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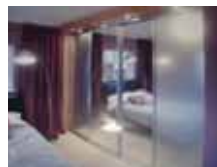
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Front cover:

Festival of Trees and
Angels at St Mary's
Church by Yvonne Ayres
enhanced by
Paul Burt Photography

Stansted Mountfitchet Village Magazine**The Link**

www.stanstedlink.org.uk

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If you do not receive your copy please email: distribution@stanstedlink.org.uk or telephone 813680

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EDITORIAL



Looking back to this time last year, it is interesting to note that we assumed Christmas and New Year were going to be close to normal; little did we know that a serious third lockdown was looming, which had a very sad and disruptive effect on family celebrations. Things do look a lot brighter now; you can read about the Christmas events on p4, as well as splendid entertainment at South Mill Arts on p25. The incredible roll out of vaccines also give cause for hope; we paid tribute to the hard work of the NHS and the optimism of those intrepid folk who were amongst the first people to receive the vaccine at Stansted Surgery, such as Tony and Margaret Trigg, who appeared on our February cover this year.

At our Annual General Meeting recently, Chairman Mike Dyer reported that our front cover illustrations have gone from strength to strength. They ranged from children reading the Link in the library last November to the glorious harvesting scene on the recent October issue. In between there was a fine balance of covers featuring local people, as in February, May, June and September; photos of trees, Christmas and otherwise; a couple of local landmarks and of course the ubiquitous peacocks. The wonderful thing is that the majority of our cover photographs are now being submitted by readers and we hope that is a sign of your approbation of the magazine. We are so very grateful for your input. Enjoy the festive season and our sincere warm wishes for a wonderful 2022.



CHRISTMAS SHOE BOXES

www.teams4u.com

Donors of items and of money, quiz attenders, quiz master David, knitters of hats, scarves, gloves, puppets and bags, sewers of bags, shoe box packers, checkers and transporters – all these people contributed to us sending 219 Christmas boxes, including 16 family boxes, to Teams4U. The quiz raised enough money to pay for shipping, and we were able to send an extra £350, which we know will be put to good use either for shoe boxes, or other projects that Teams4U are involved in.



A big thank you to everyone who contributed; we are bowled over by your generosity. The destination of our boxes is Romania. We are sending *love in every box* from Stansted. We had plenty of boxes for teenage boys this year! Thank you.



Catherine Dean Tel: 813579
Eileen Quinn Tel: 812109
Helen Baker Tel: 814865



LET'S TALK, STANSTED!

www.stanstedmentalhealth.org

Many people feel isolated at this time of year. Look out for neighbours and friends and offer companionship when you can. Simple acts of kindness and friendship have a huge impact on our mental health. Every household will receive our annual Christmas Card, where we are featuring some favourite photos from our Mental Health Awareness Week competition that we ran in May. There are useful contact numbers and information on the back of the card so please keep it all year around for reference.

Back care yoga free six-week course starting in January

Most of us experience back pain, but with some TLC it soon goes. For a significant number of us the pain never completely goes away and we turn to regular use of painkillers, or costly visits to the osteopath or chiropractor. Sometimes the chronic long-term nature of the pain begins to interfere with our lives. This six-week course will give you the information and tools you need to improve the condition of your own back, reduce pain and improve your quality of life. Spaces are limited so please email us soon to register.

Our other community groups

The Veg Shed for men meets at Elms Farm Allotments every Sunday to grow fruit and vegetables. All men are welcome, however experienced you are. Contact us for more details.

Muddy Walkers meets every Thursday at 7.30pm, and is open to everyone. Walk, talk and connect with nature. We have representatives at the **TouchPoint Café** every Thursday at the Day Centre. Drop in for a hot drink or afternoon tea.

Everyone is welcome to get in touch with the team, whatever your situation or state of mind. Wishing you a very joyful Christmas and Peaceful New Year. Let's keep talking!

Richard Haywood
Tel: 07794 268208

Email: contact@stanstedmentalhealth.org

SANTA DASH AND REINDEER RUN

www.mencapgrovecottage.org

Join us for our annual popular Santa Dash and Reindeer Run on **Saturday 4th December** at Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre. Entrants can run, jog, skip or walk either the 1k or the 5k routes. Entry: £12 for ages 13 plus; this includes a full five-piece Santa suit for you to keep. Entry: £6 for ages 12 and below, which includes reindeer antlers and a festive medal to take home. The run starts at 11.00am with the warm-up starting at 10.45am. Registration opens at 10.00am and there will be hot drinks to enjoy before the race starts. Last year's event was virtual, owing to Covid restrictions. Participants were encouraged to take part in any way that they wanted to; hence the photo of the ladies competing on bikes.



Entrants are encouraged to raise sponsorship from this event, but this is not essential; all that is essential is that everyone has a great day! To book your place go to the Grove Cottage website.

Alison Cameron
Tel: 651908

Email: fundraising@mencapgrovecottage.org

RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS STAMPS



Christmas is one of the few occasions when we receive a lot more post with ordinary stamps; most of the mail we receive these days is franked. This is an ideal time to collect the stamps and recycle them. We are also still collecting original (not remanufactured or own brand) ink cartridges, stamps, toothbrushes, electric toothbrush heads, and toothpaste tubes (please place dental items in a paper or plastic bag). Please leave items in the boxes outside the blue main door of the Free Church on Chapel Hill. There is also a collecting box inside St John's church. Alternatively please leave items in the porch of 7 Blythwood Gardens. **Please note that we do not take laser toner cartridges.** Thank you.

Marion and Mike Dyer
Tel: 814059

Email: recycle@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk



Dementia Activity Group in Dunmow

People living with dementia can benefit from a hugely popular weekly activity group in Dunmow run by Essex-based charity Action for Family Carers. More than a dozen people attend the Dunmow group and a further 50 in West Essex attend similar groups. They mix with others and participate in a variety of mentally and physically stimulating activities ranging from seated exercise, indoor bowling, reminiscence discussions and games, often including music.

The groups are led by a small team of professional and caring staff and a large number of dedicated local volunteers. Morning sessions, called *Keeping Active*, focus on physical activity; *Active Minds* is in the afternoon and focuses on activities to stimulate the brain. The group meet on Mondays 10.00am-12.30pm and 1.00pm-3.30pm at the Dourdan Pavilion, Dunmow. New members are welcome; if you know of anyone who might benefit from joining or for more information, please call Clare Savva on 0300 770 8090 or email: clare.savva@affc.org.uk.

Jennifer Jarvis



DAISY MAY'S FARM

www.daisymaysfarm.org

What a grand time we all had during our Halloween week and it was fantastic to see so many of you having the most brilliant fun. Thank you so much for coming; the animals loved seeing you all. We are now getting ready for Christmas; once again hold on to your Santa hats as there will be **so** much to do. Mrs Claus will be joining us again this year and will be reading Christmas stories to the children whilst they enjoy a hot chocolate before getting their gifts from her. Afterwards, a snowy walk through the Winter Woodland is a must. There will also be plenty of Christmas crafts to enjoy and the animals must have a fuss made of them and maybe a few treats too. Make sure you keep an eye on our Facebook page as booking will be essential; you will not want to miss out on all the festive fun.

We will be open every **Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of December** (2nd-4th, 9th-11th, and 16th-18th) 9.00am-3.00pm, so make sure you book early. These events are a vital lifeline for us to raise enough funds to feed and look after our animals and we can only do this with your help and support. We are at Hall Road, Elsenham CM22 6DN. We look forward to seeing you in the new year and merry Christmas to you all! Thank you so much.



Elaine Terry
Tel: 07747 787973



CHRISTMAS EVENTS



CHURCHES TOGETHER IN STANSTED CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

Everyone is very welcome to our Stansted Village traditional Christmas Celebration with carols and readings, which will take place on **Saturday 18th December** at 4.00pm in the Memorial Gardens by St John's Church. We are very fortunate this year to have the Bishop's Stortford Brass Band playing for our carols. Please come and join us and enjoy this festive event. It would be lovely if children could bring lanterns. There are one or two benches in the gardens; however, if you do need a seat it would be a good idea to bring your own folding chair. We look forward to seeing you there.

Kathy West Tel: 816293
Dave Morson Tel: 850209



FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH

Christmas is fast approaching and the church calendar for December is now finalised:

- Saturday 11th 1.00pm *The Snow Queen*. Live theatre in church by a fantastic group of very talented people. Tickets in advance from 07732 253311 or www.thisismytheatre.com
- Saturday 11th 4.00pm *Carol concert*. Come early to get your seat
- Sunday 12th 1.30pm-5.00pm *Party day* with a special performance by Stansted U3A Strummers at 3.00pm. A wonderful foot-tapping festive afternoon!!

Mulled wine, mince pies, raffles and a warm welcome to you all each day. See you all there.



Lynda Dale
Tel: 07716 099474

MANUDEN CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL



There will be a Christmas Tree Festival on **Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th December** 9.30am-3.30pm in St Mary's Church Manuden. Entry by donation please. Drinks and cakes will be available, with activities for the children, and a craft stall.

We hope to have about 25 decorated trees, either inside or outside the church, and would love to see you.



Glynis Prothero
Tel: 814145

AMICI CANTATE CHOIR



Christmas with Amici Cantate

Bishop's Stortford based choir, Amici Cantate, under their Music Director James Davey, is delighted to be returning to perform together in person on **Saturday 11th December** 7.00pm in the beautiful setting of St Michael's Church on Windhill, Bishop's Stortford. Choir members have been thrilled to be meeting to rehearse safely together for the first time since the choir's last real-life appearance at All Saints' Church, Hockerill two years ago for *Wassail*. This is a **free** concert and there will be a retiring collection in aid of The British Heart Foundation.

Ali Thompson



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www.mencapgrovecottage.org
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Manuden Christmas Tree Festival

9.30 am - 3.30 pm

Sat 11th and Sun 12th Dec

St Mary's Church Manuden

Drinks and Cakes

Craft Stall

Children's Activities

All welcome - entry by donation



Stansted Millers

Christmas Event

**Noon - 5 pm Sat 11th Dec
at the Windmill**

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WHAT'S ON IN DECEMBER & JANUARY

December

1	Wed	Ugley W I	Ugley Village Hall 2.15 pm
4	Sat	Grove Cottage Santa Dash	Grange Paddocks 11 am
7	Tue	Stansted is well read	Dog and Duck 8 pm
9	Thu	U3A Monthly Meeting WI	St John's Hall 2 pm Day Centre 7.30 pm
11/12	Sat/Sun	Christmas Tree Festival	St Mary's Manuden 9.30 am
11	Sat	Santa at the Windmill	Noon - 5 pm
		Snow Queen	St Mary's Church 1 pm
		Carol Concert	St Mary's Church 4 pm
		Amici Cantate Concert	St Michael's Church 7 pm
12	Sun	Party Day	St Mary's Church 1.30 pm
14	Tue	RSPB	B Park Comm Centre 7.30 pm
18	Sat	Farmers' Market	Ugley Village Hall 10 am - noon
		Village Carol Singing	Memorial Gardens 4 pm

January

4	Tue	Stansted is well read	Dog and Duck 8 pm
6	Thu	Local History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
9	Sun	Link copy due in today	before 12 noon
11	Tue	RSPB	B Park Comm Centre 7.30 pm
13	Thu	WI	Day Centre 7.30 pm
16	Sat	Farmers' Market	Ugley Village Hall 10 am - noon
19	Wed	Ugley W I	Ugley Village Hall 2.15 pm
20	Thu	U3A Monthly Meeting	St John's Hall 2 pm

It is good to see so many Christmas events back this year and we
hope you will find something to enjoy over the festive season

There is no January edition, so this page will be back in February



Celebration of Christmas



**Carols and Readings
With B S Brass Band**

4 pm Sat 18th Dec

Memorial Gardens, Chapel Hill

**Words provided - bring a lantern
or torch and your own chair**

All welcome - please join us



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www.ugleyvillage.org.uk Ugley Village Hall

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U3A Strummers at 3 pm

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Everyone Welcome



CHRISTMAS CONCERT

7 pm Sat 11th Dec


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Bishops's Stortford

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www.amicicantate.org.uk



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THE MYSTERY CHRISTMAS BOX



They were on the way home from the children's Saturday film. Jane stopped outside the corner shop. 'Hurry up. I don't want to miss The Lone Ranger,' shouted Richard. Jane stayed where she was, her breath hovering in the chilly air. She just needed a few minutes to check it was still there. Reaching up to hang on to the window ledge, balancing on the tips of her toes like a ballerina Jane's eyes drew level with the bottom of the shop window. It was a bit misted up but the glow of the twinkling fairy lights inside clearly showed the pretty box. She'd been in the shop with her mother when Mrs Cooper had put it in the window. Her mother said it smelled of violets, her favourite flowers. As she seemed so taken by it, Jane wanted to buy the box for her mother for Christmas. She wasn't sure exactly what was in the fancy box or how much it cost, but hoped that with next week's pocket money, added to what she'd already saved, there should be enough. Rubbing her cold hands together she looked for Richard. He'd gone without her, and it was getting late. Jane was afraid of the dark and ran as quickly as her six-year-old legs would carry her. By the time she caught up with her big brother she'd started to cry, but hastily brushed away her tears before he noticed. He'd only laugh at her, and she hated that.



The next week Jane could hardly contain her excitement. She hopped from foot to foot as she waited for Richard at the sweet shop. She'd managed to persuade him to leave the cinema before the film had finished, claiming she had tummy ache and felt sick, but was unable to hurry him over his purchase. Finally, when she didn't think she could bear it any longer, he paid his thruppence and they left. 'What do you want to go in there for?' he asked, a candy cigarette dangling from the corner of his mouth like the baddie in the film they'd just watched.

'Something I want to buy. You don't have to come in with me,' Jane added anxiously, not wanting Richard to see what she was getting. He'd only make fun of her, because that's what he always did. To her relief he just shrugged. Leaning on the wall he dived into his paper bag for a black-jack telling her not to be long. Jane had never been in the corner shop on her own before and was a little scared. The counter was so high she couldn't see over it. If it hadn't been for the tinkle of the bell when she'd opened the door the shopkeeper wouldn't have known she was there.

'You're Bet Slater's girl, aren't you? Where's your mum?' Mrs Cooper's loud voice robbed Jane of her own. 'Does she know you're here on your own?' The shopkeeper looked a bit annoyed, which didn't help. Gulping, Jane finally found her voice and managed to gabble, 'No. I want to buy mum



that lovely box in the window.' She pointed with a shaky finger. 'For Christmas. I've got some money.' She quickly tipped all the money she had onto the counter, and waited anxiously. Mrs Cooper tutted as some of the coins rolled onto the floor. When she'd collected all of the cash together, she counted it. 'Sorry dear there's not enough here. You need another sixpence.' Jane's heart sank into her boots. Christmas Day was the day after tomorrow. There was no way she'd be able to get more pocket money from dad so quickly and she so wanted to buy a nice surprise present for her mum. Tears threatened. Suddenly the bell tinkled behind her, as someone came in. 'What's taking you so long? Hurry up. We're going to be late again,' her brother said looking really cross.

Mrs Cooper bustled out from behind the counter and patting Jane on the head said, not unkindly, 'I can put it by for you if you want to go home and get some more money.' Jane gave her a watery smile before turning to go. 'What you trying to buy?' her brother demanded. Jane pointed at the gift in the window. 'What is it?' Richard looked mildly curious.

'It's a set of bath cubes, for your mum. A present for Christmas,' answered Mrs Cooper. Jane was now crying. 'Oh. How much do you need?' To Jane's great surprise her brother paid the extra sixpence, and Mrs Cooper even wrapped the gift in some pretty paper for them. Jane was so surprised at Richard's kindness that she quite forgot to thank him.

On Christmas morning Jane's mother was thrilled with her set of bath cubes and Jane thought she saw a tear in her mum's eye as she thanked her daughter. 'It's from me as well,' shouted Richard indignantly. 'I helped pay for it.' Jane guessed it would be a long time before she was allowed to forget her brother's good deed.



Yvonne Ayres



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MANUDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

www.manudenprimary.co.uk

The term has been very special as we have finally been able to welcome parents back into school, starting with our Harvest Celebrations just before half-term. The morning began with our traditional Harvest breakfast, where children and their families enjoyed breakfast cooked and served by our school staff. This was followed by our Harvest Assembly during which the children did an amazing job entertaining everyone.



A highlight for our reception children this term was their Barn dance. The children did an amazing job remembering all the steps in their dances. After they had performed and acted out *The Enormous Turnip* story, they joined their parents for some vegetable soup and bread that they had made. Big congratulations to all of Snowy Owl class for their energetic dancing. Throughout the term, Hawk Owl class, years 3 and 4, have been exploring how Manuden village could be improved. After looking at the structure and language features found in persuasive letters, they wrote to Uttlesford Planning Development to explain why they think their proposed development to Manuden should be approved. As part of their WWII learning, years 5 and 6 children set up a pop-up wartime café where they served some delicious food made using recipes of that time. Not only did they develop their food technology skills but were able to use their knowledge of rationing when preparing the hearty Oxford potato soup and tasty carrot scones. During the afternoon, café customers were treated to excellent entertainment when the children performed a selection of WWII songs. What a great way to showcase their learning so far this term.

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Marnie Tait
Tel: 813370

Email: admin@manuden.essex.sch.uk

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This must surely be one of the best half terms in a primary school. The run up to Christmas is always magical and after the rigours and peculiarities of the last academic year we are crossing our fingers on our anti-bacced hands that our planned Reception class Nativity on **Friday 10th December** plus our Years 1 and 2 production on **Monday 13th** and **Tuesday 14th December** will go ahead as planned. Please be aware that these dates may change.

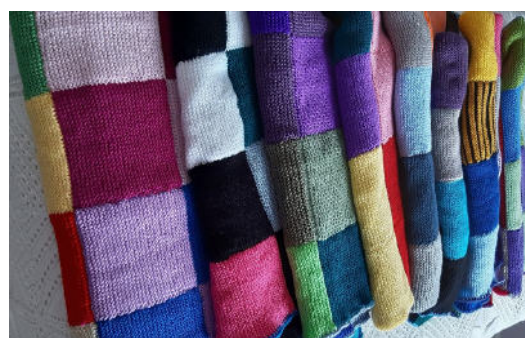
Upper Key Stage 2 have been doing some amazing work related to their overarching theme of *Gallery Rebels*. This has included a trip to the National Gallery where the children studied Impressionism, Realism, Surrealism and Cubism. In sporting news we have recently been very successful in tag rugby, winning an Uttlesford School Sports Partnership competition. I am extremely proud of the team we sent, as after a mere 15 minutes' practice they won all six matches! The team came back to school with gold medals and are through to the next round in March. Big thanks to William and Daniel's dad who stepped in to help referee. Our *Good Will Club*, led by Miss Cheer, continues to go from strength to strength. A recent push for donations for Uttlesford food bank saw our lobby overflowing with tins and cartons from our generous pupils and parents. Thank you to all those who made it to one of our Open Days in November. If you did not manage to make it and you may be interested in a place for your child, please contact the school office to book an appointment.

Matthew Curzon
Head Teacher
Tel: 812212

Email: office@st-marys-stansted.essex.sch.uk

BLANKETS FOR HOPE INTERNATIONAL

The picture below shows blankets made from the squares created by a group of knitters during the last few months. I am able to take them to the Church Office in Elsenham where they will be sent to the headquarters of Christian Hope International and sent abroad to places of need.



I would like to thank all the people who knit these and make this possible.



Judy Colliver
Tel: 812470



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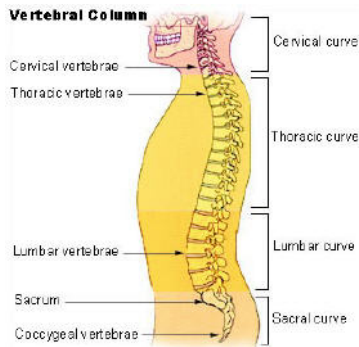
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Upper Back Mobility

This is vital for good posture, strength and sporting ability.



1. Upper backs lose mobility as we age and start sitting more.
2. The assumption is that they need more extension, opening out the chest.
3. In truth, this is not necessarily so!
4. Whilst some get stuck in a rounded position, kyphosis, some get stuck rigidly upright: the military upper back.
5. Whichever position, this lack of mobility means breathing is compromised and the rest of the spine has to compensate in various ways, none good.
6. The upper back needs a soft, flexible curve for optimal posture, strength, sporting ability, flexibility and injury prevention.
7. The problem with the military upper back is that it can lead to the shoulder blades winging, not lying flat on the back, leading to weak upper body strength and injuries.
8. If the shoulder blades are winging, the thoracic spine needs to relax into a soft curve and the shoulders roll back, down and around the ribs; I can assure you this is a brain boggle to achieve.
9. The simplest way to mobilise the upper back is to hold a balled-up sock on your sternum, and push it upwards, really opening out the chest. This does not involve moving the shoulders at all!
10. Then pull the sock into your chest, keeping the shoulders down, relaxed and still.
11. For more profound results add neural power: as you push the sock skywards, really grin, squeeze your eyes tight and tighten your teeth. As you pull the sock into you, relax your face, open your eyes as wide as possible, gently slide your jaw from side to side whilst pushing your tongue up into the roof of the mouth moving it forwards.

Clare Harding
Z-Health Master Practitioner
Tel: 816430



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET

LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

There was a very well attended meeting on 4th November, the third since we re-convened due to Covid. We were delighted to welcome back our guest speaker, Tim Turner MRICS, who is a specialist in silver and hallmarking. Tim is a senior valuer at Sworders, where he has been an associate for over 30 years; he gave a fascinating talk and brought with him a large selection of silver objects which varied in both age and value.

Numerous interesting facts were explained, for example, virtually all items which are described as *solid silver* are in fact an alloy of silver; a pure silver object would be too soft for practicable use. The quality of silver is protected by the all-powerful Assay Office at Goldsmiths Hall who ensure the hall-marking of items is accurate. Unfortunately, forgery has been a problem for centuries with unscrupulous dealers melting down objects and using false hallmarks to increase their value. As the industrial revolution created prosperity and middle-class families wished to show off their new-found wealth, various forms of silver products were manufactured using silver plating where a thin layer of silver is wedged to a base metal such as copper. Electroplated nickel silver was a later manufacturing process and is still widely used for producing silver objects. Over the years it was not uncommon for silver to be melted down and re-formed into more modern designs according to the current vogue. The meeting concluded with members inspecting the items which Tim had brought along and learning about their origin and value, followed by a vote of thanks to Tim for such an interesting and enlightening talk. Our next meetings are on **Thursdays 2nd December** and **6th January** at 8.00pm in the Day Centre; you will be very welcome to join us.

Edward Taub
Email: taub8jr@icloud.com

STANSTED IS WELL READ

Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday 7th December** 8.00pm at the Dog and Duck in Lower Street, where we will be discussing *Family Matters* by Rohinton Mistry. We will also be having our Christmas book swap at this meeting where we will each wrap up a book that we have enjoyed reading; these will be exchanged and then we will read our new book in December ready to discuss at our January meeting which will be on **Tuesday 4th January** 8.00pm. Please do get in touch if you would like to join us at either of these meetings; a warm welcome will await.

Anne Watson
Tel: 898693
Email: stanstediswellread@gmail.com



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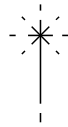
THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

It is Advent's perpetual destiny, it seems, to be mistaken for Christmas, and yet their characters could not be more different. Christmas is jolly, boisterous and, in this country at least, a largely secular affair. Advent, in contrast, is a muted and yearning church season, a time for preparation, reflection and self-examination. At Christmas, we celebrate Christ as Immanuel, God-with-us. At Advent, the Immanuel event is still a little way in the future and so Christ is experienced as God-not-quite-with-us-yet. The imperative of Advent is to prepare our hearts so they are ready to receive Christ, something that may require confession and repentance. It is a little understood fact that Advent is actually a penitential season, which arguably has more in common with Lent than with Christmas.

Ultimately, the joy of Christmas is far greater if we take seriously Advent's discipline of waiting and expecting. So do not let Christmas crowd out Advent this year. If you are sick of Christmas by the time you get to Christmas Day, you have not done Advent properly!



Rev'd Colin Fairweather
St John's Church



CHRISTMAS SERVICES



St John's

Friday 10th December

7.00pm Huw Johnson Carol Service

Saturday 11th December

4.00pm Carols at St Mary's

Sunday 12th December

3.30pm Christingle Service

Christmas Eve Friday 24th December

3.00pm Children's Crib Service

11.30pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day Saturday 25th December

9.30am Family Communion

Boxing Day Sunday 26th December

No service

Free Church

Christmas Day Saturday 25th December

10.30am Carol Service

Boxing Day Sunday 26th December

No service

St Theresa's

Christmas Eve Friday 24th December

9.30am Mass During the day

Nativity of the Lord

4.00pm Vigil Mass of Christmas with pop up Nativity

7.00pm Mass During the Night

Christmas Day Saturday 25th December

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

8.30am Mass of the Dawn

10.00am Mass of the Day

Boxing Day Sunday 26th December

8.30am Mass 10.00am Mass

Friends

Christmas Day Saturday 25th December

No Meeting

Boxing Day Sunday 26th December

No meeting



THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Quaker Meeting House, 71 Chapel Hill
Stansted CM24 8AE
www.stansted.quakermeeting.org

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

Lettings Yvonne Estop Tel: 07595 087207
Email: yvonne-wood@outlook.com

Sunday Worship 10.30am. Visitors are always welcome.

We join together in stillness every Sunday at 10.30am for an hour, followed by coffee and chat. Quakers allow each person to explore their own experience of God. While founded upon Christianity, we embrace a wide breadth of beliefs, with a dedication to peace, simplicity, truth, equality and care for nature, which we try to live out in everyday life. The Quaker way is a spiritual path for our time, a path that is simple, radical and contemporary.

We would love to welcome you. If you would like to know more, please get in touch with Jane. You can find out more about Quakers at this website: www.quakerquest.org. Our Light Group is held on the second Saturday each month at 10.30am-noon. This Quaker spiritual practice is a guided meditation on ourselves and the world. All are welcome; for more information please contact me. The Quaker Hall is available for hire; please see contact details above.

Sue Moloney
Tel: 07759 532115
Email: suemol@uwclub.net



All enquiries: The Church Office, St John's Hall,
including Church St John's Road, Stansted CM24 8JP
Hall bookings Tel: 815243 (with answerphone)
Office hours: 9.00am-4.30pm Mon, ,
2.00pm-5.00pm Tues and Thur
Email: st.johns.church@btinternet.com
Website: www.thefivechurches.org.uk

Rector: Rev'd Dr Colin Fairweather
Tel: 816721
Email: revdrcolinfairweather@gmail.com

Assistant Curate: Rev'd Helen Flack Tel: 01371 876145
Email: revhelenstn@gmail.com

Pastoral Assistant: Kathryn West Tel: 816293
Email: kewest@btinternet.com

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

ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Many congratulations to the winners of the October draw:

£100	No 174	Derek Francis
£ 50	No 187	Roland Pelly
£ 25	No 276	Jacqueline Jones

The draw for December will be held on **2nd January** in St John's Church, following the 9.30am service. The draw for January will be held on **30th January** in St John's Church, following the 9.30am service. Numbers at £2 each month 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

From St John's Registers

October

Baptisms

2nd Harriet Amber Valerie Smith
17th Heidi Amelia Tonkin

Funeral

16th Doris Thistle - at St Mary's



STANSTED FREE CHURCH

Methodist / URC
Chapel Hill

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Secretary Betty Francis
Tel: 813977
Email: betty@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

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

Preachers for December

5th 10.30am Karen Quelch - New Directions
12th 10.30am Rev'd Gill Hulme - Communion
19th 10.30am Denis Walker
25th 10.30am Christmas Day Carols
26th No service

Preachers for January

2nd 10.30am Mike Dyer
9th 10.30am Julie Finbow
16th 10.30am Rev'd Stuart Veitch - Covenant
23rd 10.30am Rev'd Gill Hulme
30th 10.30am Mark Hayes





www.stanstedfamilychurch.co.uk

Contact Howard and Ros Page
Tel: 810813
Email: stanstedfamily@gmail.com

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

We wish everyone a peaceful Christmas and a very blessed New Year. If you would like to join us for a friendly, informal meeting on Tuesday evenings or Sundays, please get in touch; we meet in person but venues may change closer to the time. All meetings offer a combination of modern worship music, Bible-based talk, discussion and prayer. The Alpha Course (in person) is currently running. Investigators (group for children aged 7-11) takes place on Friday evenings, with lively sessions including lots of games, fun challenges, stories, discussions, and creative activities such as craft and drama. There are a few spaces for new children. For more information about any of these activities, please contact us. We are also happy to receive prayer-requests from anyone, and regularly see answered prayers. 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?



Ros and Howard Page

CATHOLIC

St Therese of Lisieux

High Lane, Stansted CM24 8LQ
www.sttheresastansted.org

Priest Father Lee Bennett
Tel: 814349
Email: frleebennett@dioceseofbrentwood.org

Parish Rev'd Deacon Des Connors
Deacon Tel: 07748 464101
Email: desconnors@dioceseofbrentwood.org

Masses

Saturday	5.00pm Confessions 6.00pm Mass
Sunday	8.30am and 10.00am Mass
	9.15am Confessions
	Noon *Latin Mass
	(*First Sunday of every month)
Monday	9.00am Confessions 9.30am Mass
Tuesday	7.15am Confessions
	8.00pm Latin Mass
Wednesday	Noon Confessions 12.30pm Mass
Thursday/Friday	9.00am Confessions 9.30am Mass

Baptism By appointment

We are pleased to confirm our Christmas Masses, which sees a return of our *Pop Up Nativity*. We encourage all children to attend our 4.00pm Mass on Christmas Eve dressed as their favourite character from the nativity. All are welcome. All the Christmas masses are listed on page 13 and can also be viewed on our website and facebook page. www.facebook.com/StTheresaStansted

Clair Rava
Parish Administrator
Tel: 816889

Email: stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org



FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH

Several scouts, beavers and parents along with leaders from the 1st Stansted Scout and Beaver groups came to help tidy the St Mary's churchyard at the end of October. The weather was cold and wet at the start, but we all carried on regardless and were eventually rewarded with sunshine. The scouts and beavers were working towards a community badge as part of a World Challenge event. We cleared weeds from around the church walls, and unearthen grave surrounds to try and make walking around easier for visitors. Huge thanks to each and every one of you who helped on the day.



Champing is now closed and will restart in April. We have had over 150 people staying in church overnight and enjoying the tranquillity of this amazing building.



Lynda Dale
Tel: 07716 099474

Please see page 13 for all services over the Christmas period.



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The newly formed Gardening Group enjoyed a wonderful afternoon in October when they visited Ulling Wick, the eleven-acre garden created by Philippa Burrough. The garden was awash with autumn colour and inspirational planting schemes. The group toured the garden, enjoyed an introductory talk and tea and cake on the terrace.



We welcomed Tony Diamond to the monthly meeting on Thursday 21st October. His very amusing and informative talk was entitled *The History of Chocolate*. It was followed by the AGM which had been held over from May 2020 because of Covid. At the AGM Susan Sedgebeer was welcomed as the new Chairman, Eric Fidell as the new Treasurer and three more members joined the Committee. The Committee is indebted to the outgoing Chairman, Ray Smith, Treasurer, Nigel Johnson and Speaker Secretary Gill Dean, and wish them all well with many thanks for their time and efforts over the last few years.

Banjo player Steve Geller will present *The Songs we Sang – a Career in Music* at our meeting on **Thursday 9th December**. He will be playing some of the songs from the last 50 years. On **Thursday 20th January** the speaker will be Brian Carline. His talk, *Our Street* is a pictorial representation of life in an industrial city in the 40s and 50s. Both meetings are at 2.00pm in St John's Hall. Our Christmas Lunch is on **Thursday December 16th** at Bury Lodge. Members who wish to join us should email us. See the November newsletter for further details.

Anne White

Tel: 07874 385541

Email: stanstedu3a@gmail.com



The Place will be open **every Wednesday 10.00am-noon, in December and January**. Free coffee, cakes, and biscuits to enjoy in good company - what more could you ask? There is no need to book, just turn up. We look forward to seeing you. All adults welcome.



Mike and Marion Dyer

Tel: 814059

Email: theplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

DREAMING OF A CHRISTMAS THAT'S GREEN

I'm dreaming of a Christmas that's green
No turkey, no tinsel. Just treen,
Ivy and holly to deck the halls
Nut roast to eat with veggie stuffed balls

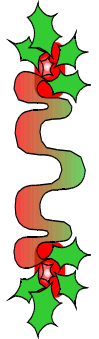
I'm dreaming of a Christmas that's green
The most eco-friendly it's ever been
Crackers handmade from recycled stuff
Made with love - but they may look rough

I'm dreaming of a Christmas that's green
Without all the fuss portrayed on the screen
In ads that show the perfect festive table
All fairy tale nonsense, like Aesop's Fable

Our Christmas could well be green this year
It wouldn't lack seasonal good cheer
Fewer gifts bought for under the tree
Would mean more cash to give to charity

Enjoy your Christmas, whatever its hue
May all you've wished for come true
Whilst spending time with those you love
Don't forget the Birthday Boy above.

Loki



SAFFRON WALDEN DEMENTIA CAFE

Are you caring for or living with someone affected by dementia/Alzheimer's or have you lost a loved one and would just like to chat? It has been six months since we restarted, and the group is buzzing with chatter and laughter, a fulfilling sight.



The photograph shows carers and dementia patients

Please do pop along to our Dementia Café and enjoy companionship, support, activities, information, advice and, of course, refreshments. We meet every Wednesday 10.00am-noon in Fairycroft House, Audley Road, Saffron Walden CB11 3HD. Onsite parking is available. If you would like to find out more, do get in touch with me.

Jennifer Jarvis

Tel: 07900 123917

Email: saffronwaldendementiacafe@gmail.com



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RSPB STORT VALLEY

www.rspb.org.uk/groups/stortvalley

With its colourful beak full of food, the puffin is one of our most iconic and much-loved birds and it is the focus for our December meeting. Our speaker is Anne Forbes who is a naturalist, ecologist and biologist; she will enlighten us on the world and life of puffins. Some of you may know Anne from her time at Herts and Essex school where she headed the Science department. The meeting is on **Tuesday 14th December** 7.30pm at Tesco Community Centre, Bishop's Stortford. All are welcome; entry: £3 for members of our local group, £5 for non-members. Annual membership is £12. Our monthly meetings continue next year on the second Tuesday of each month (venue, time and fees as December) commencing on **11th January**. We are still planning the year's programme so details of our January speaker were not available when going to press, but full details will be available on our website or from me.



On **Thursday 9th December** we are launching our programme of short, sociable and local walks. All are welcome to meet at Rosy Lea, Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, CM23 1JG at 10.30am. The plan is to follow a circular route towards Hadham Hall and follow that with refreshments. On **Saturday 16th January** we have planned a visit to RSPB Rye Meads, Rye Road, Hoddesdon, Herts, SG12 8JS. Meet at the reserve at 10.00am. This is an excellent local reserve set in wetland beside the River Lea, offering trails and hides, including the recently opened new kingfisher hide.

Peter Allen

Tel: 07876 295456

Email: peter2349@sky.com



UGLEY WOMENS' INSTITUTE

It is not every day that a group of Ugley women get the chance to handle a Martini Henri rifle or a Zulu spear. However, that is exactly what happened at our October meeting when Kate Birbeck, ably assisted by her partner Susie, came to share her passion and boundless knowledge of the Zulu War with us. There was a fascinating local connection too. A resident of Stansted Hall, Lieutenant Colonel Alan Colstoun Gardner, took part in the war. He belonged to a very distinguished family with a history of service to our

country. The local connection was extended when he married Nora Blyth of Blythwood House. He lived through the war, dying on Christmas Day in 1907 and was survived by his wife Nora who died in 1944 and by two daughters, Marjorie and Dorothy. They all rest together in St Mary's Churchyard in Stansted. Their memorial has been restored recently by Kate and thanks to her tireless efforts they also have a memorial plaque inside the church. Kate has also written and published a superb, beautifully illustrated book on the subject entitled *Rifle and Spear with the Zulu – the life of Lieutenant Colonel Alan Colstoun Gardner, soldier, hunter and politician*.

We shall be having a festive tea for our December meeting on **Wednesday 1st December** 2.15pm in Ugley Village Hall. Our programme for 2022 will get off to a flying start on **Wednesday 19th January** when the speaker will be Tim Turner; his subject will be *The History of Swords*. We hope to see you there; 2.15pm in Ugley Village Hall.

Andrea Fitt

Tel: 815922

STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET EVENING WI



Our President, Anne Watson, was able to welcome members in October to our first meeting in the Day Centre after many months of holding meetings outdoors or on Zoom. It was good also to be able to welcome two new members and several visitors. The very first meeting of our WI was held in October 61 years ago and we are lucky to have three founder members still in our membership. They are Marion Pretty, Margaret Chastney and Margaret Meadows – there must be something about names beginning with 'M'! Gary Matthews gave a very interesting talk, enhanced by photographs, about Easton Lodge, the Countess and her gardens. Many people have lived there, the most famous being Daisy, the Countess of Warwick. The gardens were originally designed in 1902 by Harold Peto, a landscape designer who worked in Britain and France. They became very neglected but are now being restored by volunteers, to bring them back to their former glory. The gardens are open on some Sundays in the year and for pre-booked visits. Our members are hoping to visit the Lodge in the near future.

On 9th December we are having our Members' Day meeting, postponed from September 2020. We are lucky that the speaker booked then is able to entertain us with her talk *Funny Ladies*. These meetings are organised by the general membership who arrange the meeting to give the Committee a break. On 13th January the musical group *Three's Company* has been booked and we hope to have a bring-and-share supper. So, the next few months look fun, and we hope that everyone remains fit and well and Covid-free. Our meetings are on the second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm in the Day Centre and visitors are always welcome.



Judy Colliver



Stansted Network

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS

Wishing all parish residents a merry Christmas and a happy New Year



The felling of some Ash trees in Newmans Plantation will make room for some of the 300 trees heading the village's way in January as part of the Essex Forest



GREEN-FINGERED HELP NEEDED

In January, Newman's Plantation will find itself at the centre of a re-forestation drive in the village. The Essex Forest Initiative will see 300 native trees heading our way - three times the original number planned as part of the scheme. Planting the trees, a mix of native species, at the start of the year will tie in with our existing plans to fell some diseased Ash trees in the plantation. But the size of the task is not insignificant.

The trees will beautify the village and help us play a part in tackling global warming; however, accepting such a large tree pack presents a logistical challenge. Newman's Plantation is too small a site for so many trees, so alternative spots need to be found. The Parish Council has called for the creation of a working group to co-ordinate planting efforts.

We are also asking for volunteers to come forward, and are particularly keen to hear from local groups such as the Gardening Club. If you would like to help us deliver the project, we would be pleased to hear from you. Contact the Parish Council by either email (parishcouncil@stansted.net) or telephone (01279 813214).



AN UGLEY FLOODING PROBLEM

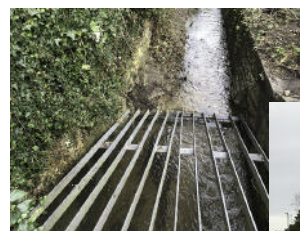
Alas, our pleas for assistance for the village from other quarters appear to have fallen on deaf ears. At a Finance & General Purposes meeting at the end of October, committee chairman John O'Brien detailed how the Parish Council is no nearer to resolving the issue of flood prevention owing to the lack of urgency shown by the Environment Agency.

The breaching of Ugley Brook is a perennial threat and *one regarded as a top flooding issue by Uttlesford District Council*. Since 2002, the Environment Agency has commissioned not one, but four reports to look into flooding in the lowest areas of our village, but none has pointed to a solution.

During that time we have had the catastrophic flooding of Lower Street in 2014. Three years later a repeat was only averted because near-to-overflowing SUD basins at Walpole Meadows hadn't been connected to the watercourse. That meant flood waters at the old junction between High Lane and the B1383 didn't flow to the low lying parts of Stansted. And the culvert in Lower Street this January came within 4cm of overflowing.

Widening the culvert, touted as a solution by the consultancy, Mott MacDonald in 2016, has never got off the ground. To deliver such a project would have cost the Environment Agency £6.5m. It would also have caused a great deal of disruption to residents and businesses on Lower Street.

The Parish Council's preferred fix is a Natural Flood Management scheme, such as the one employed in Belford, Northumberland. This has been deemed a great success by being innovative, using the natural lay of the land and leaky dams to slow the surface water run-off rate. It is also one the Environment Agency is involved with.



The culvert runs the length of Lower Street



Torrential rain turned High Lane into a scene of flooding in 2017



The Parish Council have explored how a similar scheme could alleviate the flood threat to the village, identified sites that could serve as water storage sites, and obtained the support of landowners. But it appears that the Environment Agency prefers to discard suggestions built on local knowledge.

Poor communication by the Agency is an issue too. One of the few local landowners to be contacted by the Environment Agency now refuses to allow them to start work without giving formal support for the establishment of a wetland area, at his own expense. In effect, the village is being held to ransom by the Agency's inability to communicate effectively.

On a more positive note, the drains on Church Road are to be cleared ahead of winter after our Essex County Councillor, Ray Gooding, raised the matter with Highways officers. Drains will be jet cleaned and a survey conducted to verify their varying sizes. The survey information will be used to improve future flood mitigation efforts.

ROAD MAP FOR SAFER STREETS

When our Highways Sub-Committee met this Autumn there was much to discuss. On the agenda were proposals for a pedestrian crossing on Silver Street, traffic measures for Chapel Hill, and parking restrictions to Walson Way, Cambridge Road and Newel Road among others. Below is summary of some of the key measures currently being considered in the village.

1 Our County Councillor Ray Gooding is proposing a village-wide scheme to deal with heavy goods vehicles impacting on Stansted's roads. He has called for weight limits to be applied to traffic moving through the village with surveillance cameras employed at entry points.

2 The sub-committee unanimously agreed to request the North Essex Parking Partnership implement yellow lines on **Newell Road, Bayford Way & Bentley Drive** after considering a resident's photographic evidence of parking issues in this area.

3 Consultation is to continue with residents of **Walson Way** to find a solution to parking issues in this area. Councillors Geoffrey Sell and Ayub Khan will meet with residents opposed to the Parish Council's provisional plans to stop kerb-side parking. A 20mph zone has also been proposed to tackle speeding along Walson Way.

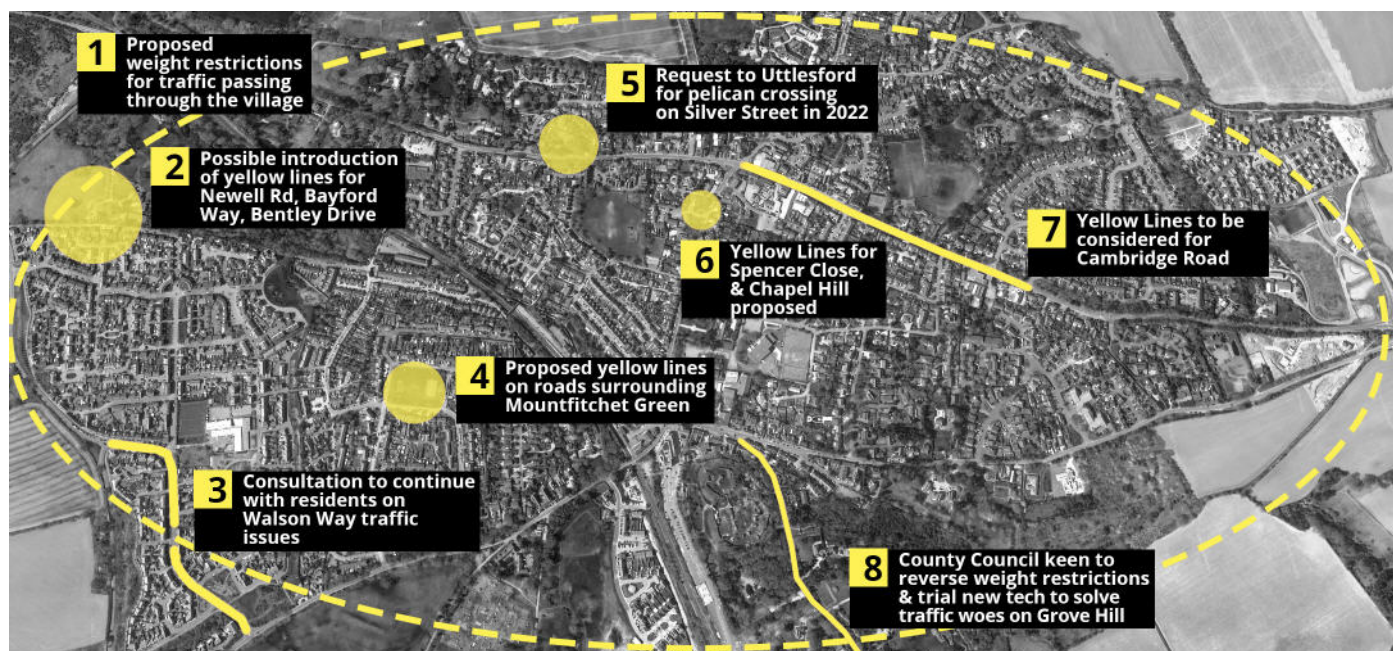
4 The sub-committee is to consult residents on the **Mountfitchet Estate** regarding a proposal to paint yellow lines on roads surrounding the Green where children play, after parents and elderly residents raised their safety concerns.

5 There was unanimous support for a resident's request that Uttlesford Local Highways Panel consider a pelican crossing on **Silver Street**, close to Blythwood Gardens. SpeedWatch's Ray Woodcock is to obtain speed data to support the application.

6 An application is to be made to extend yellow lines on **Spencer Close** to prevent cars blocking entrance to the Close, while there is also agreement that yellow lines should be implemented near to the old Post Office on **Chapel Hill**, as parking there endangers public safety. It has been noted that both these measures had been requested before but had been lost in the system, necessitating a fresh application.

7 County Councillor Ray Gooding is to explore whether yellow lines can be introduced along parts of both sides of **Cambridge Road** while the sub-committee is to petition Essex Police to tackle the on-going problem of speeding motorists along the road.

8 After visiting Stansted, County Councillor Lee Scott who has responsibilities for highways in Essex, favours dealing with **Grove Hill** as a single entity. His alternative solution to the village-wide zone proposed by Cty Cllr Gooding (see point No 1 above) is to look at reversing the weight limit on Grove Hill and trial a high-tech system that would monitor traffic along the road and be able to issue automatic fines.



WELCOME ON BOARD, LOIS

Congratulations to our newest councillor Lois Prior, who was elected in the south ward of the village back in October. Lois campaigned as an independent in the election and got 233 votes, 78 more than the opposing candidate, Peter Jones, with a turnout of 15%.

Lois is a communications, engagement and consultation specialist having worked in local government and travel infrastructure companies including TfL, HS2 and Crossrail Ltd.

She is passionate about bringing local council issues to local residents through social media and face-to-face discussions.



LOIS PRIOR

DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS



Ayub Khan
District Councillor
Stansted South
& Birchanger



Stansted Airport:

The ongoing saga between Uttlesford District Council (UDC) and Stansted Airport over their plans to expand ended up with a High Court ruling that the court will not hear a council proposal to review the Planning Inspector's decision on the appeal. The judge, Mrs Justice Land DBE, declared UDC's grounds "unarguable".

The decision to carry on fighting the Airport's expansion plans rests solely with the Residents for Uttlesford (R4U) administration. It is a failure of leadership that leaves UDC with an eye-watering bill of more than £2.5m. I'm sure that most will agree that council taxpayer's money could have been better spent on improving services across the District. The R4U Leadership has failed to accept responsibility and continues to blame the Government for the predicament we are in. I hope that lessons can be learned and that we can work more effectively with Stansted Airport and its owners, the Manchester Airport Group, as we move forward.

Universal Credit

The pandemic has brought financial hardship to many families across the District. Those on low pay, or those seeking work and in receipt of Universal Credit, have been hit the hardest. The Government rightly introduced a temporary uplift of £20 per week for this cohort but as the coronavirus protections ended, this uplift was withdrawn leaving many families disadvantaged at a time when energy and fuel costs are rising.

I was pleased to propose a motion to the Parish Council (as well as the UDC) that we write to both the Chancellor of the Exchequer and our MP Kemi Badenoch asking them to retain the uplift following its withdrawal. The motion was passed, and letters have now been sent. Whilst the Government has refused to carry on with the uplift, I believe that the endorsement of the Parish Council and UDC for the mo-

tion sends a very strong message that we believe in fairness and want to support all families across all income brackets in the District.

UDC Chief Executive Officer

Peter Holt has taken up the post as the new CEO at UDC. He has certainly experienced a baptism of fire, having to deal with the Stansted Airport High Court decision as well as contracting COVID. Having recovered, it was great that he was able to take up an offer to visit Stansted South and Birchanger, where both Cllr Melvin Caton and I took him for a tour of our patch. I know that he will return to meet with Cllrs Dean and Sell for a tour of Stansted North as well as meeting the Parish Council. It is good news that UDC has a new CEO that has a keen interest in Stansted, and even more pleasing to learn that there will soon be a UDC office on our patch at Walpole Meadows.

Stansted South District Councillor surgeries

The drop-in sessions continue and a huge thank you to residents who found time to come and meet Cllr Caton and myself at St Mary's Church of England School in Forest Hall Park. The next sessions are planned on January 8, February 5 and March 5, between 10.00am-11.15am.

Local Plan – Call for sites:

Uttlesford District Council has now published its initial technical assessment of sites for development as part of the proposed Local Plan. My colleague Cllr Melvin Caton discussed this in the last edition of The Link. Parish Councils are now invited to comment on these assessments. The proposed sites detailed in the table below are the sites that are likely to most impact on Stansted. It is important to bear in mind that only some of these sites will be chosen for inclusion in the Local Plan, and UDC is expecting to make that decision next Spring based on planning evidence. A further update will be published in the next edition of the Link.



Site Ref	Location
001 RES	Alsa Lodge
003 RES	Pines Hill
006 EMP	Land adj M11 Business Link
007 EMP	Land south of Alsa Business Park
008 RES	Off B1051
009 RES	To West Stansted Mountfitchet
010 RES	South Bentfield End Causeway
011 RES	West Pennington Lane
012 RES	West Pennington Lane
013 RES	East High Lane
014 RES	Snakes Lane
015 RES	West B1383 N Walpole Meadows
016 RES	Eastfield Stables
017 RES	B1051 Stansted
018 RES	Land at Elms Farm, Church Road
020 COM	Stansted Youth Centre
021 RES	Rear Bentfield Causeway
022 RES	South Elsenham Road
024 RES	East of High Lane
025 EMP	Stansted Northside, Stansted Airport



STANSTED PARISH COUNCIL

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Trainee Deputy Clerk Emma Philbrick

Committee & Projects Officer Laila Azure-Marxen

Communications Officer Dan Schlanker

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CHRISTMAS CLOSING

We close at 4pm on Friday 17th December and re-open 9am on Tuesday 4th January

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PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are on Wednesdays in the Mountfitchet Exchange conference room. You no longer need attend virtually and can now watch and participate in person. Questions can be asked at the start of Full Council meetings only. Seek permission to film or record proceedings.

- **Dec 1** Windmill 7pm
Finance & General Purposes 8pm
- **Dec 15** Full Council
- **Jan 12** Finance & General Purposes
- **Jan 19** Full Council
- **Jan 26** Open Spaces

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POLICE

PCSO Nikki Morris tel: 101(non-emergency)

email: nikki.morris@essex.police.uk

Community Policing Team:

braintreeanduttlesfordcpt@essex.pnn.police.uk

Look out for details of Street Beats' community meet-ups in December and January at facebook/EPUttlesford

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Wednesday 2pm-5.30pm

Thursday 2pm-7pm

Saturday 9am-5pm

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- The Bowls Club, The Recreation Ground, CM24 8BD
- Lower Street Telephone Box, CM24 8LP
- The Surgery, Castle Maltings, CM24 8XG
- Romeera Leisure Centre, Forest Hall Road CM24 8TZ
- Rose & Crown Public House, Bentfield Green, CM24 8HX
- Three Horseshoes Public House, Hazel End, CM23 1HB

Tesco (Cambridge Road) & Conneely Group Braemar House (Water Lane) have defibrillators accessible while doors are open.



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Join us this festive season for a huge dose of great entertainment that the entire family will enjoy. From **4th December-2nd January**, Scott Ritchie Productions will proudly be presenting *Rapunzel – A Magical Christmas Adventure*. This new Christmas adaptation of the popular fairy tale promises to be a theatrical treat for audiences of all ages and is being created exclusively for our audiences. Expect a host of loveable characters in this magical fairy tale, with an all singing, all dancing company of talented performers. Packed full of great songs, gorgeous scenery, dazzling costumes and plenty of laughs, this is sure to be a hair-raising production that you will not want to miss.



On **Tuesday 7th December**, enjoy a heart-warming recreation of Charles Dickens' famous performance of his best-loved ghost story *A Christmas Carol*. Experience what it must have been like to be in the audience in this seasonal treat.



Join us for a live screening of the *Nutcracker* on **Thursday 9th December**. Over the Christmas holidays we will also have the return of our *Santa's Grotto*. Tickets were selling out last year, so make sure you book soon to get a chance to enjoy Father Christmas' visit to Bishop's Stortford.

On **Saturday 8th January**, Ballet Theatre UK will be bringing their beautiful re-telling of Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairy tale ballet *The Snow Queen* to our stage. This spectacular production will be the perfect start to your 2022. For further information about all our Christmas shows and events, and to book tickets, visit our website.



Megan Langer
Marketing Coordinator
Tel: 710205



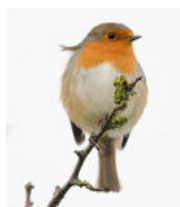
www.mountfitchetgardenclub.co.uk

With December and January being classed as wintertime, it is surprising how, over the past few years, summer and autumn plants have still been flowering during these months and are then joined by spring flowers and bulbs which have bloomed early; signs that the climate is definitely warming. However, with the number of berries on the hedgerows and garden shrubs this year, one wonders if the old saying "it is going to be a harsh winter" will come true and perhaps we will have a white Christmas. Do protect plants and shrubs that come from warmer climes; if they are in pots move them into the shed or greenhouse. Raise any pots you leave outside so that they can drain easily and continue to mulch your flowerbeds or top up pots. Tidiness is in the eye of the beholder; some like the leaves and stems cut right back, others prefer to leave the plants to protect new growth. If you are the former, remember to leave some seed heads on your plants for the birds and a supply of water. Winter is an ideal time for maintenance of tools and equipment. A general tidy up might include recycling and reusing pots and trays. The long evenings are a chance to plan ahead, order seeds and catch up with the numerous garden programmes which you have missed as you have been busy working in your own garden.

Club Meetings

We are keeping our fingers crossed that our regular meetings will restart on **Wednesday 2nd February** next year. Our speakers' secretary is working on our programme as you read this.

As this is the last Link magazine this year, on behalf of the Mountfitchet Garden Club we would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2022.



Maralyn Harris
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THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

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As 2021 enters its final month, we anticipate seasonal celebrations to brighten the shortest days of the year. The ancient tradition of decking our houses with garlands of fresh green holly branches reminds us of the continuity of life, bringing us cheer when the days are short.



Holly trees were frequently planted near houses to ward off a lightning strike; scientific research has revealed that its spiky leaves can act as miniature lightning conductors! Holly also grows in hedges or as a shrub in woods where its berries provide nourishment for blackbirds, thrushes and wood mice. Its dense branches provide secure nesting sites. Deer and rabbits will eat its nutritious leaves. Today, many homeowners plant variegated forms of holly to provide interest in their gardens and they can select a mixture of foliage to make seasonal decorations. Yew is another evergreen with red coloured fruits (loved by birds and squirrels), but as its leaves are poisonous it is less suitable for indoor decorations.



On reaching the age of 20, female holly trees bear red berries on branches covered with prickly shiny green leaves which can be cut to make decorative wreaths. Such wreaths featured in midwinter Celtic and Roman celebrations as symbols of good fortune, a tradition that continues thanks to the intervention of a local man, William Winstanley (1628–1698). During the Commonwealth, from 1649 to 1660, the

Puritans under Oliver Cromwell proclaimed that it was illegal to celebrate Christmas, banning frivolities and feasting on mince pies. Winstanley, who lived in Quendon, believed in celebrating Christmas as a time for sharing joy, fun and good fortune with others. After the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, using his influence as a writer, he encouraged a return to the seasonal merrymaking which we still enjoy today.

Tricia Moxey
Trustee



www.eastonlodge.co.uk

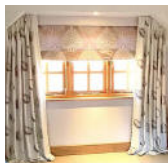
Early December 2020 seems such a long time ago; we were coming out of lockdown and expecting to be able to enjoy Christmas with family and friends. We all remember what happened to that! At the gardens, we had our first snowfall; we were looking forward to the balustrade being restored; and we were busy planning for snowdrop Open Days in February. For us, we had one positive outcome: the balustrade!



This year, we are looking forward to our first wintry views of the restored balustrade and keeping our fingers firmly crossed that in February we will not be waterlogged or in lockdown, so that we will be able to welcome visitors for snowdrops again. This year we did manage to plant additional snowdrops around the gardens, so for the coming season they should be more spectacular than ever. Save the dates: Sunday 13th, Thursday 17th, Sunday 20th and Thursday 24th February. We are also now taking bookings for group visits to the gardens in 2022. These can be arranged for groups of 10 or more and include entry, a guided tour and a copy of our informative paper guide too, plus tea or coffee and a slice of delicious home-made cake. To arrange a group visit, email: groupvisits@eastonlodge.co.uk or call 01371 876979. If you arrange your group visit for a Thursday you will see our volunteers working and be able to chat to them about what they love about being with us, such as: working outdoors in a beautiful tranquil place; getting to know a fun group of people; seeing the fruits (flowers and veg) of their labours and of course lots of tasty cake. We take on new volunteers all year, so why not think about joining us as a volunteer? There is more information on our website.

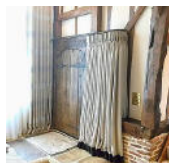
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To coincide with the start of the COP26 climate change summit, Stansted Airport Watch (SAW) launched its *Fly Less* campaign; this was publicised on the SAW website and social media, supported by posters, banners and car window stickers. In addition, SAW has written to the chairmen of the FTSE top 100 UK companies, encouraging businesses to reduce business flights. Aviation currently accounts for around 9.4% of UK carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. Stansted Airport is understood to be the largest single source of these emissions in the East of England.



The difficulty of decarbonising air travel is widely acknowledged and, whilst technological solutions such as electric aircraft might one day be possible, there is no realistic prospect of a technology fix on any meaningful scale until at least the 2040s. The Government's independent Climate Change Committee has called for a slowdown in the level of air travel and a freeze on UK airport expansion until the aviation sector can show a significant reduction in its CO₂ emissions. To date, the Government has rejected this call and is putting its faith in technological solutions, at least for the time being.

Dig for Victory

One of the key agreements at the COP26 climate change summit is a commitment to stop global deforestation by 2030 and begin to replenish the world's tree cover. In November volunteers from SAW began planting more trees to increase the size of the wood near Broxted Hill. This wood was first established in 2004 by volunteers from Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) on the site then proposed for a second runway. Terry Waite CBE planted the first tree and another 500 trees have since been planted including maple, oak, hornbeam, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, beech and ash. As well as increasing the size of the wood, SAW is calling upon its 7,500 members and registered on-line supporters to support its tree-planting initiative and to plant a tree in their gardens or allotments.

Campaign Office
Tel: 870558

Email: info@stanstedairportwatch.com

UTTLESFORD CITIZENS ADVICE

www.uttlesfordcab.org.uk



How to get help

The last 18 months have been hard on many of us. It is estimated that more than 3,000 households in Uttlesford are already struggling to pay their bills. If you are worried, you are not alone. Please get in touch with our team of trained advisers for help to access:

- Universal Credit and Disability Benefits
- Benefits for working families
- Support for carers
- Local council help, such as council tax support
- Help to save money on your energy bills
- Grants to improve energy efficiency
- Budgeting and debt support
- Employment advice and support for job seekers
- Support with housing and homelessness issues
- Emergency funds for prescriptions and other household essentials
- Local foodbanks and children's clothes banks
- School holiday support

Remember, you don't need to be on benefits to ask for our help. **Our advice is available to everyone and is always free, confidential and impartial.** We will work with you to overcome barriers and solve problems that may be preventing you from sleeping well at night. For further information go to our website, visit our new one-touch video access point in Great Dunmow library, call 01799 618840 or email: help@uttlesfordca.org.uk.

How about joining our team of volunteers?

You will gain new skills and experiences that could enhance your CV, challenge yourself and achieve great satisfaction. We welcome applications from all sections of the community, so what are you waiting for? Visit our website for more information and to find out about the different volunteer roles available.

Warm Homes Winter

You can find advice about your energy supply, including help if you are struggling to pay your bill by calling 01799 618840 email: warmhomes@uttlesfordca.org.uk or visiting our website. You can also find a wealth of information to help you get the best deals on your household bills on www.moneysavingexpert.com.

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www.humanrootscommunity.org.uk

Who are Human Roots? A community garden that's making a difference. Our mission is to improve mental and physical health in our community. We grow our own healthy, organic food and share it with local food banks. We reconnect people with nature and the soil by teaching them the full food cycle, from planting and growing vegetables and fruit, right through to healthy cooking. We work throughout our society, from schoolchildren to the elderly, supported by our partners in the local business community. Human Roots has a real-world impact today. We are feeding vulnerable families in our neighbourhood, working with local schools, and running education outreach programmes.



Photo of a Christmas meal by Charles Koh

We are always looking to create fun ways to bring some joy to the community, as well as raising some much-needed funds for our schools' project. I am sure you are all sick of me banging on about school gardens, but we have a massive drive to raise as much awareness and funds to help us support as many local schools as possible in building their mini allotments. Check out *Little Roots* on our website. This month, we are fundraising with a first edition cookbook for Christmas. For £5, you will get 12 Christmas recipes to help set you up for the most delicious festive meal. Stock is limited so don't delay, order now. To get your copy, please email us or find us on social media.



Keiran Olivier
Tel: 07946 783039
Email: info@humanrootscommunity.org.uk

Thanks to Ken McDonald and Jason Shields for the cheery sign!



We had an interesting meeting and speakers at our breakfast on 5th November. Rhian Burke from DRB-DPO told us about General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). She said that the aim of data protection is to keep any information that businesses hold about customers, employees and suppliers safe and secure. Businesses need to be aware of their responsibilities relating to data protection and embrace and integrate them into their systems and procedures. If you need help and advice about data protection then email: rhian@drbdpo.com for more information.



Staff from Forest Hall school gave us information on how to take on an apprentice including funding and support for employers; the minimum age is 16 years and they should not be in full time education. Apprenticeships are incentives to give local students more employment options in the community. Jonathan Moran is the careers officer at the school and talked about types of apprenticeships and support for smaller employers. If you are a business and are interested, email: moranj@bmatforesthall.org.uk.

Support4Sight is launching its *Extra Mile* award to celebrate local businesses and organisations that have done that little bit extra to ensure blind and partially sighted people feel welcomed and included. This could be taking the time to read a menu to a person who is not able to read it themselves, or ensuring your premises are accessible to blind and partially sighted people. Email Sharon Schaffer on sharon@support4sight.org.uk for more information. Gordon Morrison gave us an update and overview of the Rotary Club and making a difference in the community through volunteering.

There are no breakfast meetings in December or January but we have our Christmas Lunch on Friday 3rd December.



Iris Evans
Treasurer

Please don't forget that there will be no issue in January.

The next issue will be in February



STANSTED BOWLS CLUB

Whilst we love our Club's setting and appreciate the sight of the trees surrounding the green, it is a never-ending task this time of year to keep our newly levelled and seeded turf clear of leaves and worm casts. Many of our members have stepped up to form a rota to spread the swishing/raking workload, but it is still a sizeable task. On 10th October the Club was represented in the Stansted Wellbeing Festival at St John's Hall and Church. I hope that this event will become a regular one as it seems such a good way for local people to find out what clubs and organisations are available, and hopefully find something that suits them. We are hoping that some of the people who visited our stall will be joining us next year on the green.



At the end of October the Club held its first AGM since 2019. Alongside the procedural matters (for example, accounts approval, election of officers) we also looked at shirt designs and selected a blue design which is both smart and practical. We are looking forward to getting these in for the new season. For any of our members not able to attend the AGM you can see the shirt design in the photo. I will be in contact with all our members shortly so we can place an order in good time. Until spring the Club's activities will include indoor bowling at Turpin's, Saffron Walden (Seniors League and roll-ups), ten-pin bowling outings and Friday Club nights, where we have been trying our hand at darts. A couple of other social events are also in planning.

Jeanette Mansell
Secretary

Tel: 07967 033924

Email: jeanette.mansell2016@gmail.com



STANSTED FOOTBALL CLUB

www.essexseniorleague.co.uk

Games in both the league and cup are plentiful for the first team with league games being played over Christmas and New Year. At the time of writing, we are due to travel to Fakenham Town for the second round of the FA Vase; a win there allows us to compete in the third round, to be played in December. The management team are ensuring that the squad of players rotate to avoid any unfortunate injuries. Good news has come from our youth teams: three of them

occupy the top spot in their respective age group leagues. We are also seeing the benefits of having a youth section affiliated to our first team as players from our under-16 squad have been training with the first team. Our veteran's team are coming to terms with the more competitive division they are playing in this season, with a number of home games in December; hopefully they will soon be sitting comfortably in mid-table.

The Club must maintain Hargrave Park's playing surface in a good condition; therefore we are spending thousands of pounds with an authorised FA contractor to ensure the groundwork is professionally done. Finally on behalf of the Club committee, team management and players we wish all our supporters best wishes for the festive season and new year.

Fixtures at Hargrave Park in December:

Saturday 11th v Saffron Walden KO 3.00pm *

Tuesday 28th v Athletic Newham KO 3.00pm

*(Will be rescheduled if either side qualify for third round of the FA Vase)

Fixtures at Hargrave Park in January:

Monday 3rd v Saffron Walden KO 3.00pm *

Saturday 8th v Sawb'th Town KO 3.00pm

Saturday 15th v Woodford Town KO 3.00pm

Saturday 22nd v Cockfosters KO 3.00pm

*(if needed to be moved from 11th December)

Any changes will be announced on our social media websites.



Tom Williams
Secretary
Tel: 07921 403842



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

www.stanstedwindmill.co.uk

The windmill closed for the season last month so there is not very much to report for this issue. However, I am pleased that most of us are in a much happier place this year than we were a year ago, for to enjoy Christmas again with family and friends will be wonderful. Our mill will be open on **Saturday 11th December** noon-5.00pm when Santa will be in situ to greet the children, and each child will receive a present from him. Tours of the mill will be possible. There will also be a raffle, mince pies, mulled wine, tea, coffee and squash. Our usual souvenirs will be on sale in case you need any Christmas gifts. We do hope you will all come along with your children. We wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2022.



Molly Clark
Co-Trustee
Tel: 816768





STANSTED HALL AND ELSENHAM CRICKET CLUB

www.shcc.hitscricket.com

The 2021 season ended with work parties tidying up both grounds. The Herts and Essex Border League presentation dinner was attended by 16 members, collecting the Premier Division Champions Cup. Rory McGurk collected highest number of runs (736) and top individual score (157) award, and young Peter Page collected best bowling performance award (6-13) for Division 2. Grant Ward took 30 wickets in the Premier Division but unfortunately missed out by 1 wicket to get an award. Blame the fielders, Grant! The seniors are playing in the indoor league at the Hertfordshire and Essex Cricket Centre and the juniors will be starting indoor nets in December. The financial position of the Club has improved. We would like to thank the local Parish Council, and the Uttlesford District Council (in particular Geoffrey Sell and Petrina Lees) for their continued long-term support. Parents, friends of the Club and playing members have also been generous – a big thank you to you all. It is sad that Brian Harvey, one of our Vice Presidents, died recently. He too supported the Club financially and was always interested in our youth section.



Champions Herts & Essex Border League Premier Division.

I have been with the Club for 66 years and I think that 2021 was possibly the best season that I can remember. The three major events were winning the league, having 100 juniors at the Club for the first time, and juniors playing cricket at Molehill Green. On top of that all players, parents and members enjoyed our very friendly atmosphere.

The Club has consulted with Columbia Threadneedle on its plans for sport generally onsite and offsite of the proposed Northside development at Stansted Airport.



David Brown
Tel: 831011 or 07788 999663
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Stansted Tennis Club

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www.stanstedtennisclub.co.uk

Jim Kitson Trophy

This mixed doubles tournament was held on Saturday 9th October. It was a really enjoyable day with some great tennis and a fish and chip supper to finish. Many thanks to all those who participated and to Gail Hogg for organising. The winners were Daphne Lunnon and Adrian Olver who beat Marta Hensall and Ash Patel 6-3. The consolation prize was won 4-1 by Mike and Val Ashwood against Gerred Gilronan and Sue Armorgie.



Evening Club Sessions from 7.00pm

Men's club nights are on the first Monday of every month, ladies' nights are on the second and fourth Monday and there is a mixed club night every Wednesday. All sessions are free to adult members; non-members are welcome as visitors and pay £2.

Coaching

LTA qualified coach Ollie Toms continues his popular coaching programme, including junior tournaments and tennis camps and group or individual coaching for juniors and adults. Call 07917 652014 or see www.olliestennis.co.uk for more information. We are also looking to offer beginner coaching if there is sufficient demand; please contact Ollie to register your interest.

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Bowls Club	Jeanette Mansell, Hon Secretary Tel: 01371 821446	St John's Road and Area Association	Leila Riddell Tel: 07770 955830
Brownies (Tue)	Kathy Shearman Tel: 07724 355533	Scouts (age 10½ -14)	Mike Byrne Tel: 812780
Brownies (Wed)	Susan Scott Tel: 810955	Spangles Family Hub	Tel: 03002 470122 Email: essexwest- hftcentraladminhub @nhs.net
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History Society	Roger Barrett Tel: 814216 Email: rmbarrrett54@gmail.com	Stansted Speed Watch	Warren Vickers Tel: 813996 Email: vickersw@aol.com
Human Roots	Keiran Oliver Tel: 07946 783039 Email: keiran@humanrootscommunity.org.uk	Talking Newspaper (BS and District)	Richard Barnett Tel: 651270 Email: familybarnett24@hotmail.com
Huw Johnson Club	Katharine Collis Tel: 07759 157620 Email: kat_collis@hotmail.com	Tennis Club	Fiona Kelly Tel: 07949 623484 Email: fiona1.kelly@btintetnet.com
Investigators Age 7-11	Ros Page Tel 810813 Email: stanstedfamily@gmail.com	The Hundred Parishes Society	Ken McDonald Tel: 813226 Email:hundredparishes@btinternet.com
Let's Talk, Stansted Mental Health Support	Richard Haywood Tel: 07794 268208 Email: help@letstalkstansted.org	Town Twinning	Chairman: Geraldine Allars Tel: 07833 089298 Email: twinning@stansted.net
Little Scrummers	Andrew Poyser Tel: 07738 591232		
Millers (Windmill)	Molly Clark Tel: 816768	U3A	Ray Smith Tel: 813270
music@stansted (Classical concerts)	Sonia Levy Tel: 815282 Email: contactus@musicatstansted.co.uk	WI (Stansted)	Anne Watson Tel: 898693
Neighbourhood Watch	Valerie Trundle Tel: 813433	WI (Ugley)	Dorothy Wallace Tel: 850215
Parkinson's UK Uttlesford Support Group	Simon Russell Tel: 01799 524638 Email: simonrussell2@tiscali.co.uk	Youth Centre	Linda Barnes Tel: 07947 548051
Rainbow Pre-School 506997	Gill Pursglove Tel: 814242/07966 Email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net		
Rainbows (Wed)	Rachel Foster Tel: 07818 417971		

Note: This list will be updated as and when we learn of any changes. If you would like your organisation to be added please let us know. Contact details are on page 1.

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.

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