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Front cover:

Moses Brett volunteering in Birchanger Wood as part of his Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. Photo by Dan Brett enhanced by Paul Burt Photography

Stansted Mountfitchet Village Magazine

The Link

www.stanstedlink.org.uk

The Link is published by Stansted Mountfitchet Magazine Community Interest Company and delivered free to 3700 homes and businesses in Stansted. Further copies may be purchased for £1 each or £11.00 per year, plus postage. Each edition is also available on our website.

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

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CONTRIBUTIONS Up to 300 words in Word format. Photographs to be sent as separate attachments (jpeg). By email (preferred) to editor@stanstedlink.org.uk by noon on 9th March for the April issue or by hand/post by noon on 7th March to 7 Blythwood Gardens, Stansted CM24 8HG

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EDITORIAL



Our thanks to Daniel Brett for submitting the unusual front cover photo, taken in Birchanger Wood. It shows Daniel's 14-year-old son Moses, working for his Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award. It is a wonderful scheme, familiar to many youngsters in secondary schools throughout the country. If you are looking for work towards your DoE award, you will see from the Daisy May's Farm website that they need volunteers to help take care of their animals.

The Link has been greatly helped over the past few years by Sarah Lee's delivery team, bringing the magazine to your door towards the end of every month. Sarah and her helpers made their final delivery at the end of January, and we thank all of them so much. We now welcome Dor2Dor, who will have delivered this edition to you.

Stansted Business Forum suggests, quite correctly, that we should *Support our Local Businesses*. This puts us in something of a dilemma with regard to the Foodshare programme run by Touchpoint; the latter aims to prevent food going to landfill and to help people with their rising food bills. The side effect of these very worthy goals is that some of our much-valued retailers such as Goldings and the Co-op are suffering from a decrease in customers. It is a tricky problem which can perhaps be solved by good old compromise. Happy Spring to everyone!



ST MARY'S SCHOOL

www.stmarysstansted.co.uk

We welcomed back *Nite Owls* to school a few weeks ago. They brought five different owls to see us, including an African eagle owl, a barn owl and a little short-eared owl. It was amazing to witness them flying low above the children's heads in the hall as they sat watching; they were fascinated. The photo shows Joanne Colebourne with her favourite, a barn owl.



From now until Easter, Reception will be learning about Fairy Tales in *Once Upon a Time* and KS1 are going on a minibeast hunt, learning to be entomologists in *Wriggle and Crawl*. Years 3 and 4 are preparing to be *Urban Pioneers* which encompasses graffiti art, geographical skills and local history. Our oldest children are studying natural selection and the origin of species as they delve into *Darwin's Delights*. They will sketch, complete online research, use maps and learn about significant individuals such as Charles Darwin and Mary Anning. Lastly some very exciting sporting news: we are proud to announce that we are the Uttlesford Dodgeball champions! This was decided after a hard-fought, nail-biting and thrilling final at the Lord Butler Leisure Centre. Dodgeball is taken extremely seriously at St Mary's, and the team has flourished under the enthusiastic leadership of Charis Rose. This is a good opportunity to thank Georgia Grover and Gemma Hanna for all they do in school to carry our sporting curriculum forward.

Matthew Curzon
Headteacher
Tel: 812212



We have had a wonderful start to the spring term. We were very fortunate to have a new pergola built in our outdoor area over the Christmas break which means the children are now able to play and learn outdoors in all weathers. Our topic this half term is *Keeping Healthy*. The children have enjoyed taking part in many different activities such as yoga, exercise sessions, tasting new foods and looking at hygiene routines such as hand washing to keep the germs away. We also celebrated Chinese New Year, trying some delicious new foods and dancing like Chinese Dragons.

Our qualified, experienced team are pleased to be able to take children from two years and offer up to 30 hours per week. Our sessions are: 9.00am-noon, noon-3.00pm and 9.00am-3.00pm. We are taking registrations for September 2023 now; if you are interested please contact us.

Carly Richards
Pre-school Manager
Tel: 810800

Email: admin@birchangerbutterflies.org.uk

STANSTED MESSY CHURCH

www.stanstedchurches.com



It was good to see several new families joining our February Messy Church. The theme was *Surprise* and there were lots of interesting crafts based on the theme. The children particularly liked guessing what was inside the Kinder eggs during the celebration.

The team are currently undertaking a review of Messy Church, so there are no future sessions planned at the present time.

Marion Dyer
Tel: 814059



Email: messychurch@stanstedchurches.com



MAGNA CARTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

www.magnacartaacademy.org

Our pupils were given new tools to inspire confidence during a visit from motivational speaker James Shone. He had been a teacher for 16 years when, in 2012, he was preparing to take on his first headship. During a routine eye check, it was discovered that he had a large brain tumour. After 27 hours of brain surgery and 80 days in hospital unable to eat, drink or talk, he was left with no sight in one eye and only ten per cent vision in the other. As founder of his charity *I Can and I Am*, with a mission to inspire confidence, James hosted a whole school assembly where he shared his story.



Year 6 pupils also attended a workshop with him, exploring ways to inflate balloons of self-belief by showing kindness, feeling gratitude and setting themselves small steps forwards rather than large leaps. They also thought about what makes them unique and the importance of having a sense of belonging. Art teacher Ann Clausen said: "James' visit included joining a group of children from Years 1 to 6 for an art workshop, in which we all worked together to create a beautiful set of mosaic letters for *I can and I am*. His visit and message had a memorable impact on staff and children alike and will help with our on-going commitment to building self-belief and resilience in our children and the overall mental health wellbeing of our children and staff." Head of school Jen Pearce said: "James shared his acronym of UFO with us, meaning we should look Upwards, Forwards and Out. This is a mantra we will continue to build on in school with the children, as well as remember ourselves as adults and role models."

Kelly Clark



www.rainbowstansted.co.uk

Prior to half term we had Chinese New Year celebrations, with related themed activities, including Chinese writing and making lanterns. Snacks were noodles, sweet and sour sauce and prawn crackers. During this second half of the term, children are continuing to practise their numbers using number rhymes with visual aids. They are also practis-

ing shape names and mixing paint colours to see what they come up with. Mother's Day and Easter gifts and cards will also be created. Small groups of children have been going to the library on Tuesday mornings to join in Rhyme Time with Lou; they are loving it. When the numbers have been low during an afternoon session, the staff have taken the opportunity to take the children to the recreation ground to play on the equipment and to have a run around.

Rainbow Pre-School takes children from 2½ years to rising 5 and sessions are Monday to Friday 9.00am-3.00pm. If you are interested in applying for a place for your child, please visit our website for details. You need to put your child's name down now, however young, to ensure a place.

Gill Pursglove
Administrator
Tel: 814242

Email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net

DAISY MAY'S FARM

www.daisymaysfarm.org

Our small animals are cosily tucked away in the woodland area and are absolutely loving being amongst the trees near the pigs. Also in the woods are the owls; if you stand very still and quiet, they might just come out and see you. There really is so much to do at the farm at the moment including riding on our train through the woods, meeting the new lambs and kid goats, holding chicks and ducklings, a woodland stamp hunt, paddock walks and seasonal arts and crafts and more. We have all sorts of chickens, ducks, guinea fowls, turkeys, geese and we often have chicken and sometimes duck eggs for you to buy.



Come on down to our farm and blow those cobwebs away! There is so much to do and see, and you really must not miss all the new additions who will be born over the coming months. Check our Facebook page for updates on our new arrivals, and our *Hatch a Chick* scheme which is now up and running again, along with other farm news updates. We look forward to welcoming you. We are at Hall Road, Elsenham CM22 6DN and are open every day: weekdays 9.00am-4.00pm and weekends 10.00am-4.00pm.

Elaine Terry
Tel: 07747 787973



Lifting the roof of the O2!

Last half-term, the School Choir look part in the Young Voices Concert at the O2 Arena. Officially the largest school choir concert in the world, the spectacular choral celebration involved over 8,800 singers, performing with a host of professional solo singers, musicians and dancers; all expertly led by conductor David Lawrence. The massed choir gave us rousing renditions of a number of choral medleys including: *Over the Hills*, a selection of songs taking us on a journey through the United Kingdom; *Milligantics!* a musical setting of some of Spike Milligan's nonsense poems and a pop medley from the film, *Trolls*. Other musical delights included a mash up of two Disney songs, one from *Pocahontas* and the second from *Hercules*. *Message* was also sung; this has become a Manuden favourite, not only for its moving words and sentiment but also for its body percussion. A highlight was the appearance of Heather Small; it was a real privilege for the children to perform with her as she sang her iconic song, *Proud*. The evening finished with Nile Rogers Disco Party, involving all of the evening's performers; this had both parents and children dancing in the aisles. The energetic moves, choreographed by street dancers Urban Strides, along with the amazing lighting effects, ensured that the concert was a real spectacle.



The children performed brilliantly and made us all very proud; they were definitely worthy of their place at the front of the stage, right in the heart of the action. Not only did they sing and dance enthusiastically, but they represented Manuden superbly throughout the day. The concert provides an invaluable opportunity for our children to take part in an inspirational, large-scale event with such talented performers and we hope that the children will remember their experience for years to come.

Marnie Tait
Deputy Headteacher
Tel: 813370

Email: m.tait@manuden.essex.sch.uk

Alex's Gold

Congratulations to Alex for gaining his Chief Scouts Gold award. He has taken part in a wide variety of camps, activities and challenges at Troop, District and County level over the last four years, resulting in the completion of all nine Challenge Awards.



Covid severely restricted all the Scouts' progress, yet Alex along with the other Scouts, has since put in the time and effort resulting in this great award. As we now lose him to the Explorer section; wear your Gold with pride, Alex; well done from all of us.

Mike Byrne
Scout Leader
Tel: 812780



YOUNG PEOPLE'S PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

As part of the Anglia in Bloom Action Group's preparation for our 2023 entry we are organising a photography competition for young people. This is a great opportunity for them to showcase their photography skills. The theme of the competition is *I love Stansted Mountfitchet*; the overall winner will feature on the Parish Council website and social media platforms, and hopefully on the front cover of The Link.

The theme is very open ended and could feature a village landscape, characters who live or work in the village or some aspect of the natural environment. The only real stipulation is that the photo should be taken within the Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Boundary. The picture needs to be in portrait format for the front cover of The Link. There are two age groups: 12-18 and 11 and under. Entries need to be submitted as high-resolution Jpeg files and sent as an attachment to the email address below. Please state your name and age and contact phone number. Closing date for entries is **Saturday 20th May** and we will announce the winner and award prizes at the beginning of June. There is a limit of one entry per person.

Trevor Lloyd
Email: stanstedinbloom@gmail.com



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Annual Parish Meeting

7.30 pm Wed 15th March
 Day Centre, Crafton Green

**Come, listen & speak!
 All welcome**

More information tel 813214

WHAT'S ON IN MARCH

1	Wed	Mountfitchet Garden Club	Day Centre 7.30 pm
2	Thu	History Society	Day Centre 8 pm
3	Fri	Stansted Business Forum	The Linden 7 – 9 am
4	Sat	Helpline Quiz	Day Centre 7 pm
5 & 19	Sun	Green Waste Skips	Lower St Car Park 12.30 - 4.30 pm
7	Tue	Stansted is well Read	Dog and Duck 8 pm
9	Thu	Link copy due in today WI	before noon Day Centre 7.30 pm
14	Tue	RSPB	Bishop's Pk Centre 7.30 pm
15	Wed	Ugley WI Annual Parish Meeting	Ugley Village Hall 2 pm Day Centre 7.30 pm
16	Thu	U3A Monthly Meeting	St John's Hall 2 pm
18	Sat	Farmers' Market Town Twinning Quiz	Ugley Village Hall 10 am - noon Day Centre 7.30 pm
23 Thu/24	Fri	Water Lane Theatre Co	South Mill Arts 7.30 pm
25	Sat	Water Lane Theatre Co Music@stansted Saffron Walden Choral	South Mill Arts 3 pm and 7.30 pm St John's Church 7.30 pm Saffron Hall 7.30 pm



Green Waste Skip Dates

Lower Street Car Park
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**7.30 pm Sat 18th Mar
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Most UK households throw away at least 40kg of plastic each year; enough to fill 10 recycling bins. Nationwide, we use 7.7 billion plastic bottles per year, an average of **117 bottles per person**, per year. This has a detrimental impact on our environment. If you want to reduce your waste, following the Five Rs is a great start; four actions should be taken, if possible, prior to recycling: **Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose and then Recycle**. This month we will look at ways to reduce single use plastics. There are several local low plastic businesses in Stansted. These include:

- **Steve Golding Greengrocers** on Chapel Hill, where most fruit and veg come plastic free
- **Kings Family Butchers** on Lower Street welcome you bringing your own containers and using paper bags instead of plastic
- **REFILLit** delivers cleaning products and more to your door in glass bottles - for more info go to www.refillit.org.uk



Further afield there is **The Refill Barn** in Radwinter for food refills using your own containers. We really encourage you to support these businesses, as they are all independent, selling healthy, locally sourced and environmentally friendly products. Here are some tips to reduce your plastic usage:

- Carry your own refillable coffee cup and water bottle
- Food packaging: find products in cardboard, buy loose fruit and veg
- Filter water using Phox instead of plastic cartridges www.phoxwater.com
- Buy milk and juice in glass bottles that can be reused from the milkman, MrMilk www.mymilk.co.uk or Milk & More www.milkandmore.co.uk

If you know of a local, environmentally friendly business, please do contact us.

Emma Thomas and Helen Scott
Email: sustainablestansted@gmail.com



Citizens Advice
the charity for your community

www.uttlesfordca.org.uk

Rural Cost Of Living

The cost of living in a rural area is higher because we have to travel further to shops and services; this is particularly hard for anyone trying to find work, access education or navigate the benefits system. Many houses in Uttlesford are off-grid and many are old and poorly insulated, which means that fuel poverty is more prevalent. We also have to contend with patchy connectivity, no job centre and poor public transport links.

A survey commissioned by the Rural Services Network (RSN) last year shows rural areas are also suffering more acutely from the rise in the cost of living compared to urban areas. So, to understand more about rural household budgets, they have launched a *Rural Cost of Living Household Survey*. Your input will help the RSN to engage more effectively with Government Departments, MPs and other policy makers. You can access the survey here until 31st March: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Rural_Households_Cost-of-Living.

As a local charity, we work hard to help everyone in the community to overcome these challenges. You can read about how we make a difference in our Insight Report 2022, available on our website in the *about us* section. If you are worried about rising costs and struggling financially, we offer free advice and support and can help you to access warm homes advice, help with fuel debts and energy efficiency measures and benefits applications and entitlements. Please see the February Link for details.

Our advice is available to everyone and is always free, confidential and impartial and can be accessed as follows:

- For online advice go to www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- Call or email us
- Visit our one-touch video access points Stansted library
- Visit www.uttlesfordfrontline.org.uk for details of over 150 local health, wellbeing and community groups

Jo Hancock
Tel: 01799 618840
Email: help@uttlesfordca.org.uk

MOBILITY CHAIRS AND SCOOTERS

Please contact me if you use a motorised chair or scooter. The background: I am a co-opted member of the Parish Council (PC) Highways Committee. During the last PC Highways meeting I raised the difficulties which users of these mobility vehicles have. This is especially true when using dropped kerbs and entering some facilities in our growing village; there have been at least three accidents. To properly understand your experiences and issues I need to communicate with you, so please email or call me in confidence. I do not use social media.

Ray Woodcock
Tel: 816468
Email: raymond.woodcock@btinternet.com



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March Entertainment

Wed 1st 10.00am Free *Storytime at the Museum*. Enjoy a story and some colouring.

Wed 1st 7.00pm £16.50 NT Live: *The Crucible*. A witch hunt is beginning in Arthur Miller's captivating parable of power with Erin Doherty (The Crown) and Brendan Cowell (Yerma).

Fri 3rd 7.30pm £23 *The History of Rock*. Featuring the music of Led Zeppelin, Cream, Guns 'n Roses, AC/DC, and Queen.

Sat 4th 11.00am Free *Museum Guided Tour*. Find out about local artefacts such as our polished Neolithic axe head and the Great Seal of Bishop's Stortford Town.

Wed 8th 7.30pm £16 *Nothing on Earth*. In Women's History Month 2023, a fantastical, heart-catching, time-travelling tale of female experiences and women taking flight.

Fri 10th 7.30pm £19.50 *My Mountain Life: Simon Yates*. Witness Simon's tireless journey from a mountain in Peru to some of the remotest on the planet and share the drama, excitement and beauty of modern, light-weight alpinism.

Sat 11th 7.30pm £26 *Waterloo: The Best Of Abba*.



A look back at the sensational rise to stardom of the Swedish pop group ABBA, recreating it so impeccably that fans, old and new can still experience the thrill of a live ABBA show.

Thurs 16th -Sat 18th 7.30pm from £19 *BSA Performing Arts, Fame*. This unforgettable film and television production inspired generations to fight for fame and light up the sky.

Tue 21st 12.20pm Free *Mapping Verulamium*. Presenting the latest results from the geophysical surveys.

Thu 23rd - Sat 25th 7.30pm from £15.50 Water Lane Theatre Company presents *Murdered to Death*. Set in a 1930s country manor, this is a hilarious spoof of Agatha Christie.

Tue 28th 7.00pm £16.50 ROH: *Turandot*. In the court of Princess Turandot, suitors who fail to solve her riddles are brutally killed, but when a mysterious Prince answers one correctly, he holds the power and a glorious secret.

For tickets call 01279 710200 or visit our website.

Israel in Egypt

The Choral Society, with soloists Grace Davidson, Rebekah Jones and Ben Durran and Musical Director Quintin Beer, will perform Handel's oratorio *Israel in Egypt* on **Saturday 25th March** at 7.30pm in Saffron Hall. The oratorio is dominated by dramatic virtuosic choruses. The text follows the story of the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt, with vivid evocations of hail-stones, lightning, plagues of frogs, flies and lice and the crossing of the Red Sea. It culminates with the celebratory *Sing ye to the Lord; for He hath triumphed gloriously*. The choir will be accompanied by The Brook Street Band. Tickets: adults from £18, under 25s half-price, from Saffron Hall www.saffronhall.com or tel 0845 548 7650.



Sarah Ludlow-Elston



Local award-winning amateur Water Lane Theatre Company presents *Murdered to Death* from **Thursday 23rd to Saturday 25th March** at 7.30pm plus a Saturday matinee at 3.00pm with all tickets at concessionary prices. The play is a riotous send up in the best of Agatha Christie traditions. Set in a country manor house in the 1930s, it has an assembled cast of hilarious and absurd characters. But who did it? Was it Bunting the butler, or the very English colonel with the prerequisite stiff upper lip? Maybe it was the shady French art dealer and his moll, or the bumbling local inspector? Perhaps the well-meaning local sleuth who seems to attract murder wherever she goes and has a suspiciously familiar name (Miss Maple anyone?). They all get caught up in the side-splitting antics which follow the mysterious death of someone in the house; we could tell you who, but we would have to kill you (oh hang on, that's not right!). Anyway, it soon becomes clear that the murderer is not finished yet; but will the murderer be unmasked before everyone else has met their doom, or will audiences die laughing first? Tickets are available from the South Mill Arts box office tel: 719200 or visit www.southmillarts.co.uk.

Richard Pink
Email: richardpink@me.com



STANSTED IN BLOOM OPEN GARDENS

Welcome to a new season of gardening. Following last year's highly successful judged competition, it was wonderful to see how many of you take great pride in your gardens, so this year's event is taking a different approach; instead of a judged competition, we are proposing a Stansted Open Gardens afternoon on **Sunday 2nd July**. If you are proud of your garden, here is an opportunity to share with others the creativity that goes into your individual and unique garden in Stansted. If you are interested in taking part, please email me for more information.

Penny Reeves
Committee
Email: pm.reeves31@gmail.com



ERIN'S EVEREST CHALLENGE

I am going to do a sponsored climb and will be climbing the height of Everest on a climbing wall; a total of 8846 metres, 42 climbs a day, seven days a week, for two weeks during the school Easter holidays. I am 14 years old and am fundraising in order to be able to volunteer, giving vital help to poor and vulnerable communities in Cambodia. I will be helping to provide access to sanitation and safe, clean drinking water, restoring old buildings and schools, making clay pots to store rainwater, building chicken coops, and teaching some English to the younger children. This will take place during school summer holidays in 2024.



I am volunteering for this through my school, Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport and Camps International, who work with schools all over the UK to support poor communities globally. If you would like to sponsor me, please use the QR code below.



Erin Matthews
Tel: 07718 802342



www.mountfitchetgardenclub.co.uk

Growing for the Flower Arranger part 2

The Club welcomed Maïke Windhorst again. Her home-grown flowers business for the floristry industry has grown and diversified since her last visit in 2016. Wild flowers, and what used to be considered as weeds, are very popular in floral art nowadays and *No Mow May* has highlighted the large number of colourful and unusual plants which we cut

down before we see their beauty. She recommended the Hardy Plant Society as a good source of unusual seeds. Aware of the amount of plastic used in her garden, she has been experimenting with different methods of growing and displaying flowers without plastic. The most successful method of producing non-plastic containers is by making hessian tiles; approximately 22cm (9") square with the height of the sides dependent upon what was to be planted, then sewn at the corners to keep their shape, filled with compost and planted up. Once outside, the hessian eventually rots down and the compost improves the soil. Her displays of bulbs and perennial plants proved to be popular with her clients; experimenting further, annuals and biennials were then introduced. Seeds or plug plants extend the range that can be used. Fellow florists are now experimenting making tiles with old woollen clothes. Slides of these tiles being used in her garden and some of her gift displays were shown.

Next Meeting

Andrew Babicz will be presenting *Seasonal Container Gardening* on Wednesday 1st March 7.40pm for 8.00pm at the Day Centre. Refreshments are served before the talk. Visitors are always welcome.

Maralyn Harris
Chairman
Tel: 07919 478144

STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET EVENING WI



Our January meeting was organised by non-Committee members, to give the Committee a break. We do this annually as it gives members an idea of what serving on the Committee entails, in the hope that they will come forward later! I was pleased to be President for the evening and enjoyed taking on a role I have done before, with excellent support from the members' day committee. Following the very successful theatre trip last year, Liz Jordan offered to organise another one to see *To Kill a Mockingbird* at the Gielgud Theatre in London. Chris Hope reported that £945 was raised by the Bridge Drive held in aid of St Clare Hospice, at which some WI members had helped by making cakes.

It was lovely to welcome our speaker Andy Piggott, telling us of his life as a balloon sculptor. The table began to fill up with small balloon animals and flowers which he created as he spoke; occasionally one would burst! I found it quite amazing to hear that he has made wedding dresses out of balloons, which brides have actually worn. I asked what would happen if the balloons burst and he assured me that a white silk dress is always worn underneath. He had pictures of the model of Elsa's Castle from the Disney film *Frozen* which he constructed using 19,000 balloons. Andy also did some magic tricks for us - magic being another of his many talents - including supposedly removing an article of my underwear. I knew he hadn't as it wasn't the right colour! Heather Can will be our Speaker on **Thursday 9th March**; her talk is entitled *Easter Flowers*. We invite visitors as always to come along if this interests you; we meet at 7.30pm in the Day Centre.



Judy Colliver
Tel. 812470

NIGHTMARE ON GROVE HILL

Urgent attention needs to be given to the daily problems on Grove Hill. There was carnage there on Monday 6th February due to potholes and an oversized Warburton vehicle, with the knock-on effect of driving on the pavement causing danger to pedestrians, gridlock, and jumping red lights. A Stansted resident used to walk her dog from Aubrey Buxton using Grove Hill but does not dare to nowadays in view of the huge danger posed by vehicles driving on the pavements.



Two quotes follow from residents on 6th February:

"Ambulance vehicle engine cut out due to potholes, I just spoke to them. Surely an emergency vehicle taken off the road due to unacceptable conditions is reason enough to improve the situation. There could be lives at risk lost due to this! "

"Ambulance driver lost steering of vehicle having hit one of the potholes causing 20-minute jam on Grove Hill. A second ambulance team arrived to assist but ended up in a longer jam. All resolved by much reversing and mounting of pavements again."

Andrew McDonell
Grove Hill Residents Group

BENTFIELD ROAD – WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The Parish Council is seeking views on the introduction of double yellow lines on both sides of Bentfield Road, from the junction with Bentfield Gardens, around to the junction with Bentfield Causeway. We believe that these waiting restrictions will make the area safer for everyone. The road is very narrow and parked cars make it difficult to negotiate for drivers in both directions, especially for larger vehicles. The pavements are narrow and cars parked close to, or partly on, create dangers for everyone but especially those with buggies or in mobility scooters. We would welcome your comments, in support or against, by email before Friday 10th March please. Thank you.

Ruth Clifford
Email: parishcouncil@stansted.net



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET

LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The meeting was opened by the Chairman, David Perry, who announced the sad news that our long-time member, Pearl Wellings, had recently passed away and he offered condolences to her family and friends.

During our February meeting we watched a fascinating collection of short films on the National Trails of South East England kindly loaned by the East Anglian Film Archive, part of the University of East Anglia. The first, *Father Thames* (1935), followed the river from its shallow source in the Cotswolds to the heart of London. Although rather grainy due to age, it portrayed a quiet and peaceful landscape of pre-war Britain. The second film *Pilgrims Way* (1956) covered the 120 mile trek over the North Downs and showed rather pretty towns and villages mostly unspoiled by modern developments. The slow speed of the sparse traffic reflected a more peaceful time. *Holiday on the North Norfolk Coast* (1952) followed a group of young women and men from Glasgow walking from Morston Quay to the Blakeney Nature Reserve. Then came *Eastbourne* (1958) showing an organised cross country walk over the South Downs. Unlike today, where walkers are kitted out in the latest paraphernalia, those taking part wore normal everyday clothes; men in suits or sports jackets and ladies in skirts and tops. No special walking boots either, just normal shoes; not great for mud and puddles. *Norfolk* (1986) narrated by journalist Bruce Robinson, was about an ancient Norfolk Roman Road called Peddars Way Path. The final film *The Ridgeway* (1988) showed the lives of people who lived and worked on Britain's oldest road. Special thanks were given to Roger Barrett who arranged the evening.

The next meeting is on **Thursday 2nd March 7.30pm** for 8.00pm in the Day Centre. Alison Rowlands is giving a talk on *The Hertfordshire Witch Trials*.

Edward Taub
Email: taubjr@icloud.com

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BIRCHANGER WOOD: THE YEAR AHEAD

www.birchangerwoodtrust.org

The wood faces challenges and opportunities this year. Ash dieback continues to ravage our mature ash trees, causing a massive financial headache for the charity as professional arborists are required to fell the trees located near the A120. A further nine ash trees died over the summer, due to the drought. Purchases of our firewood soared ahead of Christmas and by January we had sold out, forcing us to suspend sales. The funds raised from wood from our sustainable coppicing help pay for the work on the dead and dying ash. However, we still need funds to plant replacement trees and we are applying for a grant from Uttlesford's Zero Carbon Communities fund to pay for large saplings, to re-establish forest cover quickly and maintain the woodland's structure.

The wood is not just affected by this deadly fungal disease, but also by climate change. The Trust is trying to combat the effects of frequent drought and floods by slowing the pace of the woodland stream by constructing leaky dams. We have also created a wildlife pond inside our compound, to support insects and amphibious creatures. Maximising biodiversity is crucial to our woodland, particularly in times of climate stress. We are working with a local beekeeper to establish wild honeybee habitats in the wood with the installation of swarm boxes. By establishing native wild bee colonies, we can help native bees to resist colony-threatening pathogens.



One of our objectives is public education on woodland conservation and ecology. Our annual open days held every August are always a roaring success and we will have two open days a year; one in the Spring. Jono Forgham, a local woodland ecologist and a trustee, is planning a year-long natural history survey to examine biodiversity, hopefully with the assistance of volunteers. He is also set to launch a Bug Club for children - the most enthusiastic visitors to our open days.



Daniel Brett
Secretary
Birchanger Wood Trust 2018
Email: danielbrettdotcom@gmail.com

STANSTED LIBRARY

www.libraries.essex.gov.uk

Our newest events are *Drop-in Craft* afternoons for children below age 11 and *Digital Skills* help for all ages. The craft is run by our new volunteer, Fiona, on Wednesdays 2.30pm-4.30pm. Parents and carers will need to stay in the library with their children. It is a free session and we are looking forward to seeing some lovely creations. Digital Skills is a drop-in on Thursdays 2.00pm-4.00pm, when Vic will be offering free advice and assistance to anyone who needs help on either the public computers or their own devices; everything from how to use a mouse to more complex issues. Some customers have already benefited from his know-how and we hope that this will prove to be a useful service to lots of people. We also run *Baby and Toddler Rhyme* times on Tuesdays 9.45am-10.30 am.

We have had many new members join the library; if you have yet to sign up, you can do so online on the library website or just come into the library and meet your friendly library staff who can sign you up at the welcome desk. We look forward to seeing you soon.



Susannah Freeman
Tel: 03456 037628
Email: Susannah.freeman@essex.gov.uk



www.stanstedbusinessforum.com

Attending our monthly breakfast meetings is highly beneficial for local individuals and companies as they provide an opportunity for business owners, team members or people thinking of starting a business to come together, exchange ideas, and support each other. They can also be a great way to have a more informal and relaxed approach to business and allow for more personal interactions. It is a great way for people to get to know one another beyond their professional roles. These popular meetings are held on the first Friday of every month (except August and January) 7.00am-9.00am at The Linden. There are also plans for a summer social event.

We have a great mix of businesses of all shapes and sizes. You will find everything you need from cycle repairs, IT, estate agency, painting and decorating, accountants, leaflet and magazine delivery and everything else in between! Our networking events also provide a platform for individuals to share their ideas and experiences. This can be incredibly valuable, as it allows individuals to learn from the successes and failures of others. Additionally, it can be a great way to gain inspiration and new perspectives on business challenges and opportunities. The Stansted Business Forum (SBF) members support and recommend each other. Our meetings are informal and friendly. To book a space please email James at hello@stanstedbusinessforum.com or visit our website.



Iris Evens
Email: iris.evans9@gmail.com

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Last month was the beginning of Lent. At the time of writing this (still in February), I am unsure what I will be doing for it this year. I did have a phase slightly less than ten years ago of learning passages of scripture by heart. I have memorised Romans 8, which Rowan Williams submitted to the Liturgical Commission as one of the passages which he thought that all Christians should know by heart. The next year I learned the Sermon on the Mount, which is three chapters of the Gospel according to St Matthew. However three chapters was a somewhat oppressive task. I did it in the end but Lent is not about oppressing ourselves, and I do not recommend it.

Last year I was looking through the story of the Temptation in the Wilderness as preparation for a Lent sermon. I had never noticed before that the story begins with the Holy Spirit leading Jesus into the desert. It struck me that, far from being a time of miserable privation, Lent can actually be a time to experience the Holy Spirit in all its fullness. So my Lent resolution was simply to pray *Come Holy Spirit* each morning before I got out of bed. It lacked the heroics of extended Bible memorisation, but it did turn out to be a wonderfully energising spiritual discipline. If you do say this prayer, however, do not be surprised if some of the dark corners of your heart are unsettled; the Holy Spirit is not an obedient pet who will simply do your bidding! So, however you decide to spend your Lent, I hope that it will be a holy time for you. The sign of a good Lent is a joyful Easter. May both be ours this year!



Rev'd Dr Colin Fairweather
St John's Church



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Services Family Communion (1st Sunday) 9.30am
Holy Communion (2nd-4th Sundays)
9.30am

There were no entries from St John's Registers in January.



ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Congratulations to the winners of the January draw:

£100 No 185 Judy Colliver
£ 50 No 170 Ray Smith
£ 25 No 238 Alan Helbert

The draw for March will be held on **26th March** 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 £2500 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



FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH

It may be cold, wet and very grey right now but the church calendar is already filling up with all sorts of events for the coming year. My heart was filled with joy towards the end of January by the sight of the first snowdrops in the churchyard; a sign that soon the daffodils will follow. That will also mean it will be time to resume work on the churchyard with much to do.

Champing season will resume on 31st March and I already have bookings in the diary. We also have church tours booked in. I am hoping to bring *thisismytheatre* back in May and other theatre and musical events. More details will be available soon; for now, watch this space for exciting events coming to St Mary's during 2023.



Lynda Dale
Tel: 07716 099474



STANSTED FREE CHURCH

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

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

Preachers for March

5th 10.30am Faith Paulding
12th 10.30am Rev'd Charles Martin
19th 10.30am Rev'd Gill Hulme - Communion
26th 10.30am Karen Quelch



The Place on the Hill for adults only is open on Wednesdays 10.00am-noon in the church foyer, and *Fun Place on the Hill* for all ages, especially children, is open on Fridays 9.15am-11.30am in the church hall. Do join us for good company and free refreshments, and save on your home heating bill.

RECYCLING STOP PRESS No more blister packs

The response to the appeal for blister packs has been so overwhelming that our local recycling collection point at Newport has run out of space. This means we will pause our collection for the next couple of months whilst they clear the backlog. Please look out for an update in The Link.



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Tel: 07748 464101
Email: desconnors@dioceseofbrentwood.org

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

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Sunday 8.30am and 10.00am Mass
Wednesday 12.30pm Mass
Friday 9.30am Mass

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Baptism By appointment



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.



WAR MEMORIAL FLOWERS

Almost unbelievably Easter Sunday is only just over a month away on 9th April. This is when we resume arranging flowers in the two small containers on the War Memorial after the winter. We do this until Remembrance Sunday on 12th November. We have a wonderful number of volunteers who usually do the flowers for only one week. Some people are willing to do them more often for which I am very grateful. We are always looking for more volunteers and I would love to hear from anyone who would be interested in helping; I would of course explain what to do. My very sincere thanks to everybody who has helped over the last year; you all do a wonderful job for something that is so worthwhile.



Janet Hollis
Tel: 812073
Email: janhollis@btinternet.com



TOWN TWINNING QUIZ



A reminder of our Quiz Night on **Saturday March 18th** at 7.30pm in the Day Centre, in celebration of St Patrick's Day, and to foster closer ties with Rungis, Stansted's twin town in France. Tickets are £7.50 with snacks and a pay bar, available from 813214 or email: twinning@stansted.net. You are also welcome to bring your own food and drinks.

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IN THE GARDEN

Roses

These are the nation's favourite flowers, so we are told; they are certainly mine as they offer such a vast array of types. There is one for every garden situation and, if treated well, they continue flowering into autumn. To get the best from them, now is the latest time to prune them for maximum vigour this summer. Cut out dead, diseased or crossing stems: for shrub roses reduce height one to two thirds. Cut hybrid teas and floribundas hard back. Climbers should have main stems trained laterally and the shoots from them cut back to one or two buds. Ramblers can be left to their own devices unless you need to reduce their spread. Just remember, it is very difficult to damage a rose by pruning so if you get it wrong it will not harm the plant, you might just miss out on prize blooms this year!



The Pond

Hopefully you had a rubber ball floating in your pond creating a supply of air during the icy weather. If the oxygenated plants were not thinned between November and January now is the time to do so before they multiply rapidly in warmer weather. Remove floating, dead leaves and cut back faded top growth of marginal plants. Divide or top dress submerged plants like water lilies.

Tomatoes

There are many varieties to choose from ranging in size, colour and most importantly flavour. Ideally sow seeds in March in a cold greenhouse using a heated propagator for best germination. Sow seeds 2.5cm apart on moist compost in a 15cm tray. When seedlings have developed a pair of true leaves, gently prick out using a small spoon, replanting into 7.5cm pots. Do not touch the stems, only the leaves. More about this subject next month.

Susan Sedgebeer
Email: stanstedu3a@gmail.com



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET u3a

www.u3asites.org.uk/stansted

Our first speaker for 2023 was Peter Maggs, who regaled us with details of a celebrated murder case nearly 200 years ago in rural Suffolk. The trip to see the Temptations at the Prince Edward Theatre in London on 11th May has unfortunately already sold out. A new *Geography Group* has just started and there is a proposed *Strictly Singles group* which

we hope will soon be up and running. The *Gardening Group* are still enjoying meeting even though we have not had the best weather for gardening. Following a lecture from Geoff Hodge in January on the best way to deal with bugs and garden plagues, they enjoyed their meeting in February visiting Grove Lodge, Saffron Walden, a National Garden Scheme (NGS) garden where they saw displays of snowdrops and spring bulbs - minus the slugs!

Our first Saturday Seminar of the year, *The History of the Conflict between Ukraine and Russia*, was so popular we had to book a larger venue. The next seminar is on **29th April** and there will be more information about this in our next newsletter, but it promises to be a thought provoking session. Do join us at our monthly meeting on **Thursday 16th March** and leave our cold shores to travel with author Philip Caine from Barrow through Africa, Kazakhstan, Russia, Iraq and the Gulf States. He is now the author of adventure thrillers and a prolific public speaker. Our meetings are on the 3rd Thursday of the month 1.30pm for 2.00pm in St John's Hall.

Eileen Quinn
Tel: 07874 385541
Email: stanstedu3a@gmail.com



www.stanstedmentalhealth.org

Spring is in the air and with warmer days and lighter evenings, it is the perfect time to consider joining one of our existing activity groups. *Muddy Walkers* are a super friendly group who meet each week to walk and talk, a boon to both their physical and mental health. All levels are welcome - nobody is ever left behind! On Sunday mornings we have the *Veg Shed*, a men's group which meets at the Elms Farm Allotments. Spring is a busy time in terms of preparing the allotment, planting and sowing seeds so please come along if you like getting your hands dirty. All men are welcome, whether experienced growers or complete novices. Please email us if you would like more information or want to be added to either of the WhatsApp groups. We have recently been planning our programme of activities for the year. A new initiative is a series of talks on various aspects of mental health and wellness; watch this space for further information in the coming months and let us know if there is a specific topic you would like to see covered.

We continue to benefit from your support whenever you shop at the Co-Op; use your membership card and choose us as your cause. Please take a look at our profile page at <https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/69702> and support us if you can. Our next volunteer get-together is **Tuesday 28th March** at 7.00pm in the Social Club. Come along and meet us, find out more about what we do and share your ideas about how we can better support those in our community who might be struggling with their own or a loved one's mental health.

Dina McDonald
Email: contact@stanstedmentalhealth.org



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NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2023



Meeting Agenda

Ruth Clifford

Clerk to Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council



A cold, dark damp night wasn't enough to keep hardy residents from filling up the Day Centre to hear our speakers at our Annual Parish Meeting last year. To entice you up to the top of Chapel Hill on March 15 for our second Annual Parish Meeting since the end of the pandemic, we have invited guest speakers from TouchPoint, Uttlesford Foodbank and Stansted Surgery.

The Annual Parish Meeting is the perfect opportunity not just to listen to some of those most engaged in serving our community, but also for residents to share their thoughts with Councillors.

You can read the agenda opposite but are free to raise any matters that you feel need to be aired, be that the Parish Council's stance on housing development or any ideas you would like considered to tackle speedsters along our roads.

Like last year, the Day Centre at 72 Chapel Hill will play host to the meeting. We would ask you to arrive from 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. We look forward to seeing you there.

AGENDA ITEMS

Day Centre, 72 Chapel Hill, CM24 8AQ

Wednesday, March 15

7.30pm start

- 1 To receive apologies for absence
- 2 To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2022
- 3 To receive the Parish Council's audited accounts to 31 March 2022
- 4 Financial Report
- 5 Chairman's Report
- 6 To welcome Paul Chambers from Touch-Point and Desiree Ashton from the Uttlesford Foodbank
- 7 To welcome Teresa Buglass, Practice Manager, Stansted Surgery
- 8 Proposed resolutions
- 9 Open Forum



NOTE our audited accounts and Auditor's Report are available on our website www.stansted.net/About Us/Finances



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2023



Annual Report

Cllr Maureen Caton
Chair of Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council

COMMUNITY EVENTS



The Parish Council's aim is to keep and support Stansted as a vibrant, caring community that is able to adapt to our changing lifestyles. The Jubilee event held on the Recreation Ground was a huge success and the proceeds of £3,320 were donated to The Stansted Trust Funds to administer. We have agreed to run an event for the Coronation of King Charles III. We are awaiting confirmation but this will be 7th or 8th May.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

It was disappointing we could not extend our Christmas light offering to more businesses on Lower Street this year. We did not get a response from Essex County Council to our request to use the power source to light up the Fountain at the top of Chapel Hill.

ZERO PRECEPT RISE TARGET MET

I am delighted that, following a number of deliberations with the Chair of Finance, we were able to agree a 0% increase in the Parish Council's share of the Council Tax in the next financial year. This is in recognition of the current financial situation everyone is experiencing. It is unlikely to be repeated again next year.

TOUCHPOINT SUCCESS

Touchpoint go from strength to strength, and are now considering extending our partnership to lease – at no charge – Crafton Green House from the Parish Council.

This would enable them to provide further services to our community. They now promote and facilitate a number of similar projects throughout Uttlesford and you will hear more about their plans when they speak at the Annual Parish Meeting.

THREADNEEDLE UNDERWHELMS

Columbia Threadneedle Investments had applied for planning permission to develop the Northside of Stansted Airport for mainly logistic sector developments and permission was granted by UDC in late January. We lobbied hard to promote the needs of Stansted within this application and were disappointed at the lack of community benefits considered in relation to the development.

The turf football pitches on the site, which were used by Elsenham Junior Football Club, are to be replaced by a 3G artificial facility at Forest Hall School – we have requested that the Parish Council is represented on the body that manages this new facility. We did manage to secure funding to contribute to Essex County Council's (ECC) feasibility study on the



Turf pitches used by youth teams near the airport

redirection of heavy goods traffic away from the village via the A120. We used this experience of lack of community benefit to respond to the UDC consultation on S106 provision and developer consultation and contributions.

We should also be clear, the Parish Council only supported the development of 250 homes on land north of Walpole Farm, in the proposed UDC Call for Sites, not the 350 now proposed. This was made very clear at their consultation event.

HOPE FOR ALMSHOUSES...

The search for land to replace the Almshouses in Stansted continues. We are currently in discussions with ECC and Legacy East Almshouse Partnership to determine if the old Youth Centre site in Lower Street could be a feasible replacement site.

...AND FOR A PHARMACY

We are also hopeful that, with the allocation of dispensing licences being passed to the Herts and West Essex Integrated Care Board in April this year, we can continue to demonstrate the need for two dispensing pharmacies in our community.

COMMUNITY POLICING



Our Special Constable and PCSO continue to work with us to promote and safeguard our community. Following the withdrawal of Elsenham from the funding agreement with Uttlesford District Council, UDC has agreed to cover that element of the funding deficit for the remainder of the contract.

ACTIVE ON HIGHWAY ISSUES

Highways issues have been high on the agenda this year – with Grove Hill still awaiting legislation to enable remote enforcement of weight limit infringements. Residents' parking schemes have been consulted on in the south of the village and will be soon with Foresthall Park residents. "No Airport Parking" signs have been erected there as they have on some roads in the north of the village

A GREENER GREEN



Further improvements to the Mountfitchet Green have been completed with the addition of seating, fencing, a goalpost and a swing for less able children. Various areas of the village have benefited



The former youth centre: a possible site for new almshouses

from a tree-planting project undertaken by the Essex Forest Initiative who will maintain the trees for the first three years.

LED STREET LIGHTS

We are seeking a grant from UDC to convert our streetlights from sodium to LED to save money and reduce CO2 emissions. A Climate Change group of residents has been formed to encourage a change in behaviour by our community. The group, *Sustainable Stansted*, has applied for funding to distribute flyers and aim to find more funding for projects focusing on domestic energy saving and environmental issues.

PLAN NEARLY READY

The UDC Local Plan remains an emerging plan with delay after delay announced - leaving us open to speculative development. Meanwhile, we are finalising the mapping and appendices to go with our Neighbourhood Development Plan and expect to deposit the draft with UDC prior to the Annual Parish Meeting.

YOUTH SERVICE

The delivery of the Youth Club service was retendered this year, with the provider now being Essex Youth Services. The service has transferred to, and was re-launched in, a refurbished building on the Peter Kirk site just a few weeks ago. Our Youth Council is now including year 6 primary school young people, working with primary heads and school councils. We aim to provide our youth with skills to negotiate and debate the promotion of a Stansted that enables them to develop into valued citizens.





ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2023

Financial Report

Cllr John O'Brien

Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee



In last year's report, I raised concerns over inflation forecasts of up to 6% for April 2022, but a mis-conceived 'Mini Budget', together with the Ukraine war's effect on energy costs, resulted in almost double that figure with inflation reaching 11.1% in November and a forecast that the rate will only fall below 10% after March 2023.

In December the members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee voiced their opinion that, in view of the 'Cost of Living Crisis', a way should be found for the Parish Council to show its support for those members of our community struggling with their own financial worries. In January, it was unanimously agreed to recommend to Full Council not to increase the **Council's Band D Tax rate, which should remain at £127.88**. This was approved unanimously by Full Council at its meeting held on 18th January.

As explained last year, the Parish Council's policy is to maintain a minimum increase in the Precept at 2% per annum, way below the predicted rise in the UK economy of 5 times that amount. Full Council has agreed that it will not claw back the 2% concession but to ensure that we can meet our obligations, the Council also agreed that any shortfall in the budget for 2023-2024 should be taken from the £25,000 annual repayment into the Foresthall Park Community Fund, which would be repaid as an extra instalment after the end of the loan repayment term (in 4-5 years).

As stated last year, the F&GP Committee is charged with trying to balance 'need' with 'service to the community'. The formation of a **partnership with Touch-Point** has seen the start of not only improvements to council property at Crafton Green, but also in services to those in need of support. We have indeed seen 'added value' to community services here. Crafton Green House is now looking in better shape after repairs to the roof and windows, with the former Day

Centre becoming a true welfare hub for our own and wider communities.

The **environment and sources of energy** are hot topics which need attention. The Parish Council has implemented a second phase of tree planting around our open spaces with 56 trees being planted through the Essex Forest Initiative. The F&GP Committee has agreed that a £5,000 Earmarked Reserve be transferred from funds left over to produce the Neighbourhood Plan and be made available to the newly founded Climate Change Working Group (now named Sustainable Stansted).

Our Parish Council, unlike others, owns 85% of all streetlights in the village and an application has been made to Uttlesford's 'Zero-carbon Community Fund' to convert 100 of our sodium lights to LED. If successful, it would help us reduce the anticipated timescale for the full conversion of our lighting stock, from 7 years to around 3 years, achieving an overall saving of 72% in carbon emissions and energy costs.

Last Christmas saw the first attempt to improve the **Christmas lighting display** in Lower Street. This proved more difficult than expected with property owners understandably reticent to allow fixings installed on the outside of their buildings. Despite this, thanks to the Stansted Social Club and King's Arms a great improvement to the atmosphere was achieved. The great fund-raising effort of Patsy Banks provided the Christmas trees which were lit up outside the Castle Maltings and opposite The Dog and Duck pub.

Annual Parish Council Grants: Applications were received from six organisations and dispersed as follows: Stansted Millers £500; Uttlesford Community Travel £1,250; Human Roots £500; Stansted Hall & Elsenham Cricket Club £500; Uttlesford Citizens Advice £1,120. Touchpoint £1,150.



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**UGLEY
WOMEN'S INSTITUTE**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) recently published analysis of the 2021 Census. The population of England grew by 6% in the last 10 years and 14% over the last 20 years. Locally, the increase has been much faster. The population of The Hundred Parishes in 2021 was around 156,000, up 12% since 2011 and 24% since 2001. If roads seem busier, these extra 30,000 people are a major factor. Half of the increase is accounted for by six parishes close to Stansted Airport. Elsenham, Flitch Green, Great Dunmow, Little Canfield, Stansted Mountfitchet and Takeley have all expanded by more than 50% in the last 20 years. Another big growth was seen in Buntingford: from 4,300 in 2001 to 7,900 in 2021.



The Domesday Book

The Census is the modern equivalent of the Domesday Book of 1086 AD when the national population was less than two million, compared to 60 million today. Today, 8% of the Hundred Parishes population was born outside the UK (compared to 17% in the whole of England and Wales); 10% of homes are flats (v 22%); 36% of houses have four or more bedrooms (v 21%); 27% of homes are rented (v 37%); 40% of adults work at home (v 31%); 55% are in professional or managerial jobs (v 46%); 56% of households have two or more vehicles (v 35%). We have a different age mix from the UK average, with a shortfall of around 5,000 people in their 20s and 30s offset by around 5,000 extra people aged over 40. While the above information highlights contrasts, some statistics are closely aligned with the national picture: 99% of households have central heating; 5% of households have a second home; 51% of the population is female and 49% male. Each parish introduction on our website has been updated to include the 2021 population. For more information, please go to www.ons.gov.uk/census.



Ken McDonald
Secretary
Tel: 813226
Email: hundredparishes@btinternet.com



HUW JOHNSON CLUB

The Club restarted its Thursday sessions on 23rd February at 7.00pm in St John's church hall; we have an action-packed timetable of activities planned, including a visit from an Elvis impersonator on 9th March! If anyone is interested in attending as a member or a volunteer, please do get in touch.

Ellen Brooks
Tel: 07800 896516
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Our first meeting of the year got off to a brilliant start. We had a welcome return visit from Ken McDonald, no stranger to readers of The Link or lovers of our beautiful countryside. He gave us an introduction to The Hundred Parishes Society and a beautifully illustrated guided tour through our countryside, calling in at places on our doorstep. These included Stansted, Ugley, Stanstead Abbots, Birchanger Woods, Braughing, Broxted and Much Hadham. A variety of houses were to be seen including one in Ugley with a flying pig made of straw on its thatched roof. Others included a personal favourite of mine, The Old Sun Inn at Saffron Walden, displaying a wonderful example of pargetting. This gem is now owned by Douglas Kent, Chairman of The Hundred Parishes Society. Pubs were also included on the tour and we saw the *Coach and Horses* at Newport, the *Red Lion* at Hinnton and the *Axe and Compasses* at Aythorpe Roding. After Ken's brilliant talk he and his wife Janice enjoyed a cup of tea and some delicious home-made biscuits with us.

Our March meeting will be on **Wednesday 15th March** at the new start time of 2.00pm in Ugley Village Hall. This will be Members' day when a temporary committee takes over for the afternoon and the entertainment details remain a mystery. Why not come along and join us for the afternoon? You would be most welcome!

Andrea Fitt
Tel: 815922



STANSTED SOCIAL CLUB

www.smsc.uk.com

Well, it looks like spring has finally sprung, although I think we have a long way to go to hit the giddy heights of last summer. As part of our ongoing commitment to our staff and members, all staff attended a first aid training course which will certainly help with any medical emergencies. We have also invested in a defibrillator which will supplement those already available throughout the village. We have several plans drawn up for landscaping the garden. The idea is to have a practical garden for events and barbeques, for example, mixed with the peace and tranquillity of a mindfulness area. In an effort to make more use of our kitchen we hosted a Burns Night on 25th January. Thank you to Terri Hopkins for making the evening a great success. If you have any suggestions for future events, please speak to one of the staff or committee members.

Following on from a packed entertainment programme in February we have some great acts lined up for March. We start on **Saturday 4th** with a full *Blondie* tribute band, followed by *Jamie Callis* on **Sunday 5th**. Our resident DJ John is back on **Saturday 11th** and the **18th** sees a *Kylie Minogue* tribute with dancers. We round the month off with a fantastic *Elton John* tribute. As always, you can get the latest Club information on our Facebook page.



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STANSTED PHARMACY UPDATE



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

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Since my update in the December Link, a number of important events have occurred. In November I submitted a statement to Herts & West Essex Integrated Care Board (H&WEICB) explaining why we urgently need a licensed community dispensing pharmacy near Stansted Surgery in addition to Boots on Cambridge Road. A small group of residents then had a virtual meeting with a director of H&WEICB, and a follow-up meeting is planned. In December Health Watch Essex conducted an online survey asking what we experience when visiting our local dispensing pharmacy and what could be improved. Over 170 responded, most of them Stansted residents.

On 26th January H&WEICB held a virtual meeting; I attended but was not allowed to speak. However, I submitted a statement which the Board responded to. On 27th January a representative of Health Watch Essex visited Stansted and met a few residents. We showed her the Lower Street pharmacy, our Surgery and the NHS dentist. We walked up to Boots then had a whistle-stop tour of the village. It was her first visit to Stansted and helped her understand our need. One of our wheelchair-bound residents sent me her statement and allowed me to read it to the Parish Council on 18th January; a copy was sent to the H&WEICB and our MP. Her statement is so powerful: *Our community does not properly consider the needs of those less able due to no fault of their own. Those who cannot walk need to be able to gain access to Stansted's key facilities; let us start with a licensed pharmacy that ALL can enter. If any readers or others are disabled, please contact me with your experiences.* The campaign continues.

Raymond Woodcock
Tel: 816468

Email: raymond.woodcock@btinternet.com

TAI CHI

Tai Chi for Health was developed by Moy Lin Shin in Canada, who recognised the need for a secular form of Tai Chi which focused on the health benefits of regular practice. Described as a moving meditation by Dr Michael Mosely in his regular *Just One Thing* health series, Tai Chi's benefits have been rigorously studied. It is a gentle practice which exercises the mind as much as the body and is very suitable for older people. You do not need any fancy equipment, just comfortable clothing and footwear. Are you an older person looking to become more active? Have you done Tai Chi in the past and would like to do a refresher? I run a weekly Tai Chi class on Wednesdays 10.00am-noon in Birchanger Village Hall and I will be running a beginner's class on Thursdays 9.30am-10.30am from **16th March**; the cost is £30 for six sessions. Over 6 months you will learn the foundations of Master Moy's Tai Chi for Health and the first 17 moves. You can then join the Wednesday group and learn the rest of the set. I am an accredited teacher with Essex Tai Chi Academy; see www.essextaichiacademy.org for more information. Please contact me if you would like to join my classes.

Cait Goddard
Tel: 07415 628935
Email: caitgoddard@virgin.net

We were very pleased to hear that our application for a grant from the Stansted Airport Community Fund had been successful. The award of £651 will enable us to carry out work recommended by our Millwright. The project is an engineering issue with health and safety implications. A fantail is the circular windmill mounted perpendicular to the main sails, at the rear of the windmill cap. When the wind changes direction it turns the fantail and through a very low-g geared mechanism, turns the whole cap so that the sails face into the wind again. Since a major restoration in 2009-10 the windmill has been able to turn itself into the wind automatically by this mechanism. However, in conditions where a strong wind veers or backs quickly, the fantail can rotate extremely fast. To reduce the risk of damage or breakage of individual blades (with an attendant risk to people or property in the vicinity), tie-rods would interlock the individual blades into a single more rigid entity which is better able to withstand such bad weather conditions.



We are currently working on an application for an Airport Flagship award to enable us to complete the re-pointing of the brickwork. Under this scheme, organisations within a 10 mile radius of the airport can apply for grants up to £50,000. They will be awarding just one Flagship Award per year and we are likely to be competing with a number of other applications; we will be waiting nervously to hear if we have been successful or not. Your first chance to visit the mill this year will be on **Easter Sunday 9th April**. We are also open on **Easter Monday 10th April**. There will be an Easter Egg for the children. Normal admission charges will apply: adults £2, children 50p, under 5s free.

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March can be a lovely month for being outdoors. The daffodils in the gardens come out then and are usually still in bloom in early April. If you would like to visit during March, group visits for 10 or more people can be booked for a Thursday. From **6th April** onwards, the gardens are open on Thursdays for everyone.



There are a huge number of species and varieties of daffodil to be seen; many were planted in Victorian times and have naturalised in the Bosquet and the Lime Wood. Other wildflowers are out too in March; fresh leaves are opening on shrubs and trees and there is the first blossom on the fruit trees – beautiful pink on the peaches and nectarines that are espaliered on the kitchen garden walls. There is often real warmth from the sun in the Italian Garden and the Walled Kitchen Garden, so the bees and butterflies are starting to get out and about. For gardeners, it is a lovely time for getting borders back into shape, moving and planting perennials, prepping vegetable beds and sowing the first seeds. As the gardens renew themselves, we also like to welcome new volunteers. We are holding two days for potential new volunteers on **Saturday 11th March** 10.00am-1.00pm and on **Thursday 16th March** 10.00am-1.00pm, so there are weekend and weekday options. We will show potential recruits around the gardens and for those that wish, there can be a little light work. For more information, please visit our website.

Jill Goldsmith
Tel: 07947 183439
Email: jillgoldsmith1@virginmedia.com



HELPLINE

A reminder of our *Quiz Night* on **Saturday 4th March** 6.30pm for 7.00pm in the Day Centre; tables of six, bring your own food, drink and glasses (nibbles provided). There will be a raffle and prizes for the winning and losing teams. Tickets are £5.00 available from Sue Thrush on 07716 437649, email: suethrush@hotmail.com. Please join us for what promises to be an enjoyable and reasonably priced evening out. You may even learn something new along the way!



Stansted Helpline Committee

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So how do you go about losing weight? How to stop smoking? How to drink less? To not place that bet? All these actions are driven by our subconscious. There is something about eating that packet of biscuits, smoking that ciggie, having a crafty snifter or ten, just taking up a Betfred offer, that seems to fulfil our deepest needs. The only control our conscious brain affords is how to deliver the hit our subconscious brain is demanding. Which leaves the question: how do we regain control, so our conscious brain is able to say no?



Two answers: consequences and a myth

To learn how to say *no*, the brain needs a set of balance scales. On one side is the action we want to stop. On the other side is the long-term consequence of that action. This is where the power lies! The mere *desire* to stop places a tiny feather on those scales. It is when the long-term consequences become apparent that our desire to change becomes a compelling need. This is an individual discovery, based on the cost to our own long-term values. Instead of getting frustrated at an inability to stop, the energy is better spent visualising the future. When to do this? Here we come to the Myth of Tomorrow. Gym computers are full of these at this time of year! We sign up full of good intentions. Life happens, we get tired and over worked. We tell ourselves that we will make use of our membership ... tomorrow. So there is your answer. There is no time like now, now, now to discover that compelling need.

Clare Harding
Z-Health Master Practitioner
Tel: 07802 872919

STANSTED IS WELL READ

The next meeting of our book group will be on **Tuesday 7th March** at 8.00pm in the Dog and Duck, Lower Street, where we will be discussing *Songbirds* by Christy Lefteri. We enjoyed reading the *Beekeeper of Aleppo* by the same author in 2021 and so are hoping we will enjoy this moving story about the disappearance of a Sri Lankan domestic worker in Lefteri's native Cyprus. Please get in touch if you would like to join us, a warm welcome will await.



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



STANSTED FIRE SERVICE

www.essex-fire.gov.uk/locations/Station_83_Stansted

The year 2022 was incredibly busy for all firefighters across the country; they all worked very hard indeed, including our crew. This year started with a real focus on the year ahead for our team. Looking back at past events, our Christmas open evening on Friday 2nd December was a huge success and we would like to thank everyone who came to the station for the evening; it was fantastic to see so many of you getting into the Christmas spirit. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting everyone and you will be pleased to know that we are already busy preparing the next one. Do please look out in future editions of The Link for a date.



Our crew are now busy supporting the community through various roles, including conducting home fire safety visits and ongoing training. We offer free home visits to any Essex resident. If you do not have working smoke alarms or would like more information about how to live safely and securely at home, book a free visit at www.essex-fire.gov.uk and search for Home Fire Safety. Look out for our fire-fighters in and around the village on Saturday mornings in the early part of the year. We will be basing ourselves outside the Co-op on Lower Street on selected mornings (see dates on our Facebook page). We will be speaking to people about fire safety and also looking for the next generation of Stansted fire-fighters. Stay safe and best wishes from all at the Fire Station.

Steven Perry

Tel: 01376 575830

Email: stansted.oc@essex-fire.gov.uk



www.helenrollason.org.uk

We are ready to step into March, and we are so pleased to share all of the incredible events that are being planned for the year ahead. There are so many ways for you to get involved. As always, thank you so much for your continued support. We would not be able to offer the much-needed services for people living with cancer without your help. We are so grateful to our incredible community of supporters.

Upcoming events:

Banish those winter blues and join us at *Ride for Helen* at Hatfield Peverel in May. We will be celebrating 10 years of

this amazing event. With your help, we would love to make it a record-breaking year. Our magical enchanted *Afternoon Tea* is back on **Sunday 2nd April** 2.30pm-5.30pm at Hatfield Place, Hatfield Peverel. **Tickets are selling quickly, get yours today.** The Spring Rural Ramble returns to the Gardens of Easton Lodge on **Saturday 29th April** 10.00am-4.00pm. For full details of these and other wonderful events, please see our website or contact us.

Tel: 01245 380719

Email: fundraising@helenrollason.org.uk

BIG GARDEN BIRD WATCH

Every day I top up the bird bath water in my garden. I love to watch the birds as they either queue patiently along the fence until their turn for a bath or, as in the case of the starlings, just dive in noisily *en masse*, crowding out any poor creatures already bathing. I always think the starlings are the avian equivalent of teenage hooligans, but they provide great entertainment. I also replenish the food on the bird table each day and as far as fresh nosh is concerned it is every bird for itself, definitely no queuing involved; although I notice the robin always hangs back until the other birds have gone, preferring to dine alone.



Goldfinch

For years I have taken part in the annual bird survey in late January. Previously, I have scrubbed the feeder and filled it with delicious bird snacks before settling down for an hour to record the different species which visit my garden. Most years I am disappointed by the lack of bird activity, especially hurt by the non-appearance of my regulars. Having fed and watered them all year round I hope they would have the decency to show up for the Big Garden Bird Watch and show their appreciation for all my efforts. However, I usually end up with maybe the odd pigeon to record if I am lucky.

I took part again on 28th January. The weekend was a particularly busy one and I did not do the usual spruce up of the bird feeders or bath, so I just flung around the usual daily rations, sat down with coffee and a newspaper keeping just half an eye on the garden, resigned to the usual non-activity outside. Totally immersed in the crossword, I was suddenly aware of movement. To my surprise the garden was full of birds jostling for their place at the feeders. Excitedly, I counted up the darting, dancing creatures and recorded my highest total ever. My patience has been rewarded – at last.

Loki



www.stanstedtennisclub.co.uk

Spring is now upon us and we have a full year of tournaments, league matches, open club sessions, cup competitions and social events to look forward to. You can view our whole year's events on our website. Look under *Tournaments and Diary Dates* for more details. Open club sessions are on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday mornings, as well as Wednesday evenings. New members are welcome.



The adult and junior coaching run by professional coach Ollie Toms goes from strength to strength, with junior groups after school on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 4.00pm. There is also a new beginner/improver adult group on Wednesdays 1.30pm-2.30pm. For more information and all lesson times contact Ollie on 07917 652014 or check out his website: www.olliestennis.co.uk. Our other coach is Martyn Taplin, email: mj.taplin@btinternet.com.

Debbie Lane
Tel: 07870 971983
Email: debbiegane@gmail.com



STANSTED HALL & ELSENHAM CRICKET CLUB

www.shcc.hitscricket.com

We held our AGM at the end of November and are delighted that we have a new secretary, Penny Hannam, and a new Club Safeguarding Officer, Jenny Styles. Paul Findlay has become Vice Chairman as Stewart Pimblett steps down from that role but remains on the Committee. The annual quiz night was successful with 180 people attending; a music quiz is planned for October.

Our new league season begins on **Saturday 6th May**, Coronation Day. Cricket Clubs are being encouraged by the ECB to hold a special event if at all possible. The 1st XI will again be playing in the Herts and Essex Border League Premier Division and the 2nd XI in Division 3. Indoor nets for the seniors have already begun at HECC on Sunday mornings. Our juniors are raring to go and are netting at HECC; let us hope that we get another good summer. With England now T50 and T20 champions surely more youngsters will want to play our exciting game? If you would like to join our Club as a player or volunteer, please contact me.



David Brown
Tel: 831011 or 07788 999663
Email: david1.r.brown@gmail.com

STANSTED BOWLS CLUB



Obituary

It is with great sadness that we heard of the recent death of Yvonne Sharp, who passed away on Wednesday 1st February. Yvonne was a real stalwart of the Club and its biggest supporter. She was always smiling and nothing was too much trouble. Yvonne had many roles, including Ladies Captain, helper behind the bar and cook; she also took part in Peter Brown's past presentation evening productions. All these were undertaken with great spirit and enjoyment. Yvonne will be remembered for her good humour and dedication to the Club over the years.

News

Spraying has now started on the green in preparation for the start of the bowls season. Our *opening of the green* will be on **Saturday 29th April** at 2.30pm; fingers crossed for good weather. Spectators are welcome to come and watch. Membership fee for beginners is at the reduced rate of £50.00 this year. We should soon have our web page up and running. Other events to be confirmed.

Doreen Scraggs
Tel: 07881 852833
Email: doreenscraggs@talktalk.net



FOOTBALL CLUB

www.essexseniorleague.co.uk

After postponing some games in January, the First Team were able to get the second half of the season going with some good wins including a local derby win against Sawbridgeworth. Those games which were called off have now been rearranged for midweeks in March, so there is plenty of football to look forward to. The break also helped a few players to recover from niggling injuries which could have caused our team management some selection issues.

The League Disciplinary Committee reinstated Stansted back into one of the cup competitions after it was discovered that our opponent's team included a player who had already participated in the same competition for another team; a second bite at the cherry you might say. Our Youth Teams are having a successful season in their respective Eastern Junior Alliance Leagues and we look forward to them playing out their remaining home games at Hargrave Park in March and April.

Finally, some great news on our team manager Paul's medical condition which we reported on last month. Paul is out of hospital at home recovering well and even managing to sneak up to the ground to watch an hour of our games but under strict instructions to stay out of the dugout.

ESL Premier Division March Fixtures at Hargrave Park

11 th	v Saffron Walden	3.00pm
14 th	v Ilford	7.45pm
21 st	v Halstead Town	7.45pm
25 th	v Barking	3.00pm



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Beaver Scouts Age 6-8	Angela Madigan Tel: 01371 513028	St John's Road and Area Association	Secretary: David Marchant Email: david@marchant.com
BS Beekeepers	Kate Walker Tel: 07399 197756 Email: secretary@stortfordbees.org.uk	Scouts (age 10½ -14)	Mike Byrne Tel: 812780
Bowls Club	Doreen Scraggs Mob: 07881 852833 Home: 815036 Email: doreenscraggs@talktalk.net	Stansted and District Past Rotarians Club	Geoff Lay Email: geoff.lay@ntlworld.com
Brownies (Wed)	Susan Scott Tel: 810955	Stansted Badminton Club	Vince Tel: 07793 000107 Raj Tel: 07775 915418
CAB	Tel: 01799 618840	Stansted Business Forum	Iris Evans Email: iris.evans9@gmail.com
Corkers Netball	Lizzie Read Tel: 07770 594848	Stansted Cricket Club (Adults) (Juniors)	Ben Sammons Tel: 07852 510330 Email: bensammons3178@gmail.com Keith Ayres Tel: 814471
Cub Scouts Age 8-10½	Emma Croutcher Email: croutchere@gmail.com	Stansted Football Club	Tom Williams Tel: 07921 403842
Explorer Scouts	Paul Thorneycroft Tel: 01371 876784	Stansted Hall and Elsenham Cricket Club	David Brown Tel: 831011/07788 999663 Email: david1.r.brown@gmail.com
Friends of St Mary's Church	Lynda Dale Tel: 07716 099474 Email: lynnydale@hotmail.com	Stansted Social Club	Andrew Sharpe Tel: 812992 Email: stanstedclub@gmail.com
Garden Club	Maralyn Harris Tel: 07919 478144	Stansted Sparks Netball	Gemma Snelling Tel: 07894 944242 Email: gemmasnelling@me.com
Grove Cottage	Jocelin Warren Tel: 07482 535020 Office Tel: 656085	Stansted Speed Watch	Warren Vickers Tel: 813996 Email: vickersw@aol.com
Guides	Jennifer Jarvis Tel: 814434	Stansted Tennis Club	Debbie Lane Tel: 07870 971983 Email: debbieglane@gmail.com
Helpline	Tel: 07704 553727	Talking Newspaper (BS and District)	Richard Barnett Tel: 651270 Email: familybarnett24@hotmail.com
History Society	Roger Barrett Tel: 814216 Email: rbarrett54@gmail.com	The Hundred Parishes Society	Ken McDonald Tel: 813226 Email: hundredparishes@btinternet.com
Human Roots	Keiran Oliver Tel: 07946 783039 Email: keiran@humanrootscommunity.org.uk	TouchPoint	Shirley Johnson Tel: 07572 114882 Email: info@thetouchpoint.org
Huw Johnson Club	Ellen Brooks Tel: 07800 896516 Email: ellenbrooks@hotmail.co.uk	Town Twinning	Chairman: Geraldine Allars Tel: 07833 089298 Email: twinning@stansted.net
Let's Talk, Stansted Mental Health Support	Richard Haywood Tel: 07794 268208 Email: contact@stanstedmentalhealth.org	u3a	Susan Sedgebeer Email: bertiestar@gmail.com
Little Scrummers	Andrew Poyser Tel: 07738 591232	WI (Stansted)	Doreen Brown Tel: 325326
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music@stansted (Classical concerts)	Sonia Levy Tel: 815282 Email: contactus@musicatstansted.co.uk	Youth Centre	Essex Youth Services Tel: 07584 140507
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Parkinson's UK	Simon Russell Tel: 01799 524638 Email: simonrussell2@tiscali.co.uk		
Uttlesford Support Group			
Rainbow Pre-School	Gill Pursglove Tel: 814242/07966 506997 Email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net		
Rainbows (Wed)	Rachel Foster Tel: 07818 417971		
Rainbows (Fri)	Sue Pollard Tel: 813734		

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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