and talked about their creative and business activities and their ambitions. But what shone through was the support they had given each other, and the hope and confidence they had been given of a better and a fulfilling life. As one of them said, "It has made me feel worthwhile".

Faith may be able to move mountains, but so too can Hope – mountains of despair.

Katharine Hurford



CHURCHES TOGETHER in STANSTED

BRADWELL PILGRIMAGE

Saturday 3rd July

This year's Bradwell Pilgrimage celebrates the 1350th anniversary of St. Cedd's landing in Essex and bringing Christianity. At its inception the Pilgrimage was an Anglican occasion, but in recent years it has become an ecumenical celebration. The Fraternal in Stansted hope that this year there will be enough 'pilgrims' from the Stansted Churches to fill a coach.

Anyone who has been to the Pilgrimage knows that the weather is always good for the two mile walk, the atmosphere is relaxed and friendly, and the Service inspiring; this year the speaker is the Bishop of Chelmsford.

There are details of the day and approximate cost of the coach in newsletters and a list to sign in each Church. Do sign up if you can.

Katharine Hurford

CHURCHES TOGETHER ON EIGG

Phyllis Harrison tells of an ecumenical Easter on a Western Isle

Eigg for Easter? A nice thought and an even nicer fulfilment of an island dream holiday.

24 hours, if you can sit it out, by train via Peterborough, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Fort William and Mallaig; then the little boat trip that deposits the visitor on the only landing stage on Eigg; the family pick-up that drops us and our food and luggage at our cottage at the end of the island road – and we are on for a 'HAPPY EASTER!'

An evening stroll across the fields to the shore and we drop in on the Catholic Church, tucked in the trees, still structurally sound but sadly dilapidated inside. Two or three ladies are arranging flowers for Easter Day.

"Come and join us for mass tomorrow."

"Thank you we'd like that – we're mixed Methodists and Presbys, see you soon!"

So, on Easter morning we joined the locals for a memorable time of worship. The place had been transformed; flowers and colourful people too covered the wall cracks!

No priest available! An Anglican nun joined us and we were invited to choose hymns – an amusing try-out of various tunes (no accompaniment of course). The nun led a French carol about the green grass rising which is followed by the missal's Easter service – a refreshing start to the great season plus invitations to meet the priest visiting next week (for a coming funeral).

Three miles away (four to the quayside shop, on foot always) the little Church of Scotland welcomes all for the occasions when they in turn have a visiting minister. The church building too was shared for island meetings and social functions.

We enjoyed sandy beaches, swims, the warden's wildlife walk, craggy climbs, and discovered Churches Together On Eigg.

Phyllis Harrison



SHALOM

On 7th June there will be a Summer Walk led by Margaret Whitelaw, starting at the Quaker Meeting House at 8.00pm.

On 21st June Anthea Lee will give a Quaker view of healing at 8.00pm at 7 Blythwood Gardens.

All are most welcome to attend these events.

Catherine Dean
813579

STANSTED DAY AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

We are all extremely grateful for the money given to us for our new curtains.

The organisations that use the day centre have raised funds in various ways – thank you all.

The recent coffee morning raised the magnificent sum of £435 and we really appreciate the stall holders, those who donated things and those who came and spent their money. When we have the final total we will let you know. Again thank you very much.

Brenda Scarr

Help! - One, two or even three drivers are needed to take people to and from the Day Centre on a regular basis. You will only need to be available one regular day every three weeks - Tuesdays or Thursdays. For more information ring 814440. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Bridget Gott

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

The New Civic Year

The annual meeting in May marked the start of the new civic year. The new Chairman (Cllr Elizabeth Godwin from Birchanger) and Vice Chairman (Cllr Bill Bowker who represents Newport) were elected. The leadership of the Council and chairmanship of the policy committees remain in the hands of the Liberal Democrats. I am serving as the Vice-Chairman of the newly established Transport and Highways Committee. Transport is likely to become much more high profile for the Council. It will be concerned with the management of decriminalisation of parking enforcement.

Although the County Council is the highways authority, Uttlesford is responsible for a locally determined highways programme. The Committee will also be concerned with matters such as road safety and residents' parking schemes.

I will continue to serve on the Stansted Airport Advisory Panel which meets with senior management from the airport on a regular basis. This will be particularly important as we expect to receive a planning application from BAA to make full use of the existing runway. I am also a member of the Community & Leisure Committee which has oversight of the District's leisure centres including Mountfitchet Romeera.

Like many other councillors I represent the Council on outside bodies. My involvement continues to be serving on the Board of Uttlesford Citizens Advice Bureau. When resources and a venue become available I should like to see a CAB presence in Stansted. Other organisations I am involved in are the Uttlesford Police and Community Consultative Group and Birchanger Wood.

General Satisfaction Survey 2003

Like many other organisations the Council carries out market research to find out people's views. Some 1367 residents completed the survey in the autumn of 2003. It makes for interesting reading. Overall satisfaction with council services at 64% was the highest rate in Essex. Dissatisfaction with council services at 9% was the lowest in Essex.

Asked, "what is most important in making Uttlesford a good place to live?" the reply was:

- 1 Low level of crime
- 2 Health services
- 3 Education provision
- 4 Affordable decent housing
- 5 Clean streets

It was not all good. Asked, "what most needs improving?" the replies included:

- Activities for teenagers
- Public transport
- Level of traffic congestion
- Affordable decent housing
- Road and pavement repairs

Of course, in any survey one should always contain a health warning. As the old adage goes, there are lies, damn lies and statistics. Nevertheless for all policy makers it contains food for thought.

Councillor Geoffrey Sell
Tel: 01279 815925
email: cllrsell@uttlesford.gov.uk

Stansted Post Office

I have asked for a meeting with Post Office Counters in the next few weeks over the disgraceful delay in re-establishing our local post office. I want to see the colour of their eyes! Do they really care if Stansted doesn't have a PO? Are they really trying to solve the needs of local people? Or is it simply cheaper for them if Stansted residents continue to traipse to Bishop's Stortford and Elsenham. I don't know the answer to these questions but I will try to find out.

Appointments

For the second year I have been elected as Leader of the District Council. My colleague Vanessa Pedder is the new Vice Chair of the Environment Committee. Geoffrey Sell has reported on some of the other appointments. Stansted is well represented with councillors in positions of influence. Putting plans in place and restructuring and recruiting our staff have taken up much of the first year of the new council. From now on we have to step up delivering our plans.

Councillor Alan Dean
Tel: 01279 813579
email: cldrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk

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Newport Croquet Club

Open Day

Saturday 12th June

Come and have a go!

Tea & Coffee available

please wear flat shoes on the lawns

More information from
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St John's, Stansted

Summer Sale and Afternoon Tea

2.30 - 4.30 pm Sat 12th June

St John's Church Hall

Lots of super items to buy!

Admission £1 incl. refreshments

Proceeds to Committee Room Refurbishment

VILLAGE EVENTS

June

2	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
		Gdn Club trip to B. End Gdns	Crafton Green Car Park 6.30 pm
5	Sat	Mini Market & Coffee morning	UR Church 10 am - noon
6	Sun	Windmill Open	2 - 6 pm
		D Day Commemoration	War Memorial 3 pm
		Afternoon Tea (after service)	UR Church 3.30 - 5 pm
7	Mon	Shalom Walk	Quaker Meeting House 8 pm
10	Thu	Euro Parliamentary Elections	
		WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
11	Fri	WI 'The Entertainers'	United Reformed Church 7.45 pm
12	Sat	Lib Dem Ploughman's	Day Centre noon - 2 pm
		Summer Sale & Tea	St John's Hall 2.30 - 4.30 pm
		Croquet Club Open Day	Newport Croquet Club
12 Sat/13	Sun	Green Waste, Wood, Metal	Lower St Car Pk 9 am - 3 pm
18	Fri	Hill Chilli	31 Chapel Hill 7 - 10 pm
20	Sun	Boot Sale	Mountfitchet School 8 am - noon
21	Mon	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm
26	Sat	Summer Fayre	St Mary's School noon - 3 pm
		Music on a Summer Evening	Four Winds Burton End 7 pm
26 Sat/27	Sun	Green Waste, Wood, Metal	Lower St Car Pk 9 am - 3 pm
27	Sun	SSE Open Gardens	Broxted Village noon - 6 pm

July

3	Sat	Bradwell Pilgrimage	Meet at Crafton Green 9.30 am
4	Sun	Windmill Open	2 - 6 pm
5	Mon	Shalom Group	Quaker Meeting House 8 pm
7	Wed	Mountfitchet Seniors	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
		Garden Club	Day Centre 8 pm
8	Thu	WI	St John's Hall 7.45 pm
10 Sat/11	Sun	Green Waste, Wood, Metal	Lower St Car Pk 9 am - 3 pm
11	Sun	Boot Sale	Mountfitchet School 8 am - noon
		Fun Run & Walk	Bentfield Green 11 am
		HEAL Open Gardens	2 - 6 pm
17	Sat	Music in the Park	Bentfield School 2 - 8 pm
19	Mon	Shalom Group	7 Blythwood Gardens 8 pm

St Mary's Primary School
PTFA

SUMMER FAYRE

Saturday 26th June

12 noon - 3 pm

GAMES WITH A SPORTING THEME

MINI FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

RAFFLE ~ TOMBOLA

BBQ ~ LICENSED BAR

Entry 50p - accompanied children free



MUSIC ON A SUMMER'S EVENING

with **'CHARITY'**

Saturday 26th June

6.30 for 7-9pm

at 'Four Winds' Burton End

(please bring own deckchairs)

Tickets £8 inc. light refreshments
from HJ Club or Stansted Carpets

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VANISHING VILLAGES

Broxted Open Gardens

Sunday 27th June

12 noon - 6 pm

fête • displays • refreshments • BBQ
beer tent • country walks • pony rides

Tickets £4 - children free

(incl. shuttle bus between gardens)

Tel. Maggie on 850204 or 07714 767921

www.stopstanstedexpansion.com

Bentfield School PTA

Music in the Park

Saturday 17th July
2 - 8 pm

live music all afternoon
bouncy castle ~ games
BBQ ~ beer tent

Tickets - £6.50 in advance (£7.50 on gate)
from School (813626) or PTA members
Accompanied children free



STANSTED OPEN GARDENS

Sunday 11th July
2 pm - 6 pm

17 gardens to visit

Refreshments available at
Day Centre Crafton Green and
at some gardens

Tickets £4 Tel 814265



STANSTED FUN RUN

www.stansted10k.org.uk
info@stansted10k.org.uk

Bentfield Green 11am Sun 11th July

SERIOUS RUNNER - need a challenge

FUN RUNNER - improve your time

WALKER - enjoy a pleasant stroll

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NEW MEMORIES FOR OLD

In the 21st century families are spread wider than ever across the country – or around the world – and so it's easier than ever to lose touch with our relatives. Even those of us who are on the Internet probably send 10 emails to friends for every one that goes to a relative.

At the same time, people are living longer. Whilst most older people are perfectly able to look after themselves, or can manage with a minimum of assistance, nothing can substitute for a visit from their children or grandchildren, nieces or nephews.

Fortunately there is one leisure activity that positively encourages us to talk to the older generations in our family – researching the family tree. As any guide to family history will tell you (and there's an excellent Beginners' Guide on the Internet at www.LostCousins.com), when you want to research your ancestors, your first step should be to talk to those who are still living.

Our parents and grandparents, great uncles and aunts are like living history books, able to tell us how life really was for previous generations, when television had yet to be invented, the telephone was a novelty, and families huddled round a crystal set to listen to '2LO'.

It isn't as if you'll be able to capture all that knowledge the first time you talk to your relatives. Go back to them every now and again as you piece together the family history, and you'll be surprised – and delighted – to discover that they remember more and more, as the snippets of information you feed back to them trigger memories of people and events that had been long-forgotten.

I began to research my family tree when I realised that my last surviving relatives from my parents' generation were well into their 80s. I couldn't expect them to be around for ever, and if they weren't, a wealth of information could be lost. Nobody else would be able to name the guests at that 1920's wedding party, or identify the backdrop for that family photograph.

I didn't find anyone rich or famous in my family tree. Most of my ancestors were poor farm labourers – and my great-great-grandmother died in the workhouse at the age of 52. She'd been a widow for 20 years by then – what a struggle it must have been to bring up her four children. Knowing that my ancestors didn't have an advantageous start in life makes me all the more proud of them. They managed to learn to write though their parents couldn't; they went wherever there was work so that they could feed their children; they did their best – and it worked.

People often say "I haven't got the time to research my family tree". That might once have been the case – but these days so much information is literally at your fingertips, thanks to the Internet. A good place to start is the 1881 Census of England & Wales, which is available completely free at www.FamilySearch.org; another very useful site is FreeBMD (<http://freebmd.rootsweb.com>) where you can search the indexes of births, marriages, and deaths since 1837.

At the new LostCousins site (www.LostCousins.com) all you do is enter the details of your ancestors from the 1881 Census. Then, when someone who shares the same ancestors logs on - your lost cousin - the two of you are automatically put in contact so that you can exchange information, share photographs, and swap stories about the family you both belong to. LostCousins is a good place to start because apart from the excellent Beginners' Guide mentioned above, there's also a blank family tree that you can download. If you need a passcode to enter the site, enter the word LINK.

Peter Calver

Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council

Clerk Ruth Clifford
Office Hours
10 am - 1 pm
Monday - Friday



Council Offices
Crafton Green
Tel 813214
Fax 813964

At the Annual Council Meeting on 5th May, Cllr Catherine Dean was re-elected as our Chairman, with Geoffrey Sell re-elected as Vice-Chairman. Committee Chairmen remain unchanged - Peter Jones (Finance and General Purposes) and Valerie Trundle (Open Spaces).

Waste Skips and Recycling

Many of you will have noticed that the recycling banks have moved to the far end of the Lower Street Car Park. This is partly to reduce the disturbance to neighbouring properties, but also to rationalise the site. The fortnightly waste skips (for metal, wood and green waste), are likely to be housed permanently on this site, although only open for use, currently, every other weekend. They will therefore require to be sectioned off. With funding from Uttlesford, we intend to screen this area somehow to improve the visual aspect!

Skip dates: 12th and 13th June, 26th and 27th June, 10th and 11th July, all 9.00am-3.00pm.

Don't forget that there are also limited recycling facilities in the car park on the left-hand side of Cannon's Mead.

Grass Cutting

Unfortunately, and due to the persistent wet weather in early May, our grass cutting schedule fell behind resulting in some untidy areas. The Cemetery particularly looked poor and for this we apologise; however the mowers are running as we type and we hope that all is now back on schedule.

Parish Cemetery

On the subject of the Cemetery, a working party has been established to undertake a thorough review of the Rules and Regulations. It will work on this over the summer, with a view to reporting back to the Council in September. It is our intention to liaise closely with the Rector who has responsibility for rules and regulations in the Churchyard.

Ruth Clifford
Clerk

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

As has been reported over the past few months the three major issues before the County – airport development, housing provision and Planning Act Review – are presently under either active discussion and debate or are awaiting consideration by appeal bodies. Hence no reports of any value can be made now before the autumn and beyond and perhaps even later as the Parliamentary Elections loom in view in 2005. Any future reports must therefore wait.

However, other issues which will have great effect in the county from an environmental and economic point of view are moving into more serious consideration. One of these is the question of Cross Rail which the Prime Minister has stated should now go ahead. From the county viewpoint familiar problems will arise. The Cross Rail project reaches into Essex at Shenfield or into Thurrock. Whilst to the average commuter the provision of a speedy and hopefully efficient service will bring much benefit in terms of speed and comfort in travel, the question arises as to who will provide and what arrangements are to be made over the movement of the commuter from his/her home to the railhead. Will there be sufficient car parking space? Will the road systems have the necessary capacity? The Cross Rail Authority takes no account of this from a financial point of view. Who is to do so? The county is giving thought to this but no decisions will be taken or plans be made for some time yet. Sufficient to say Cross Rail will have effects in Uttlesford that need to be kept in mind, but not yet!

Another and more remote, but nevertheless important, future development which will affect us all is the proposition for a new container port to be built in the UK. One site in Southampton water has been considered and recently discarded by Government on environmental grounds. The other two sites under consideration are both in Essex – one at Shell Haven on the Thames and the other at Harwich at Dibden Bay. The development of one or other would have enormous effects on the county in some ways for the better and in others for the worse. Again both options are under active consideration and decisions will not be taken until 2005. Which option will win remains to be seen, but in the case of Harwich, development there could bring many benefits to one of the less affluent areas of the county. Which option is best overall will be decided. Let us wait and see.

Should any reader wish to discuss these matters further they should contact the undersigned on 01279 812588.

Richard Wallace
County Councillor Stansted Division

Stansted Art & Craft Market

Good News and Bad

We now have a revitalised committee, and until the middle of April we were looking forward to many more years of fundraising for Stansted's good causes. Then disaster struck. As you may have read in the local paper, or last month's 'Link', vandals set fire to our storage shed and destroyed virtually all of our equipment. The biggest loss is all 33 of our display boards on which we hang the paintings for the Market. To replace all of these will cost in the region of £700. Even if we manage to get round this major problem, we shall still not have any advertising boards to put in gardens, or any of our roadside signs. To re-stock the Market fully will take far more than the reserve fund that we carry. In the light of this, the committee held a meeting recently to decide whether or not it would be feasible to have the Market this year, or indeed at all in the future.

We all want to see the Market continue, particularly now that we have a new committee up and running. As a result, we have decided that the Market will take place this year as planned. However, we shall be operating at something of a disadvantage. We intend to replace as many of the display boards as we can afford this year and to restock the rest of our equipment as and when funds allow. Of course this does mean that we shall be lacking most of our advertising material this year. Therefore, if anyone who does not normally do so would be willing to display a poster for us this year, we would be very grateful. After all, if we manage to get the Market open as usual, but nobody knows about it, a great deal of work will have been in vain.

If you can help in any way, we would love to hear from you! On a more mundane note, we could still do with more stewards and more help with setting up and dismantling the Market. So, if you cannot commit the time which involvement with the committee would mean, but might be able to find an hour or two once a year in aid of all the activities which the Market supports, please contact Brenda Ryan (tel. 812725); your offers will be very warmly received. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Market at St John's Church and Church Hall, St John's Road, Stansted on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th September 2004.

Sian Mackey

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Local Occupations

No. 6

Library Manager

Christine Chanter

The library service seems to be in the public eye nowadays as a consequence of changing lifestyles and the resulting need to provide a wider range of facilities. Stansted shares this national trend but has unconsciously developed another means of raising its image – that of offering a friendly village-style ambience in which anyone can feel at ease. The credit for this must largely go to the team of four led by Christine. She became a library assistant in 1987 and has been manager for some nine years – sufficiently long to know the local ‘trade’ and sustain an informal and helpful relationship with regular and occasional visitors alike. Regular card holders will have noticed how the shelves of books have diminished by a third in recent years to make way for videos and four computer terminals. Both of these innovations have proved popular, and extended the variety of residents who come in.

The library building in Crafton Green started life as a telephone exchange in 1935 and has adapted with the times since the move from the then, Parish Council offices in Lower Street in the early ‘70s. It is now a little too small to do justice to expanding services and population but it has the great advantages of a central location and nearby parking; furthermore it has good access for the disabled and there is a Loop system for users of hearing aids.

Christine’s day begins with booting up the computers and dealing with the post and the thrice weekly delivery from the Council’s central store. Nor surprisingly, everything is computerised, so new books, videos, etc. have to be logged in and, of course, all borrowed books, etc. have to be similarly recorded. She and her colleagues hold the oddly-named European Computer Driving Licence. With the rise in school computer resources the use of reference books by children has fallen off but an ambitious youngster can quite easily earn extra kudos by augmenting internet material through the reference system. Obviously Bishop’s Stortford and Saffron Walden libraries hold a more comprehensive range, but it is easy to order-up books from national sources, a service which is generating a healthy number of enquiries. Much of Christine’s day is taken up with dealing with these and other enquiries. Wet days tend to be busier than the fine ones. The library fills a niche for those seeking reading practice, a resource which is used by the Peter Kirk Centre, and there is an associated service named Quick-Read that operates through short stories.

Another facility which Christine masterminds is called Libraries Direct which, with the help of several volunteers, takes books to the housebound. A new venture this summer is Roller Coaster, a summer holiday edition of the Summer Read programme which has been running for some years.

Christine sometimes thinks nostalgically of the days when books filled the building and the more widespread reading interest of those times, but is determined that the new services should be made known and extended as time goes by. Already audio books, language courses on tape, CDs, CD ROMs and DVDs are on the library’s repertoire and finding favour.

Nevertheless, the background to Stansted Library remains its books and the cheerful service of its staff. The photograph below was taken when Mary Phillips retired in April and includes Glynis Springham and Anne Hutchinson as well as Christine on the right. Sadly, a weekend assistant, Vanessa Stares, was absent due to illness.



There is now longer Saturday opening, which is a clear plus for the working population. So, if you are not already an unofficial ‘friend of Stansted Library’, pop in and see what Christine can offer.

Derek Honour



Royal British Legion Stansted & District Branch

A reminder that a commemoration of the 60th anniversary of D-DAY will be held at the Stansted war memorial at 3.00pm on Sunday 6th June.

Do please try to come along to this service which will be followed by tea in the Day Centre (not in St John’s Hall).

David Challis
Chairman

BENTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

01279 813626

With the good weather comes the end of both the football and hockey seasons. Our girls' football team had their first match experience with the six-a-side tournament held at Katherine Semar Junior School and really enjoyed the experience. The next day we sent two enthusiastic teams to the boys' Football Tournament at the same venue. It was a beautiful sunny morning attracting a large crowd of supporters. The most highly contested match was when our A and B teams met to play each other. The result was an honourable 0 - 0 draw.

The weather unfortunately did not hold for the district hockey tournament which was held at Newport Free Grammar School the following Friday. Again we were able to send two teams. Our A team, having come top of their league during the season, narrowly missed out on a place in the finals. Well played to all those who competed in these matches and others, throughout the autumn and spring terms.

During the Easter break our school saw other children within its walls when RESCU, a local organisation for children with disabilities, used part of it for their Easter playscheme. Our special facilities (including soft play area and light and sound room) make this an ideal location for them to use and the school is delighted to welcome them.

This term Class 4 have been studying India. To enhance their learning, a visit was arranged from the Parrotfish Company who thrilled the whole school with a special assembly where they were the guests at a Hindu Wedding. Some of the children had the chance to dress up in Indian clothes. After the assembly Class 4 had activities including block printing, puppetry and kite flying and, in the afternoon sampling Indian food; a super day!

Classes 1 and 2 enjoyed a joint visit to Aklowa African Village - just down the road in Takeley. They took part in music making, roasting peanuts and dressing up (adults included)! They had a wonderful time.

Is your child aged 18 months or older and not yet in Nursery? Have you heard about Messy Play? This is great fun and runs in the Nursery every Monday during term time from 1.30pm to 3.00pm. If you are interested please contact the school - or just turn up! And talking of the Nursery - there are still a few vacancies for this coming September! Contact the school if you would like to visit and see Mrs Smith and her team in action!

The PTA would like to extend a huge vote of thanks to all those who supported the Big Top May Fair on 8th May. Despite picking the wettest weekend in recent history, we had a fantastic afternoon. With the rain miraculously holding off for the afternoon and a handy supply of gazebos and marquees we were able to go ahead as planned. The circus theme went down incredibly well with both children and adults alike. The bouncy slide, Silly Billy Blue Hat, wobbly bikes, and candy floss proved the most popular attractions for the children, while the old favourites

such as the raffle, tombolas, coconut shy, BBQ and beer and Pimm's tent kept the adults amused! The children put on a spectacular circus performance, with children from reception to class 6 tumbling, clowning, juggling and even taming lions! It really was a sight to behold! The event raised around £2000, so once again we would like to thank all those who helped and supported on the day.

With the summer fast approaching it is time, once again, to dust off those dancing shoes – yes, it's Music in the Park. This year's event will be held on Saturday 17th July from 2.00pm 8.00pm and promises to be even bigger and better than last year. We've got live bands playing all afternoon with music to suit all tastes, and bouncy castles and entertainment to keep the children amused. There will be a beer tent and BBQ to top up the picnics so a great family day is guaranteed! Tickets are available from the school (813626) or a PTA member at a cost of £6.50 in advance or £7.50 on the door. Children under 16 are free if accompanied by an adult, so the family can enjoy a whole day of entertainment and fun for just £13! Come and join us for a great start to the summer!

BENTFIELD COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL 25th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

Way back in 2001 the writer contributed an article on the reunion of 'old' scouts in Felbrigg, Cromer, where scout camps had taken place in the past.

Now for more nostalgia, this time concerning Bentfield County Primary School. There are many people in the village who will remember Barbara and Alan Lodge who moved from the village almost 20 years ago to the wilds of Northamptonshire. They have retained a great affection for the village and still have many connections here. Barbara had it in mind that the year 2004 would be Bentfield's 25th Anniversary, and she and Alan instigated a get-together of old pupils/parents/teachers/friends, to celebrate the momentous occasion. Sue and I were roped in to help with organising and the four of us set to in getting things moving.



It was no mean task tracking people down. This was achieved by networking, Friends Reunited website, old records and word of mouth, etc. All the hard work culminated in a weekend of celebrations at the school on 1st and 2nd May.

On the Saturday evening we held a social event with local trio Slow Time Monday (all present parents at the school) providing excellent music. Food was served and about 80 people attended, coming from as far afield as Scotland. As you can imagine there was much nostalgia with many people meeting again for the first time in over 20 years. Everybody had a marvellous time and the evening was a great success.

On the Sunday the school was opened with displays of old photos, newspaper cuttings, ex-pupils' work, copies of 'Contact', the magazine we used to produce, and much more. There was even a dress made from material the school used to sell by the yard. Jemima, who wore the dress when she was about nine years old, declined to model it!

For most of the day the school hall was full of people, many coming from various parts of the country. It was lovely to see so many ex-pupils and to learn what they were doing now. Of particular interest was exploring the school and seeing the many changes that had taken place over the years. Bentfield School has had many changes and has grown considerably. It now has nursery and special needs provisions which are most impressive.



People were most interested in seeing the new nursery and classrooms, which include an impressive light and sound room and soft play area. The ICT suite was also commented on with its array of computers and equipment – a far cry from when I was at primary school, although I must say I was a dab hand with the counting beads, and you don't get ink monitors any more!

Although the school has changed a lot one thing hasn't changed – that is the happy atmosphere which the school has always had. It was a very happy and memorable weekend, and a sum of money was raised from the sale of tickets and raffle on the evening that will be used to buy the school something to commemorate the event.

Here's to the next 25 years!

Dick Pollard



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

Jumble and bric-à-brac stall 8th and 9th May

The weather for National Mills Open Weekend did its usual thing, and managed to drizzle a lot of the time. Luckily however, it stayed dry long enough on the Saturday and Sunday to make for a successful sale.

The profit for the Mill so far is just over £525 and this is due to the kind and generous donations for the stalls, and the stalwart helpers who turned out both before and on the days. There will be some more money to come from various sources but the result to date has really been worth the effort. Once more a big "thank you" to the 'flyer' deliverers, donors and helpers.

Pearl Wellings

Congratulations to Pearl and Tony Wellings and all their helpers for the splendid result (reported above) of so much hard work, delivering leaflets, collecting, sorting and selling jumble and bric-à-brac. Tony also had the unenviable task of disposing of the leftovers. The Windmill was left in trust to Stansted, so if you live here it belongs to you, but comparatively few help to conserve it. If you have time to help or would like to make a donation, please ring:

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PATIENT & PUBLIC INITIATIVE FORUM

So what are these Patient and Public Initiative Forums (that's if you've actually heard of them)? A bit of a mouthful certainly, and smacking somehow of the bureaucracy riddling the NHS.

But hang on; they really are important - to you, to me and to our whole community, giving us all a more potent voice in shaping our health. They replace the old, and still missed by some, Community Health Councils. But – so we are told – they have more power. We shall see...

I'm part of the forum dealing with the Princess Alexandra Hospital Trust in Harlow and we're still very much at the formative stage - a bit like the birth of one's first baby; messy, a lot of unknowns and a heck of a lot to learn! Our pivotal role is in getting patients' views heard and acted on within the NHS; in this case, the hospital itself. So we're here to deal with anything that concerns you, that you want improved or that you maybe feel is lacking.

I'm basically the one who handles the media - I suppose 30 years as a newspaper, BBC radio and TV journalist accounts for that. The rest of our team have long been involved in and with the NHS and the Princess Alexandra; using it, working for it and helping run its various other volunteer groups. So we know the setup well.

What differentiates us from the old Community Health Councils is that we have, as I say, some quite wide-ranging statutory powers to back us up. We can demand information, investigate issues and inspect premises – and we are quite independent of the NHS. So far our Forum is looking into hospital hygiene, transport, the complaints system and breast cancer, with more to come.

We're also very much on the lookout for new members for our forum, so if you want to find out more you can take a look at www.cppi.org, at www.makingtimeforhealth.org, and at the various other NHS websites. You can contact the CPPIH (who select Forum members) on 0845 120 7111 or enquiries@cppih.org, ... email me (and I'll pass it on) ... or just drop a letter to our local office at Moot House, Stow Centre, Harlow.

Why did I join the PPI Forum? Because I've had to use NHS hospitals in recent years and, frankly, I feel I owe the NHS a great deal for the splendid treatment I've received. We're not the only Forum in this area, so if hospital work isn't your scene, then there's also the Uttlesford PCT Forum which deals with anything from surgeries to opticians, as well as Forums for the Ambulance Service and Mental Health.

Two big issues face the NHS and us over the next few years: Patient Choice, where you choose your hospital, and the new and greatly reduced hours of work imposed by the European Union. Both have huge implications for hospital budgets and, in the end, on us. Our PPI Forum is keen to make sure you get your say.

Luke Albarin
email luke@albarin.fsworld.co.uk



Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) has received the national award for the UK's 'Best Community Campaign' by a prestigious parliamentary group at a ceremony in the House of Lords on 26th April.

The All-Party Parliamentary Sustainable Aviation Group was formed in response to the Government's recent Air Transport White Paper. The Group's Mission Statement is:

"To inform the UK Government about the range and scale of the local, national and global environmental impacts that the air transport industry causes and to participate in the debate on how best to control and reduce them, creating an environmentally sustainable future for those who work in, use, and are affected by the industry's everyday operations."

The Group's Officers are: Lord Faulkner of Worcester, Chair; Vice Chairs; John Randall MP, Tony Colman MP; David Taylor MP, Treasurer; and Patsy Calton MP, Secretary. SSE was praised for its "hard-hitting, fact-based grass roots campaign".

Campaign Chairman Norman Mead and Campaign Director Carol Barbone received the award on behalf of SSE from Lord Faulkner of Worcester and Braintree MP Alan Hurst at a special ceremony which also recognised the achievements of the media, parliamentarians, community groups, scientists and financial institutions.

Commenting on SSE's success, Norman Mead said: "Presentation of the facts about the impacts of expansion in a clear and straightforward way has been our goal from the very beginning of the campaign. We know that this community has come to trust us as a result – and it has earned us respect at the very highest levels, evidenced by today's award."

Norman Mead added: "We're not in this business to win awards but to eliminate the threat of Stansted becoming the world's largest airport. Nevertheless, to receive the accolade of Best Community Campaign is a real honour and demonstrates that we have an excellent foundation from which to go forward and defeat the expansion proposals which are before us."

Carol Barbone
0777 552 3091
cbarbone@mx.co.uk



Huw Johnson Club

On 6th May the Club celebrated its 30th birthday with a service in St John's Church led by the Rector and choir and attended by over 150 members, parents, helpers and friends. We were delighted to welcome our MP Sir Alan Haselhurst, who spoke to us all afterwards.

Huw Johnson died from muscular dystrophy on 16th April 1974 and his parents Tom and Marion founded the Club in his memory later that year. Its objectives have remained consistent from this time to the present, ie to assist and provide support to young people with special needs, and their parents. Latterly 'young people' has become extended to not-so-young as members tend to remain with us well into middle life. Gratitude was shown to Tom and Marion, who spoke of the early days and Huw's influence, and members led prayers of thanks for what the Club had meant to them, while Huw's godfather, Fr Huw Chiplin, read from Huw's perceptively-written diary.

Following the service there was a reception in the Hall and a splendid performance by the Clown Doctor. All in all it was an occasion which will remain in our memories for a long time. With a loyal membership and a great team of leaders, helpers, drivers and supporters, the auguries for the Club's future are most encouraging. As our MP said, coming at the end of a week of dismal international news, seeing a gathering of thoroughly happy and caring people is a true reflection of what life is really about.

Derek Honour



Stansted Tennis Club



Tournament results

Junior Girls Singles

On Sunday 25th April ten girls competed for this new trophy, which was very kindly donated by honorary club member, Pat Clower. In the round-robin stage, the girls were split into two groups of five, with each competitor playing a match against all others within that group. Katherine Langridge, Rosie Chatto and Alice Hamilton-Hastings all finished level in group 1 on 17 points each. Katherine took top spot in the group as she had the most number of wins. In Group 2, Ruby Hollis was the top scorer with 27. All ten girls were then seeded, according to how they had fared for the knockout stage. The semi finals and final were the best of seven games. In the first semi, Katherine Langridge beat Rosie Chatto 4-0 and Alice Hamilton-Hastings defeated Ruby Hollis by the same score. The final then produced a cracking match. Alice took a 3-1 lead and looked like she would lift the trophy, but Katherine doggedly fought back to win the next three games to win 4-3.

The Boyd Trophy

This annual event was played for on Sunday 9th May. Twelve players competed in the round robin morning event. A delicious chilli lunch was then enjoyed by the players before the semi-finals took place. In the first semi, Sandra Ayres and George Luther beat Fran Cayless and Martin Macionis 6-2, while in the other semi, Jenny Kirby and Chris Hollis beat Richard Mott and Pam Fearn 6-0. In the final Chris and Jenny won the first two games, but George and Sandra stormed through the next six games to clinch the match and win the trophy.

Paul Bristow Junior Doubles Tournament

This is a reminder to all junior club members that you need to pick your partners for this event which will take place on Sunday 13th June. Please see the posters in the clubhouse for more information. You need to be quick as this is a very popular event and the number of pairs is limited to 16.

Club Open sessions

All adult members are welcome to come along and join in any of the following open club sessions:

Sunday mornings from 9.30am
Wednesday mornings from 10.00am
Wednesday evenings from 5.00pm
Friday mornings from 9.30am

Coaching

Martyn Taplin is currently holding adult coaching sessions for club members who wish to improve their game. Two classes take place between 2.30-4.30pm on Saturday afternoons. Please call Martyn on 816386 if you would like to find out more or would like to join in.

Chris Hollis has started the spring/summer junior coaching programme at the club. Group lessons are now taking place on Saturday mornings as well as Monday, Thursday and Friday afternoons. There is also a match practice session for the older juniors on Tuesday afternoons. Chris now has more availability for individual lessons, so if you have specific areas of the game you want to refresh, or just want a general lesson, please get in touch. You can contact Chris on 319155.

Tennis Balls

Janet Hollis still has a lot of tennis balls (of varying standards) for sale. Please contact her on 812073 or call in at 105 Cambridge Road, if you would like to buy any.

If you would like to join Stansted Tennis Club, please contact Kate Rutter (Membership Secretary) on 01279 813053. For any other enquiries, please contact either Richard Mott (Secretary) on 01279 466348 or Janet Hollis (Chairman) on 01279 812073.



JUNE



Named for the Roman Goddess Juno, patroness of womanhood, marriage, motherhood and the newly born, June was, and indeed still is, regarded as a propitious month for weddings. Beloved of song writers and poets, June is associated with romance, moonlight and roses - "O, my Love's like a red, red rose that's newly sprung in June" said Robert Burns.

The third Sunday in June, this year the 20th, is regarded as Father's Day. It is said that the idea came from Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington, USA, after hearing a Mother's Day sermon in 1909 and wanting to honour fathers also, particularly her own. The first time it was celebrated was on 19th June 1910. In 1924 President Calvin Coolidge supported a national Father's Day and in 1966 President Lyndon Johnson signed a Presidential proclamation that it should be the third Sunday of June. To the delight of card manufacturers and suppliers of gifts, the day has now spread to several countries around the world.

22nd June is the feast day of St. Alban. He was a Roman soldier who became the first British Christian martyr. Many people (including me!) believe he should be England's patron saint, not St. George.

"And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, comes perfect days;
The Heaven tries earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays"

James Russell Lowell

Peggy Honour

ST JOHN'S ORGAN APPEAL

At Christmas the Gern organ at St. John's church stopped. Since then inspections have been carried out to see what needs to be done to restart it, and the bad news is that something of the order of £70,000 plus is needed to get it going again. We are still awaiting the detailed estimate. It is described as a Gern organ, but as a result of previous repairs there is not very much of today's organ that resembles the original organ.

In all the circumstances, and aided by advice from an expert in this field, the church has come to the conclusion that consideration needs to be given to a new digital organ. There are two main firms that build these organs, Makin and Allen. We have seen representatives from both firms and Makin have provided us with an organ for a trial period.

Makin will provide us with an installed organ for just under £23,000, whereas an Allen organ is likely to cost around £26,000. It is not just on price that we favour Makin.

The church finances are not adequate to meet a bill for £23,000. Obviously the regular church congregation will make an effort to meet part of this sum, but to achieve it we have to look for help from others. An appeal is made therefore to all those who occasionally use the church, or are likely to use it, to contribute to meeting the cost of the new organ. If you make your contributions under the gift aid scheme we will have the Government making a very useful contribution. If you are a tax payer at standard rate, gift aid has no effect on your tax bill. However, if you only pay tax at 10% it may be something you should not consider. If, however, you are paying tax at 40% then you do get a benefit in that your tax bill will reduce by just under 23% of the amount you pay to us. We also benefit by some 28% of the sum you pay. So it's good for us and it can be good for you. If you do only pay tax at 10% I am happy to help you decide whether gift aid will affect your tax liability.

Nigel Holland

STANSTED PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL ORGAN APPEAL

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of the new digital organ. I wish to pay this sum over the
following period:

NOW
Then on:
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I agree to this sum being contributed under the Gift Aid Scheme. In this connection I want St. John's Church to treat all donations that I make hereafter as Gift Aid contributions. I confirm that I currently pay an amount of Income and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the amount of tax being reclaimed, and I expect this to continue. If this were not to be the case in the future I will let you know.

Name and signature

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**St Mary's Primary School
Parents, Teachers and
Friends Association**



Each time I come to write the Link article, I am always amazed by how busy school life is. In addition to the daily curricular lessons, there are sports fixtures, special visits, school trips and themed weeks, as well as after school clubs and activities. May has been no exception.

Years Five and Six have spent part of their Fridays this month focusing on 'Body Care'. This has involved undertaking fitness tests, discussing exercise and healthy living, and looking at ways to promote a healthy lifestyle. If your children have been running around the garden more than usual, or begging you to go swimming with them, this could be the reason why. So, come on grown-ups, give them some moral support, join in their activities, have some fun, and get yourself fit into the bargain!

Saffron Walden Museum and Maze was the venue for a thoroughly enjoyable day out for Years One, Two and Three. The children were treated to a tour of the museum and its exhibits, which tied in with their Science work on Rocks. They were given a very interesting talk on rock formation and volcanoes, and were able to examine specimens of rocks and crystals. This was followed by the chance to get lost in the maze. Thankfully, everybody found their way out, and came home enthusing about what they had seen and learnt.

May is a particularly busy month for the teachers and pupils who sat their SAT assessment tests. This can be an exhausting time for the children, both mentally and emotionally. St Mary's, along with other schools across the country, took part in a pilot scheme for the Year 2 SATs, which the Government is hoping to introduce nationwide. Under this new scheme, more emphasis is placed on the Teacher's assessment of the child, and for some children it will avoid the need to sit additional tests. It will also mean that parents are given a more simplified set of results with their child's annual report, which will more accurately reflect their ability.

On a lighter note, Cycling Proficiency Tests took place for the Year 6 pupils. A big 'WELL DONE' to all those who passed! This was closely followed by Walk to School Week, and many children throughout St Mary's made a huge effort to take part. It's amazing how different the school run can be when you do walk – a whole new world of sights and sounds you would otherwise have missed. Then there is the social aspect - chatting whilst you walk, meeting up with friends along the way, discussing the highs and lows of each other's day. Not to mention the health benefits. I hope this week has inspired more children to leave the car at home, and enjoy the benefits of walking to school!

With summer hopefully just around the corner, there is much to look forward to at St Mary's in June. Andy Scott, who works for Ipswich Town Football Club, is running

another of his very successful Soccer Schools during the Half-Term holiday. If your child would like to take part, please register your place with the School Office soon as spaces are limited. Our annual Sports Day is booked for Friday 18th June, and parents and friends are welcome to come along and cheer the children in their races. This is always an exciting day for the children, so make a note in your diaries – hopefully the weather will be kind to us. After Half-Term the photographers will be coming in to take photographs of the pupils; dates will follow in the Newsletter. Our annual Summer Fayre is to be held on Saturday 26th June and plans are well in hand for an exciting and enjoyable family day out. Please start saving clean, empty jam-jars, items for the Raffle and Tombola stalls, and any toys and books no longer used. Again, more details will follow in the Newsletter.

And finally, a reminder that the school has a Non-Contact day on Monday 7th June. After such a busy month, the children will be glad of an extra day at home!!

Jane Granger
PTFA Member



What an exciting term the summer term is proving to be. Our older group have been out and about in the local area. On April 27th they travelled by train to Elsenham, where they visited our local post office. The children were shown round the sorting office and all posted a letter home to Mum. The children were thrilled to see the letter arrive on their door mats the next day – the fastest 2nd class delivery I've ever experienced!

The following week we boarded the train again. This time Bishop's Stortford was our destination where we visited the café at Pearsons. We were given an extremely warm welcome and the children all ordered a drink and a snack from the very patient waitress. Since the visit the children have been able to incorporate their experience of the café into their play in our Rainbow café – giving and taking orders and distributing drinks to the customers.

On the 26th May we held our annual Sponsored Obstacle course. Children from all groups took part and completed a maximum of ten laps in order to raise money for new toys and equipment. A ploughman's lunch was served at the end of the morning and children were rewarded for their efforts with an iced lolly each. We would like to thank all those who supported the event in any way. We raised £200 at this event last year and we are hoping to exceed that amount this time.

If you are interested in a place at the pre-school from September please contact Gill Pursglove on 814701 for further information.



Stansted Evening Women's Institute

There was a very good attendance for our May meeting when the Resolutions for the Annual General Meeting to be held in Sheffield in June, were discussed. Three Resolutions are usually put forward each year for discussion by representatives of all the WIs.

Each individual WI is linked with three or four others in its area, and takes it in turns to represent the others and vote on their behalf. Last year it was our turn and we were lucky enough to go to the Albert Hall. This year Berden WI is our representative. The topics for discussion this year are - The Growing of GM crops in the UK; Trafficking of Women and Children; and Air ambulance service funding. The President Marion Pretty, Sue Holland and I attended a meeting in Chelmsford to hear three experts talk about these subjects.

Brian Grout from Writtle College, a biotechnologist gave an interesting presentation, which we would have liked all members to have been able to hear, as this subject is so complex. The actual Resolution asked for the Government to prohibit GM crop cultivation in the UK, which, in the light of recent reports, seems to be happening at the moment. Brian Grout did point out that with the increase in world population all the time we must be careful not to rule out the possibility that there could be benefits - such as genetically modified plants which could include vitamins vital to people who live in countries where food is short. Members voted in favour of the Resolution.

Chris McCann - a Solicitor and member of the Crown Prosecution Service in Essex spoke at the same meeting on the Trafficking of Women and Children and the reasons for their being brought into this country, where they think they will get a better life. It was felt by our county that we should ask the EU and the UN, as well as our Government, to put legislation into place to combat this and to support the victims. He supported the efforts of the WI who are helping by raising this subject and discussing it. I was surprised to learn that the UK is the only country to prosecute in child pornography cases on the Internet. Members voted in favour of this Resolution.

Simone Robinson, from Essex Air Ambulance also spoke at this meeting; she stressed that the Air Ambulance Service does not want funding from the government, which would mean it had too much control. Their fundraising is done by Lottery, community groups, collection tins, payroll giving etc. but there is an urgent need for money from the Government for specific help, such as helipads for night-time use - at the moment they can only land in the daylight - and money for assistance with training. The members voted for this Resolution.

After a break for coffee, members formed groups to discuss what they would like from future speakers, and if they would like to make changes in the way the meetings are run. Judging by the ensuing noise I am expecting lots of ideas to come back via the group leaders who endeavoured

to write them down! Lorna Stenton told members of her aromatherapy course at Denman College, which she attended as part of the Awards for All Scheme, that 17 of us are going on five different Courses at the beginning of June under the same scheme.

We now have 53 members of the WI, but there is always room for more - we meet the second Thursday of the month, at 7.45pm in St. John's Hall.

Judy Colliver



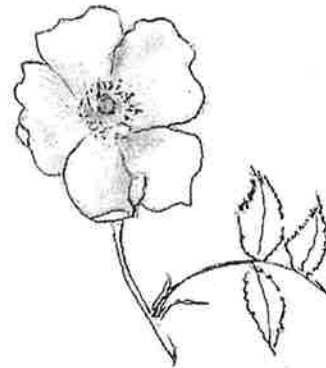
Nature Notes

Scrambling over local hedgerows in June and July are the pink or white five-petalled flowers of the dog rose, *Rosa canina*. It belongs to the same ancient family as apple, pear, plum, strawberry and blackberry. The dog rose is the most widespread of our 14 native species of rose. The word 'dog' is derogatory as this rose, although scented, is considered inferior to the highly scented cultivated roses, just as the dog violet is inferior to the sweet violet.

Shakespeare knew it as the Canker Rose and referred to it disparagingly in the sonnets and in Henry IV, Part I:

To put down Richard, that sweet lovely rose,
And plant this thorn, this canker, Bolingbroke?

In Shakespeare's time it was the dried flowers of the Apothecary's Rose, *Rosa gallica*, that were used in the making of pot pourri.



The dog rose has vigorous arching stems. The sharp downward pointing prickles enable it to cling to trees and bushes as it climbs upwards. It loses its leaves in winter, but the woody stems remain. It is extremely long living: there is one in a convent garden at Hildesheim in Germany that is reputed to have been planted by Charlemagne's son in AD 850!

After flowering it produces bright red oval hips which are extremely rich in vitamin C. The vitamin C content is apparently higher than in any other common fruit or vegetable. The dog rose came into its own during World War II when the hips were collected and processed into rose hip syrup. This was a valuable source of vitamin C when oranges were in short supply.

Rosina Kirkwood



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET

LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The Society's Annual General Meeting was held at the Day Centre on Thursday 6th May. Last season's meetings were reported as being very successful and well attended; the year's programme once again proving to be both enlightening and entertaining with invited speakers and members' own presentations encompassing a wide range of interests and fascinating detail from local interests to a story of emigration to Australia.

'Members Day' again proved very popular. To avoid disappointment please forward your name as soon as possible for inclusion next season.

The Chairman expressed thanks to all who had given assistance during the year's proceedings. Following the conclusion of AGM business matters, Peter Sanders gave a presentation (his 16th year) on extracts of events focussing on local matters of 'Stansted Parish Council 1908-1913'. The Society's committee members were then called upon by lending voice to our early Parish Councillors. *(It should be noted, and probably was, that no joint rehearsal of the evening's procedures had taken place!)*

The Parish Council, being a relatively new institution, was set up in 1894 under the Parish Council Act, thus taking over from the Church Vestry the running of ordinary village business. The Vestry remained to look after Church business. Parish Council elections were then very keenly fought and said to have caused considerable excitement among electors and those standing for the 11 available seats. The Council required several committees to be set up, these included Recreation Ground, Footpaths, Fire Engine, Lighting (street lighting by gas lamp), Sanitary matters, Assessments etc; but, of course, the Parish Council concerned themselves with far more than that.

One such concern being the speed at which motorists (on occasions estimated at 30-40 mph) and cyclists were causing problems as they proceeded through the village, the former being especially noticeable during Newmarket racing days. This matter alone, first raised in 1909, took the Parish Council, Essex County Council and eventually a Local Government Board Inquiry until 1913 before coming to a successful conclusion with the introduction of a 10 mph speed limit for the village.

The issue of Scavenging (Refuse collection) first arose in 1909, again taking a long time to resolve, which eventually required householders to provide dustbins (68 had been provided by 1912). Upon this sweeter note the evening's proceedings were brought to a close.

The programme for 2004-5 is well under way. We hope to see you all safe and well in September. The subject and speaker should appear within a later edition of the 'Link'.

Peter Brown



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info@stansted10k.org.uk

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All previous entrants have been sent details of this year's run, and we are now getting a good number of entries from people who have found our web site. For those who have still missed out, there is a copy of the entry form towards the back of this edition of the Link.

An added attraction for runners will be a free massage before the race, courtesy of Stortford Grange Physiotherapy Centre. There is also to be an extra water point on the route as we are expecting hot weather!

If you enjoyed the Clown Doctor at the recent Huw Johnson Club celebrations, you (and your children) will have an opportunity to see him again on the Race day.

Brian Quinn would still be very pleased to hear from people willing to help as stewards on the route for a couple of hours. Please call him on 01279 812109 or send us an email.

Marion Dyer
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Our next ploughman's lunches will be on Saturday 12th June and Saturday 10th July, at the Stansted Day Centre, noon to 2pm. All are welcome.

The main social event in June will be an International evening on Saturday 19th June at 7.30pm at Chantry Hall, Henham. Tickets are £7.50, to include supper, and are obtainable by ringing 814222 or 813432.

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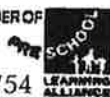
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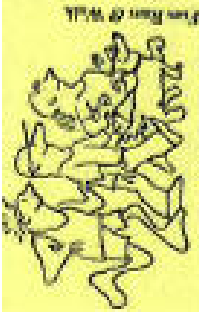
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10K COUNTRY & ROAD FUN RUN & WALK

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www.stansted10k.org.uk

11 am Sunday 11th July 2004 Bentfield Green

ALL PROCEEDS SHARED BETWEEN:

The Haw Johnson Club which aims to help anyone with a disability extend their range of social activities and make new friends whilst providing mutual support for their carers. The money raised from this year's run will go towards the expense of their annual holiday, plus the purchase of much needed new equipment.

The Assin Endwa Trust aims to improve the environment of the village of Assin Endwa in Ghana, by providing building materials and using local skills. Although only a tiny, five year old charity, already they have built a large communal latrine, a four-roomed schoolhouse and a community library. They are now hoping to build a small primary health clinic with accommodation for visiting doctors and nurses who travel large distances to visit the village. See more at www.endwa.org.uk

Postal entries must be received by 1st July

Categories (Individual & Teams) Male/female Under 12, Under 16, 16+

Fees Adults £7 (£8 on the day) Children £3 (in advance & on the day)

Individual (but not team) entries on the day from 10.00 am to 10.45 am.

Bar-B-Q ~ refreshments ~ raffle

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Stansted Fun Run, 7 Blythwood Gardens, Stansted CM24 8HG Tel/fax: 01279 814059
email: info@stansted10k.org.uk PLUS visit us on the internet at www.stansted10k.org.uk



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STANSTED 10K FUN RUN & WALK

FIRSTNAME.....SURNAME.....

ADDRESS

POSTCODE.....TEL.....

EMAIL (will not be publicised or passed on)

AGE (Optional if over 16) MALE / FEMALE

TEAM (if applicable)

Note: Postal entries (including teams) must be received by 1st July. Please send team entries in one envelope. First 4 team members home to count.

DECLARATION:

Please enter me for the Stansted Fun Run. I will not hold the organisers or sponsors responsible for any injury or illness incurred to my person during, or as a result of, the event, or for any property lost or damaged in the vicinity of the course.

SIGNATURE DATE

IF ENTRANT IS UNDER 16 YEARS OF AGE, PARENT/GUARDIAN MUST SIGN.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING AS APPROPRIATE:

Amount enclosed £..... (Adults £7, under 16s £3) Cheques to Stansted Fun Run.

..... I require a sponsorship form (entry fee will be refunded if you raise over

£15/£10 in sponsorship for our chosen charities).

..... I enclose an additional sae for a list of timings to be sent to me after the event

..... Please send me a map for locating the car park and start of the run

..... Please send me some raffle tickets to sell

PLEASE ENCLOSE A STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE OF SIZE C5 (9" by 6") plus an ADDITIONAL C5 sae if you require a list of timings.

Please use a separate form for each entry (photocopies are permissible) but you may send one cheque for all entries.

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