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Daniel Brett:
Stansted FC playing at St
Margaretsbury

Stansted Mountfitchet Village Magazine

The Link

www.stanstedlink.org.uk

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By email (preferred) to editor@stanstedlink.org.uk by noon on 9th March for the April issue or by hand/post by noon on 7th March to 7 Blythwood Gardens, Stansted CM24 8HG.

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EDITORIAL

As we watch the winter turn into spring and the days become longer, this is no doubt one of the most anticipated times of the year. The surrounding countryside and woodlands come to life, providing us with the opportunity of going back to nature to observe and enjoy a variety of wildlife, in places such as Hatfield Forest on page 7. The confusion of Brexit aside, this month we are facing some local challenges, including the fight to keep our library open and the need for a second pharmacy to serve our growing community; get the latest updates from the Parish Council on page 21. On a happier note, this month's sporting cover captures a determined Stansted football team as they aim to finish the season on a high by winning the League title, more on page 43. Former Nurse Jean Winder moved to Stansted 70 years ago, and she tells *My Stansted* why she still loves living in the community on page 11. As we enter a season of reflection *Thought for the Month* on page 13 encourages us to explore the deeper meaning of certain words such as the Period of 'Lent'. Would you like to learn the basics of Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation? Find out how and where on page 17. Finally, allow yourself to float away on a wave of joy and harmony this month, as the Harmonaires Choir perform in Stansted to raise funds for WaterAid, read more on page 29.



Ken Whyne
Editor

HAVE YOU HEARD OF BUFFY BUS?

www.buffybus.co.uk



The Big Bus for Little People

Buffy is a fully-equipped double decker bus which offers a range of activities for pre-school children and their parents and carers to come together, in a fun and safe environment. Our activities include painting, craft making, dressing up, playing in our ball pond and even cooking on a regular basis. The sessions

are led by experienced playleaders so that you can have a chance to 'chill out' and make new friends whilst your children are enjoying themselves. We have toilet/baby changing facilities on board and our service is Ofsted registered. Buffy operates five days per week and visits 15 different communities throughout Uttlesford. **We come to Walson Way, Forest Hall on Wednesdays 1.45pm-3.00pm during term-time.** You don't need to book, you can just turn up at any session. We ask for a suggested donation of £2.50 per child per visit, but most importantly we want our

service to be available to all, so please see our play leaders if you have difficulties with a donation.

New Bus

We are delighted to announce that we have been awarded funds from the Big Lottery to buy a replacement bus, which

will be launched in the summer. We are busy planning the interior of the bus so that our updated service will allow us to reach more families and carers with a wider range of requirements. This year we will also be celebrating our 25th birthday with a big launch event over the summer holidays, so please make 2019 the year when you visit Buffy - you will be very welcome. Contact us for more information or see our website.



Rosie Juhl

Project Manager

Tel: 01799 522130

Email: info@buffybus.co.uk



We have been covering a theme of *Super Heroes and Fairies*, which has been very popular with the children. This has encouraged the children to 'mark make' (which supports their early writing skills) as they have designed and named their own Super Hero or Fairy. They then discussed their creation's Super Powers and how they can use these powers to help others. Following one Forest School session where the children had collected sticks, they then made these into wands by winding wool round them, developing their fine motor skills. Forest School this term has given us the opportunity to explore our ever-changing environment with the different weathers we have experienced; rain, wind and snow. It was very exciting for all the children to make foot-prints in the snow and then look for animal footprints as well.



Our qualified, experienced team are pleased to be able to take children from two years old and offer up to 30 hours per week. The sessions we offer are 9.00am-noon, noon-3.00pm, and 9.00am-3.00pm. If you are interested in a place please contact us via our website or give us a call. We only have a few spaces available for the current academic year and are taking registrations for September 2019.

Karen Reilly
Pre-school Manager
Tel: 810800



ST MARY'S CofE (FOUNDATION) PRIMARY SCHOOL

There are two important news items for this month. Firstly, we said goodbye to Mrs Lyn Turner, our school secretary. Mrs Turner had been with St Mary's for 25 years and was a constant smiling presence in the office. She will be missed by everyone in the school. I love the fact that some of our current pupils' parents remember Mrs Turner being in the school office from when they themselves were pupils here! We wish her well for the future. Secondly, Mrs Rose and our dodgeball team recently achieved a first for St Mary's when they won a place at the Essex Dodgeball competition final. In Mrs Rose's words: "That was absolutely nail biting! We got through the first and second rounds, through the semi-finals and into the finals, then lost and took the Silver. There's only one team in the whole of Essex that can beat us! It's the furthest children have got in sport in the whole history of the school. They were incredible!"

ST MARY'S SCHOOL - EGGSTRAVAGANZA!

Join in the fantastic fun of our Easter Egg hunt organised by St Mary's PTFA, on **Sunday 7th April** noon-4.00pm. Starting at the school, this quest to find uniquely decorated eggs, hidden all over Forest Hall Park, will be a delightful afternoon out for your family. With every egg providing a clue to a puzzle, to be solved along the way, and a prize for every successful egg hunter, it really is a treat of a trail.

An Eggstravaganza and More

Besides the most marvellous egg hunt, there's more to look forward to in the school hall: Bobtail our fluffy Easter bunny, bouncing bunnies bouncy castle, seasonal crafts and the Easter kitchen which will be serving hot cross buns, chocolate nests and more; and if you are after an Easter cake, look no further than our Easter bake-off cake stall.

An Eggvent for the Whole Community

The colourful eggs are being decorated by local community groups and businesses, with special thanks to sponsor Martin Grant Homes. The theme is *'We are Stansted!'*, so feast your eyes on eggs that reflect everything you love about your local community – we welcome egg hunters of all ages. Now all you have to do is find them! Tickets £2.50 from www.pta-events.co.uk/stmarysstanstedptfa or buy them on the door for £3. The eggstravaganza awaits!



Barbara Young
Head Teacher
Tel: 812212

STANSTED MESSY CHURCH

www.stanstedchurches.com/messychurch



In January, over 60 adults and children enjoyed a variety of crafts and activities (including a magic torch!) which related to our theme of *Light*. It was good to see some families that we had not seen for a while, as well as welcoming some new ones.



There are more pictures on our website

Our next event is on **Sunday 10th March** 3.30pm-5.00pm at St Mary's School. This relaxed and lively style of church for all ages has activities, celebration and food, and plenty of **FUN**. Everyone is welcome, particularly families with children aged under 12, and there is no charge. See our website for more details.



Marion Dyer
Tel: 814059

It is hard to believe that we are already over half way through the academic year; the spring term seems to be flying by even quicker than the autumn term. Despite this fast pace there continues to be a plethora of learning taking place throughout the classrooms. In Cherry Class it has been most pleasing that the children are exemplifying a really settled and grown-up attitude, a testament to them considering it is only their second term in school. They have been studying old toys and it has been interesting to listen to the perceptions of the children when comparing them to the modern-day toys they are used to. In Pine Class they are learning about traditional tales and I have also seen some fantastic art work. Their recent display entitled *Colour Chaos* was particularly eye catching and demonstrated some excellent painting skills. In Birch Class our Year 2 pupils have been learning about the Great Fire of London and are currently creating the office of Samuel Pepys in the home corner.

In lower Key Stage 2 there is an obvious geography theme running through the pupils' learning. Maple and Beech Class have been studying mountains and rivers, and Year 4 has been looking at volcanoes through their Roman-based *Escape from Pompeii* topic. The pupils in this class were also enthralled by a recent drama visit from Freshwater Theatre Company, who led a volcanoes workshop in the main hall. In Chestnut Class the pupils are hard at work learning about earth and space in their *Out of this World* topic, whilst our Year 6s are revising the great range of writing genres they have studied over the years through their Harry Potter themed topic *The Philosopher's Stone*.

David Rogers
Headteacher
Tel: 813626

DO YOU RUN A COMMUNITY GROUP OR SERVICE FOR CHILDREN OR FAMILIES?

The organisers of *Bouncy Picnic* (picnic and inflatables event on the Rec in June) are considering a plan to give organisers of local community groups the possibility of raising awareness for their group by taking part in this year's event. *Bouncy Picnic* is attended by hundreds of people, mostly families with primary-age children, or younger. There could be an opportunity to publicise your group by running a small free activity/game or just providing a display and someone to answer any questions about what you do. However, in keeping with the rest of the event, fundraising will not be allowed and those involved will generally be groups which offer a service or activity free to the community (or accept optional donations only), rather than businesses or other activities which make a commercial charge. If you would like to know more please get in touch.

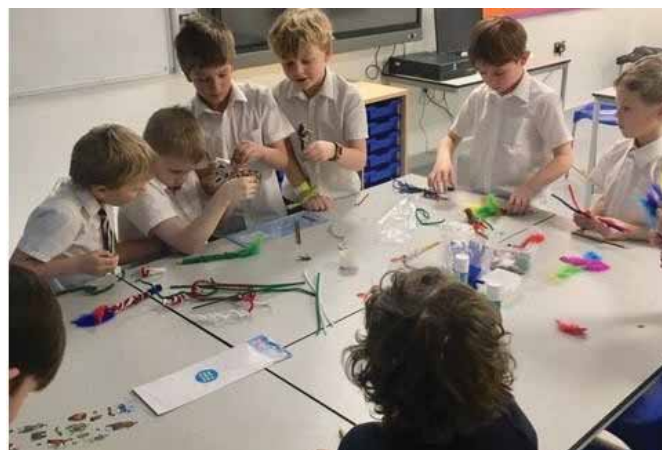


Ros Page
Tel: 810813
Email: rospagemusic@yahoo.com



MAGNA CARTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Children attending a primary school out of hours are being given a wealth of new experiences and opportunities. Magna Carta Primary Academy has relaunched its breakfast and after-school club with the appointment of new manager Rebecca Pengelly, who is mum to two Magna Carta pupils. She is giving children opportunities to be creative, to use their imaginations and to learn before and after school at the clubs, now named Lionhearts. She said: "I am creating a welcoming, fun environment focusing on children being creative. I am getting children to use their imaginations and ideas." The club has dress-up costumes for children to role-play, Lego to develop co-ordination and building, a colouring area and a quiet home corner with blankets and pillows for those wanting an after-school rest. The sessions have an educational element and regular themes, including one week learning about pets and watching Andy's Animal Adventures and another having a teddy bears' picnic where they made their own hats and played party games.



Headteacher Marios Solomonides said: "We have got great parents who do a lot for us. Rebecca is a parent and brings with her lots of customer service experience and people skills from her previous roles. We considered outsourcing the clubs, but this way we are able to link the sessions to our curriculum and they become an extension of the school day. The team running the clubs are a part of our staff training and work to the same systems, so that brings its own security and peace of mind for children and parents as the standards are the same throughout." The breakfast club runs 7.30am-8.45am and the after-school club 3.00pm-6.30pm. Healthy meals are served during both sessions.

Kelly Clark
Tel: 01245 237751



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WHAT'S ON IN MARCH

1	Fri	Business Forum Breakfast	Linden House 7 for 7.30 am
2	Sat	Quaker Healing Day	Quaker Meeting House 12 - 3pm
5	Tue	Stansted is Well Read	Dog and Duck 8 pm
6	Wed	Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm
7	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
9	Sat	Link copy due in today	before 12 noon
10	Sun	Messy Church	St Mary's School 3.30 - 5 pm
11	Mon	Community First Responders	Free Church Hall 8 pm
12	Tue	RSPB	Bishop's Park Comm Centre 7.30 pm
13	Wed	Cricket Club AGM	Football Club 7.30 for 8 pm
		Annual Parish Meeting	Day Centre 8 pm
13/20/27	Wed	Learn How to Meditate	St John's Church 7 - 7.45 pm
14	Thu	Stansted WI	Day Centre 7.30 pm
16	Sat	U3A Saturday Seminar	Free Church Hall 9.30 am
		Music@stansted	St John's Church 7.30 pm
17 Sun & 30 Sat		Stansted Family Café	Day Centre 10 - 11.30 am
19	Tue	CAMEO	Day Centre 7 pm
20	Wed	Ugley WI	Ugley Village Hall 2.15 pm
21	Thu	Stansted U3A	St John's Church 1.30 for 2 pm
23	Sat	Harmonaires Concert	St John's Church 7 - 8 pm
		Saffron Walden Choral Society	Saffron Hall 7.30 pm
24	Sun	Cantate Spring Concert	St John's Church 6.30 pm
26	Tue	Hearing Help	Day Centre 2 - 4 pm
		Inner Wheel	Day Centre 7.30 pm
27	Wed	Windmill AGM	Day Centre 7.30 for 8 pm
28 Thu - Sat		Murder on the Nile	Rhodes B Stortford 7.30 pm
30	Sat	Murder on the Nile	Rhodes B Stortford 3 pm
30	Sat	Grove Cottage Disco Night	H@me and Eat 8 pm



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Sat 16th March

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7.30 pm Sat 16th March

St John's Church

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Programme to be confirmed

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HATFIELD FOREST

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hatfield-forest

Spring is approaching and excitement is mounting at Hatfield Forest, where a tawny owl has again been spotted roosting in a veteran tree. The Forest has a number of nest boxes, but this owl seems to prefer the natural habitat. The owl is in a prime place to be able to capitalise on every element which make up a tawny's diet; small mammals, rodents, small birds, frogs, insects, worms and even fish at times. There are also reports of red kites and ravens overflying the Forest, and the possible sighting of a goshawk around the area.



Finding a spot to watch wildlife is a wonderful way to enjoy the Forest. We ask that you please give the creatures space to live, undisturbed by us. Please do take photographs, sketch and paint from a distance, but keep to hard-standing paths and away from waterlogged areas. It is important dogs are kept on leads in the lake and boardwalk areas, around our livestock and wildlife, and under close control in the wider Forest. There are many ways to explore Hatfield Forest. We have events during the spring and summer, including photographic workshops, a Forest bake-off and the opportunity to build a bee hotel. For details see our website or call us. It is not just wildlife that is flourishing now. The Forest is showing signs of new growth, with catkins on hazel trees, sticky buds on the horse chestnuts and dog's mercury carpeting our ancient woodland.

Helen Hooker and Elizabeth Reeve
Visitor Welcome Team
Tel: 870678

THANK YOU, DAPHNE

Volunteering to help with the production of a monthly magazine is quite a major commitment of time and effort. Our colleague, Daphne Lunnon, a loyal Stansted resident, has been providing her copy-proofing skills to *The Link* for an amazing 16 years! Her role is to read every single editorial page and pick-up any last minute errors just before the magazine is printed. To date Daphne has been responsible for proofing over 176 different issues of the magazine; that is some commitment! The other members of *The Link* team would like to say a big **Thank you** to Daphne for her amazing contribution and her continued dedication to the magazine.



Ken Whyne
Editor

WHOOSH EXPLORE NEWS

www.whooshexplore.co.uk



Paddling sessions are now starting for our new season with *Whoosh Explore*, with regular paddling sessions on a Saturday morning, and monthly litter picks to improve the environment of the River Stort. *Whoosh Explore* celebrates its 10th anniversary this year; it continues to offer weekend paddling, Saturday morning club trips and taster sessions to many local community groups.

This year we set the challenge to improve the Stort with monthly litter picks and are looking for volunteers to assist with our *River Stort - River Clean* Campaign. People are often surprised to hear that the rivers are not cleaned of litter as part of weekly rubbish collections, and that maintaining the river is typically down to the work of volunteer groups. The River Stort is an area of diverse wildlife which needs protection; paddlers have sighted otter and water vole for example, as well as kingfishers and cormorants on our travels. We made the commitment to improve the river environment after discovering a dead otter that had become caught in an illegal and abandoned crayfish net. We are on the lookout for dangers to wildlife such as abandoned shopping trolleys and entangled fishing lines in trees. We now run a litter picking paddle over the first weekend of each month, heading out to a different stretch of the river each time. We welcome anyone who can take a couple of hours out to assist in either walking or paddling a stretch of river with a dustbin bag, gloves and grabber.

Over the years we have developed as a Club with a regular group of weekday paddlers alongside our weekend activities. We are a diverse paddling community with a wide age and ability range. We welcome new members looking to try something new, from our midweek pensioners' paddle, to our evening taster sessions for youth groups and trips which can be found on our website.

Peter Nash
Tel: 817453



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

www.stanstedwindmill.co.uk

We are all prepared for our AGM on **Wednesday 27th March** 7.30pm for 8.00pm in the Day Centre, when our speaker will be Roger Barrett from the History Society. As always we would welcome some new Stewards for an occasional two hour shift when the windmill is open during spring and summer. Please do get in touch with me if you would like to help.

Our Spring Coffee Morning will be on **Wednesday 10th April**, 10.00am-noon, again in the Day Centre. There will be hot cross buns, biscuits, squash, tea and coffee. Entrance fee: £2.50 which includes refreshments. There will be a raffle, cake stall, bric-à-brac and mill goods on sale. When we are open on Easter Sunday there will be small Easter eggs and a windmill souvenir for all the children. The next Windmill openings will be 1.30pm-5.30pm on Sunday 7th April, Easter Sunday 21st April and Bank Holiday Monday 22nd April.



Molly Clark
Co-trustee
Tel: 816768



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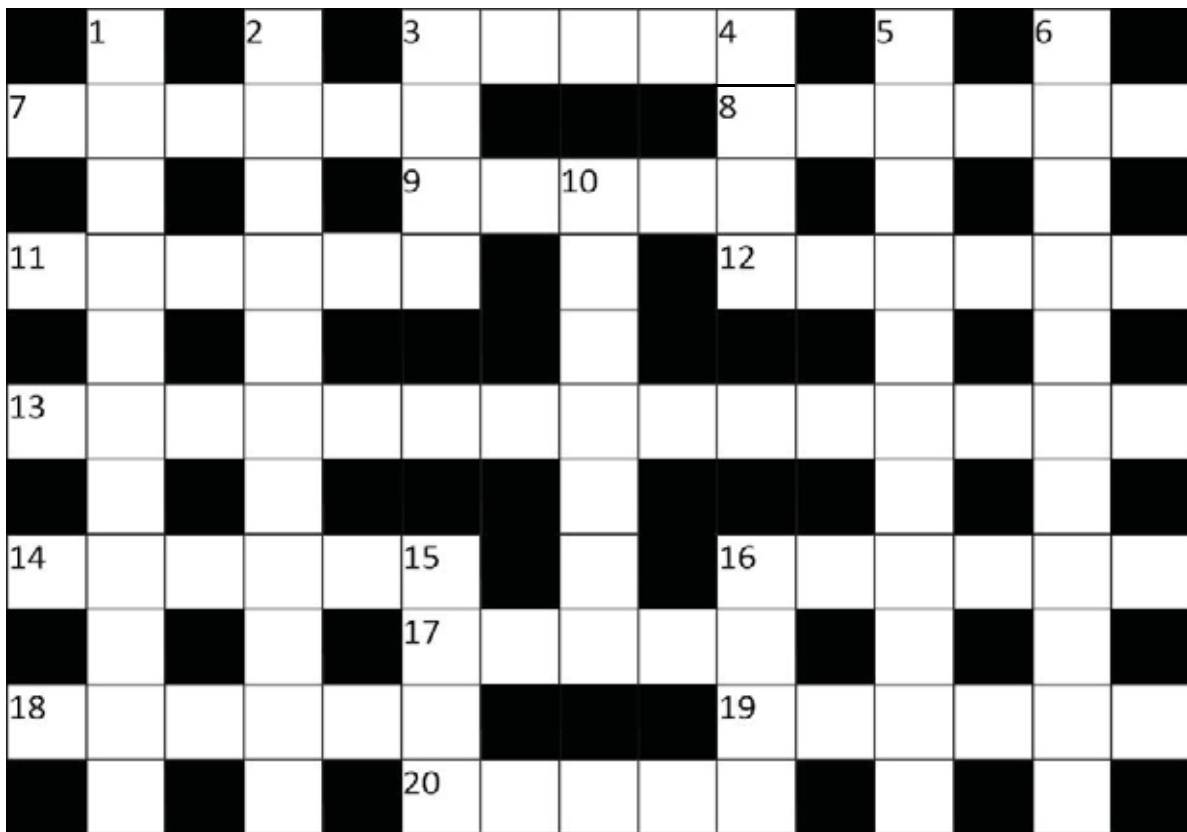
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FUN AND GAMES PUZZLE TIME



Compiled by Roger Wardle. Answers on page 37

ACROSS

3. Viennese dance (5)
7. Hire or interlock (6)
8. King of the fairies (6)
9. Like a Sprite (5)
11. Harry Potter's calling (6)
12. Football or cricket team (6)
13. Easy listening whilst driving in the centre lane (6,2,3,4)
14. Dual speaker music box (6)
16. Messy, not orderly (6)
17. Small, neat petition (5)
18. Regional brogue (6)
19. Tree-lined road (6)
20. Slow deadly sin! (5)

DOWN

1. Drugs to fight bacteria (11)
2. Peace and stability (3,3,5)
3. A plant on the wrong place! (4)
4. Defined area, sometimes cordoned off (4)
5. Famous people, well they think they are (11)
6. Last line spoken in a radio conversation (5,3,3)
10. Surrendered as a penalty (7)
15. Chooses, decides (4)
16. The Mormon state (4)

UK CITIES

1. Most populous city outside London
2. Surrounded on three sides by the river Wear
3. A large medieval mappa mundi is on display in the cathedral here
4. This city is half in Armagh and half in Down
5. Nicknamed "Steel City"
6. The cathedral in this city has the heaviest ring of 10 bells in the world
7. Formally known, officially, as New Sarum
8. City of the birth of Rob Brydon, Harry Secombe and Catherine Zeta-Jones
9. City that includes Buckingham Palace
10. The legend of "Peeping Tom" is set here
11. Britain's oldest black community and Europe's oldest Chinese community live here
12. City known for its lace, bicycle and tobacco products
13. This city is named after Britain's first Christian martyr
14. The final battle of the English Civil War was fought here
15. City of dreaming spires
16. Gateway to the Highlands
17. City with a Royal Crescent, Pump Room and Assembly Rooms
18. The first set of rules for football were drawn up here, and the first game played under FA rules
19. Known as the city of "jute, jam and journalism"
20. Has the world's oldest dry dock and the Spinnaker Tower

Compiled by Cliff Gilbert. Answers on page 37

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MY STANSTED

An Interview with Jean Winder



How long have you lived here?

For 70 years

What brought you to Stansted?

I moved here to work as a Nursing Sister at the Herts and Essex Hospital in Bishop's Stortford.

Why do you enjoy living here?

I get visits from members of my wonderful family who live in the village and I have lovely neighbours who help and look out for me. Stansted is a very friendly community.

Is there anything you don't like about the village?

Not really. Although it's changed a lot, I'm still quite happy living here.

How does Stansted compare with other places you've lived?

When I moved here, from a village in Yorkshire, Stansted was smaller than it is now so it wasn't that different from where I lived before. People weren't quite as openly friendly here as they were in Yorkshire but I soon got to make new friends in Stansted.

What was your profession?

I trained as a nurse in Blackpool and Manchester and worked at Herts and Essex Hospital for 12 years. I was also the school nurse at St Mary's School in the village for 18 very happy years.

How do you spend your leisure time?

I enjoy volunteering at the Huw Johnson Club, Bingo sessions at Norman Court and occasional visits to the Day Centre. I'm also lucky enough to go on a cruise most years arranged by my grandson.

What is the most memorable thing that's happened during your time in Stansted?

Joining the Huw Johnson Club in 1974, which has brought me so much pleasure over the years, and being presented with a Community Achievement Award. When I got the letter telling me about the award, I thought they must have sent it to the wrong person and almost ignored it. (I didn't think I'd done anything special enough for an

award.) My daughter persuaded me otherwise and we had a lovely evening at the presentations. My certificate hangs in pride of place on my wall and I have some smashing photos of the event so I'm glad I didn't throw that letter in the bin!



Yvonne Ayres



www.stanstedbusinessforum.co.uk

We had a lively, well-attended meeting on 1st February at Linden House. The Stansted Business Forum (SBF) is always keen to link with our local community and particularly with our primary schools and Forest Hall School. We also now have a charity of the year; last year it was *Support 4 Sight*, where the forum raised money to support people who are blind or with vision impairments. At the meeting, we heard from St Clare's Hospice which is the SBF charity for 2019, telling us about the good work that they do. One of our district councillors, Geoffrey Sell, gave an update on the local plan and particularly asked the Forum to get behind it. If the local plan does not get accepted it means that more houses will be built in Stansted. He also said that the local plan was meant to include building commercial offices for business start-ups. This does not appear to have happened. It was therefore particularly important that local businesses had a say in the future of Stansted. So please remember to contact Geoffrey and help provide support for local businesses.

We are updating our website and social media so you can see what our local businesses offer, and hopefully they will be your first choice if you need a range of services. We are also looking to print more maps of Stansted showing the location of our businesses and what they do. Our next meeting is at Linden House on **Friday 1st March 7.00am** for 7.30am, and we invite local businesses to contact Peter on 813318, email: peter.james@murdochsestateagents.co.uk to secure a place.



Iris Evans



INNER WHEEL CLUB OF BISHOP'S STORTFORD

On a very wintry evening in January we were treated to a wonderful illustrated talk by Ken McDonald from The Hundred Parishes Society. Ken outlined how the Society was formed and who the trustees are. He then went on to take us on a tour of some of the parishes with photographs of some really interesting buildings. All the photographs we saw can be found in the book that they have published, copies of which were on sale. The Club will be celebrating its 70th Charter with a special lunch on **Sunday 3rd March** at Bishop's Stortford Golf Club. Our regular Club meeting will be held on **Tuesday 26th March** at 7.30pm in the Day Centre. For more information please contact me.

June Milne
Club Correspondent
Tel: 01371 875370

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THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

When I am driving, I, like many, have the radio playing. I often change which channel I listen to: sometimes show tunes, sometimes pop music, and currently the channels which provide topical discussions. At the moment a hot topic on most stations is Brexit, but increasingly there has been interest in trying to identify and explain the terminology involved, which is leaving many of us completely baffled!

Well, there is equally an effect where words which are commonly understood amongst people of faith can leave those outside baffled. I am sure you could identify what some of this terminology might be; but we need to understand and make understood the life-changing ability of these words. To start

with a simple one, "Jesus Christ" – is this just something to say as an exclamation of shock? Or is it the name of our Saviour, Lord and Friend? We have now entered a period of *Lent* - do you know what that means? If not, why not find out? The Bible is full of wonderful words but we do need to try and understand what they mean to each of us. I will leave you with some easy ones to get you started: Would you like a 10/10 life? Then look up John 10:10; "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." I encourage you not to be dismissive or baffled by what faith could mean to you, why not commit this Lent period to learning more of the word, or maybe turn to it for the first time?



Lieutenant Megan Kervin
Bishop's Stortford Salvation Army



CAMEO (Come and Meet Each Other)

The CAMEO group meets at 7.00pm on the third Tuesday of the month in the Day Centre. The cost is £1 per session and includes an evening topic followed by fellowship over tea/coffee and biscuits. In January the fellowship enjoyed a yummy Burns Night supper put on by Lt Cols Alan and Val Hart (members). It was a great evening of food and fellowship and of course, original poetry. The programme for the next few months is as follows:

19th March *This is me*: Elliot Kervin (Royal Marines Bandman)

16th April Passover Evening

21st May *This is me*: Rev'd Sarah Forrest (Holy Trinity Church)

18th June *This is me*: Rev'd Gill Hulme (Methodist Church)

The Salvation Army meets for a service each Sunday 10.30am at Markwell Pavillion, Castle Gardens, Bishop's Stortford. Everyone welcome. We hope to see you soon.



Lieutenant Megan Kervin
Tel: 507464

Email: megan.kervin@salvationarmy.org.uk

From St John's Registers

Baptism

10th February Charlotte Elizabeth Burt

Funerals - January

3rd Andrew Mark Smith, age 45 - funeral at St John's followed by cremation at Harwood Park

23rd Michael John McGreal, age 69 - service at St John's followed by cremation at Cam Valley

31st Gerald Norman Childs, age 87 - service at St Mary's followed by burial at Stansted Cemetery

We apologise for an omission in the December Registers. The entry should read:

Baptism

16th Ralph Robert Robinson



All enquiries: The Church Office, St John's Hall,
St John's Road, Stansted CM24 8JP
Tel: 815243
Office hours: 9.00am-12 noon Mon,
Wed, Fri
Email: st.johns.church@btinternet.com
Website: www.stanstedstjohns.btik.com

Rector: Rev'd Paul Wilkin
Tel: 812203
Email: stansted.rector@gmail.com

Director of Music: Anne Brooks
Email: anne.brooks22@yahoo.co.uk

Church Hall Bookings: Barbora Dragoskova
Tel: (with answerphone): 815243
Email: st.johns.church@btinternet.com

St John's Diary

Sunday

8.00am Said Holy Communion

9.30am Choral Eucharist (2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays)

9.30am Family Communion (1st Sunday)

Tuesday

9.15am St John's Tots

Wednesday

9.00am Morning Prayer

10.00am Holy Communion

Thursday

10.30am-noon The Coffee Pot

Monday-Thursday and Saturday

5.00pm Evening Prayer

A monthly service of Holy Communion is held for residents in two Stansted care homes: on the first Wednesday (Hargrave House) and the second Tuesday (Mountfitchet House).

Ash Wednesday Service

This year, instead of our usual evening Ash Wednesday service, we are having a special Holy Communion service on Wednesday 6th March at 10.00am in St John's Church.

Kathy West

ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Congratulations to the winners of the January draw:

£100 No 83 Bridget Gott
£50 No 279 John Elliott
£25 No 243 Richard Shervington

The draw for March will be held on **Sunday 31st March** in St John's Church following the 9.30am service. Numbers at £2 each are still available for anyone who may wish to join the Club and be in with a chance of winning one of the 38 prizes totalling £2,500 given away this year. The Club raises vital money to help cover the heavy maintenance costs and work of St John's Church.

Jean Newson
Tel: 819062

THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Quaker Meeting House, 71 Chapel Hill
Stansted CM24 8AE
www.saffronquakers.org.uk/stanstedhtml

Clerk Jane Mitchell
Tel: 503024
Email: sjane.mitchell@ntlworld.com

Lettings Richenda Whitehead
Tel: 07773 603618
Email: richendajw@live.com

Meeting Sunday, 10.30am every week

Light Group 10.30am-12 noon 2nd March. The (Guided Meditation) 'Experiment with Light' is a process that helps people deepen their spiritual lives by discovering what it means to 'wait in the Light', as early Quakers did.

QUAKER NATIONWIDE DAY OF HEALING

www.quaker-healing.org.uk

Join us for an extended *Meeting for Worship* with a specific focus on Healing on **Saturday 2nd March** noon-3.00pm. It will be preceded by our regular Stansted Light Group session from 10.30am-noon. **You may wish to focus on:** family or friends, sickness, tragedy, starvation, homelessness, world conflict, the environment and all life on our fragile planet. Stay for as long as you wish, but please respect the silence within the building. Hot and cold drinks will be available in the kitchen; do bring a packed lunch if you wish. **Healing is love in action ... "Perhaps as never before, what the world needs is Healing"**. Further details from Anthea Lee 656707 or Sue Moloney 771405.



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Email: minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Lettings Marion and Mike Dyer
Tel: 814059
Email: lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Preachers for March

3rd 10.30am Nicola Grieves – New Directions
10th 10.30am Rev'd Jan Atkins-Snow
17th 10.30am Rev'd Stuart Veitch
24th 10.30am Rev'd Roy Fowler - Communion
31st 10.30am Rev'd Christine Fowler - Mothering Sunday



LEARN TO MEDITATE

Would you like to learn how to meditate? Meditation is a universal spiritual wisdom and a practice found at the core of all the great religious traditions, leading from the mind to the heart. It is a way of simplicity, silence and stillness and can be practised by anyone, wherever you are on your life's journey. This practice is derived from the Gospel teaching of Jesus and the advice of early Christian monks. It also comes from the Desert Fathers and Mothers, who teach a Christian spirituality of powerful relevance for those today who want to live their discipleship to Jesus in a radical and simple way.

Meditation Group

During Lent this year, instead of the usual Churches Together Lent meetings, we will run a meditation group on **Wednesdays 13th March to 17th April** 7.00pm-7.45pm in St John's Church, when we will learn and practise the technique of silent prayer. This is meditation taught from a Christian perspective, but anyone of any faith (or none) who has an open mind is welcome.

Helen Flack
Assistant Curate, St John's Church
Email: revhelenstn@gmail.com



FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH

Our AGM is on **Friday 15th March** 6.30pm for 7.00pm in the Day Centre. As ever, it promises to be more fun than your average AGM, with fish and chips and a quiz. Anyone wanting to come for fish and chips should contact Ray Rodgers on 814210. This year, the Friends are hosting no less than five performances by *thisismytheatre* from May onwards, including *Romeo and Juliet* and *Macbeth*, with the *Wind in the Willows* for the young at heart. Over the weekend of **27th and 28th April**, 2.30pm-5.30pm St Mary's will be hosting a musical celebration of Stansted choirs. See p37 for more information. Free entry. All welcome.

Tony Graver



Contact: Howard and Ros Page
Tel: 810813
Email: contactstanfam@yahoo.com

Our Christian beliefs are conventional, we are just doing church differently.

Our @27 meetings are normally held on alternate Tuesdays; 7.30pm coffee for 7.45pm start. In March and April (leading up to Easter), arrangements will be a little more flexible than usual, so please get in touch if you wish to come along. @27 is a house-church or homegroup-style meeting with modern worship music, a Bible-based *thought for the day*, discussion, prayer and more. If you are looking for Christians with a contemporary outlook, a desire to grow in our faith and a vision to benefit our community, why not get in touch? All are welcome; you do not have to be a member of Family Church, or any church, to attend. The **Alpha Course** is now well under way, and is suitable for anyone who would like to explore the basics of the Christian faith; whether you would describe yourself as a Christian or not. If you missed the start this time, but would like to take part, please get in touch as we plan to run it again in the near future. If you would like to join a prayer walk, or have a prayer-request, please contact us.



Ros and Howard Page

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	Sunday	10.00am
	Holy Days of Obligation	see St Theresa's website
	Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri	9.30am

Confessions	
Saturday	10.00am and by appointment

Baptisms By appointment



SHALOM

We are not meeting in March and April as we are supporting the Churches Together in Stansted *Learn to Meditate* Lent Groups (see separate article for details).



Marion Dyer
Tel: 814059



Sunday walks departing at 10.00am, 5-6 miles

10th March Thremhall Park (Bury Lodge Lane), off the old Takeley Road GR: TL532214 Postcode: CM22 7WE
24th March Green Tye (Park Roadside next to Prince of Wales PH) GR: TL444184 Postcode: SG10 6JP
14th April Daisy May Farm, Hall Rd, Elsenham, Left after the RH bend GR: TL541261 Postcode: CM22 6DF
28th April Twyford Lock Car park Pig Lane B/S GR: TL493193 Postcode: CM22 7PA

New Year and we have our Annual AGM and all are welcome, not just members, on Tuesday 12th March 7.45pm at the New Apton Centre, Bishop's Stortford. We are delighted that an illustrated talk will be given by local writer and journalist, Phoebe Taplin, on *Great Long Distance Walks near Bishop's Stortford*. The talk will focus on ten of the best local routes to celebrate the landscapes of Hertfordshire, Essex and beyond; entry is free!



Photograph courtesy of Sylvia Hayes

Reporting a problem on Essex Roads

If you find a problem in Essex relating to any Highways issues, and this includes public footpaths and bridleways (PROWs), there is a website on which to report it www.essexhighways.org/Transport-and-roads.aspx. It is a fairly simple and easy site to use.

I would like you to remember **Phil Tripp** who was a long-time member and chairman of BSDFA, who died recently at the age of 93. He actively led walks along footpaths including carrying out clearances with spades, loppers, machetes, secateurs and strimmers; those were the days! He fought avidly for retention of the footpath through Hockerill College grounds, organising an all-day count of the number of users and why they used the path, which he presented at the hearings. Our present chairman, Dave Webber, dedicated our last walk to the memory of Phil. Thank you Phil for showing us how to appreciate our local PROWs. My thanks to Joyce who jogged my memory.



Daphne Wallace-Jarvis
Publicity Officer
Email: dwjwjj.444@gmail.com



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HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

www.numiscan.co.uk

What is Atrial Fibrillation?

Atrial Fibrillation (AF) is a common abnormal heart rhythm. Your heart's pumping action is controlled by tiny electrical messages produced by a part of the heart called the sinus node. The sinus node is sometimes called your heart's 'natural pace-maker'. Normally, the electrical messages are sent out regularly, with each message telling your heart to contract and pump blood around your body. This is felt as a normal, regular heart-beat, or pulse. Atrial Fibrillation (AF) happens because, as well as the sinus node sending out regular electrical impulses, different places in and around the atria (the upper chambers of the heart) also produce electrical messages, in an uncoordinated way. These multiple, irregular messages make the atria quiver or twitch, which is known as fibrillation: an irregular and fast heart-beat, or pulse.

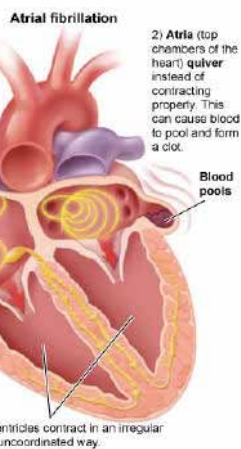
What are the symptoms of Atrial Fibrillation?

Symptoms can include: palpitation (being aware of your heartbeat), tiredness, shortness of breath and dizziness or feeling faint. An irregular pulse could be a sign that you have an atrial fibrillation. However, some people only have mild symptoms, while other people have no symptoms at all.

Can Atrial Fibrillation lead to a stroke?

AF can increase the risk of a blood clot forming inside the heart. If the clot travels to the brain, it can lead to a stroke. AF increases stroke risk by five times. However, with appropriate treatment the risk of stroke can be substantially reduced with anticoagulant (blood thinning) drugs.

Numi Scan, located on Cambridge Road, is offering free AF tests; please call us to book. We also offer other vascular screening for stroke prevention.



When the rate of the electrical signals is very high, the atria quiver instead of contracting properly. They fail to pump all the blood out of the atria. The blood can pool and may form a clot. If a blood clot leaves the atria it can block an artery in the body, causing severe complications, such as **stroke**.

Nathan Boston
Vascular Sonographer
Tel: 797790

STORT INTERFAITH SEMINAR

Thursday 14th March 7.00pm

Shi Xing Fa leads a seminar on *Taoism and Tai Chi* at the Windhill Christian Centre, Bishop's Stortford. Shi Xing Fa trained in Tai Chi and Qi Gong at Shaolin Temples in China and in the UK, and is an experienced teacher, lecturer and practitioner of Chinese cultural healing and wellbeing. Tai Chi is a form of meditative exercise; Qi Gong involves healing with acupuncture and meditation. All welcome.

Dave Morson
Tel: 850209



COMMUNITY FIRST RESPONDERS

Learn the basics of Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Have you ever wondered what you would do if the person standing next to you collapsed and stopped breathing? Did you know you are their best hope of survival? On **Monday 11th March** at 8.00pm in the Free Church Hall, Stansted Community First Responders (CFRs) will be demonstrating CPR and will show you what to do. Come and practise simple techniques that could help you save someone's life. The only cost will be your time. For more information about the evening, or about the Stansted Community First Responders, please call or send me a text.

Diana Griffin
Tel: 07733 218692

BRAIN TRAINING

Improve your balance and make your walking and running more fluid. To find out if this works for you, stand on one leg, maybe with your eyes shut, and get a good wobble going. Now make a tight fist with one hand and stretch out the fingers of the other hand. If this made you nearly fall over, try it the other way round. The chances are high that one combination improved things whilst the other made things worse. Apart from doing this when practising your balance, it's an extremely good idea to do the same hand combination whilst out walking or running. Just swing your arms as you normally do when proceeding along but keep one hand in a fist and the other stretched out.



Why this works boils down to it having a good effect on the gait cycle. This is how we walk: as the right leg steps forwards, the left arm also comes forwards, whilst the left leg and right arm go backwards. For many reasons and in different ways, this can go a bit wrong. The one fist exercise helps correct this. A typical sign is an unbalanced bottom (oo'er missus); tighten your bottom and prod away at each cheek – it is very common for one cheek to be flabbier than the other. The above drill profoundly helps correct this.

Clare Harding
Z-Health Master Trainer
Tel: 816430
Email: fun@clareharding.com

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www.helenrollason.org.uk

Join the Helen Rollason Cancer Charity for our Rural Ramble at The Gardens of Easton Lodge on **Saturday 13th April**. Last year, we welcomed over 300 supporters who joined the charity for our very first Rural Ramble raising over £5,000! The gardens, which are entirely maintained by volunteers, comprise a walled kitchen garden dating back to the 18th century, a wild flower area for the bees, formal gardens, beautiful carpets and expansive colourful displays of flowers in Spring and Summer.



There are three distance options for participants to choose from: 10-mile walk and garden visit, four-mile walk and garden visit or a one-mile walk family trail and garden visit; dogs on leads are welcome. As part of the visit a delicious cream tea is included with each ticket. Situated a few minutes outside the historic market town of Great Dunmow, this is a unique opportunity to enjoy a beautiful walk around the surrounding countryside and The Gardens of Easton Lodge. Last year, participants were full of praise for the event; "I would just like to say thank you for organising a great first Rural Ramble. My husband, two children, two dogs and I completed the 10-mile ramble today. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves; the organisation, the route and the tea afterwards were all excellent." This year we already have lots of people signed up and are looking forward to a great day out; we are keeping our fingers crossed for sunny skies and warm spring weather! Places are limited and must be pre-booked. You can register online using the form on our website or simply call 01245 380719.

Holly Butler
Marketing and Communications Co-Ordinator

CAR KEY – CLAIMED!

Following on from the item last month about a FIAT key which I found in a field near Church Road, I was very pleased to receive a phone call from its rightful owner, who was extremely pleased to get it back, after a few anxious weeks of worry. So, if you ever find an object like that where it shouldn't be, then do get in touch with *The Link*; we might get the item together with its owner in due course!

Elizabeth Oakley

WINES OF SPAIN



If you are planning your summer holiday, why not try some of the indigenous grape varieties before you go, and maybe visit a few wineries whilst you are there? We are so lucky in the UK to have supermarkets with a great range of local indigenous grape varieties, like Spanish wines for example. Many will have tried the white wine and grape Albarino from the Galicia region in northern Spain, but a more unusual variety from the same region now gaining popularity is *Godello*. This grape, which at one time was on the verge of extinction, is more intense with good minerality and crisp acidity. Try Sainsbury's Taste the Difference *Godello, Bierzo 2016* at £9.00 or the 'Xastra' *Godello, Bierzo* at £9.99 from Adnams.

The white *Rueda* wine is made predominantly from the Verdejo grape, a good alternative to Sauvignon Blanc (and indeed is sometimes blended with it) and great with fish dishes. A good value example is *Beronia Rueda 2016* at £8.99 from Waitrose with aromas of ripe stone fruits with hints of lime, green apple and tropical fruits on the palate. For the reds Spain has much more to offer than just the Tempranillo grape and Rioja. One worth seeking out is the second most popular red grape in Spain which few have heard of: *Bobal*, a muscular red wine with a dense core of forest fruit flavours. Majestic have a great value example in *Vox Populi Bobal 2014* at £7.32 as part of a mixed six case. Another variety gaining in popularity is the Mencia grape, mainly from the Castilla y Leon region in NW Spain with aromas of strawberry and plum (a bit like Pinot Noir) and an elegant fruity taste. Again, Majestic have a good value version in their *Pizarras de Otero, Bierzo 2015* at £7.99 as part of a mixed case, or the 2016 Mencia *Selection 'Xastra', Bierzo* at £9.99 from Adnams. Happy holiday planning!



Paul Wilkinson
Email: Corkscrew_456@hotmail.co.uk

INK CARTRIDGE RECYCLING FOR CHARITY

Since starting to collect used ink cartridges in the middle of 2017, we have raised £97.20; this has gone towards the expenses of Messy Church, which is funded by all the Stansted churches. Thank you to all who have donated so far – please keep them coming! There is a collecting box in the Free Church Foyer (which is open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9.30am-12.30pm), and also one in the Free Church Hall. We can take most cartridges except Epson, but they must be **originals** (not remanufactured or own branding such as Tesco, Millway etc). Unfortunately, we can no longer recycle mobile phones. If you cannot take items to the church, you can bring them to 7 Blythwood Gardens (leave in the porch if we are out) or we can collect from you. Thank you.



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Stansted Network

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

to be held at

The Stansted Day Centre, Crafton Green, Chapel Hill, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex

On WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH 2019 at 8.00pm

A G E N D A

- 1 To receive apologies for absence
- 2 To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2018
- 3 To receive the Parish Council's audited accounts to 31 March 2018
- 4 Financial Report
- 5 Chairman's Report
- 6 To receive a report on Neighbourhood Watch
- 7 Proposed resolutions
- 8 Open Forum
- 9 Refreshments

Ruth A Clifford
Clerk to the Council

NOTE

The Parish Meeting may, by law, discuss all parish affairs and pass resolutions about them. Such resolutions are not binding upon the Parish Council, but members usually consider them at their next available meeting and consider what action, if any, to take. Anyone wishing to speak under the Open Forum must state their name and use the microphones provided. Any intention to record, film or take photographs during the Meeting must be notified to the Clerk or Chairman prior to the start of the meeting. Please try not to repeat topics already discussed. The meeting will close at 10pm at the latest.

Tea and coffee will be served after the meeting.

CONTACT US: parishcouncil@stansted.net or telephone 01279 813214

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Cllr Maureen Caton writes:

Another year to look back on and look forward too! Elections are looming and there may be changes to the incumbent Parish and District Councillors that represent us. Peter Jones, (pictured right), who has been a Councillor at both levels, serving the community for 43 years, has decided to retire. His financial expertise, aligned with his common-sense approach to issues, will be sorely missed. John Salmon (left) is also bidding farewell to council life; John has also served on both Councils and retires after 32 years. Thank you both for your years of dedication and commitment to our community.



We hope the Local Plan will be passed and leave us in the position of only accepting another sixty homes in the period to 2033. This, aligned with our **Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)**, which outlines how we expect any future development, should be assessed in line with policies and principles in the plan. Public consultation on the NDP should take place in late Spring this year. This may well be followed by a call for sites suitable for new almshouses to be built, following the release of funds from the old site on Church Road, ringfenced to be reinvested in Stansted.

Welcome to the **new residents** of Walpole Meadows and Elms Farm; we hope they will be part of, and participate in, our vibrant and caring community.

This year's **Community Achievement Award** winners, who were acknowledged at a celebration event at Uttlesford District Council Offices were Judy Colliver, Alan Corbishley and Marion Pretty. Between them, they illustrate our ability to care in our community.

We held a civil ceremony this year to mark our **twinning with Rungis** in France. We are looking forward to individuals, families and organisations in the village taking the opportunity to exchange visits and social/cultural experiences that will strengthen our bond of "entente cordiale."

The decision on the **expansion of Stansted Airport** was controversially approved by Uttlesford District Council (UDC), with the Parish Council requesting the Minister to review the decision.

Likewise, we are questioning the validity of the 2015/18 **Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment** which states that we only need one dispensing pharmacy in the village; some significant consultees omitted to comment on our needs and this negligence requires a review, significantly in the south ward. The Essex Health and Wellbeing Board are not prepared to visit and hear the views of the community and, therefore, will not issue a reviewed statement of need. We have no alternative than to seek the support of the Minister for Health to achieve this outcome.

Essex County Council's (ECC) **Library Strategy Consultation** was a complete surprise to the Parish Council. We have been in discussions with the Library Service since 2011, culminating in an agreement that our new hub, The Mountfitchet Exchange, would be designed around the central resource of a library. To hear that our library was in tier 4, deemed for closure, displayed a lack of transparency and partnership working to say the least. The consultation document is, we believe, flawed; not least it uses statistics taken during the period that the library was based in the mobile vehicle and latterly in a small room in our offices. We are robustly pursuing ECC to honour their commitment and obligation to our community and to review the statistics and the development opportunities from the hub - to place us in Tier 2.



We hope to have a UDC presence providing community information from the hub, CAB services and a base for our joint-funded **Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)** who has been recruited and will hopefully be with us in April.

The increase in our precept this year (£6 per household at Band D) comes as a result of ECC 's current position where they have not signed the lease on the new building, depriving us of an income of £20,000 per annum, although they agreed the Heads of Terms of the lease some years ago.

Should ECC honour their commitment, this money will be used to reinstate the Foresthall Park S106 fund used last year to buy out the legal rights over the Crafton Green land and car park owed by a third party.

The completion of the new **Mountfitchet Exchange**, and the relocation of the Health Service, gives us the opportunity to review the future use of Crafton Green House. We are also discussing with UDC the possible use of the grass area adjacent to the house to create additional car parking spaces.

We are in discussion to set up a **Youth Council** in conjunction with our schools and the Youth Centre, to promote the views of young people being heard and responded to within our democratic systems, and to help prepare our young up-and-coming community champions.

We are in a dialogue with the Environment Agency who are focusing their **Natural Flood Management** programme to the north of Gall End Lane and contact is being made with local landowners to agree further actions on flood alleviation for Lower Street specifically.

Thank you to our staff who have risen to the challenge of a difficult year, and to my fellow councillors who volunteer their services freely in support of our community.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Cllr Peter Jones writes:

Council tax (parish share) will rise by 9.68%. If ECC had signed the library lease (as promised as late as November), council tax would have increased by 2.4% as indicated last year. The Parish Council cannot assume that ECC will commit, so to meet auditor requirements on the level of free reserves, the higher figure has been agreed.

Projected Net Expenditure

2018/19

The outturn is lower than anticipated a year ago reflecting the Clinic remaining a contributor for half the year, some short term saving in staff costs and the late recruitment of a PCSO.

2019/20

An empty Crafton Green House will cost about £20,000 made up of lost clinic income and continuing business rates while the age of lighting stock will lead to higher replacement costs. Even so the outturn was still projected to be lower than indicated last year. If, however, ECC fails to lease space in the new building then, until a new tenant is found, net costs will be £20,000 higher.

Financial Summary

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Net Expenditure	199,947	227,965	264,416*	279,443* (*includes £20,000 library)
Surplus	55,053	32,035	35,584	27,757
Free Reserve (FR)	126,000	45,000	81,000	109,000
FR as % of net spend	63	20**	31	39
Council Tax (band D)	82.33	90.30	92.47	94.69
% change	3.04	9.68	2.4	2.4

** adjustment of other reserves will enable us to meet the auditor's requirement of 25%.

Areas of Potential Change

- 1 New building costs - if ECC, or another party, signs a lease then parish finances will improve by £20,000. ECC has "actively" encouraged the Parish Council to pursue this project.
- 2 Day Centre - changes in the running and management of the Day Centre may produce a useful saving of around £5,000 as well as safeguarding the service.
- 3 Crafton Green House - the building cannot be allowed to stand empty. Options under consideration could save the parish around £8,000 or more depending on future use.

Reserve for Foresthall Park

The Parish Council undertook to replace some of the money taken from the Community Fund for the new building. It is hoped that building the reserve will begin in the next year.

Copies of the full audited Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2017/18, and our budgets for 2018/19 and 2019/20, can be viewed on our website www.stansted.net, click on "About Us" and select "Finance" from the drop-down menu. Printed copies available on request or at the Meeting. If you wish to raise any queries, it would be helpful to be notified in advance so that they can be answered in full.

ELMS FARM ALLOTMENTS

The allotments at Elms Farm were officially handed over to the Parish Council on Wednesday 16 January. The provision of allotments was part of the planning agreement for the Elms Farm estate so there was no council tax payers money involved in providing the allotments and any expenditure on the site will be funded from the rental income.



There is a mixture of full plots (25m x 10m) and half plots (12.5m x 10m) and our photograph shows some of our allotmenters getting to know each other and discussing their plans for their plots. The initial challenge is to clear the plot of "field grass" and turnover the soil ready for planting in the spring.

All the plots at Elms Farm have now been allocated but if you want to be added to the waiting list please see the allotment section on our website or contact the Parish Council Office on 813214. There will also be allotment plots available on the Walpole Farm development once all the construction work has been completed. A waiting list for these has already been established.

NEWS FROM UTTLEFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cllr Sell writes:

Budget

At our meeting on 21 February we will be setting the budget for 2019/20. It is likely that an increase of 2.99% will be recommended. Council taxes are not sufficient to pay for the services that the council provides, so central government has provided an important source of funding. However, this has been going down. In 2016/17 the Council received £7.652 million, made up of Business Rates Retention, New Homes Bonus etc. By 2020/21 this is forecast to reduce to £5.087 million and by 2023/24 to £3.1 million. With these projected reductions the council has two choices - reduce services or diversify through investments. The Council rightly has decided on the latter. In May 2017 the Council acquired a 50% share in Chesterford Research Park, financed through borrowing £37 million. It is expected that the net contribution for 2019/20 to the Council budget through this investment will be circa £1.7 million.

This investment strategy I have supported, although I have concerns about the governance arrangements and I will be tabling a budget amendment. In 2017, the council decided to give £500,000 towards a running track at Carver Barracks. This project has stalled with the Ministry of Defence. My amendment would seek to cancel the project and reallocate the money to a community infrastructure fund.

Local Plan

This has been submitted to the government, and inspectors have been appointed. They will examine the soundness of the plan. The majority of the housing development has been allocated in three new garden communities: North Uttlesford (Great Chesterford) Easton Park (near Dunmow) and west of Braintree (Stebbing). Stansted only receives a small allocation. It is in our interest that the plan succeeds otherwise we may find we will be receiving extra housing.

Stansted Library

Many thanks to all those who have supported the campaign to keep a library in the village. I have met the County Council portfolio holder Cllr Susan Barker on several occasions and left her in no doubt about the strength of feeling. One of the petitions that has been circulating will be handed into the county council by Cllr Mike Mackrory, Leader of the Opposition.

At the district council's last meeting I tabled the following motion which was passed unanimously:

"This Council asks the Cabinet Member for communities and partnerships to work with Essex County Council, parish/town councils, voluntary organisations and residents to explore ways in which the library service in Uttlesford is maintained and enhanced, in light of the county council's major consultation of the proposed future strategy for the county's libraries."

DATES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings start at 7.45pm unless otherwise stated

March

- 6 Highways 7.00pm and F&GP
- 11 Civil Protection
- 13 Annual Parish Meeting
- 20 Full Council

April

- 3 Full Council
- 10 Open Spaces
- 17 Windmill 7.00pm and F&GP
- 24 Full Council

*For contact details of all councillors
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or previous editions of The link*



ST CLARE HOSPICE NEW DONATION CENTRE

www.stclarehospice.org.uk

The hospice has opened a Donation Centre at the Links Business Centre in Bishop's Stortford; this will help us raise vital funds for patient care. Each year, we receive more than 60,000 bags or boxes of donations, which are processed by our Retail volunteers. Until now, sorting through donations has been exclusive to St Clare shops; however, the Donation Centre will ensure that we can make the most of each donation. Our nine charity shops provide the single largest revenue source for us, and each shop relies on generosity from the local area. The Donation Centre will enable us to utilise more stock and get the right items out to the most suitable shop. It will also host occasional sale events throughout the year.



Aimee McKay, Donation Centre Manager and Martin Green, Distribution Assistant.

Furniture collection

Fiona Eaton, Head of Retail at St Clare Hospice, said: "The majority of our shops don't have a lot of space to store donated stock, so our new Donation Centre will help us to take in a greater number of furniture donations so we can continue to expand our free Furniture Collection Service." If you would like to lend a hand in St Clare's new Donation Centre, please visit our website or contact Voluntary Services Manager Rob Wallace tel 773722 email: rob.wallace@stclarehospice.org.uk.

eBAY TEAM

The hospice is on the lookout for online-shopping-savvy individuals who can lend their skills to our eBay team. Last year, St Clare's eBay shop (stores.ebay.co.uk/St-Clare-Hospice) generated enough funding for over 500 90-minute home visits to local people by an *At Home* nursing assistant.

eBay Assistants

The role entails listing donations on the online shop, researching the value of items, photographing stock and writing compelling descriptions of the products to encourage people to view and place bids. Volunteers will also be required to respond to any queries and liaise with buyers about payment as required, then pack and post items to

customers. For more information please visit our website or contact Rob Wallace (details above).

Chris Carter
Communications Volunteer

BREXIT AND THE VETERINARY WORLD

I am sure most of you are heartily sick of the 'B' word by now. As I am writing this in February, who knows where we will be in a month's time, but at present it all seems a bit of a mess. The implications of Brexit have been far-reaching and the veterinary world has not escaped. There is a shortage of vets in the UK; in 2016, 43% of new vets had graduated from non-UK vet schools. Vets are employed in general practice, industry, meat hygiene, Government and research. In the meat hygiene sector alone, some estimates suggest 95% of Official Veterinarians (OVs) working in abattoirs graduated overseas. The uncertainty around Brexit has seriously affected recruitment; other areas of concern include the supply of drugs and animal feeds. However, veterinary organisations are working hard to come up with contingency plans, and drug and food companies assure us they have put measures in place to prevent shortages.

Pet Passports

An area of concern is foreign travel and obtaining a pet passport. At present cats, dogs and ferrets need to have a microchip and be vaccinated against rabies; a pet passport can then be issued. In the case of a 'no deal Brexit', these rules will change; a microchip and rabies vaccination are still necessary but then your pet must have a blood sample taken at least 30 days after the rabies vaccination. If the results of the blood test are successful, a passport can be issued but the pet will not be eligible for travel until three months from the date of the successful blood sample. You will also need to take your pet to an OV no more than 10 days before travel to get a health certificate; the whole process could take four months, so our advice is to speak to your vet. We will be posting the latest news on our website and Facebook page or you can visit the Government website www.gov.uk/guidance/pet-travel-to-europe-after-brexit



Ilse Pedler
Mercer and Hughes Veterinary Surgeons



BOOGIE ON DOWN TO 90s AND NOUGHTIES MUSIC

Two of our supporters, Nicole and Justin, are organising a fun evening of 90s and Noughties music on **Saturday 30th March** 8.00pm at *H@me and Eat* in aid of Grove Cottage! *H@me and Eat* is on Stansted Road, Bishop's Stortford CM23 2TH. Come and enjoy the sounds of years past with like-minded people, a fully licensed bar and in a unique venue. Tickets £21.55 (including booking fee) are available from Eventbrite <http://bit.ly/2AFZEYJ>. All proceeds to Grove Cottage.



Alison Cameron
Email: fundraising@mencapgrovecottage.org

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Usually March is the lull between the snowdrop open days and first full season open day, this year on **Sunday 28th April**. But this year it won't be! We are starting the month cleaning out the waterlily pond in the Italian Garden. The waterlilies have not looked their best set against the increasingly brown, muddy water. So, we are gathering as many volunteers as possible to share the work of pumping out 25,000 gallons of water and sludge, and cleaning and repairing the base of the pond.



On **Thursday 14th March** from 10.30am we have a new volunteers' day - an opportunity for people interested in joining us, to come along, get to know the gardens and hopefully sign up as volunteers. Gardeners are particularly welcome, but also volunteers willing to learn or with other interests to offer. We rely on volunteers to help with all the trust's business, including helping run Open Days, catering for visitors and our administration. Hot drinks and cake will be provided and if new volunteers want to stay and get started on some work, they will need to wear suitable clothing and bring lunch. For more information see our website or call us.

Jill Goldsmith
Publicity
Tel: 01371 876979



YOUR VILLAGE SCOUTS NEED YOU!

Wanted: Scout Leaders

If you have some spare time, enjoy the outdoors, and like being with children, then we would be very pleased to hear from you. Please contact Brenda Ryan on 812725 or myself. Thank you.

Mike Byrne
Scout Leader
Tel: 812780
Email: stanstedscouts@hotmail.co.uk

GARDENING TIPS FOR MARCH

March can be unpredictable weatherwise, with extremes of temperature in both directions. If we are lucky enough to have a warm period, it is an ideal time for rectifying dead patches and seeding in the lawn; it can even be suitable for major lawn renovations. Should the weather not be so kind, it can still be possible to use turf except in extreme conditions. Generally good quality seed will produce a better result in the long term for establishing a lawn and is considerably cheaper. Make sure your mower blade is both sharp and balanced prior to using it this season. Deadhead daffodils (removing spent flowers) to direct most of the energy the plant generates into the bulb to optimise flowering next year. It is best not to cut down or tie up the foliage, as this reduces the amount of energy that is directed down into the bulb. You can even consider feeding them with a tomato or other high potash fertiliser to improve flowering next year. Whilst discussing bulbs, you can start to plant summer flowering bulbs such as gladioli this month too; in fact, planting some now and some in April will spread the flowering period out in summer. Hardy annuals such as cornflowers and sweet peas can be sown outside now, but do not be tempted to try and sow half hardy annuals outside already as they will almost certainly fail.



If you have a pond with a filter and pump, check they are in good working order for the summer. If your filter has a UV lamp, ensure you fit a new bulb as they are only effective for one growing season. Doronicum, fritillaries and forsythias are star performers this month; treat yourself to a trip to the nursery to buy some.

Paul the Gardener

STANSTED DAY CENTRE

January has been somewhat reflective as several of our regular diners have passed on. They will all be sadly missed, but fondly remembered in the hearts of all their friends at the Day Centre. On a happier note, Hazel who has been coming for lunch on a Tuesday for many years was joined by her son and daughter-in-law to celebrate her 96th birthday with a cake; who knows what she wished for as she blew out her candles! We certainly all enjoyed sampling the cake after lunch. Remember if you have a special occasion coming up which you would like to celebrate, why not see if the Day Centre is free for you to hire. Jo and Julie in the kitchen have been providing delicious traditional winter warming meals such as chicken casserole with dumplings, the always popular *Toad in the Hole*, wholesome gammon pie followed by favourites such as sponge pudding, apple strudel and custard, or bread and butter pudding. Despite the cold, the warm sun has managed to flood into the dining room to brighten us all up and remind us that spring is on its way. *'Take time to observe nature, for beneath the surface, as if by magic new life is already beginning'*. The Day Centre is open Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10.00am-2.00pm. Lunch is served at 12.30pm. Booking is required before 11.00am on the day.

Angela Hall
Tel : 815091
Email: stansteddaycentre@gmail.com

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A TASTE OF FRANCE IN STANSTED

The inaugural meeting of the Stansted-Rungis Twinning Association was held on 25th January at the Day Centre. The event was attended by over 60 people who enjoyed a cheese and wine evening, as well as the company of visitors from our twin town of Rungis who were very pleased to meet so many people from Stansted with an interest in the Twinning of the two towns. A special thank you goes to sponsors of the evening including: Fisher and Woods of Saffron Walden for supplying the (all English) cheeses, and to Majestic Wine Stortford and Mix Cocktail Bar Stansted for their contributions of wine. Future events to build on the relationship between the two towns are being planned for later in the year. If you are interested in becoming part of the Twinning Association, membership is free; contact us by email (please put Twinning in the subject line), or like us on Facebook at Stansted-Rungis Twinning Association.



Stansted Town Twinning Quiz Night

Join us on **Saturday 13th April** 7.00pm for 7.30pm at the Day Centre. All proceeds to the Twinning Association. Tickets £10 to include Ploughman's Supper from the Parish Council.

Ruth Clifford
Stansted Parish Council
Tel: 813214
Email: parishcouncil@stansted.net



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The Republic of Venice, traditionally known as '*La Serenissima*', was a sovereign state and maritime republic which existed for over a millennium until 1797. It left us with the wonderful and unique city of Venice itself, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and some of the most loved music for both instruments and voice. Amongst the more popular of her sons is Antonio Vivaldi, regarded by many as one of the greatest Baroque composers. Join us on **Saturday 23rd March** 7:30pm in Saffron Hall, with performances of Vivaldi's *Double Trumpet Concerto in C major*, and his enduringly popular *Gloria*. We take a grand tour to visit other great Italian composers of this era including Monteverdi's *Beatus Vir* and Gabrieli's joyous *Jubilate Deo*. We are joined by Bishop's Stortford Sinfonia and are delighted to introduce three talented young soloists, sopranos Daisy Brown and Nia Coleman and mezzo soprano Heather Lowe. Tickets: adults £10-£28, under 25s or students £5, and under 18s £3, from Saffron Hall's website, Saffron Walden Tourist Centre or on the door (subject to availability).

John Luke

SPRING CONCERT

A Cantate Senior Choir Showcase

On **Sunday 24th March** at 6.30pm this acclaimed choir will be performing a *Spring Concert* in St John's Church, featuring a kaleidoscope of music from across the centuries, from Purcell to the Beatles. The audience will also be treated to an amazing percussion piece for basketballs written by Wolfgang Reifeneder and arranged by Graham Instrall. Musical directors are Nicholas Shaw and Graham Instrall, pianist Charlie Penn. Tickets: adults £12, concessions £10, under 18s £5, available through the website www.cantate.co.uk/events or on the door.

Alison Thompson



HARMONAIRES – WADE IN THE WATER

www.theharmonaireschoir.com

Back in Stansted for their first local concert this year, The Harmonaires Choir, under the leadership of Josie Cowley, is performing on **Saturday 23rd March** at 7.00pm in St John's Church. This one-hour concert is raising funds for WaterAid: an international charity set up in 1981 (by the UK water industry) to transform the lives of the poorest and most marginalised people, by improving access to clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene. Without these, overcoming poverty is just a dream. Even now one in nine people are living without these basic human rights. WaterAid has brought clean water to 24 million people over 35 years and continues to be one of the most respected organisations dealing solely with water, sanitation and hygiene issues.



Listen to songs that will transport you to rivers and seas, storm and rain. Enjoy evocative music by Chilcott, American and British folk music, musical theatre, spirituals and more. Tickets: adults £10, students £6, available from the choir's website, or call 07912 025777, also from myself, or on the door. The choir is building a reputation as one of the leading choirs in the area singing an eclectic mix of music from Tallis to Coldplay. Their Christmas extravaganza, in Bishop's Stortford, was a sell-out and raised over £400 for the charity *Shelter*. The choir is also performing a lunchtime concert on **Saturday 9th March** at Bury St Edmunds Cathedral.

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MURDER ON THE NILE AT RHODES

By Agatha Christie

www.rhodesartscomplex.co.uk

Award-winning local drama group Water Lane Theatre Company are pleased to present this popular mystery drama at the Rhodes Arts Complex on **28th, 29th and 30th March** at 7.30pm and **Saturday 30th March** at 3.00pm. Having tired of her 'little Belgian detective', Agatha Christie adapted her novel, *Death on the Nile*, to exclude Hercule Poirot and introduce Canon Ambrose Pennyfeather to the plot. The drama surrounds Kay Ridgeworth who, being blessed with beauty, wealth and a new husband, embarks on a honeymoon voyage upon a paddle steamer on the Nile. Fatal circumstances await when the idyllic surroundings are shattered by a shocking and brutal murder. Under scrutiny are a multitude of memorable passengers, all with a reason to kill. As tension and claustrophobia builds, the startling and audacious truth is laid bare. Tickets: adults £16, concessions £14, Saturday £12.



March Listings

At thestage Stortford

Friday 1st 7.30pm Derek Acorah – The 'Eternal Life' Tour

Saturday 2nd 7.30pm Jason Donovan and his Amazing Midlife Crisis Tour

Thursday 7th 8.00pm Rich Hall's Hoedown

Friday 8th 7.30pm The Jive Aces Big Beat Revue

Saturday 9th 7.30pm TRIBUTO – Portuguese Folk Music

Wednesday 13th–Saturday 16th 7.30pm (Saturday Matinee 2.30pm) BSMTC Youth presents *Hairspray*

Sunday 17th 7.30pm The Lindisfarne Story

Monday 18th 11.00am, 12 noon, 1.00pm, 2.00pm Nest

Wednesday 20th 7.30pm *Wilde Without the Boy*

Thursday 21st 8.00pm An Evening with Ray Clemence

Hosted by Micky Hazard

Friday 22nd 7.00pm, Saturday 23rd 1.30pm and 5.00pm **Horrible Histories – Brand New Barmy Britain**

Thursday 28th–Saturday 30th 7.30pm (Saturday Matinee 3.00pm) **Murder on the Nile**

At thescreen Stortford

Monday 4th 2.00pm, Tuesday 5th 7.30pm **Can You Ever Forgive Me?**

Monday 4th 7.30pm, Tuesday 5th 2.00pm **Green Book**

Saturday 9th 11.00am **How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World (Kids for £1)**

Monday 18th 7.30pm, Thursday 21st 2.00pm **All is True**

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Wednesday 13th 1.30pm **Story Time at the Museum**

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Saturday 23rd from 11.30am **Drop In Horrible Histories Catapult Craft**

To book tickets for any of the above please call us or visit our website.

Elizabeth Murphy

Tel: 710200

Email: info@rhodesartscomplex.co.uk



www.musicatstansted.co.uk

Our current season comes to an end on a high for our audience on **Saturday 16th March** when *Benyounes String Quartet* will be playing in St John's. I say "on a high" because in an audience survey in 2017 the most popular concert choice was a performance by a string quartet, and what the audience says it wants, we do try to see that it gets! The quartet comprises Zara Benyounes (violin), Emily Holland (violin), Sara Roberts (viola) and Kim Vaughan (cello); we shall be enjoying the youthful vigour of early Beethoven in his String Quartet Opus 18 No 6 in B flat; the deliberate French-ness of Debussy's only, but masterly, String Quartet Opus 10 in G minor, together with Haydn's String Quartet Opus 76 No 1 in G.



Fresh and vivid

Formed at the Royal Northern College of Music and currently celebrating its 10th Anniversary, the Benyounes Quartet has forged a reputation for fresh, vivid performances (see their happy photo!) and interpretations of refinement and integrity. As well as St John's, they have established a presence in famous venues including the Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Purcell Room, Wigmore Hall and the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester, while internationally they have performed in Budapest, Bordeaux, Verbier, Aix-en-Provence and Ireland. Tickets: adults £15, concessions £12, children under 18 free, available from Absolute Travel; Nockolds Solicitors; Bishop's Stortford Independent; Sonia Levy tel: 815282 or on the door. As the season ends, the Committee will be losing its treasurer, Richard Owen, who has looked after our finances for many years. He and his wife Linda have also attended to our membership renewal and the issue of season tickets. We thank them for all they have done for the Club. We shall miss their wise counsel but look forward to continuing to see them 'in the audience'.

Alan Corbishley

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STANSTED IS WELL READ

The next meeting of our book club will be on **Tuesday 5th March** at 8.00pm in the Dog and Duck in Lower Street, where we will be discussing *This Boy* by Alan Johnson. This memoir of the politician's childhood is also a story of the West London slums. It could just be a grim catalogue of miseries, but as it is written with a spirit of generous acceptance, humour and openness; it is an inspiring and entertaining read. Please do join us; we meet on the first Tuesday of every month and a warm welcome will await.



Anne Watson

Tel: 898693

Email: stanstediswellread@gmail.com



Mountfitchet Garden Club

www.mountfitchetgardenclub.co.uk

The intriguing title of February's talk was *Pin me to the wall and do what you want with me*. Andrew Mikolajski entertained members with his knowledge of climbers and wall shrubs; ideas and hints on where to position the plants, how to prune them, easy methods of attaching the plants to the walls and how to train the plants to ensure they show off their flowers were explained with great enthusiasm. Using a series of slides, members were shown some large houses, open to the public, where plants have been trained to cover the buildings and garden walls. York Gate House near Leeds is a good example of how a *pyracantha* can be trained to cover a house. To reach this standard, Andrew joked, requires patience and a lot of staff! However, by using tricks like pig wire, gardeners are able to attach the plants and train them easily in a domestic-sized garden. Although considered out of season, a visit to gardens in the winter will often show the framework and pruning methods used to achieve the summer displays. A lively question and answer session followed the talk.



The next meeting is on **Wednesday 6th March** 7.30pm for 8.00pm at the Day Centre; *Flowering Shrubs for each Month*, by George Lockwood. Refreshments are available prior to the meeting, and visitors are always welcome.

Maralyn Harris

Chairman

Tel: 07919 478144

STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET EVENING WI



Our January meeting had a post-Christmas theme with 'fun and frolics'. We were welcomed by the Committee who had laid on punch and nibbles and, after the business part of the meeting, we enjoyed ourselves with some tabletop games. As we moved around the tables to try out new games, we were able to catch up with our news about Christmas and New Year. The evening was also the deadline for voting for a resolution to be presented and voted on at the National Federation WI Annual Meeting in June. There was a shortlist of resolutions chosen from many submitted and the resolution attracting most votes from members will be included in the Annual Meeting. These resolutions covered subjects such as '*Improving the Plant Biosecurity in the UK*', '*A Call against the decline in Local Bus Services*', '*Don't Fear the Smear*' and three others. If passed, the chosen resolution will be presented to the Government and form the basis of a WI campaign. We were reminded not to miss the Essex Federation Annual County Meeting at Charter Hall, Colchester in March where the speaker will be the Rev'd Richard Coles, a former member of the Communards and, to get our feet tapping in the afternoon, there will be entertainment from *Abba Rival*.

So you can see, the WI is not all about cakes and Jerusalem. Come along and try us out. Our next meeting will be on **Thursday 14th March** at 7.30pm in the Day Centre when we will hear *Dopplegangers read poetry or double vision*. Sounds intriguing! For more information please contact our President, Anne Watson on 898693.

Jenny Wraith

SAVE THE DATE!

Table Top Sale

Stansted WI is holding a table top sale on **Saturday 13th April** 11.00am-1.00pm, in St John's Church Hall. We are now taking bookings for tables. Tables must be booked in advance and are £10. Perfect for selling unwanted items or craft items; perhaps you are de-cluttering, or maybe you belong to an organisation that would like to have a table and raise funds by selling produce or bric-a-brac. Entry to the table top sale will be free for buyers. If you would like to book a table, or would like to find out more, please contact Brenda Ryan on 812725.

Anne Watson

ANYTHING YOU CAN DO ...

Inspired by our son David's successful completion of last year's London Marathon, his wife, Jo is taking up the challenge running in this year's London Marathon, and raising money to help dementia sufferers. We are holding a fund-raising event for Jo on **Saturday 13th April** at 49 St John's Road 10.00am-3.00pm. Everyone is welcome. Please put the date in your diaries. More details next month.

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Nature Notes

One chilly morning a small flock of finches came into the garden and hunted for seeds among the shrubs. These were mostly bramblings, finches visiting from Scandinavia, mixing with our chaffinches, which are very similar in appearance. Flocks like this usually spend most of their time foraging in the hedgerows in the countryside.



Other winter visitors are a large flock of redwings, members of the thrush family, to be seen in local stubble fields and also pigeons which come to feed on young crops. These pigeons often roost in the trees round our village but never seem to come down and mix with our resident pigeons. Among any large flock of birds, it is inevitable that there will be sick and ailing birds and the sparrowhawks will pick these off. A few weeks ago, a sparrowhawk perched on the fence near our kitchen window and when it took off it swooped low over the lawn and skimmed over the top of the neighbour's fence. If any small bird had happened to be at their bird table at the time it would have been seized and carried off.



Felix



Don't give up, give thanks

It's a Christian tradition to deny ourselves something we enjoy in the weeks of Lent between Shrove Tuesday and Easter Sunday. This period of fasting is often reduced to giving up chocolate, cakes or alcohol. Lent is also a time of reflection, and Christian Aid invites us to think about the things that we have, be thankful for them, and share some of that good fortune with others. A booklet entitled *Count Your Blessings*, available online at www.caid.org.uk/lent or from me, invites us to "put our faith into action through daily reflections and challenges." It puts the spotlight on small, remote islands in the Philippines, where the community is pushed to the brink of survival by climate change and precarious livelihoods. On some days it invites us to make a donation to Christian Aid as a way of saying thanks for what we have. Other days an action is recommended, such as only buying sustainably sourced fish, taking a photo and posting on social media, writing down our blessings on sticky notes and putting them where they will often be seen.

So, starting on **6th March, Ash Wednesday**, you could Count your Blessings and support Christian Aid at the same time. You could give up chocolate as well. Please contact me if you would like a copy of the booklet.



Catherine Dean
Tel: 813579

Email: catherinemarydean@btinternet.com



RSPB STORT VALLEY LOCAL GROUP

www.rspb.org.uk/groups/stortvalley/events/

Our next monthly meeting on **Tuesday 12th March 7.30pm** at Bishops Park Community Centre, Lancaster Way, Bishop's Stortford (next to Tesco) will be a talk on *The British Trust for Ornithology* (BTO) by Paul Stancliffe. The BTO is an independent charitable research institute combining professional and citizen science aimed at using evidence of change in wildlife populations (particularly birds) to inform the public, opinion-formers and environmental policy and decision-makers. Their impartiality enables data and information to be used both by Government and NGO campaigners. The combination of professional ecologists, long-term datasets, some in excess of 50 years, and volunteers participating all over the country gives the BTO a unique voice in nature conservation. Entry £3.00 for Stort Valley Members, £5.00 for visitors.



Our next walk will be around Rutland Water Nature Reserve on **Saturday 23rd March**. Meet at Rutland Water Anglian Birdwatching Centre LE15 8BT at 10.00am. This internationally famous nature reserve is one of the most important wildfowl sanctuaries in Great Britain. It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, designated as a European Special Protection Area, and internationally recognised as a globally important wetland **Ramsar Convention** site. The reserve occupies shoreline and shallow water lagoons along several miles of the western end of Rutland Water, with plenty of bird watching hides and nature trails, plus a well-equipped visitor centre. At this time of year we can expect to see some great wildfowl flocks all around the reserve. Admission price: £6, concessions £5. Donations to the Local Group are also welcome. For more information contact Lee Jaques on 07454 801894.

Sheila Bowles
Tel: 814973



Free drop-in for all ages organised by and held at Stansted Free Church, Chapel Hill, open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9.30am-12.30pm. WiFi, computers, newspapers and magazines to read, good company plus comfortable seating, free refreshments and a separate space for children to play with toys and run around – see you there!



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SIXTY FIVE YEARS OF CHURCH MUSIC - IN A CASSOCK

It all started in 1941 when, aged seven, I joined the choir at St Mary's Church and my Uncle Ron, an accomplished organist, paid for me to have piano lessons for a year. My family then acquired a piano and I continued to learn to play without tuition. A

few years later I taught myself to play the organ, and in 1956 I was appointed organist and choir-master at St Mary's. During those early years, I attended several residential courses at the Royal School of Church Music led by eminent professionals such as Sir David Wilcocks of King's College, Cambridge. By the early '60s I was also choir-



master for St John's Church and organised visits to cathedrals with choirs from St Mary's and St John's, deputising for the resident choirs who were on holiday or touring. I stayed at St Mary's until it closed in 1980. I then formed St Mary's Singers, visiting a total of 27 cathedrals, including St George's Cathedral in Jerusalem where we sang Choral Evensong. We also took part in *Joy to the World* Concerts at the Royal Albert Hall in aid of children's charities, alongside Cliff Richard and other celebrities. In 1988 I was presented to HRH Princess Royal in recognition of four years of participation at these concerts; a great honour. After leaving St John's, I took over the choir at All Saints Hockerill Church in Bishop's Stortford for five very happy years, before moving to Chatteris due to work commitments, where I still live. There I was persuaded to take over as Director of Music at St Andrew's Church in Sutton (Cambridgeshire), a huge, freezing cold church at the time, with a worn-out pipe organ!

St Mary's exhibition Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th April

In 2006, after an incredible 65 years I finally hung up my cassock and although I am no longer running a choir, church music is still my passion. I am actively involved with St Mary's Friends who are staging an exhibition to celebrate the choirs' visits to various cathedrals and venues, offering a unique opportunity for choristers past and present to renew old acquaintances and take a trip down memory lane with me. Numerous photographs will be displayed, and recordings of the choirs will be played during the weekend. The BBC News Team are expected to pay a visit. The choristers' enthusiasm made it possible to achieve the high standards required by cathedrals.

Keith Turner



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET U3A

www.u3asites.org.uk/stansted

In February, David Morson gave a talk to the Philosophy Group on St Thomas Aquinas, including his philosophical justification for the real presence of bread and wine (transubstantiation) in the Eucharist (Holy Communion). The meeting ended with a BBC iPlayer recording from 1948 of the famous debate between Fr Trevor Coppleston and Bertrand Russell on the *Argument from Contingency*. A great time was had by all!

Due to St John's Hall heating issues, our monthly meeting will be in St John's Church. On **Thursday 21st March** 1.15pm for 2.00pm we welcome Steve Scruton from **BBC Radio Essex** who will be regaling us with stories of his life on radio. March promises to be an interesting month for members; from singing, walking and ukulele classes to poetry, philosophy or languages and much in between. Annual membership is now £15 - great value for the time and effort put in by many people to increase the quality and enjoyment of our lives. On **Tuesday 5th March** the Art Group, who meet at OSCA in Henham, will enjoy a demonstration of watercolours by John Tookey; the Art Appreciation Group hosts a talk by David Morson entitled *What Makes A Painting* on **Wednesday 20th March** at the Day Centre. **Saturday 16th March** may well prove to be a highlight of the year when Dr Michael Bailey, President of the Stephenson Locomotive Society, will lead the Saturday Morning Seminar. Tickets £4.50 from our website. The Concert Group are visiting Saffron Hall to hear *Saffron Walden Choral Society* and *Bishop's Stortford Sinfonia* celebrate the music of *La Serenissima*. Although we have 28 interest groups, there is always room for more. There is a wish to start a Mah Jong group, and a second French Class started last month; new members are welcome. If your preference is for a relaxing time, you may like to join us on our September holiday to West Sussex. For any of these activities check out our website or call us on 07874 385541.

Eileen Quinn

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Across

3. Waltz 7. Engage 8. Oberon 9. Elfin 11. Wizard
12. Eleven 13. Middle of the road 14. Stereo
16. Untidy 17. Petit 18. Accent 19. Avenue 20. Sloth

Down

1. Antibiotics 2. Law and order 3. Weed 4. Zone
5. Celebrities 6. Roger and out 10. Forfeit 15. Opts
16. Utah

UK CITIES ANSWERS

1. Birmingham 2. Durham 3. Hereford 4. Newry
5. Sheffield 6. Wells 7. Salisbury 8. Swansea
9. Westminster 10. Coventry 11. Liverpool
12. Nottingham 13. St. Albans 14. Worcester
15. Oxford 16. Stirling 17. Bath 18. Cambridge
19. Dundee 20. Portsmouth

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Hello everyone! Really sorry, but this is also goodbye. I have been involved with Birchanger Wood from when it experienced its financial difficulties in 2009; working together with Joyce Hammersley, we managed to raise enough funds to sort out the problems ... and I think you may have discovered the paths! I spent a long time last year sorting issues to establish the trust as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and there are now a number of new trustees. I wish the new trust well, so this is goodbye from me.



However, this wonderful ancient wood, unlike myself, is in full stride and the trees are still eating CO₂ to protect us. Enjoy this fabulous facility. My every good wish to you all. Thank you and may you long continue to love and use this lovely local Woodland.



Daphne Wallace-Jarvis

WORTH IT?

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How do they repay us these surfers of the sky?
By pooing on our windows from up on high
Despoiling clean washing and shiny cars too
Such tiny creatures – such a lot of poo!
Such ingratitude for our help and care
Is it worth all the effort year after year?

Braving wind rain and snow to keep up supplies
Of seeds and suet balls, nuts and dried flies
A costly addition to our grocery bill
Gobbled up fast - albeit with skill
The angst is forgotten when the moment arrives
And the fledglings take off up into the skies



Loki



UGLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

It was a case of 'let the games begin' at our first meeting of 2019; a very happy fun-filled afternoon which saw our members ascending ladders and being swallowed by snakes, testing their grey matter with Rummikub and enjoying a game of Ludo amongst other board games on offer. A lovely afternoon topped off with tea, coffee and delicious home-made cakes and biscuits. Our annual New Year's lunch at the beautiful Ugley Chequers held on 23rd January was its usual great success; the delicious lunch was followed by a very entertaining quiz.

Ken McDonald of the Hundred Parishes Society will be the speaker at our March meeting on **Wednesday 20th March** at 2.15pm; over the next few months we will be welcoming Carol James in April, who will be speaking on *the History of Teddy Bears*; Phyllis Harrison's *Memories* will be shared with members at our June meeting; *New Zealand* will be under the spotlight at our July meeting; *Nature through the Seasons* will feature in our August meeting; in September we will be meeting stuntwoman Lucy Allen. In October there will be a talk on *Costume and Accessories* and November will see the return of Brian Carline who will be taking us back to the days of *Dolly Blue* and *Izal*. Finally, to bring another year to a close, the '*Mad Hatters*' will be entertaining us at our Christmas party. Why not come along and join us? We meet in Ugley Village Hall on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2.15pm. You would be most welcome!

Andrea Fitt
Tel: 815922



HUW JOHNSON CLUB

The Huw Johnson Club is a social group for adults over 25 with learning disabilities, which runs on Thursday evenings in Stansted. After a few weeks off over the winter, we restarted for the Spring Term on 21st February with our (nearly) New Year Dinner at the Chequers pub in Ugley. We also have a lot of exciting activities to look forward to over the next few months, including a trip to the Rhodes Arts Theatre and bowling at Ace of Lanes in Bishop's Stortford. Although we have been off the last few weeks, our loyal supporters have continued to fundraise for us; a huge Thank You to the Singing Santas of Stansted who raised £501 from their carol singing and to everyone at Bentfield Primary School who raised £230 from their Christmas Jumper Day. Thank you also to everyone who responded to my plea for new volunteers both in The Link and on Facebook. We are still looking for new minibus drivers; get in touch if you are interested. Our AGM is on **Wednesday 10th April** at 7.30pm in the Free Church Hall; it would be lovely to see you there! We are always looking for more volunteers, so if you would like to get involved with a local charity, then do get in touch.



Katharine Collis
Tel: 461270
Email: kat_collis@hotmail.com

THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY - LAKES AND PONDS

www.hundredparishes.org.uk



The pond by the village green at Finchingfield pictured here is a much photographed and painted example of the idyllic view of the English countryside, where ducks swim and white clouds are reflected in its calm waters.

The area of the Hundred Parishes has a variety of similar ponds. Those alongside roads were often formed from ancient extraction pits for clay or gravel; others appeared where earth had been extracted for building work. Some are surviving medieval fish ponds or the remnants of moats around isolated old farm houses. Ponds on farms provided water for livestock, but following the reduction in cattle and sheep-rearing many have been filled in.

Fortunately, a number of private gardens have ponds where aquatic plants provide a haven for a wide variety of creatures that depend on such water bodies for their survival. Dipping a net into a pond will reveal snails, assorted larvae of dragonflies, water beetles and midges. Larger ponds may support fish.



The lake at Albury, on the way to Ware



Debden Lake, near Saffron Walden

Amphibians such as frogs, toads and newts need to lay their eggs within water but will spend much of their adult lives on land, eating a range of garden pests if there is some dense vegetation and a rockery nearby. These creatures have become quite scarce in the wider countryside with the reduction in suitable habitats. During March, the croaking of male frogs hoping to attract a mate is one of the sounds of spring. Local records of adult amphibians and locations of spawn provide valuable

information about their distribution and behaviour. If you are fortunate to see frogs, toads or newts in your local ponds, then please do pass this information to either the Essex Field Club or the Freshwater Habitats Organisation. Details on www.essexfieldclub.org.uk and www.freshwaterhabitats.org.uk.

Tricia Moxey
Trustee
Tel: 01277 364522



The Doctor's Pond in Great Dunmow



Artists capture the scene in Finchingfield.



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

At our February meeting we were given a most enjoyable talk by Leila Riddell on the Magna Carta Embroidery. Leila has been involved with embroidery most of her life and was responsible for the Bishop's Stortford Mural. In 2013 Leila was approached by Nigel Collingwood and Audrey Rodgers to discuss a Magna Carta project for Stansted. Nigel was a member of the Magna Carta Barons Association. It was decided that this work should be a screen in order to be portable and should be made of the best quality material. The Airport's Community Resources provided grants to help with the cost of the materials and accompanying booklet. The design of the centrepiece was inspired by an ammonite Leila saw in the Saffron Walden Museum. The historical background was provided by the Local History Society. A lot of artwork had to be produced before stitching could commence on the many buildings and historical events which make up the embroidery. The project involved a huge number of volunteers and we were shown a number of slides showing the work in progress.



Leila gave over her home to the huge task of assembling the finished pieces and fitting them into the magnificent wooden frame made for the purpose. This had to be done to a very strict timescale. The final unveiling took place at Forest Hall School. The embroidery was on display at the Mediaeval Fair at Stansted Hall. It has since been to St Mary's Church, Saffron Walden and Chelmsford. It is back at Stansted Hall at present, awaiting its permanent home at the new Stansted Mountfitchet Hub.

Next month's meeting will be held on **Thursday 7th March** 7.45pm at the Day Centre, when Helen Gibson will talk about *The Malt Industry in Hertfordshire*. All welcome.

Frances Lyons
Tel. 815830

SOCIAL CLUB

We start this month again with the sad news that one of our older members has gone to the great social club in the sky. Gerry Childs was a born and bred Stansted boy and he was given a lovely send off by his family and friends.

No doubt you might be wondering why work has still not started on the tower yet. We have been waiting for the final quotes to come in, so that we can make a decision and instruct the contractor. By the time you read this we will have made that decision and the scaffolding should be going up. Due to years of neglect the cost of the work is around £100,000, so we are still looking for any ideas as to how we raise that total! We have made a healthy profit for 2018 but most of this has been wiped out with historic debts.

March entertainment

Saturday 2nd sees the first appearance by *Quixote's Beard*. They play fast Indy, rock and punk from the 70s through to today. **Saturday 9th** sees the return of *Cadence* with their excellent mix of rock covers. On **Saturday 16th** we have *SCAM 69* back at the Club. If you like your music loud and fast, they are the band for you! **Saturday 23rd** sees our final Saturday entertainment when we welcome *The Boney Moronies* to the Club for the first time. They perform covers from David Bowie, The Beatles, The Who, The Clash, Talking Heads, ZZ Top, Dr Feelgood and many more. We finish the month with karaoke on **Sunday 31st**. We have prize bingo every Tuesday at 8.00pm and don't forget that we have Sky Sports and BT Sports; so head down to watch football, snooker, darts, motor racing and a whole lot more!



Andrew Sharpe
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Email: stanstedclub@gmail.com

STANSTED BOWLS CLUB



We are looking to encourage new bowls players to join our Club. In order to do this we are offering a heavy discount to the yearly fee ... wait for it! **One-year's full membership, which allows you to take part in Club matches and competitions, and full use of our discounted bar for just £10. Yes that is correct, it's not a misprint - £10!** We are a small Club with a big heart; we play because we enjoy it and have a few laughs along the way. Of course, it is nice to win and to be the best, but it is especially nice to be in the company of good friends enjoying a game. This we can promise you at Stansted Bowls Club, so come along on a Friday evening (our social evening) and meet a few of the players and help to put the world to rights. The season starts again in April and goes right through to October. We have many opportunities for you to have a go, so please take up our offer; you know it makes sense.

On to Club news - the green is looking very good, bearing in mind the bashing it took last summer with the sweltering heat; lovely for the players, but not so good for the playing area. We hope to be able to provide our members and visiting teams with an exceptional surface to bowl on. By the time you read this the Clubhouse should have its new roof installed. The old one had been leaking quite badly in several places, but we should be good now for the next 25 years! I would also like to thank Cllr Geoffrey Sell who has donated £1,000 from his 'New Home Bonus scheme' fund; this has been added to our new roof fund. Thank you, Geoffrey. Happy bowling.

Peter Beattie
Hon Secretary
Tel: 07850 329192
Email: peterdavidbeattie@gmail.com

DIRECTORY OF LOCAL CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS

Alzheimers Society	Tel: 01371 872519	Rainbows (Friday)	Sue Pollard Tel: 813734
Air Training Corps 494 Squadron	Tel: 681559/661929 Email: 494@aircadets.org	Rotary Club	Martin Budzinski Tel: 07803 878961 Email: martin@voucherpacks.com
Beaver Scouts Age 6-8	Angela Madigan Tel: 01371 513028	St John's Road and Area Association	Secretary: Leila Riddell Tel: 07770 955830
Bowls Club	Peter Beattie, Hon Secretary Tel: 07850 329192 Email: peterdavidbeattie@gmail.com	Scouts (age 10½ -14)	Mike Byrne Tel: 812780
Brownies (Tuesday)	Kathy Shearman Tel: 07724 355533	Shotokan Karate Ryu	Donna Ring Tel: 731752 Email: skr@skr.org.uk
Brownies (Wednesday)	Susan Scott Tel: 810955	Spangles Children's Centre	Sarah Mason Tel: 812348 Email: smason2@spurgeons.org
CAB	Tel: 01799 618840	Stansted and District Past Rotarians Club	Secretary: Geoff Lay Email: geoff.lay@ntlworld.com
Corkers Netball	Lisa Menzella Tel: 07827 988732	Stansted Badminton Club	Vince Tel: 07793 000107 Raj Tel: 07775 915418
Cricket Club (adults) (juniors)	David Hedge Tel: 812509 Keith Ayres Tel: 814471	Stansted Business Forum	Iris Evans Email: iris.evans9@gmail.com
Cub Scouts Age 8-10½	Nic Devine Email: kinglouie.huskies@gmail.com	Stansted Family Café	Ros Page Tel: 810813 Email: contactstanfam@yahoo.com
Day Centre	Tel: 815091	Stansted Football Club	Tom Williams Tel: 07921 403842
Explorer Scouts	Paul Thorneycroft Tel: 01371 876784	Stansted Hall and Elsenham Cricket Club	David Brown Tel: 831011/07788 999663 Email: david1.r.brown@gmail.com
Friends of St Mary's Church	Lynda Dale Tel: 07716 099474 Email: lynnydale@hotmail.com	Stansted Sparks Netball	Gemma Snelling Tel: 07894 944242 Email: gemmasnelling@me.com
Garden Club	Maralyn Harris, Chairman Tel: 07919 478144	Stansted Speed Watch	Warren Vickers Tel: 813996 Email: vickersw@aol.com
Grove Cottage	Jocelin Warren Tel: 07482 535020 Office tel: 656085	Stansted Supers Handball Club	Olly Pocknell Tel: 07875 391701
Guides	Jennifer Jarvis, District Commissioner Tel: 814434	Tennis Club	Fiona Kelly, Publicity Officer STC Tel: 07949 623484 Email: fiona1.kelly@btintetnet.com
Helpline	Tel: 07704 553727	U3A	Ray Smith, Chair Tel: 813270
History Society	Peter Brown, Chairman Tel: 812816	Women's Institute (Stansted)	Anne Watson, President Tel: 898693
Huw Johnson Club	Katharine Collis Tel: 461270 Email: kat_collis@hotmail.com	Women's Institute (Ugley)	Dorothy Wallace, President Tel: 850215
Inner Wheel Club	Jenny Savage, President Tel: 656065	Whoosh Explore Canoe Club	Helen and Peter Nash Tel: 817453
Investigators Age 7-11	Ros Page Tel 810813 Email: contactstanfam@yahoo.com	Youth Centre	Linda Barnes Tel: 07947 548051
Little Scrummers	Andrew Poyser Tel: 07738 591232	Note: This list will be updated as and when we learn of any changes. If you would like the details of your organisation to be added please let us know. (Contact details on page 1.)	
Millers (Windmill)	Molly Clark Tel: 816768		
music@stansted - classical concerts	Sonia Levy Tel: 815282 Email: contactus@musicatstansted.co.uk		
Neighbourhood Watch	Valerie Trundle Tel: 813433		
Parkinson's UK	Vivian Falk, Chairman Tel: 01799 513128 Email: vivian@brackendalehouse.co.uk		
Uttlesford Support Group	Gill Pursglove (Administrator) Tel: 814242/07966 506997 Email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net		
Rainbow Pre-School			
Rainbows (Wednesday)	Rachel Roberts Tel: 078648 21905		

BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES or SPECIAL OCCASIONS

If you would like to mark any occasion that is special to you or someone you know, by announcing it in the Link, please email a short message together with your name address and telephone number to: announcements@stanstedlink.org.uk or send the details to 7 Blythwood Gardens, Stansted CM24 8HG. Details must be submitted by the 8th of the month for publication the following month.



Stansted Cricket Club

We note with sadness the passing of Bob Stoddart (21st June 1922 – 12th November 2018), one of our keenest vice-presidents. Bob's name will live on in the Club through his annual Bob Stoddart Cup, awarded to the most promising junior.

We await details of our 1st XI's fixtures in the Herts and Essex League Division 2. (Due to a reorganisation, we were invited by Herts and Essex Cricket League (HECL) to stay up in Division 2, which we readily accepted!) As some HECL clubs have XIs who play at a higher level in senior leagues, we have to wait for those senior leagues' fixtures to be published before the HECL fixtures can be compiled. Our 2019 Cambridgeshire Cricket Association (CCA) fixtures have been published; this year our 2nd XI will play in a 16-team CCA Junior League Division 4 South (formed by combining last year's Divisions 4 South and 5 South). We are scheduled to play the other 15 teams once each, and have been allotted seven home and eight away matches between Saturday 4th May and Saturday 31st August inclusive. The Club has booked net sessions at the HECC Sport Cricket Centre in Sawbridgeworth every Tuesday 9.00pm-10.00pm until 9th April. All current and any prospective players are welcome to attend. The Club's AGM has been arranged for **Wednesday 13th March** 7.30pm for 8.00pm in Stansted Football Club. All current and prospective players are welcome. The Club would like to invite anyone interested in scoring on a regular basis next season to contact me. Adults wishing to join the Club should contact me; juniors should contact Head Coach Keith Ayres on 814471.



David Hedge
Hon Secretary
Tel: 812509



Stansted Tennis Club
Founded 1889

www.stanstedtennisclub.co.uk

The new membership year starts on **Friday 1st March**, so if you would like to join please download a membership form from our website. You are also welcome to come along to a club session, up to three times a year, as a visitor (£2 per adult per visit) to try the club out first.

AGM

The AGM will be held on **Thursday 28th February**, at 8.00pm, in the Quaker Meeting House, Chapel Hill. Please come to find out more about the Club and to meet and question the Committee!

Junior coaching

The junior coaching programme, open to members and non-members of STC, will now be starting after half term, due to bad weather. Group coaching sessions will be held on Wednesdays and Fridays from 4.00pm. Please contact Ollie Toms for further details on 07917 652014, email: ollie@olliestennis.co.uk.

Ladies' night

The next ladies' night (members only) will be on **Monday 11th March** from 7.00pm.

Used tennis balls

Used tennis balls can be purchased for £1 for a tube of four, from Jan Hollis at 105 Cambridge Road. Please visit our website for further information about the Club.

Fiona Kelly

Publicity Officer

Email: fiona1.kelly@btinternet.com



STANSTED FOOTBALL CLUB

The excitement around the Club continues, as we remain in pole position to become League Champions with just two months of the season remaining. However, there are three teams chasing us, and they are all in great form. Interestingly two of them, Saffron Walden and Takeley, demonstrate the strength of competitive Step 5 football currently in our area. The plaudits for the team keep coming, whilst the management team win the league awards for *Manager of the Month*. Nationally our Club is in the top ten teams for most league wins and goals scored at Step 5 Level, according to statistics issued by the *Non-League Crowd*. What is also lovely for the Committee to see is the enthusiasm of young supporters at the games; there is a wonderful interaction between them and the players, as they chant their vocal support. A reminder that for under-16s, watching your local side is free, and whilst the local support has certainly grown this season, we always appreciate seeing more young fans. While a winning side on the field helps to promote the Club, off the field it has its rewards too. The Club would like to thank Ollie Emsden and his *Vision Fitness of Henham* for their sponsorship of the players' new warm up tops. A wonderful gesture.



Stansted FC playing St Margaretsbury, whom they beat 5-0 on 26th January

Unfortunately, some fixtures have recently been lost to the weather. Below are those home games that have been scheduled; please keep checking our social media page for any potential changes.

Saturday 9th March vs Southend Manor KO 3.00pm

Saturday 30th March vs Hullbridge Sports KO 3.00pm



Tom Williams
Secretary
Tel: 07921 403842

DON'T FORGET!

The clocks go forward at 1.00am on Sunday 31st March



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