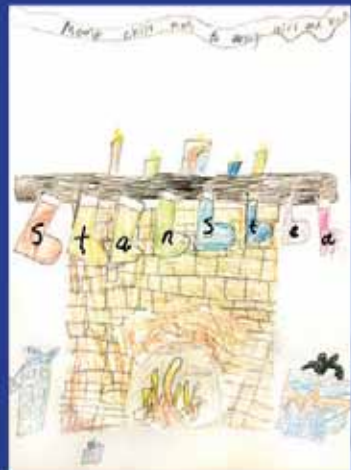


The Link



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**Our wonderful front cover
was created by the children
of Magna Carta School**

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

Editor

Elizabeth Oakley
01279 812690
editor@stanstedlink.org.uk

Advertising

Mike and Marion Dyer
01279 814059
adverts@stanstedlink.org.uk

Distribution Queries

David Horton
01279 813680
distribution@stanstedlink.org.uk

Treasurer and Company Secretary

Alan Wheeler
01279 813745
accounts@stanstedlink.org.uk

Directors

Mike Dyer (Chairman)
Yvonne Ayres
Susan Bone
Catherine Dean
Marion Dyer
Sarah Ludlow-Elston
Elizabeth Oakley

Photographic Consultant Paul Burt

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CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE (FEBRUARY)

Please email editor@stanstedlink.org.uk by noon on **9th January**. Submissions should be in Word or typed into an email, maximum 300 words, and may be subject to editing. Please send photographs as separate jpg.

DISCLAIMER Opinions in The Link reflect those of the authors and contributors. Publication (on paper or electronically) of articles, advertisements or product/services information does not constitute endorsement by The Link nor is any culpability accepted for work undertaken by advertisers.

Stansted network is compiled and financed by Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council. Stansted Link is printed by Sudbury Print.Group.



CHRISTMAS EVENTS



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 on the farm! Thank you so much for coming, the animals loved seeing you all.



We are now getting ready for Christmas and once again, hold on to your Santa hats as there will be **so** much to do! There will be a gift from Santa himself and a festive story time with a hot chocolate and cookie; and absolutely not to be missed is the Santa Sleigh Train driven by Santa and his helpers! Afterwards, a snowy walk through our winter Woodland wonderland is a must! There will also be plenty of Christmas crafts to enjoy and of course, the animals all have to have a fuss made of them and maybe a few treats too. Do keep a look out for our exciting Christmas plans. All this will be available on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays throughout December and keep an eye on our Facebook page for our Christmas opening times. Booking is essential via our website as you do not want to miss out on all the festive fun. 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 look forward to seeing you in the new year and merry Christmas to you all!

Elaine Terry
Tel: 07747 787973

CHRISTMAS CHURCH SERVICES

St John's (Church of England)

Sunday 10th December

4.00pm Christingle Service

Saturday 23rd December

4.00pm Carol Service

Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December

3.00pm Children's Crib Service

9.30pm Bethlehem Mass, first Mass of Christmas see *Thought for the Month* for more information

Christmas Day Monday 25th December

9.30am Holy Communion

New Year's Eve Sunday 31st December

9.30am Morning Prayer

Free Church (Methodist and URC)

Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December

10.30am Carol Service

Christmas Day Monday 25th December

10.30am Worship

New Year's Eve Sunday 31st December

10.30am Worship

Stansted Quakers (Society of Friends)

Sunday 17th December

10.30am Christmas Meeting for Worship

Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December

10.30am Meeting for Worship

New Year's Eve Sunday 31st December

10.30am Meeting for Worship

St Theresa's (Catholic)

Saturday 16th December

2.00pm Children's liturgy and party

Christmas Eve Sunday 24th December

4.30pm Vigil mass for children

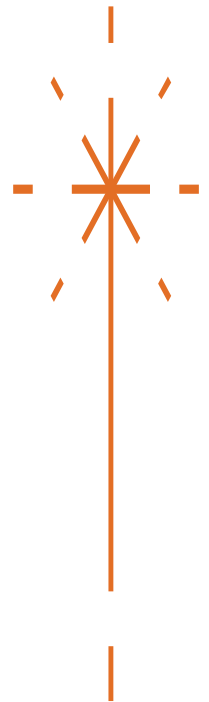
8.00pm Mass 11.30pm Midnight Mass

Christmas Day Monday 25th December

8.30am and 10.00am Mass

New Year's Eve Sunday 31st December

8.30am and 10.00am Mass



CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

Churches Together in Stansted welcome everyone for a Celebration of Christmas with Carols in the Memorial Gardens by St John's Church on **Saturday 16th December** at 4.00pm. We are fortunate to have the Bishop's Stortford Brass Band once again. This is a standing event, so please bring your own chair if you need one. Children may like to bring lanterns and torches to create a festive atmosphere. Parking restrictions will be lifted in St John's Road and parking will also be available at Magna Carta Primary School. I look forward to seeing you there.



David Morson
Tel: 850209

HERTS AND SOUL CONCERT



Step into Christmas with the Herts and Soul Community Choir Christmas concert in support of Isabel Hospice. Join the choir as they take you through a fantastic feast of festive favourites including traditional and modern carols, Christmas swing classics and rock and pop sing-a-longs. It is the perfect way to celebrate the most wonderful time of the year. The concert will take place on **Saturday 9th December** at 7.00pm in St John's Church. Seasonal refreshments and a raffle will be available. Tickets: adults £10, children £5 are available from Lucy email: hertsandsoulchoir@gmail.com or www.trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/49814. We look forward to seeing you there.

Liz Jennings



CHRISTMAS EVENTS



FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH



CAM VALLEY CREMATORIUM

www.camvalleycrematorium.co.uk

Here are our Christmas events for this year:

Friday 1st December 5.00pm

A *Christmas Carol* by *thisismytheatre*. Tickets: Adults £15.00, under 16s £10.00, under 4s free, available from www.thisismytheatre.com or pay on the door. Not to be missed!

Saturday 9th December 11.00am-5.00pm

Christmas Tree Festival with Carol concert at 3.00pm

Sunday 10th December 11.00am-5.00pm

Christmas tree festival with party time at 3.00pm featuring our favourite *Stansted Mountfitchet U3A Strummers*. With songs we know and love, they will have us dancing in the aisles! There will be raffles, mulled wine and mince pies on both days. I look forward to welcoming you all to our events.



Lynda Dale
Tel: 07716 099474



www.mencapgrovecottage.org

Get ready to dash, prance, and spread holiday cheer with our annual family fun run on **Sunday 3rd December** 11.00am at Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre, Bishop's Stortford. Whether you are a seasoned runner, a casual jogger, a walker or a little dasher, everyone is welcome to join us. This year we invite everyone to wear reindeer antlers.



There is a choice of 5K or 1K, pick whichever suits your stride. Entry fees: adults and children 13 years and over £12, children 12 years and under £6. Reindeer antlers are included in the price. Warm up is at 10.45am. Book in advance through our website or register from 10.00am on the day. All proceeds will benefit Grove Cottage members and your participation will help make a difference.

Alison Cameron
Tel: 651908

Email: fundraising@mencapgrovecottage.org

Light a Candle Christmas Carol and Memorial Service

Set in more than thirteen acres in Great Chesterford, just north of Saffron Walden, is the Cam Valley Crematorium. It opened in 2018 and for the past five years has offered its services to families in the area. The grounds are beautifully landscaped; as well as formal areas there is a wildflower area and the whole site blends into the local Essex countryside with far-reaching views. Being near to the A11 it is easy to reach, there is plenty of parking and the facilities are modern.



The Remembrance Gardens are open for visitors, and throughout the year they hold various special events, one such being this annual Christmas service which offers an opportunity for families and friends to come together and remember their loved ones. This year it is on **Friday 15th December** 6.30pm-7.30pm. Leave a personal message on the Christmas tree using one of the special tags or write a Christmas card to your loved one and post it in the memorial post-box. If you would like to attend the service or need more details, please telephone 01799 533160 or email camvalley@westerleighgroup.co.uk.

Karen Bayford



www.swchoral.org.uk

Christmas concert with London Philharmonic

Saffron Walden Choral Society are excited to have been asked to perform with the London Philharmonic Orchestra on **Sunday 17th December** at 3.00pm in Saffron Hall for a selection-box of some of the most popular choral and orchestral music for the Christmas season. The programme includes the exquisite *Shepherds Farewell* by *Berlioz*, carols, fantasias on Christmas themes and Handel's rousing chorus. There are the sound of sleigh bells and whipcracks in Prokofiev and Leroy Anderson's high-speed rides but also the hushed reverence of music for choir alone. With audience participation and some surprises along the way the final Saffron Hall concert of the year is the perfect way to wish you a merry Christmas. Tickets from £16 available from www.saffronhall.com or the Saffron Hall Box Office tel 0845 5487650.



Sarah Ludlow-Elston



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

www.stanstedwindmill.co.uk

Santa has confirmed he will be at the Mill on **Saturday 9th December** and will be available to see children from 1.00pm so make sure you have the date marked on your calendar. He needs to be away by 5.00pm so you are advised to get to the mill by 4.30pm at the latest if you want to see him. The first floor of the mill will be transformed into a fantastic grotto so Santa will feel very much at home; do not worry, he will bring enough presents for everybody! Leon the Elf will be in attendance to help Santa and we are very much hoping Gordon will be well enough to lend a hand as well. Entrance fees are just £5.00 per child. This year you can pay by card but we are also very happy to take cash. There will be hot drinks and mince pies available along with a raffle to raise funds for mill conservation projects.



Open days resume from Easter next year. We are happy to open the mill for groups to visit so please get in contact if you are interested in a guided tour.

Trevor Lloyd
Tel: 07739 428352



MAGNA CARTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

www.magnacartaacademy.org

Focus on Academics In October we celebrated *Black History Month*, learning about important figures such as Andrew Watson, Bessie Coleman and Dr Marie Maynard Daly. In Art, KS1 created family portraits using natural materials while KS2 took inspiration from famous artists like Warhol and Degas, which are now proudly displayed in our corridors. Pupils have experimented with tastebuds and discovered the role of the skeleton, as well as investigated water resistance and gravity. Reception enjoyed a visit from a farmer, hearing about the different machines used to sow, grow and harvest. Elsewhere, pupils have learnt about Everest, Stonehenge, Japanese culture, and even designed motorised cars! In November, Year 6 studied *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, which really captured their interest.

Sports Members of Years 3 and 4 enjoyed attending the multi-skill sports festival at Forest Hall School, and our Year

5 and 6 football team competed against 12 Uttlesford schools, securing 3rd place.

Extra-Curricular Events Our School Council represented the school commendably at the Remembrance Service at St John's Church. We embraced *odd socks day* for Anti-Bullying week and *non-uniform day* for Children in Need. We also enjoyed special Halloween and Bonfire Night food. December is looking no less exciting, with a visiting pantomime, Christmas lunches, carol concerts and our Nativity plays. Thank you to our wonderful pupils for your hard work this term, especially those who submitted artwork for the front cover of this edition of The Link.

We wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy new year. If you are interested in the 2024 intake, please email: reception@magnacartaacademy.org; we would love to show you around. We are always in need of additional support at lunchtimes so if you have time to give, in the hall or playground, we would be grateful.

Jennifer Pearce
Headteacher
Tel: 783484



BEHIND THE SCENES

www.thetouchpoint.org

As I indicated in my article in the November Link, I am on a quest to find out about all of the various ways the charity Touchpoint helps our local community, as well as to meet the volunteers who coordinate the food share efforts. My previous article was about the collection of goods for the various food shares that happen during the week. I then attended a food share in Stansted to see how these goods are organised to benefit the public. I was greeted warmly by the volunteers who were busy setting up tables outside Touchpoint HQ whilst a queue of locals began to form. The tables are set out in an orderly way with food groups kept together where possible so that everything is easily visible.

There are seven food shares held every week in Stansted, Elsenham, Saffron Walden and Takeley; these reach approximately 1,500 people weekly which in turn reduces the amount of food waste going to landfill. Anyone can access the food share, there are no medical or financial criteria required. It is a fantastic way to sample rarer foods such as tropical fruits; the produce can change at every food share so you never get the identical produce each week. The lovely thing I found was that the friendly volunteers are happy to provide advice on the best way to use the product.

Following my visit to the food share, I again felt a strong sense of community; the volunteers provided an atmosphere which put people at ease in order to make it an enjoyable experience. I would recommend that everyone visits a food share at the earliest opportunity. The timetable can be found on the website. If you are interested in volunteering, please email volunteer@thetouchpoint.org or call 07572 114882.

Hannah



Friends of
St Mary's Church

5 - 6.30 pm Fri 1st Dec

A Christmas Carol
includes community carols

Tickets: Adults £15, Under 16 £10
Under 4 Free

from www.thisismytheatre.com
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STANSTED BOWLS CLUB



Christmas Fayre

11 am - 3.30 pm Sat 2nd Dec
Bowls Club, Recreation Ground

Craft Stalls ~ Christmas Wreaths

Pebble Art ~ Mulled Wine

Children's Lucky Dip ~ Jigsaws

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**Manuden Christmas
Tree Festival**

10.30 am - 3.30 pm
Sat 9th and Sun 10th Dec

St Mary's Church Manuden

Hot Drinks and Cakes
Craft Stalls ~ Children's Activities
Carols Singing for all

All welcome - entry by donation

WHAT'S ON IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY

December

1	Fri	This is My Theatre	St Mary's Church 5 pm
2	Sat	Christmas Fayre	Bowls Club 11 am - 3.30 pm
3	Sun	Grove Cottage Reindeer Run	Grange Paddocks 11 am
5	Tue	Stansted is Well Read	Dog and Duck 8 pm
7	Thu	Huw Johnson Carol Service	St John's Church 7 pm
		Local History Society	Day Centre 7.30 pm
9/10	Sat/Sun	Christmas Tree Festival	Manuden Church 10.30 am - 3.30 pm
			St Mary's Church 11 am - 5 pm
9	Sat	Santa at the Mill	1 - 5 pm
		Herts and Soul Concert	St John's Church 7 pm
10	Sun	Green Waste Skip	Lower St Car Park 12.30
12	Tue	RSPB	Bishop's Park 7.30 pm
14	Thu	W I Christmas Party	Day Centre 7.30 pm
15	Fri	Light a Candle Service	Cam Valley Crematorium 6.30 pm
16	Sat	Farmers' Market	Ugley Village Hall 10 am
		Celebration of Christmas	Memorial Gardens 4 pm
		S W Choral Society	Saffron Hall 3 pm

January

2	Tue	Stansted is Well Read	Dog and Duck 8 pm
9	Tue	Link copy due in today	before noon
		RSPB	Bishop's Park 7.30 pm
11	Thu	W I	Day Centre 7.30 pm
17	Wed	Ugley W I	Ugley Village Hall 2 pm
18	Thu	U3A Monthly Meeting	St John's Hall 2 pm
20	Sat	Farmers' Market	Ugley Village Hall 10 am
21	Sun	Music@Stansted	St John's Church 3 pm



Friends of St Mary's
Church

Christmas Tree Festival

11 am - 5 pm

Sat 9th & Sun 10th Dec

Carol Concert 3 pm Sat 9th
U3A Strummers 3 pm Sun 10th

*Mulled wine, mince pies and raffle
on both days. Free entry
Donations welcome*



Stansted Millers

Santa at the Mill



1 - 5 pm Sat 9th Dec
Last entry at 4.30 pm

Mince Pies, Mulled Wine
Tea, Coffee, Squash, Raffle
plus Leon the Elf!

Entry £5 per child for Mill funds



www.ugleyvillage.org.uk

10 am - noon
Sat 20th Jan
Ugley Village Hall

Eggs ~ Fish ~ Microgreens

Bread and Home Baking

Honey ~ Skincare ~ Crafts

Knitting and Needlework

Beef, Pork and Lamb

Refreshments and Free Parking

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3 pm Sun 21st Jan

St John's Church

The Galliard Ensemble

Flute, Oboe, Clarinet,

Bassoon, French Horn

Tickets: adults £15, conc £12
under 25s free. Pay on the door



**HERTS AND SOUL
COMMUNITY
CHOIR**

Step into Christmas

7 pm Sat 9th Dec

St John's Church

Adults £10, Children £5 from
www.trybooking.com/uk/events/landing/49814
or email: hertsandsoulchoir@gmail.com

Supporting Isabel Hospice



SAFFRON
WALDEN
CHORAL
SOCIETY

3 pm Sun 17th Dec

Saffron Hall, Saffron Walden

**Christmas Concert with the
London Philharmonic Orchestra**

Tickets from www.saffronhall.com

Tel 0845 548 7650



**Celebration of
Christmas**



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

4 pm Sat 16th Dec

Memorial Gardens, Chapel Hill

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

Suitable for all ages - please join us



www.ugleyvillage.org.uk

10 am - noon
Sat 16th Dec

Ugley Village Hall

Fruit and Veg ~ Beef, Pork and Lamb

Eggs ~ Fish ~ Microgreens

Bread and Home Baking

Honey ~ Skincare ~ Crafts

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EDITORIAL



Very many thanks to the children of Magna Carta who have enhanced our front cover in such a delightful way. We also appreciate how much effort went into this by staff, parents and governors; many thanks to you too, as well as to our amazing Paul Burt, who put the pictures together into the lovely collage. Christmas Events described on the previous few pages will be a great time of fun and celebration for the whole village and I hope you will enjoy all that is on offer.

In last year's festive edition, my wish was that 2023 might be more comfortable and less dramatic for the world; sadly my wishes were turned upside down and global events have been even worse this past year. However, we cannot give up hope and let us all wish for calm in the Middle East and in the Ukraine at this time of optimism and positivity. Have a great Christmas and New Year.

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR THE LINK

We are so delighted with the number and variety of pictures sent by you lovely people who write articles for the magazine; but we are finding that, all too often, we are having to send the pictures back to you. The ideal specifications for us are:

- Photos should be **landscape** if they are accompanying articles
- They should also be **fairly high resolution**, otherwise they look fuzzy and we cannot use them. At least 250KB is our recommendation
- **Panoramic** photos do not work within the confines of our narrow margins
- We would be hugely grateful if you could send photos, preferably jpg, separate from the article to which they belong, not embedded within the article.

In addition, we often find ourselves short of photos of village events which are suitable for the front cover. If you find yourself at one of these events, such as the Windmill Fête, do feel free to take pictures and send them to us. However, in the case of front covers, the photos must be **portrait, with high resolution**. Many thanks to all of you.

Ed.

TLC Friendly Lady Gardener



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www.stanstedbusinessforum.com

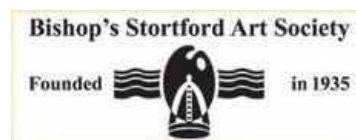
We were very pleased to have the leader of Uttlesford District Council (UDC), Petrina Lees, as the speaker at our meeting on 3rd November. Petrina said how important it is for businesses to access the free webinars that are available on the UDC website. Small businesses can obtain up to £5K in grants and every grant has a follow up. One member had a grant for solar panels which was relevant to the business. Webinars are available to businesses such as *Lunch and Learn* and *How to make your Business grow*. There is also help with creating business plans.



UDC has a newsletter which gives a wide range of information for a variety of businesses. There are many online courses on offer to enhance the skills of small business owners and their employees, which can help with the growth and productivity of their business. The council also has a digital toolkit with free digital and numeracy courses to help build skills at a time convenient to the user. Rhian Burke from *DRB Compliance* was pleased to have a local politician at the meeting who was eloquent, giving honest and clear messages, and supportive of local businesses who should keep in touch and gain the help needed to keep thriving.



Iris Evans
Email: iris.evans9@gmail.com



www.stortfordartsociety.co.uk

Keith Hornblower will be demonstrating watercolours on **Thursday 18th January** at 7.30pm in Thorngrove School, Bishop's Stortford CM23 5LD. Keith is an excellent watercolourist, and is very popular with our members. Non members are always welcome and pay £7.00; please bring your own cup for refreshments. For more information please see our website or Facebook page, search Bishop's Stortford Art Society.

Carole Crosby
Tel: 812768
Email: crosbyca10@aol.com

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STANSTED VILLAGE HARVEST SUPPER



The annual village Harvest Supper on 22nd October in St Theresa's Parish Centre was a great success. Sixty five villagers enjoyed a delicious and hearty supper delivered from our local chippy *Churchills*. I am pleased to say that the healthy eating message was in evidence as we forfeited our usual choc-ice for a satsuma, which blended beautifully with the autumnal table decorations.



After a brief pause to digest our supper, the entertainment began with Dave Morson introducing the acts. First up were our local ukulele band, the U3A Strummers. They had very thoughtfully provided a song sheet, so soon everyone was singing and clapping along. After a few well-known numbers, the audience had a rest, whilst flautist Louise led the strummers in a beautiful rendition of the *Eriskay Love Lilt*.



Members of St John's Church Choir then took to the stage to sing a topical *psalm* based on events in the village over the past year. Thanks to Stuart Ayres for his work on this. Then on a more serious note, the choir sang a favourite anthem of theirs: *Fairest Lord Jesus*. Sheila Wardle was on next, playing that wonderful tune *Memory* from the musical *Cats* on the saxophone. Dave Morson, shown below checking his words, entertained us with his guitar before he introduced the final act. No doubt many of you will recall Renée and Renato's Christmas 1982 hit single *Save your Love?* What was really surprising was that 41 years later, they were performing at our Harvest Supper! They had not changed a bit, although one or two people remarked on the likeness of Renée to Rev'd Colin from St John's!



It was good to see a number of new faces at this popular village event. Thanks to everyone who made it such a happy evening.

Kathy West

Photographs by Brian Quinn, Eileen Quinn and Steve Riley



www.musicatstansted.co.uk

Our concert on **Sunday 21st January** at 3.00pm in St John's Church will be given by *The Galliard Ensemble*; this will be the first time in our 27 years that we have presented a wind quintet. This is the woodwind equivalent of the string quartet, with its different sounds blending smoothly together into a single voice. The five different instruments can also each bring their own special colours to the music; within a single piece you can hear the melodious flute, the plaintive oboe, the silky clarinet, the gruff bassoon and the sonorous French horn all playing their part in the conversation. This quintet, formed in 1993, has performed all across the UK and the rest of Europe. Its members are especially passionate about education, working in universities, schools, day centres and nursing homes, striving to make classical music relevant to a wider audience including those with autism and other special needs. Why have we not booked a wind quintet before, you may ask!



THE PLACE ON THE HILL

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

The Place continues to offer a friendly warm space for all adults every **Wednesday 10.00am-noon**, including over Christmas and New Year. Join us for free coffee, cakes and biscuits in good company - what more could you ask? We even have a jigsaw you can work on. There is no need to book, just come along to the Free Church at the bottom of Chapel Hill and save on your home's energy bills. If you have children, please come along to *Fun Place on the Hill* which opens on Fridays; see separate article for more information.



Mike and Marion Dyer

Tel: 814059

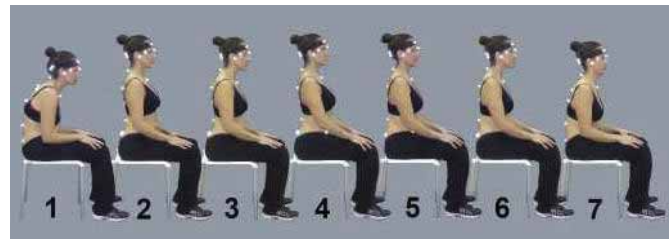
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BRAIN TRAINING

www.clareharding.com

Posture, Pain and having a good Slump

There seems to be no link between posture, pain and general health, no matter how bent your upper back is. Nagging your adolescent to stand up straight only leads to a massive grump attack. However, there is a link between losing mobility and pain. The more you keep your spine nice and mobile, the better. So when slumping in front of the telly curled up around your phone, that is fine, but do change your slumped position from time to time: curl round to the right, to the left, stick your legs out and cross the ankles, tuck them in and cross the other knee, slump back, slump forward. Ditto at work; try not to freeze in one position for hours on end.



So what about posture? There was a study where 554 Greek physiotherapists were asked about posture. Is there an ideal sitting and standing posture? Yes said 93.9% and they would prescribe exercises to achieve this perfection. However, from seven different sitting postures and five different standing postures, they could not agree which was ideal. So what is good posture? A journalist, Paul Ingraham, has dedicated his work to debunking pain science myths and this is what he concludes: *Posture is not a position but a constantly shifting pattern of reflexes, habits and adaptive responses to anything that challenges your ability to stay upright and functional*, all of which boils down to *use it or lose it*. Do not avoid becoming a bit uncomfortable when reaching for something that is rolled under the sofa. Embrace a postural challenge!



The repertoire for woodwind quintet is extensive, with works by composers such as Percy Grainger, Engelbert Humperdinck, Malcolm Arnold and Gustav Holst as well as less familiar names such as Jacques Ibert, Georg Ligeti, Paul Hindemith, Darius Milhaud and many more. The Galliards have released six CDs of quintet music, both original and in arrangements of Haydn, Mozart and others. At the time of writing, they were still finalising the programme for their visit to Stansted, but an afternoon of happy and colourful music-making is guaranteed and there will be mulled wine! Tickets: adults £15, concessions £12, under 21 free, will be available on the door. Memories of Christmas will soon be fading fast, but here is some winter joy to look forward to!

Richard Allaway

Email: contactus@musicatstansted.co.uk

DON'T FORGET!

**There is no January issue of The Link.
The next issue will be in February.**

Clare Harding
Z-Health Master Practitioner
Tel: 07802 872919



SUSTAINABLE STANSTED

Christmas is a wonderful time of year, but did you know it is also the most wasteful too? We create 30% more waste over the festive season than at any other time of year! Gifts are often wrapped in excess packaging, usually plastic which cannot be recycled. Millions of rolls of wrapping paper are bought each year, most of which cannot be recycled. Huge quantities of uneaten food get thrown away; as a country we buy more food than we can possibly eat and this waste releases methane into the atmosphere when it breaks down. Most food is wrapped in packaging that is added to our household waste.



Traditional items like crackers, advent calendars, Christmas trees and cards are often single use. Most get thrown away as they cannot be recycled due to glitter and plastic. Tips to reduce your waste this year:

- Why not look at gifting experiences, these can create some wonderful memories. Look for second-hand items or shop for local crafts
- Try wrapping gifts in fabric (Furoshiki, search on Google) or use reusable gift bags; buy 100% recycled paper and use paper tape
- Shop for food locally, which can help reduce food packaging and boost our local economy. Buy the amount you need and use leftovers to create new meals
- Make your own reusable crackers at home, placing a small gift inside
- Use a reusable advent calendar, refilling it each year with your own treats
- Try renting a Christmas tree or buying a living one in a pot that you can use again the following year.

Helen Scott
Email: sustainablestansted@gmail.com



RECYCLING

A reminder that unfortunately we are no longer able to accept blister packs for recycling; please put them in your black bin. However, we can still accept the following: ink cartridges (**not** toners), dental products, stamps, mobile phones, ipads and tablets (**not** laptops). Please make sure all personal data has been erased from ipads, mobiles and tablets. The easiest way to do this is by a *factory reset*. It would be helpful if **all items** could be placed in a paper/plastic bag or envelope; please use a separate one for each category and do not mix items. Donations can be left in the boxes

outside the blue main door of the Free Church at the bottom of Chapel Hill.

Aldi Packaging

Readers who shop in Aldi may or may not be aware that the Bishop's Stortford store recycles quite a lot of packaging that we are not permitted to place in our green council bins, viz:



Please note we are not collecting on behalf of Aldi so please do not bring these items to the church.



Marion and Mike Dyer
Tel: 814059

Email: recycle@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk



www.letstalkstansted.org

You may see us out and about during December as we deliver our Christmas gifts and business cards to people in the streets and at the station. Whilst we recognise this is a time of year where family and friends gather to celebrate the festive period, we are well aware that this is also a time that can bring sadness and loneliness to many. You can always seek help and advice from us if you feel everything is becoming too much and need someone to talk to, who will listen and can provide support. We can be contacted via our website, our Facebook page or by emailing us at the address shown below. We would like to thank Stansted Co-op and all their customers for supporting us with their Community Fund project and raising £2,229.41 on our behalf! We will be looking at a variety of projects in 2024 and these funds will be put to good use ensuring mental health awareness continues to be a top priority within Stansted and the surrounding villages.



We continue with our monthly social evenings on the last Tuesday of the month at 7.00pm in the Social Club. Please join us on **Tuesday 30th January** and find out what we will be getting up to next year. Everyone is welcome and if you have any suggestions for future events or activities, we would love to hear about them. Let us make 2024 the year of increasing awareness of *Let's Talk Stansted!* We also hope to have Mental Health First Aiders in every business, school and club in the area.

Anne Guney
Email: info@letstalkstansted.org

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IN MEMORIAM

RUTH LOIS RAWLINSON

24th August 1940 - 14th August 2023



Mum grew up in Bexleyheath, Kent and moved to North Limes, Stansted in January 1970 with her husband John and us as six-month-old twins. Mum then stayed in the village for the rest of her life, moving to Mont House in 1988 where we all lived for 20 years. This was then demolished and is now the *Mont Heights* development. She then lived in Blythwood Gardens before her last home in Hargrave Mews.

She was dedicated to her career, helping others and to us and our families. She worked in London for over 30 years as a Civil Servant for central government and was a regular commuter from Stansted. She said she loved commuting as it was her chance to catch up on her reading, one of her favourite pastimes, as well as the odd game of cards! She was very proud of her work, with highlights being helping inner-city areas to rebuild after the 1980s race riots and working on policies to help small businesses.

Mum loved living in Stansted; she belonged to many clubs and was a familiar face at community events and fundraisers. Her interests included being a governor at Bentfield Primary School, an active member of the Liberal Democrats, a Parish Councillor and a volunteer at the Day Centre. She was also president and later treasurer for the Ugley WI and a keen member of University of the Third Age (u3a).

She had a deep faith and converted to Catholicism in 1986 with a moving service at Westminster Cathedral overseen by Cardinal Basil Hume. Mum was an active member of St Theresa's Church community as well as the wider *Churches Together* movement in the village, going away on retreats to Lourdes and meeting the Pope in Rome. The Church was an amazing support for her after the sudden death of our Dad, John in 1988.

Mum was an amazing woman; she had a wonderful sense of adventure and love of travel including a honeymoon in Morocco, weddings in America, boating through Russia and numerous road trips with us visiting friends and family. She was also very kind and generous to all including to her grandchildren Reggie and May.

She spent the last months of her life at Cedars Place nursing home in Halstead where she was very happy and very well looked after. Just before passing away she was, as ever, asking after people, was engaged in activities and had just been appointed to be the Residents Representative at the care home meetings!

Throughout her life, Mum collected a number of extremely good friends in the village and we thank you all for the love you gave Mum, the laughs, the lunches, the fundraising and the travels. As many of you have said to us in the village, we will all greatly miss Mum's gentle and calming influence; she dealt with whatever life threw at her quietly and sensitively and always with that lovely warm smile. She will always be in our hearts and I am sure in all of yours. As she often said to us and which we would like to say to you all, *be nice to each other and the world will be a better place.*

Edward and Isobel Rawlinson



www.rainbowstansted.co.uk

Harvest was celebrated by the Adventurers children making a basket and filling it with gifts of food. They attended a church service and on the following Monday visited the residents of Norman Court to give them a basket. The photographer has visited, fundraising Christmas cards have been made and our annual Happyschool bag collection has taken place raising much needed funds. In addition the staff are busy organising fun activities for the lead-up to Christmas. The Explorers group children have settled well and they will be joined by more children in January. We now hold a stay and play session for 18 months to 3-year-olds on Friday afternoons. This has proved popular, with numbers increasing each week. The session was initially for the Autumn Term only, but we are hoping to continue this in the Spring Term.

We are delighted to have been donated £2,000 from the CO-Bro company set up during Covid by Neil Ray and Mishul Prasad. We are planning to complete the garden makeover which we started with a donation from the Co-op fund. We also want to send a big thank you to Krzysztof, one of last year's parents, who has constructed the most amazing mud kitchen for us in his workshop at Spellbrook. Any refurbishments are on hold at the moment while the roof at the Peter Kirk Centre is replaced; the building is now surrounded with scaffolding and there is a tin hat on so work can carry on despite the weather.

Rainbow Pre-School takes children from 2½ years to rising 5. If you are interested in applying for a place for your child, please visit our website for details. In order to ensure a place, you would be advised to put your child's name down now, however young they are.



Gill Pursglove
Administrator
Tel: 814242

Email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net



THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Our traditional Midnight Mass service is something really special – a time of festivity and holy awe as we welcome the Christ-child into the world. The thing is, though, virtually nobody from St John's regular congregation ever turns up. The fact is, people simply do not want to be out in the middle of the night and in the middle of winter. Personally, I have always found Midnight Mass to be a very impractical service. For the past two years I have done it, I got to bed around 1.00am. As a result, I slept badly, and spent the whole of Christmas day knackered.

So we researched alternatives this year, and discovered the concept of the Bethlehem Mass. It is the same service as Midnight Mass, with communion, a mercifully short sermon, and plenty of Christmas carols. The only difference is, it starts at 9.30pm, half an hour before it is midnight in Bethlehem. So after 10.00pm, we can meaningfully sing the *born this happy morning* line from O Come all Ye Faithful without having to stay awake into the wee small hours. After it is all over, we go home and have a cup of cocoa, and can still be in bed before it is silly o'clock. Everyone is a winner.

So I commend the Bethlehem Mass to the good people of Stansted this year. May we all know the holy joy of this season, in our homes, and in our hearts.



Rev'd Colin Fairweather
Priest In Charge
St John's Church



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Email: revhelenstn@gmail.com

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Mobile: 07880 602717
Email: kewest@btinternet.com

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Email: anne.brooks22@yahoo.co.uk

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9.30am

Parish Priest Fr Clement Orango
Tel: 814349
Email: frclementorango@brcdt.org

Parish Administrator Clair Rava
Tel: 816889
Email: stansted@brcdt.org

Masses:
Saturday 5.00pm-5.30pm Confessions
6.00pm Mass

Sunday 8.30am Mass
10.00am Mass

Wednesday 12.30pm Mass

Our Mass times can be subject to change so please refer to our website/Newsletter for updated information, including weekday Masses. Confessions are at 5.00pm every Saturday before the Vigil Mass and by appointment.

Baptisms: By appointment

From St John's Registers

Funeral
10th October Zoe Ferrier, age 46 - 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

3rd 10.30am Heather Gale - New Directions
10th 10.30am Rev'd Gill Hulme – Gift Service
17th 10.30am Rev'd Stuart Veitch - Communion
24th 10.30am Carol Service
25th 10.30 am Rev'd George Lambdon - Christmas Day
31st 10.30am Denis Walker

Preachers for January

7th 10.30am Rev'd Stuart Veitch
14th 10.30am Rev'd Gill Hulme – Covenant Service
21st 10.30am Jerry Heyhoe
28th 10.30am Topsy Brice

At our gift service on 10th December we will be collecting items for the Uttlesford Food Bank.

The Place on the Hill will be open as usual on Wednesdays throughout Christmas and New Year. See separate article for details.



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET u3a

www.u3asites.org.uk/stansted

Stansted u3a Singers presented their annual concert on Saturday 30th September in St John's Church. For the first time this was an afternoon performance, and certainly the churchyard pathways were easier to negotiate in the daylight. The concert theme was *I have a Dream* and the choir sang a variety of old and new numbers, led by Musical Director Isobel Bradshaw. In the interval the audience enjoyed delicious homemade cakes, together with wine and soft drinks. There was a surprise at the end of the concert with Elton John's uplifting *I'm still Standing*, each singer whipping on a pair of Elton's special specs. A retiring collection for Uttlesford Foodbank raised almost £130 from a very generous audience. We would welcome additional singers to join the choir; just come along to rehearsal any Tuesday 1.00pm-2.30pm at OSCA Hall in Henham.



Our Christmas Tea is on **Thursday 7th December** in St John's Hall and the annual Christmas lunch is on **14th December** at Bury Lodge. Looking forward to next year, the Speaker Programme is on our website. Our first monthly meeting is on **Thursday 18th January** 1.30pm for 2.00pm in St John's Hall. The speaker will be Lindsay Whitehouse who will talk about *My Life in Prison*. Lindsay was Governor of several prisons including Chelmsford; he was also the first Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex. He has written articles aimed at criminal justice professionals involved in the Youth Justice system.

Anne White
Email: stanstedu3a@gmail.com



STANSTED QUAKERS

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

Contact Jonathan Morrell Tel: 07775 860379
Email: woldsouth3@gmail.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 for an hour, followed by coffee and chat. Quakers allow each person to explore their own experience of the divine. We try to live our faith in everyday life, with a dedication to peace, simplicity, truth, equality, and nature.

Light Group This is a guided Quaker meditation. There is more information on the noticeboard outside the Meeting House or do contact Sue on 07759 532115. We generally meet on the 2nd Saturday of each month.



HUW JOHNSON CLUB

Our last meeting for this year will be the carol service on Thursday 7th December at 7.00pm in St John's Church. All are welcome to join us for carols, readings, a raffle and mince pies. Our Thursday evenings will then take a break until the end of February but we will be having a club trip to the panto in Cambridge in early January which is an outing always thoroughly enjoyed by all. As always, anyone interested in attending as a member or a volunteer, please do get in touch.

Ellen Brooks
Tel: 07800 896516
Email: ellenbrooks@hotmail.co.uk



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STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

www.stanstedhistorysociety.org.uk

What was our village like in the past? We are fascinated to know what the shops, roads, pubs, houses and schools were like, for instance. Paul Embleton, our November speaker, provided an insight into these intriguing questions. Paul has spent a lifetime collecting postcards, photographs and memorabilia showing the life and times of Stansted and Bishop's Stortford over the last 150 years.



Stansted was a relatively small village with an amazing number of pubs, many of which are still functioning today or until recently. These include The Three Colts, The Rose and Crown, The Bell, The Feathers and The Windmill. There were many shops; Greens Stores in Cambridge Road was the most prominent and there were many more shops in Silver Street, Chapel Hill and Lower Street covering a vast array of trades and services. A photograph of the Post Office in Chapel Hill with all the staff outside was another fascinating glimpse into the past. Sport was also well catered for with photographs of Stansted football teams over various periods, the most poignant of these was taken just at the outbreak of WWI from which many of the team would never return. There were also photographs of the cricket club over the decades, and one of the original bowls club taken in 1906; the men were fully attired in three-piece suits and the ladies in large buttoned dresses with bonnets. In his vote of thanks our Chairman, Dave Perry, thanked Paul for his truly superb and beautifully illustrated talk and hoped that he would speak to us again sometime.

Our meeting on **Thursday 7th December** at 7.30pm in the Day Centre will be a quiz evening; there will be a raffle with proceeds going towards acquiring a new public address system. We do not meet in January.

Edward Taub
Tel: 816932
Email: taub8jr@btinternet.com



FUN PLACE ON THE HILL

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

The Fun Place on the Hill is open every **Friday, including school holidays**, from 9.15am-11.30am in the Free Church Hall. Everyone is welcome at the Fun Place. Parents, children and all age visitors drop in and adults relax with a hot drink and chat. Meanwhile the youngsters enjoy plenty of space to run around and play with the toys, and listen to Story Time or join in with a Sing-Along at around 10.30am. Free squash and healthy snacks are available for children, and tea/coffee and biscuits for the adults. Please make a note in your diary that our **Christmas Event** is on **Friday 15th December** including activities and a special visitor! Now colder weather is returning, why not come along for a couple of hours on a Friday morning and help save on home energy costs. There is limited free parking in the church car park. Looking forward to welcoming you on Friday mornings.

Sue Parker and Fran Richards

Tel: 657116

Email: funplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

FOREST HALL SCHOOL

www.foresthallschool.org



Visit from a Rungis School

Dustin Schuyler, head teacher at the school, is pleased to announce that the school recently received visitors from Rungis, France and it was an absolute delight to meet them. Stansted is twinned with Rungis and their schools are very keen to link up with Stansted schools. The students had a tour of the school and were then able to participate in lessons with other students; all involved could practice speaking French and English. The Rungis visitors were a big hit with the pupils and they did not want to see them go.



Dustin is keen that communication between the schools can continue through being a pen pal. His students joined the visit to the House of Commons which had been previously arranged through links with Rungis. This was an invaluable and memorable experience for all involved. Dustin would like to thank those involved in helping to organise the trip as well as the local Parish Council and staff at Rungis. For further information please contact the school on 813384 or email: reception@bmatforesthall.org.uk.



Iris Evans
Community Governor

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ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Many congratulations to the October draw winners:

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£ 50	No 186	Margaret Hill
£ 25	No 282	Janet Hurst

The next two draws will take place after the 9.30am service on Sundays **31st December** and **28th January**. Numbers at £2 per month for each number 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

Email: jean733@btinternet.com

STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET EVENING WI



Our speaker, Sharon Gould's talk was entitled *East End to Essex*. She introduced herself as a Cockney by default as on a good day with a prevailing wind, Bow Bells could be heard in 'Ackney' hospital where she was born. Lots of memories were recalled especially chamber pots or *gazinders*, wooden toilet seats, buckets and Izal toilet paper which was used for tracing paper and for playing the comb, as shown in the photo below. Her talk also included Saturday morning pictures, pie mash, liquor and eels as well as Virol/malt and cod liver oil (which she invited us to taste - delicious) and concentrated orange juice to keep children healthy. She also spoke of child cruelty in the form of home perms, lethal curling tongs and pain inducing curlers. It was a highly entertaining and amusing evening and we look forward to hearing more from her in the future.



Our next meeting will be our Christmas party on **Thursday 14th December** where we will be entertained by a tribute to Elvis. Our meeting in the New Year will be on **Thursday 11th January** with a surprise speaker. Both meetings are in the Day Centre at 7.30pm. We welcome visitors and new members. Please come and join us.

Linda Gurr
Tel: 07743 549241

IN THE GARDEN

Our gardens have been cleared of leaves, mulched and planted with bulbs. Winter is here and the garden is dormant for a couple of months. There may still be colour with the odd rose or salvia producing flowers if the weather has been kind; shrubs such as holly, cotoneaster and viburnum may be adding a little to the show. Evergreen shrubs come into their own with their green and yellow colours, and the blue conifer stands out beautifully in the winter garden. Several of these trees can be shaped into topiary balls or cloud-pruned in layers giving interest to the garden. Some shrubs' lower branches can be cut back thereby leaving space for underplanting with snowdrops or primroses. Grasses too can play their part giving colour and structure to the garden in winter.



This is also the time of year for planning. What to plant or sow next year? What did not work; what ideas are there for resurrecting a corner that has been long overlooked, or a border that needs rearranging? If tasks like cleaning and washing greenhouses and cold frames have not yet been tackled, then now is a good time to do so; sheds will also need sorting out and tools cleaned and sharpened. You may not be able to garden but you can still find jobs to do. Do not forget the wildlife at this time of year. Leave plenty of places where those beneficial creatures can safely overwinter, perhaps a pile of leaves and twigs here and there, or build a bug hotel out of a small box filled with cut bamboo canes and rolled-up, corrugated cardboard, using straw and moss to pack in any spaces in between. Whatever the weather that winter has in store for us, there is always something to look forward to in the garden.



u3a Garden Group
Email: stanstedu3a@gmail.com

STANSTED IS WELL READ

The next meeting of our book club will be on **Tuesday 5th December** at 8.00pm in the Dog and Duck, Lower Steet where we will be discussing *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. We will also be holding our Christmas book swap where we all take along a festively wrapped book that we have enjoyed, and then we each choose one to take away and read. We will discuss our new books at the meeting on **Tuesday 2nd January**. Please do get in touch if you would like to join us, a warm welcome will await.



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

Stansted Network

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS

PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

...with news of pharmacy provision in the village, three successful grant awards, a visit to Stansted by teenagers from Rungis and details of how to share your thoughts on the district council's plans for our area until 2041



Pharmacies: An Open & Shut Case

At the start of November, Stansted welcomed the opening of the new dispensing pharmacy. For this we must thank the partners of Stansted Surgery who, having won their appeal against NHS England's refusal to grant them a pharmacy licence back in July, have worked tirelessly to get a working dispensing pharmacy up and running. The result of their handiwork is Peacock Pharmacy.

This new dispensary has taken over occupancy of Stansted Pharmacy, sited next door to the Stansted Surgery on Lower Street. Stansted Pharmacy, despite their convenient location, were without a licence to provide prescriptions



medicines. This left residents in the south of the village and crucially at the bottom of Chapel Hill with no choice but to head up the Boots Pharmacy on Cambridge Road.

The Peacock Pharmacy fills an important gap in community health service provision. But there has been little time for those who campaigned for a second dispensing pharmacist in Stansted to celebrate. The pharmacy on Cambridge Road has been deemed financially unviable by its owners, Boots Pharmacists.

Back to square one?

Well not quite. The village is again down to a single dispensing pharmacist for 8,600 residents, but the Parish Council is working with Stansted Surgery to find ways to expand Peacock's reach in the north of Stansted. One way being explored is to apply for planning permission for a 24hr easy-

to-use collection point for medication on the Crafton Green site.

Another option could see Crafton Green and SMPC buildings used to deliver services such as flu and major vaccination



programmes. The aim would be to reduce the need for residents with limited mobility to navigate Chapel Hill. The surgery is already offering a home delivery service for people unable to collect prescriptions in person.

Three more grants awarded

Close to £3,000 in funding has been awarded by SMPC to a trio of organisations delivering services and support to people in Stansted. Last Christmas, TouchPoint raised funds to distribute £25 Amazon vouchers to over 150 struggling families in 2022. To help TouchPoint deliver £15,000 worth of presents to hard up families in Uttlesford, the SMPC has provided a £1,500 grant.

Home Start Essex has been awarded £250 to fund its work providing practical and emotional support to parents struggling to cope with the stresses of modern family life. The final beneficiary was community newcomer She's Ready Stansted. A £1,000 grant will support their work empowering women to be more active through social action.

The organisations joined five other recipients of the £7,000 set aside by SMPC to support community groups in 2023/4. If you would like to find out how to go about applying for a parish council grant for your organisation visit: stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk/community-grants

Police Action

Investment by the district council in a Tru-cam has helped Essex Police (Uttlesford) clamp down on what consistently ranks for many Stansted residents as one of their biggest beefs speeding motorists.

Police Community Support Officer Alex Stewart has conducted multiple community meet-ups in our area since September. A common complaint heard at these has been pedestrians being made to feel unsafe by fast traffic along High Lane, Cambridge Road and Church Road.

Tru-cam accurately records motorists' speeds and sends pictorial evidence of number plates and car type to the district camera enforcement team.

Rungis Youth Assembly Visit Autumn 2023

Months of planning and hard work paid off for the Stansted-Rungis Twinning Association when a visit by 8 teens from the French town's Youth Assembly (plus their two adult guides) passed off without a hitch.

There have been several visits between our two communities since the official twinning in 2018, but this is the first time a visit has been arranged for this age group, says SMPC Chair Maureen Caton. The trip was a fantastic success.

The party of representatives from the French town's Youth Assembly travelled by Eurostar and stayed in London for their 5-day trip. Other than organising their accommodation, the twinning association also arranged for the teens to experience a day in the life at a British second school (Forest Hall School), while local MP Kemi Badenoch's office kindly organised a tour of the Houses of Parliament.

Chair Caton said: The young people from Rungis really enjoyed their time at Forest Hall and we would like to thank the school Head, Dustin Schuyler, for facilitating the visit.

With the French teens safely returned to their families, the twinning association has already started prepping for the next trip between the two communities. Next May, Stansted will once again lay out the welcome mat to our friends in Rungis!

If you would like to get involved in twinning activities, email twinning@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk



Rungis Youth Assembly members (top) were joined by pupils from Forest Hall School (below) on a visit to the Palace of Westminster in November

Errant parking is viewed legally as a civil, not a criminal, offence and as such falls outside the jurisdiction of the police. This is not always the case, though, and PCSO Stewart is keen to warn residents that parking vehicles in such a way that could block access to emergency services could see your vehicle towed away, with penalty fees being incurred.



PCSO Stewart said: Normally we need to have a police officer present before we can issue a ticket, but having the Tru-cam means we can issue penalty fines ourselves.

The community policing team also wish to stop people parking on zigzag lines at zebra crossings, such as at Lower Street and Cambridge Road. Parking in such places can put pedestrians at risk of serious injury. Drivers may be unable to spot pedestrians if their view is blocked by parked cars near a crossing. Those caught stopping on zigzags even if it's just to let someone out of a car can expect a £100 fine and points on their licence.

Highways Round-up

Essex County Council are preparing to meet representatives of the communities of Stansted, Elsenham, Henham, Ugley and Takeley ahead of a consultation into the possible re-routing of HGV traffic away from Grove Hill. An alternate route has been suggested that would see HGVs pass instead via Hall Road.

Costly safety improvements to this route would be needed before this would be considered a viable option by Essex Highways. Alternative routes are unlikely to be welcomed either by nearby communities, who are sensitive to a proposal that could see HGV traffic pushed their way.

Money well spent...

Investment by the Parish Council in wooden barriers along Ugley Brook came just in time to minimise the risk of flooding in Lower Street when heavy rain from Storm Ciaran pounded the village in November.

Our volunteer flood wardens used £2,000 of funding from the Parish Council to build two barriers to catch debris and manage the brook's flow. Storm Ciaran battered southern England and caused some flooding locally, notably along the B1383 at Birchanger.

But regular checks of the barriers and removal of sticks and branches meant the wardens prevented the Brook becoming blocked and overflowing into Lower Street, as happened in 2014.



There is pessimism also about the implementation of traffic calming measures for High Lane. At a Highways sub-committee meeting in October, County and District Councillor Ray Gooding says the proposal is currently being reviewed. He reported the problem here rested with High Lane's status as R2.

Roads are ranked according to the prioritisation given to vehicles over other road users and pedestrians. High Lane would need a R3 rating for calming measures. But even if the Lane's was recategorized downwards, this could pose further problems. As an R3 road, maintenance and repairs would be de-prioritised along High Lane.

News that Essex County Cllr Lee Scott has made way for Tom Cunningham as cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Sustainable Transport, offers hope that a fresh pair of eyes may view the troubles of Grove Hill and High Lane in a new light. The Parish Council has written to welcome Cllr Cunningham into his new role and invited him to visit Stansted to see the problems first hand.

And finally, in light of reported near misses the Parish Council has asked the Local Highways Panel to conduct a study into determining the best location for a Zebra crossing on Forest Hall Park. The highways panel is tasked with delivering road casualty reduction schemes and measures requested by local communities. The absence of a crossing is putting the lives of school children at risk on the development.

Draft Local Plan Consultation

The district council has been in consultation with residents since November 3, seeking your thoughts on the plans and proposals for development in Uttlesford contained in their draft Local Plan.

You have until the middle of this month—December 15 to be precise—to have your say on a document that could prove crucial in determining what gets built, and where, across the district from now until 2041.

What has been proposed

Central to the draft plan are allocations for about 6,000 additional homes in the most sustainable locations. Of this number, 455 have been allocated to Stansted. The rest will appear mainly in Great Dunmow, Newport, Saffron Walden, Takeley and Thaxted. Some non-strategic development is also proposed in larger villages. The plan does not propose any development in smaller villages, other than modest infill, nor in the open countryside.

The Local Plan as currently written seeks to ensure that future development preserves and enhances the experience of existing communities, whilst providing a range of new facilities and infrastructure, and ensuring that 35% of the homes built are affordable homes

How you can have your say

The quickest and easiest way to read the draft plan and to provide feedback will be via district council's website: www.uttlesford.gov.uk/new-local-plan.

You can also respond by emailing localplan@uttlesford.gov.uk

And if you struggle with computers, you can still participate. Printed copies of the Draft Local Plan can be read at the Mountfitchet Exchange library, where you can also ask for a consultation form to write down your comments before posting the form to: **Local Plan Team, Uttlesford District Council, London Road, Saffron Walden CB11 4ER.**

Why your are views important

Your responses will be used to inform the final version of the plan, which the council will consult on again next year. The final plan will then be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination by a Planning Inspector.

**We wish all residents
a very Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year.
See you in 2024!**

The Parish Council will be closed from December 19 reopening on January 3. Contact our Parish Councillors for assistance should you need to reach SMPC during this time. Their details are listed on page 23 and our website: www.stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET PARISH COUNCIL

STAFF

Clerk Ruth Clifford Deputy Clerk Emma Philbrick

Committee & Projects Officer Laila Azure-Marxen

Communications Officer Dan Schlanker

Email: info@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 01279 813214

Office Hours Mon-Fri 9am-4pm, Wed 9am-2pm

Reception: Mon-Fri 10am-2pm

Website: www.stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stanstedcouncil

Instagram: [stansted@parishcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/stansted@parishcouncil)

Twitter: @StanstedMPC

PARISH COUNCILLORS

Alan BARNES ☎ 817214

alanbarnes@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

George BRAECKMAN ☎ 07981203831

georgebraeckman@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Maureen CATON ☎ 813914 **CHAIR**

maureencaton@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Sanjukta GHOSH ☎ 817974

sanjuktaghosh@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Anne GUNEY ☎ 815996

anneguney@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Jamie HOGG ☎ 647206

jameshogg@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Peter JONES ☎ 813252

peterjones@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Joanna KAVANAGH ☎ 815157

jokavanagh@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Ayub KHAN ☎ 815800 **VICE-CHAIR**

ayubkhan@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Allan LOVE ☎ 817620

allanlove@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

John O'BRIEN ☎ 816772

johnobrien@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Lois PRIOR ☎ 07472172223

loisprior@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Geoffrey SELL ☎ 815925

cllrSELL@uttlesford.gov.uk

Tom van de BILT ☎ 07710426850

tomvandebilt@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are at the Mountfitchet Exchange. If you wish to attend virtually, look for Zoom details in the agenda documents on our website:

Dec 6 Windmill Sub-committee **7-8pm**, Finance & General Purposes **8-10pm**; **Dec 13** Full Council **7.30pm**

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Alan DEAN

☎ 813759 email: cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk

Geoffrey SELL

☎ 815925 email: cllrSELL@uttlesford.gov.uk

Ray GOODING

☎ 813103 email: cllrGOODING@uttlesford.gov.uk

Nick CHURCH

email: cllrchurch@uttlesford.gov.uk

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Ray GOODING

☎ 813103 email: cllr.ray.gooding@essex.gov.uk

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Kemi BADENOCH MP

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

☎ 0207 219 1943 email: kemi.badenoch.mp@parliament.uk

POLICE

PCSO 81764 Alex STEWART

email: alexander.stewart@essex.police.uk

Non-urgent incidents call: 101

Serious incidents call: 999 www.essex.police.uk/ro/report

Meet-up Events: Day Centre **Dec 1**,

Lower Street Co-op **Dec 2 & Dec 14**

LIBRARY

The library at Mountfitchet Exchange opens:

Tuesday 9am-1pm Wednesday 2pm-5.30pm

Thursday 2pm-7pm Saturday 9am-5pm

ADVICE SESSIONS

Uttlesford Citizen's Advice run a FREE drop-in service every Thursday from 9.30am-2pm, except when Peabody operate advice sessions (see below). You can also ask to speak to an advisor during Parish Council reception hours via computer hook-up. Ask at reception for details.

Peabody Trust run a drop-in service on **Thursday, Dec 14** from 11am-3pm. Advisors can help with benefits problems, housing issues, access to job training and offer support to overcome addiction.

TOUCHPOINT, STANSTED

The community wellbeing project runs a variety of clubs, groups and activities from 72 Chapel Hill where you can socialise, get help, access training, and fill up your larder for free! **Foodshares** Stansted Social Club Wed 2.30-3.30pm, **Thursdays** Crafton Green 10am-noon, **Saturdays** 1-2pm; **Community Cafe** Thursdays 11am-5pm, **Fridays** 10am-12pm; **Free hot meals** on Tuesdays 4-6pm for pre-school and school age children; **Breakfast Club** every Friday 8.30am-10.30am. Contact info@thetouchpoint.org ☎ 07572 114882

GARDEN WASTE SERVICE

A refuse truck will be in the Lower Street Car Park from 12.30-4.30pm to recycle your garden waste on the Sunday **Dec 10**. This will be the last collection until spring 2024.

Village Defibrillators

Defibrillators in yellow on the map are accessible 24/7. Call Emergency Services for an access code. Defibrillators in orange are only available during the working hours of the establishment they are sited at.



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SHOE BOXES

www.teams4u.com

A large number of shoe boxes - 167 to be precise - are on their way from Stansted to the Ukraine, Romania, Moldova, Georgia and Bosnia. A big thank you to everyone who contributed: the knitters, donors of items, packers, and those who attended David Morson's quiz which raised £587 to cover the transport cost of £3 per box. Dave Cooke, who founded the Teams4U shoe box appeal over 25 years ago, says that the current need is still extraordinary and the power of the shoebox has never faded. The organisation's involvement does not end with the giving of the Christmas box as the shoebox will be given to a vulnerable child, or family, through schools, nurseries, hospitals and orphanages. Their aim is that each box is given in relationship with the local community as part of a long-term commitment to these children.



Preparing the shoe boxes in Stansted is a team effort, organised by the three of us and Eileen's husband, Brian, but we feel that the time has come to hand over to younger folk, those under 70. It is very rewarding, and we would give advice and lend support to anyone prepared to take over. We will not be organising the packing of boxes next year; we hope that someone will come forward to continue sending love in a box from Stansted. Thank you to everyone for your generosity.

Catherine Dean Tel: 813579

Eileen Quinn Tel: 812109

Helen Baker Tel: 814865



SOCIAL CLUB

www.smsc.uk.com

I hope that your Christmas preparations are going well! There are two important dates for your diaries: **Wednesday 13th December** is our annual senior citizen's Christmas lunch and the children's party is on **Saturday 16th December**. If you are members and wish to attend either event, please put your names down in the club. We are once again a Club Awards finalist with the ceremony at the end of November. We are pleased to announce that our sponsored darts player, Mason Teese, has secured his England spot for next year's Tri-Nations tournament in Scotland and the European Cup in Latvia! If you are able to offer any sponsorship for Mason please get in touch.

There is some fabulous entertainment lined up for December. On **Saturday 2nd December** we have a *Cher* tribute, followed by a *Chas 'n' Dave* tribute on **Sunday 3rd**. We welcome *Sax On Fire* back on **Saturday 9th** and we have a *Madonna* tribute on the **16th**. The *Souled Organisation* are back on **Friday 22nd**, with a *Robbie Williams* tribute on **Saturday 23rd**. *Gemma Louise Doyle*, returns with her opera crossover set on **Sunday 24th** and we round off 2023 with *Joe Gibbons* on **New Year's Eve**.

In January we have *Scam 69* on **Saturday 6th**, with karaoke on **Friday 12th**. There is a treat for *Carpenters* fans on **Saturday 13th** with the amazing *Karen Carpenter Experience*. The *Brit Invasion* are back on **Saturday 20th**, and we round off January on **Saturday 27th** with the phenomenal *Afterlife*. As always, entertainment is included as part of your membership. Non-members are welcome to events and the ticket price is £10. I would like to finish by wishing everybody a happy festive period and a prosperous 2024!



Andrew Sharpe

Email: stanstedclub@gmail.com

ST CLARE HOSPICE

www.stclarehospice.org.uk



St Clare teams up with UCAN

We now have a new venue for our Café Clare coffee morning and our drop-in sessions - the Jubilee Hub in Jubilee Gardens, Saffron Walden. We teamed up with Uttlesford Community Action Network (UCAN) to provide this service. Thank you to the Salvation Army for hosting us earlier in the year; we now look forward to welcoming local people every Thursday to Café Clare 10.00am-noon and to our drop-in 1.00pm-3.00pm. The nearest parking is in the Waitrose car park; the gardens are on Hill Street CB10 3EH.



Stacey Towler, Volunteer Development Manager from St Clare Hospice with Clive Emmett, UCAN CEO

Our communities have told us that getting to our Hospice in Harlow sometimes proves a challenge, which is why we have a regular weekly slot in the heart of the town. Please come along in the morning to have a cuppa and why not stay until the afternoon to talk to our staff and tell us what you would like to see St Clare do in your town. No need to book, just pop in, we are all ears.

Tracey Hall

Head of Community Engagement

Tel: 773700

Email: info@stclarehospice.org.uk

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We have a lot of events planned for December and January. We begin on **Wednesday 6th December** with a midweek walk offering good views of the Patmore Heath nature reserve. We are meeting at 10.00am at the Brewery Tap Inn, Furneux Pelham SG9 0LL which we will be returning to for lunch after the walk. With Jono Forgham as our special guest speaker, we look forward to an entertaining and enjoyable evening meeting on **Tuesday 12th December** at 7.30pm in Bishop's Park Community Centre CM23 4DA. His new talk *The Wonders of Norfolk, A Birdwatchers Guide to the Hotspot* will highlight his incredible knowledge of birding in Norfolk; the places to go and the species to be seen. Ending our events for December on **Sunday 17th** we offer a chance to get away from all the Christmas rush with a visit to Essex Wildlife Trust's Blue House Farm Nature Reserve at North Fambridge CM3 6GU. Meet at the reserve at 10.00am. With many birds on migration this gives us the opportunity to see large numbers of geese, wildfowl and wading birds.



For our monthly meeting on **Tuesday 9th January** (venue and time as December) we welcome Richard Bashford who will be presenting *The Birds and Wildlife of Poland*. He has worked for the RSPB for many years and has made many trips with NatureTrek to Poland over the last 20 years. On **Saturday 13th January** we plan to visit the Lee Valley Wildlife Discovery Centre, Fishers Green, Waltham Abbey EN9 2EF. Meet at the reserve at 10.00am. This reserve has a splendid new Wildlife Discovery Centre shown in the picture above and many other hides and lakes offering excellent viewing opportunities. It is a great place to visit and at this time of year there should be plenty to see. On **Thursday 25th January** we have our local midweek walk, meeting at 10.00am in Bell Street Public Car Park, Sawbridgeworth CM21 9AA. The planned route is to the west of Sawbridgeworth taking in open countryside and country lanes.

Peter Allen
Tel: 07876 295456
Email: peter2349@sky.com

The theme at our November flower demonstration and talk was *Christmas*. Angelikka Mead produced five very different displays using a mixture of fresh flowers and dried materials. Members were shown how to build up a display, to weave and plait leaves, as well as to cut palm leaves into interesting shapes. There was a demonstration of how to wire cones, leaves and other accessories to cover the mechanics, and this skill can also be used to make door wreaths and swags, for example. The five displays were raffled at the end of the evening and our photo shows one of our happy winners.



There are no meetings in December or January so it will be February before we get together again. In the meantime, the Club wishes everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2024!

Maralyn Harris
Tel: 07919 478144

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We look forward to hearing from you!

It is difficult to judge our biggest achievements this year. The gardens have looked wonderful throughout, from the snowdrops in February, daffodils, bluebells and tulips in the spring and wonderful perennial borders, including the prize-winning dahlias. Our volunteers have produced and sold fantastic quantities of fruit, veg and jams and jellies. One of our volunteers has presented the story of the gardens to a record number of local history and gardening groups. We have all worked really hard and made great friendships in the process.



Early December 2022

In December we will be quietly getting on with winter jobs when the weather permits. Leaf clearance, bulb and small shrub planting should be finished but we are still likely to be planting a few young trees. The trees will include two new ones to the gardens; first a *Ginkgo*, which becomes a stunning tree, with distinctive leaves and lovely autumnal colour. Secondly a *Cercidiphyllum*, also known as a katsura, which has heart shaped leaves and apparently has a slight smell of caramel when its leaves fall in the autumn! In the warmth indoors we will be looking at what vegetable seeds to grow, as well as arranging completion of the path which will be running right from the car park. We also need to sort out our plans for re-paving the Italian Garden; this is a longer-term project, so is not likely to be in place for a while yet. We wish you all a happy Christmas and happy planning for your gardens in 2024! If you are interested in arranging a talk about the history of the gardens and the work of the trust, please leave a message on 01371 870979 or email: enquiries@eastonlodge.co.uk.

Jill Goldsmith

UGLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

The speaker at our October meeting was Jenny Oxley from Saffron Walden Museum who gave us a fascinating talk on the history of this delightful museum which opened in 1835 and has a staggering collection of 175,000 items! She brought a very interesting selection of them to illustrate her talk, allowing our members to study and, as a rare privilege,

handle items ranging from domestic to agricultural use. These included a travelling inkwell used by the military, a sugar cutter, a Victorian can opener, a tool used in the making of sails, and an apple corer made from a sheep's bone. Agricultural items included a tool for cutting and splitting straw and a very tactile leather boot worn by horses when they were put to use as *lawn mowers* before the invention of the more familiar model. The boots prevented the horses' hooves damaging the lawn as they mowed it!

Our December meeting will be our annual festive tea which for catering purposes is restricted to members only, but we welcome visitors to the following meeting on **Wednesday 17th January** at 2.00pm in Ugley Village Hall. Ken McDonald, no stranger to the readers of The Link, will be giving an illustrated talk on the churches of The 100 Parishes. Why not come along for the afternoon? You would be most welcome!

Andrea Fitt
Tel: 815922



HATFIELD FOREST

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hatfield-forest

As we move from autumn into winter, the forest's orange and yellow leaves give way to the barer winter trees. This emptier look is perfect for spotting some of the wildlife in the forest. The ground conditions will deteriorate as the weather changes, so we have closed our grass parks and moved to limited hard standing. This change in season is also causing erosion of the historic woodland rides, so if you come across a diversion, please follow it and discover a new route. The forest is now closed on Mondays and Tuesdays for the winter but is open Wednesday to Sunday 9.00am-2.30pm. The café remains open until 3.00pm serving hot food and warming drinks for this colder weather.



Hatfield Forest venison is now available to purchase from the Estate Office. We manage deer numbers in the forest so that the damage they cause to the woodland is insignificant. Venison has a gorgeous, distinctive flavour with some similarities to beef and lamb. We supply all cuts: haunch, steak, mince, shoulder and diced. It can be prepared in many delicious ways: roasting, flash-frying, grilling, stewing, mincing. If you have never tried venison, why not try some in a bun or stew at the café? Please check our website for up-to-date information.

Hannah Underwood
Assistant Business Services Co-ordinator
Tel: 870678

Email: hannah.underwood@nationaltrust.org.uk

Stansted Tennis Club members and friends are still trying to come to terms with the tragic loss of our beloved tennis coach Ollie Toms who tragically passed away on 6th October at the young age of 35. Ollie was by any measure an extraordinary person. He dedicated himself to helping people, especially the young, to thrive in a sport which he so loved. He had a very special ability to encourage and nurture people, regardless of their abilities. He was someone who put you at ease immediately and who you thought of as a friend from the outset. Four years ago, there were only a handful of juniors being coached at our Club; now there are over 85. This is down to Ollie as a testament to his determination, kindness and love of people. His passion for tennis, passed on to so many, will be his legacy. He will be hugely missed by all who knew him.



On a happier note, we were delighted to hear that in October one of our members, Sandra Ayres, travelled to Mallorca to compete in the International Tennis Federation (ITF) Individual tennis World Championship competition in the over 75s category. Sandra succeeded in getting through to the last 16 only to be beaten narrowly by Andree Teische from Germany 7-5, 7-5; an excellent achievement. Please check out our website for details about our Club and forthcoming events including a karaoke evening on Wednesday 13th December.

Debbie Lane
Email : contact@stanstedtennisclub.co.uk



FOOTBALL CLUB

www.spartansouthmidlandsleague.co.uk

I am happy to report a vast improvement in form for the First Team. However on two occasions when they were ahead of teams above us in the league, the games have had to be abandoned at half time. Against Harpenden Town we

were winning 2-1 when a deluge of rain turned parts of Hargrave Park into a lake. Then the next home game we were winning against the league favourites Real Bedford 2-0 when the floodlights failed. We identified the issue and though we protested that we would need 15 minutes to allow the lights to cool down before switching them back on, the match referee insisted on 10 minutes and subsequently blew for time. Both games will now need to be replayed and we await new dates from the league.

Our Over 45s have also shown an improvement in their form and are now sitting in mid-table in their league and looking forward to a good cup run. Our youth teams are looking very smart in their new kit after obtaining a terrific sponsorship deal, although at this time of year they have to play their home Sunday games at Good Easter. This season's festive fixtures will not, unfortunately, include playing our local rivals, Saffron Walden as we are now in different leagues; however we will be playing away at Sawbridgeworth Town on **Wednesday 27th December**, kick off 7.45pm. Finally on behalf of the Committee, team management and players we wish all our supporters and neighbours a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Fixtures at Hargrave Park in December and January

Note these are all League Fixtures with 3.00pm kick off

2 nd Dec	v Colney Heath
16 th Dec	v Arlesey Town
23 rd Dec	v Potton United
30 th Dec	v FC Romania
20 th Jan	v Shefford Town and Campton



Tom Williams
Tel: 07921 403842



STANSTED BOWLS CLUB

We had our Presentation Dinner on 25th November. Congratulations to all our winners and finalists of the Club competitions:

	Winner	Finalist
Newman Rose Bowl	Lorna Paranehetty	Stephen Hill
Ladies Challenge Shield	Jayne Nelson	Colleen Beattie
Eleanor Irwin Cup	Ann Conroy	Margaret Hill
Brett Cup	Graham Ingold	Stephen Hill
Fletcher Cup	Graham Ingold	Peter Beattie

Congratulations also to Alan Whitehead, winner of the Emerson Shield and to Graham Ingold who won the Last Bowl.

We are holding our Christmas Fayre on **Saturday 2nd December** 11.00am-3.30pm at the Club. There will be various craft stalls including Rhona's Xmas Wreaths, Pebble Art and Homecrafts; also Childrens Lucky dip, Jigsaws, Guess the weight of the Christmas Cake, mince pies and mulled wine. Please come along, everyone is welcome.

Doreen Scraggs
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BS Beekeepers	Kate Walker Tel: 07399 197756 Email: secretary@stortfordbees.org.uk	St John's Road and Area Association	Secretary: David Marchant Email: david@marchant.com
Bowls Club	Doreen Scraggs Mob: 07881 852833 Home: 815036 Email: doreenscraggs@talktalk.net	Scouts (age 10½ -14)	Mike Byrne Tel: 812780
Brownies (Tue)	Kathy Shearman Tel: 07724 355533	Stansted and District Past Rotarians Club	Geoff Lay Email: geoff.lay@ntlworld.com
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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.

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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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