

# Stansted Mountfitchet

# The Link



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### Front cover

Aubrey Buxton Nature Reserve  
by Mick Fitch

Stansted Mountfitchet Village Magazine

# The Link

[www.stanstedlink.org.uk](http://www.stanstedlink.org.uk)

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### CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

Please email [editor@stanstedlink.org.uk](mailto:editor@stanstedlink.org.uk) by noon on **9th April**. Submissions should be in Word or typed into an email, maximum 300 words, and may be subject to editing. Please send photographs (**preferably landscape**) as separate jpg.

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## EDITORIAL



For the past two months, photos of the permissive path area have graced our front cover; this month it is the turn of that other beautiful Stansted beauty spot, Aubrey Buxton Nature Reserve. We are very grateful to Mick Fitch for sending the shot of the walker and his two dogs; it really is a fantastic photograph – thanks a million, Mick. On p27 you will see another of Mick's pictures – an incredibly cute family of ducklings with their mother in the nature reserve. I am so happy to see so much about wild areas and gardens this month. Even wilder than usual, I am sharing my experience of a safari in Botswana with you on p17; I would like to encourage our readers to submit an article about an adventure or holiday which they have enjoyed. We would love to hear about them.

Much closer to home is our featured guest this month: Margaret Hill, who has been part of the backbone of this community for a long time. We are so glad she has chosen to tell us about her life here. So, many thanks to her, and to all our other contributors, including Tricia Bromley who goes to a great deal of trouble to construct a quiz for us, for which we are very grateful. To end on a good story: you recall *The End of the Saxons* in the last two issues, written by the 10-year-old Funky Chicken? Keith Eagleton is a former Stansted resident; he has lived in the west country for a long time now, but still reads *The Link*. He has responded to Funky Chicken in the most delightful manner – see p19. I believe that many readers know Keith quite well.



### FUN PLACE ON THE HILL

[www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](http://www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

The Fun Place is open every **Friday, including school holidays**, from 9.15am-11.30am in the Free Church Hall which is warm and comfortable. All ages are welcome, although Fun Place is particularly suitable for children. Please come and join us. The children enjoy playing with the toys, have plenty of space to run around, and join in a Sing-Along around 10.30 am. Adults chat over coffee in a relaxed atmosphere. Free squash and healthy snacks are available for children, and tea or coffee and biscuits for the adults. One of our regular visitors recently had a birthday, and everyone enjoyed celebrating with her and the cakes she brought along.



There is limited free parking in the church car park. We look forward to welcoming you on Friday mornings.

Sue Parker and Fran Richards  
Tel: 657116

Email: [funplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:funplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)



### DAISY MAY'S FARM

[www.daisymaysfarm.org](http://www.daisymaysfarm.org)

How lovely it is to be able to show off our wonderful farm to visitors. Thank you so much for coming to see us. We have many cute babies around the farm, so do not miss out on coming to see our small animal area in the woods. You can



enjoy cuddling the orphans (be they lambs or goats), feeding our animals, themed arts and crafts, playing in the woodland trail or having a ride on our train; you can also feed a lamb, hold a chick or duckling and cuddle a kid. There will be a golden egg hunt and adults can enjoy a

cuppa and cake. We are open daily 10.00am-4.00pm, so make sure you come and see us at any time, but particularly in the Easter holidays. Please do check our Facebook page for any updates.

There is no need to pre-book and entry is only £6, but please be aware we have no credit card facilities and **always wear your wellies!** If you have a child's birthday coming up, why not have your party with us at the farm? Perhaps you arrange school trips? Come and have a chat with us; we enjoy having the school children here and they love coming here for an informative and fun day out. There is so much going on at our farm at the moment, so we really hope to see you. We are in Hall Road, Elsenham CM22 6DN.

Elaine Terry  
Tel: 07747 787973



## MAGNA CARTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

[www.magnacartaacademy.org](http://www.magnacartaacademy.org)

### World Book Day

As you may know, Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March marked World Book Day, which we celebrated with gusto! The children had a great time taking part in various activities both at home and in school. In the morning they participated in a *Poem in a Pocket* activity, where they spent time writing or recording a poem of their choice to share with friends in the playground. They also enjoyed the *masked reader* activity, where they had to guess which disguised member of staff was reading a book. All classes were lucky enough to have visits from parents or grandparents and members of staff from around the school, including site and office staff. Thank you to all our wonderful guest readers! We had another excellent themed lunch, with options of *Harry Potter's golden snitches*, with *broomsticks* (chicken nuggets and chips) or *Cloudy with a chance of vegetarian meatballs and spaghetti*, all served with *Hungry Caterpillar* vegetables followed by *Winnie the Pooh* banana and honey cake. Delicious!



There were some excellent submissions for our *Reading in a peculiar place* photo challenge, including mid-air on trampolines, in front of castles, and from half-term holidays in sunny Spain. Pupils were invited to bring brilliant paper plate characters created at home, as well as favourite books to buddy up with other year groups and share, read and discuss, which they loved. Elsewhere reading buddies paired up so that older children could read with younger ones. We are passionate about developing a life-long love of books all year round. This is reflected in our expert approach to phonics, English, and availability of our school library, from which children can borrow to enjoy at home. If you are interested in becoming a regular guest reader in our school, please do get in touch.

Teresa Avey  
Deputy Head  
Tel: 703484

Email: [reception@magnacartaacademy.org](mailto:reception@magnacartaacademy.org)



## SOCIAL CLUB

[www.smsc.uk.com](http://www.smsc.uk.com)

We have some exciting news to start with! After 18 months of planning, we will be starting on our rear garden landscaping project. We have engaged a contractor and our aim is to have it completed by the summer so we can all enjoy the new space. The aim is to keep disruption to a minimum but there may be access issues from time to time. Membership shows no sign of slowing down and we now have 1061 paid-up members! You get a great deal for your annual membership fee. For new joiners it is just £25 per year, which includes a one-off administration fee of £5.

We have a packed entertainment schedule for April, which starts on **Monday 1<sup>st</sup>** with *Frankie 'Rocking' Smith*. **Friday 5<sup>th</sup>** sees a Music Trivia Quiz so come along and test your knowledge! There are two music sets on **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup>**. John Searle will be entertaining us with his disco vibes from 1.00pm-5.00pm. In the evening from 9.00pm we have a *Billy Joel* tribute. **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>** sees *Ultimate Madnezz* making their first appearance at the Club. They are backed up by an amazing party singer, *Caroline Crystal*. On **20<sup>th</sup> April** we have a covers band, *Hit Parade*, followed by *Girls 2 Loud* on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup>**. We round off the month with *Gemma Louise Doyle* and her amazing operatic set. As always, non-members are welcome to events; the ticket price is £10.



Andrew Sharpe  
Email: [stanstedclub@gmail.com](mailto:stanstedclub@gmail.com)



## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

[www.stanstedhistorysociety.org.uk](http://www.stanstedhistorysociety.org.uk)

A change of venue for our March meeting, due to the refurbishment of the Day Centre, meant we were in the Quaker Meeting House. Our thanks go to them for kindly agreeing to this. Dave Perry opened the meeting by introducing Peter Baker who had three short but fascinating films which he had made in the early 1980s of various festivals and other fun days out in the village.

The first film was of an event for raising funds to help with proposed relocation of the Catholic Church which was originally next to the windmill. This also included amazing scenes of part of the repairs and refurbishment of the windmill taking place at that time. Any health and safety officer watching today would be horrified at the lack of hard hats, safety harnesses and steel capped boots which seem so important today and hardly considered necessary 40 years ago.

The other films showed the Fire Station and Recreation Ground, like today, playing their part in various summer activities, and large street parades with marching bands and decorated trucks with many children aboard featured prominently. It was nice to see that as so many things have changed over the last 40 or so years. However, the warm and friendly nature of our village is still very much present, which makes Stansted such a wonderful place to live. Dave Perry thanked Peter for such a wonderful look back at a time which is still so much in the memory of many members. The next meeting is on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm in the Quaker Meeting House.

Edward Taub  
Email: [taub8j@icloud.com](mailto:taub8j@icloud.com)

THE  
FORGOTTEN GARDENS OF  
**EASTON LODGE**

[www.eastonlodge.co.uk](http://www.eastonlodge.co.uk)

April is the start of the main season at the Gardens – we open weekly on Thursdays from **4<sup>th</sup> April**, and our first Open Day is on **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April** 11.00am-5.00pm. We hope by then to have planted a range of new trees for the Glade, including *Cercidiphyllum* (Katsura) and *Acers* and that the ground will have dried out so that grass returns to the mud patches created by the standing water in February. Our volunteers will have extended the Japanese garden and planted more shrubs and small conifers into the new Warwick border. In the kitchen garden much of the early sowings of peas and beans will have been in pots, so by April we can transfer plants and prevent them being eaten by all the wild creatures: mice, slugs, moles and pigeons to name a few!

The joys of April include spring flowers and blossom and having cleared some woodland, we hope the bluebells will be able to come through more strongly and there may be the tail end of the daffodils, cowslips and violets. In the Italian garden the tulips should be providing bright colours to the fresh greens of spring growth. In the kitchen garden there will be a succession of blossom, such as nectarines, peaches, plums and cherries, followed by pears and apples. In the Glade there will be blossom on the flowering cherries and hawthorn.



We are open 11.00am-3.00pm on Thursdays, with payment on the gate. Our volunteers provide hot and cold drinks and homemade cakes. On **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April** there will be folk and acoustic music from Karen and Tony, children's craft and trail and the usual fayre for a Sunday - hot bacon rolls, cheese or hummus rolls, homemade soup and cakes. For more information, please see our website.

Jill Goldsmith

Email: [enquiries@eastonlodge.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@eastonlodge.co.uk)



[www.letstalkstansted.org](http://www.letstalkstansted.org)

Stress Awareness Month has been held every April since 1992 to raise awareness of the causes and cures for our modern-day stress epidemic. Join us on **Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April** at 7.00pm in the Social Club for our monthly get together.

We will discuss the impact of stress, its causes, as well as ideas about coping strategies and how we can support each other.

As spring arrives, we welcome the return of our **Muddy Walkers**. They meet every Wednesday at 7.00pm outside the Co-op to walk together, talk together and connect with nature, choosing different routes around the village and surrounding countryside. Everyone is welcome. For more details, contact Richard on 07794 268208.



We are delighted to announce our sponsorship of the **Stansted Unfit Kickabout Group** supporting men's mental health, described as *a bunch of unfit 30, 40 and 50 somethings who are local to the area and like to have a friendly kickabout*. You can find them playing football on the Recreation Ground every Sunday at 9.30am. If you enjoy football but do not want to take it too seriously then this is the group for you. Just turn up and play or contact Tim on 07916 337021.

Finally, we are pleased to announce the return of our **Yoga** classes run by our Chair and qualified yoga instructor Dina McDonald. Sessions take place on Wednesday evenings throughout April at the Quaker Hall and will focus on teaching the practice of Yoga Nidra or Yogic Sleep, practised lying down, it guides participants out of the stresses of daily life and into a state of deep physical and mental relaxation. To book contact Dina on 07889 446436 or email: [info@letstalkstansted.org](mailto:info@letstalkstansted.org). Whatever you do in this month, if you need to talk, we are here to listen.

Rachel Dawes

## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET EVENING WI



In February we welcomed Helen Kirkman and Claire Buttress from Foote Tayler Solicitors of Great Dunmow, an all-female legal practice which has been there for over 40 years. Helen specialises in family and matrimonial matters as well as property registration whereas Claire specialises in trusts, inheritance tax and lasting powers of attorney. They went through some of the common myths and mistakes which women in particular can make, and gave a very varied and interesting insight into legal matters that really do apply more to women than men!

Our next meeting is on **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April** at 7.30pm, hopefully back in the Day Centre, when we will be welcoming Lindsey Barrel to talk about British Sign Language. Visitors are always welcome.

Linda Gurr  
Tel: 07743 549341



## Fun Place on the Hill

9.15 - 11.30 am every Friday  
including school holidays  
except Good Friday  
Stansted Free Church Hall

**FREE entry and refreshments**

*All ages welcome but particularly suitable for children*

Plenty of toys and space to run around



## Stansted Millers

Windmill Open 1.30 - 5.30 pm

**Come and have a look round**

Easter Sunday 31st Mar

Bank Holiday Mon 1st Apr

Sun 7th Apr

*Easter Egg Hunt for Children  
Refreshments*

**Entry: adults £2, child 50p**

## STANSTED IS WELL READ

8 pm Tue 2nd Apr

Dog and Duck, Lower Street

*We will be discussing*

**The Starless Sea**

by Eric Morgenstern

The story of Zachary Rawlins who stumbles upon a mysterious book containing details from his own life

All Welcome Tel 813056

## WHAT'S ON IN APRIL

1	Mon	Easter Egg Hunt	Windmill 1.30 - 5.30 pm
2	Tue	Stansted is Well Read	Dog and Duck 8 pm
3	Wed - 7 Sun	Art Exhibition	Jackson Sq, B S 10 am - 4 pm
3	Wed	Mountfitchet Garden Club	Free Church Hall 8 pm
4	Thu	Local History Society	Quaker Meeting House 7.30 pm
7	Sun	Windmill Open	1.30 - 5.30 pm
9	Tue	<b>Link copy due in today</b> The Arts Society B S RSPB	<b>before noon</b> South Mill Arts, B S 10 am Bishop's Park 7.30 pm
11	Thu	W I	Day Centre 7.30 pm
13	Sat	Windmill Quiz	Day Centre 7.30 pm
14 & 28	Sun	Skips	Lower St Car Pk 12.30 - 4 .30 pm
17	Wed	Ugley W I Newport Flower Club	Ugley Village Hall 2 pm Ugley Village Hall 8 pm
18	Thu	U3A Monthly Meeting B S Arts Society	St John's Hall 2 pm Thorn Grove Sch, B S 7.30 pm
20	Sat	Farmers' Market Christian Aid Lunch	Ugley Village Hall 10 am Free Church Hall noon
21	Sun	Open Day	Easton Lodge 11 am - 5 pm
27	Sat	Elsenham Farmers' Market	Elsenham Village Hall 12.30 pm
30	Tue	Let's Talk Stansted	Social Club 7 pm

## BISHOP'S STORTFORD ART SOCIETY

[www.stortfordartsociety.co.uk](http://www.stortfordartsociety.co.uk)

### Exhibition and Sale of Paintings by Members

10 am - 4 pm

Wed 3rd - Sun 7th Apr

Community Space opposite the Currency Exchange Jackson Square, B Stortford

Tel 812768 for more information

## THE ARTS SOCIETY BISHOP'S STORTFORD

10 am Tue 9th Apr

South Mill Arts

*Velazquez:*

*The Great Magician of Art*  
by Donald Skeggs

Guests welcome Entry £7

Coffee served from 10 am

Tel 656065 for more information



**You're invited to a free Lunch!**

Noon - 2 pm Sat 20th Apr

Free Church Hall

Delicious Homemade Soup and Rolls

Tel Catherine 07803 299683

Donations to Christian Aid welcome

## THE FORGOTTEN GARDENS OF EASTON LODGE OPEN DAY

11 am - 5 pm Sun 21st Apr

(last entry 4 pm)

**Music by Karen and Tony**

Tickets £6.50 on gate or £5.50 in advance from [www.trybooking.com](http://www.trybooking.com)

Refreshments and Produce  
Children's Trail and Crafts

All Welcome Tel: 01371 876979



## Monthly Meeting

**Welney through the Seasons**  
by Tony Winchester

7.30 pm Tue 9th Apr

Bishop's Park Community Centre  
Bishop's Stortford CM23 4DA

Visitors welcome, entry £5

Tel: Peter 07876 295456

[www.group.rspb.org.uk/stortvalley](http://www.group.rspb.org.uk/stortvalley)



[www.uglevillage.org.uk](http://www.uglevillage.org.uk)

10 am - noon

Sat 20th Apr

Ugley Village Hall

*Fruit and Veg ~ Beef, Pork, Lamb*

*Eggs ~ Fish ~ Soup ~ Hummus*

*Bread and Home Baking*

*Honey ~ Skincare*

*Knitting and Needlework ~ Crafts*

**Refreshments and Free Parking**

For info and future dates tel 814052



## Monthly Meeting

**Graham and Mary Brace**

will be sharing experiences of their travel to the Pantanal in Brazil, the largest wetland in the world

1.30 for 2 pm Thu 18th Apr

St John's Hall

Entry free

Prospective new members welcome

<https://u3asites.org.uk/stansted>



## Green Waste Skip Dates

**Lower Street Car Park**  
Sundays 12.30 - 4.30 pm

**14th & 28th Apr**

**12th & 26th May**



## SUSTAINABLE STANSTED

Small and medium businesses produce a third of UK carbon emissions. Businesses must reduce their energy use and waste; they can make a huge difference to the carbon footprint of our community. They can also provide goods and services to their customers to help them to do the same. We aim to work with businesses around the village to support and promote this activity. As well as being critical for the future of our planet, working in a greener way can also bring demonstrable business benefits:

- Reducing energy use and wastage is not only good for the climate, it can also lead to significant reductions in costs
- Many large corporations are now looking to their suppliers to demonstrate their commitment to work in a more sustainable way
- Around 70% of people aged 16-25 are extremely worried about the climate (Study in *The Lancet* 2021). They are increasingly looking to buy services and products from businesses that show they are reducing their environmental impact
- Millennials and younger workers are driving a growing trend of climate quitting - seeking out a more environmentally friendly job (KPMG January 2023 research).

**We are looking for three Stansted businesses who would like help to know how they can work more sustainably.**

**Our support will include:**

- Helping these businesses to consider how they can reduce their carbon footprint
- Signposting to other sources of support such as environmental standards schemes
- Providing a local badge shown below to show that they have committed to working towards a greener and more sustainable Stansted.



Do you want to be one of the first businesses to receive a free badge to show your commitment to a sustainable Stansted? If so please email us or visit us on Facebook, Sustainable Stansted.

Emma Thomas  
Email: sustainablestansted@gmail.com

## RANDOM JOTTINGS

### Bluebell Time

This is the time of year to start looking out for the first bluebells. They are my favourite wild flower and always cheer me up, no matter what the weather is throwing at us at the time. Bluebells are a sure sign that spring has arrived and when they start to fade, summer is nearly here. The delicate bells have a magical quality, the ability to light up a dark wood with their amazing blue and purple hues, and on damp days can fill the air with a subtle, sweet scent.



### All the Gear and no Idea

Walking along the Cambridge Road I watched a Lycra clad and helmeted cyclist, heading out of the village towards Ugley, negotiate the roundabout at the junction of High Lane and Walpole Meadows. He was hotly pursued by a young lad on a bicycle shouting, *I have never been round a roundabout before. What do I do?* Neither slowed down or appeared to look to their right to check for oncoming traffic. Thankfully there were no other vehicles using the roundabout at the time. Is it any wonder cyclists have such a dodgy reputation?

### Bath or Shower

*Do you bath or shower?* was the question posed on a local radio station. The results of this phone-in surprised both the presenter and me. Which of the following do you think was the most popular response?

- Always shower never bath
- Sometimes bath, sometimes shower
- Always bath but shower straight after
- Do not like showers, always bath



I expected (a) to be top of the poll but it was option (c) that most Essex people who called in went for. Really? It was in February when I heard this, otherwise I would have assumed it was an April Fool's joke. If the findings were genuine then what a waste of water.

Loki



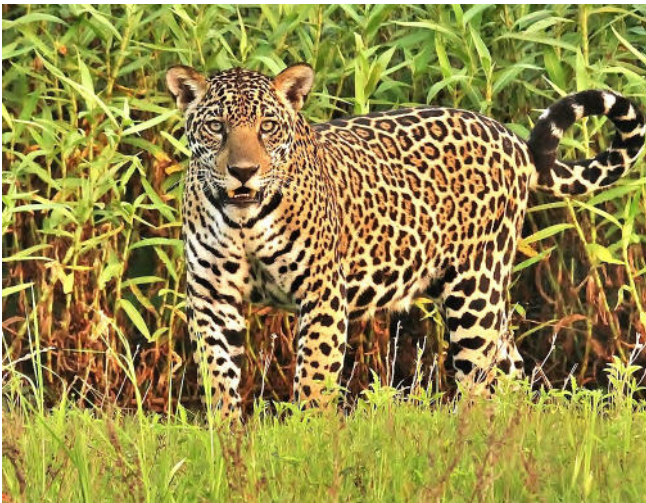
## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET u3a

[www.u3asites.org.uk/stansted/home](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/stansted/home)

For 300 years, the Royal Gunpowder Mills at Waltham Abbey developed and manufactured explosives for muskets, rockets and wartime munitions. It is now a museum. Richard Thomas, a site guide, spoke at our February meeting, looking back through the centuries to China, and the discovery of what we call gunpowder. It was fascinating; a trip to the Waltham Abbey Museum now looks likely.

In February our Gardening Group enjoyed a talk by Dave Willett, on *Great Gardens and Gardeners*. He started with the history of cultivated gardens including the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, and then went on to the development of the medieval plot essential for food production. We learned about renaissance gardens like Versailles, the landscape movement, and Lancelot Brown. Finally on to the work of Arts and Crafts designers such as Gertrude Jekyll.

Our Saturday seminar in March was given by David Morson, a true expert on history and politics. He took on that most sensitive and tragic of flashpoints: the history of war between Israel and Arabs. He discussed the complexities and the dilemmas of this most intractable conflict. It was an unforgettable and most enlightening talk.



Graham and Mary Brace will be sharing experiences of their travel to Brazil at our next meeting on **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April** 1.30pm for 2.00pm in St John's Church Hall. They will be taking the audience to the Pantanal, the largest wetland in the world, where there is a myriad of mammals and birdlife endemic to this vast country. There will be over 100 coloured slides, all taken by them, that show the wonder of truly wild animals. An example is shown above: a stunningly beautiful jaguar. That is the u3a: always something different, sometimes challenging, often heart-warming, you learn a lot and laugh a lot – do join us!

Pauline Green  
Email: [stanstedu3a@gmail.com](mailto:stanstedu3a@gmail.com)



## STANSTED HELPLINE

Launched in 1984, our Helpline will be 40 years old on 1<sup>st</sup> November. To mark this remarkable achievement, we are going green! The eagle-eyed will have already noticed the smart new posters around the village sporting our green logo, a colour that will hopefully not fade as quickly as the red did on our old ones. For those unaware of who we are or what we do, Stansted Helpline is a voluntary organisation operated entirely by unpaid volunteers and funded solely through donations. We aim to provide practical assistance to Stansted residents in times of real need where no other help, through friends or family, is readily available. Most of the requests we receive nowadays are for transport to and from medical appointments, and we provided 173 lifts last year. Back in 1984 we received a total of 165 calls of which just 88 were for transport, showing there is now even more need for help getting to appointments for those without a car and unable to use public transport.

For Stansted Helpline to have been so successful for so many years is testament to the dedication and willingness of our lovely volunteers. We always need more volunteers, especially daytime drivers, so if you think you may be able to assist, please get in touch. No regular commitment is required - when and how often is at the volunteer's convenience and you are unlikely to be needed more than once every two or three weeks. Similarly, if you need a lift give us a call and we will do our best to help.

**Tel: 07704 553727 9.00am-4.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays)**

Stansted Helpline Committee




## UGLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Butter pats, dolly pegs, a key, a shoe-shaped coin purse and a silver jug that started life as a tankard, were just a few of the very interesting items that our speaker brought with him. Tim Turner, formerly of Sworders Fine Art Auctioneers, came to our rescue when our booked speaker had to cancel at short notice. Tim's talk was entitled *Tactile Antiques* and we had the pleasure of being able to handle these lovely items. Other objects for us to admire and covet included a dice shaker dating from 1870, a large silver basting spoon, a beautifully turned wooden chess piece, a decoy pigeon and a lovely blue glass decanter. Woodworking tools also found their way into the haul including a beautiful wood and brass spirit level, a carpenter's brace and a wood mounted sharpening stone. His brilliant talk at an end, he judged our competition for a children's book, the winning entry being a delightful rag book dating from 1914.

Staying with an historical theme, the subject for our April meeting on **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April** at 2.00pm in Ugley Village Hall is *The History of Saffron Walden Almshouses*. Why not come along and join us for the afternoon. You would be most welcome!

Andrea Fitt  
Tel: 815922



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## STANSTED PEOPLE

### MARGARET HILL

Born in London in 1945, Margaret was a war baby – just! During the war, her father was in the Army and her mother painted Mosquito planes at de Havilland's. In 1964 Margaret trained in Hackney as a nursery nurse and her first job was in Stoke Newington. She arrived in Stansted in 1970 with her two small boys and in 1977 had a daughter. She has seen Stansted change a great deal over the 54 years she has lived here. During her time in the village, she has lived in four different locations.



In 1979 she joined Rainbow Play Group as a volunteer helper. During that time there was a Portacabin on the site in Lower Street where she was asked to have the under-three-year-olds with their parents in attendance. She had memorable times at Rainbow over the years, especially the Carnival floats; the most memorable one was *Sing a Song of Sixpence* for which Rainbow won first prize, and the children were so excited because they had won the cup.

In the early 80s Margaret was asked by St John's Church to assist with Sunday School; sometimes there were 80 children attending! In the mid-80s the Peter Kirk School closed, meaning many children had to be sent to other schools around the county. In 1984 she joined St Mary's School to help as a teaching assistant (TA) with some of the children who had been transferred from Peter Kirk.

In 1988 Margaret moved to Australia for two years which she enjoyed very much. On her return she reprised her TA role at St Mary's School. In 1990 she was asked by another TA at the school to help run a Red Cross Junior group after school, instructing the children on First Aid, helped by a few valued helpers. Some of the children went on to have medical careers. Margaret was awarded, together with her friend, a Certificate of Merit for their work in the Red Cross Group. Despite the success of this venture, it had to be closed due to a lack of male helpers; how sad was that! In 1992 the church decided to close the Sunday School and Margaret went on to sing with the St John's Church choir which she still does to this day. During her time singing she has also been a member of St Mary's Singers which meant she has sung in many cathedrals around the country. She

has also sung with Herts and Soul community choir and the Harmonaires.

In 2008 she moved to Japan for two years; on her return she was asked to run the St John's Tots Group every Tuesday morning, and she is still doing this after 15 enjoyable years. Apart from taking care of small children for a long time, Margaret has a keen interest in bowling. She joined the Stansted Bowls Club in 1990 after her return from Australia. In 2012 she became the first lady president. She enjoys being part of the Bowls Club and over the years has been lady captain nine times and still is for this coming season. She enjoys travelling, mainly to New Zealand and Australia, visiting her two sons' families. She has six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Margaret regards her major achievements as bringing up a lovely family, running Tots and being an important part of Stansted Bowls Club. Margaret is clearly an integral part of the Stansted community and has been for a few decades. Her contributions over the years are absolutely outstanding.

Ed



### BEHIND THE SCENES

[www.thetouchpoint.org](http://www.thetouchpoint.org)

#### *She's Ready Wellbeing Sessions*

We are all aware that exercise and socialising can help not only our physical but also our mental health; I am happy to say that we have a group for exactly that. Started in April 2022 by the fabulous Lucy with two sessions per week, the Touchpoint Wellbeing offering has grown into seven free sessions per week, mainly held at Crafton Green, which include exercise and activities as well as social interaction. The *She's Ready* sessions are for women only, but all other sessions are for women and men. There is a focus on mental wellbeing through the use of physical activity. I am sure the approximately 100 attendees per week would agree with the sense of belonging and community it brings.

I understand from speaking to Lucy that she would love to expand the timetable to have more of the same classes and also provide other activities; however, these classes depend entirely on funding from various organisations. Any news on future classes and growth will be updated on social media. For more information please visit our website or email: [info@thetouchpoint.org](mailto:info@thetouchpoint.org). The weekly timetable is shown below; a variety of classes are offered, to suit all abilities and experience, so you are sure to find a class which suits you:

<b>Mon</b>	6.30pm	Yoga <i>She's Ready</i> (becomes running in the summer)
<b>Tue</b>	9.15am	Mindful Yoga
<b>Wed</b>	12.15pm	Chair Yoga
<b>Thu</b>	9.15am	Bootcamp and Yoga at Takeley <i>She's Ready</i>
<b>Fri</b>	9.15am	Bootcamp and Running <i>She's Ready</i>

Hannah



As promised, I am focusing on our younger pupils this month. We held a fantastic event for both our reception classes recently: they came back to school in the dusk and explored St Mary's with torches, hunting for pictures of nocturnal animals before sharing a bedtime story in the sensory room and then enjoying a hot chocolate back in the classroom, all whilst wearing their cosy pyjamas.

Key Stage 1 had a great day for the launch of their *Scented Garden* topic; Rhona Brown very kindly came in and did beautiful individual flower arrangements with the children in years 1 and 2. The flowers made the school smell amazing! Other activities included floral paper craft, painting Mother's Day cards and a flower hunt in the playground. Year 1 have also had a very successful half term of swimming lessons. They have done a brilliant job of getting changed independently and managing the hustle and bustle of the local pool.

Ash Class performed at Saffron Hall as part of the *Gymnastics and Dance Display*. Kara Power had a fabulous time watching the performance and was very impressed with our children who not only performed fantastically but also supported all the other schools taking part. Well done. There have been a number of recent successful sporting events in which we have participated, especially cross country in the mud; huge congratulations to all our runners. We also celebrated World Book Day and dressed up for Comic Relief. We wish you all a very happy and peaceful Easter holiday.

Matthew Curzon  
Headteacher  
Tel: 812212

??????? QUIZ ????????

- 1 City that hosts the Australian grand prix
- 2 Collective noun for a group of rhinos
- 3 Planet closest to the sun
- 4 Blood group for universal blood recipient
- 5 Tridecaphobia is the fear of what?
- 6 Largest port in Europe
- 7 Number of squares on a chess board
- 8 National stadium formerly known as the Empire Stadium
- 9 Main ingredient in baba ghanoush
- 10 International car registration for Ukraine
- 11 The only metal that is liquid at room temperature
- 12 Largest animal
- 13 Protein a coeliac cannot eat
- 14 Canis lupus is better known as
- 15 Lead singer of Blondie

Compiled by Tricia Bromley

Answers on page 28

The Society's logo is a wood-cut by the late Eric Ravilious. He and Edward Bawden were both Royal College of Art students. During a cycling holiday, they happened upon Great Bardfield, where they rented Brick House, starting a fascinating period for the village. Over the next two decades, numerous artists came to live there who became known as *The Bardfield Artists*. In 1932 Bawden married Charlotte Epton, a potter, and his father bought Brick House as a wedding present for them. In the same year Ravilious married Tirzah Garwood, an artist and engraver and they lodged for a while at Brick House. Bawden's work can be seen today on three Victoria Line stations: Highbury and Islington, Victoria, and Tottenham Hale, for which he designed the logos. Another artist, John Aldridge, bought Place House, Great Bardfield in 1933 and became friends with Bawden. They produced Bardfield wallpaper together for the company Cole and Sons to distribute.



Brick House

In 1952, painter Stanley Clifford-Smith moved into Bucks House and later to the Old Bakehouse. He was very involved in open house exhibitions which were held in the 1950s. The public could view and buy art in the studios and homes where it had been created. Marianne Straub, a textile designer, moved to Great Bardfield in 1953, buying Trinity Cottage. She was the senior designer for Warner and Sons of Braintree. Other Bardfield Artists included Kenneth Rowntree, Michael Rothenstein and Walter Hoyle. A good selection of the Bardfield Artists' work can be seen at Fry Art Gallery in Saffron Walden, which reopens on **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April**; see <https://fryartgallery.org/> for opening hours. In Great Bardfield, books and other information about the artists can be purchased at the new premises of *Between The Lines* bookshop.

Ken McDonald  
Secretary  
Tel: 813226



Email: hundredparishes@btinternet.com

## NEWPORT AND DISTRICT FLOWER CLUB

Our year got off to a flying start when Madeleine Bradley, floral demonstrator for the National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies (NAFAS) designed six wonderful arrangements related to *The Colours of India* including the one shown below entitled *Delhi*, known as The Pink City.



Our AGM will be on **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April** at 7.30pm in Ugley Village Hall with a guest speaker from Chickney Flower Farm. Visitors are always welcome. On **27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> April** we will be having a stall at this year's *Crank Up* at Carver Barracks. Please come along and say hello.

Patricia Sanz  
Email: [flowersanzp2020@gmail.com](mailto:flowersanzp2020@gmail.com)



[www.mountfitchetgardenclub.co.uk](http://www.mountfitchetgardenclub.co.uk)

### March Meeting

Brian Carline gave a very entertaining and informative talk on *The Science of Plants*. The talk opened with a reminiscence of the radio programme *Round the Horne* and the character Arthur Fallowfield, whose catchphrase was *...the answer is in the soil*. Throughout the evening, members were given tips and advice on how to improve their garden soil, the peat-free bags of compost now sold, what to look for if plants start to look poorly and what to feed them. He also showed us the ideal watering can that enables precise watering techniques. He specialises in fuchsias and pelargonias and takes hundreds of cuttings a year. Members enjoyed his anecdotes of his failings and achievements over the years. A selection of his plants was available to purchase and a lively question and answer session followed the talk.

### Annual General Meeting

The AGM will take place on **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April** at 8.00pm in the Free Church Hall.

Maralyn Harris  
Tel: 07919 478144

## IN THE GARDEN

### Little hands make light work of gardening

To encourage children to appreciate how and where their food comes from, parents and grandparents can organise a fun project growing potatoes. A large area of land is not necessary for this as they can be confined to pots or bags. The only requirement is a sunny position; a paved area is ideal. Use a large pot with a diameter of 40cms by 50cms deep, or a large, strong, black bag with drainage holes. A new potato such as Charlotte, a second early salad variety, works well but whatever you choose, they must be certified seed potatoes. As just three potatoes are required per pot or bag, you will need only a small quantity. To chit the potatoes, place them with the eyes uppermost in an open egg box and allow the eyes to sprout up to 2cms.



Place multipurpose compost to a depth of 10cm in the pots, then equally space three seed potatoes, eyes uppermost and cover with approximately 15cms more compost. Water, so that the soil is moist but not waterlogged. When the leaves start to appear keep covering them in stages. Be aware a late frost will kill the emerging leaves so some protection such as fleece or newspaper may be required. Carry on covering the leaves with soil as they appear until the top of the pot is reached. Then wait until the flowers and leaves have died back before carefully removing some of the compost to see if the potatoes are ready to be harvested. If you are using bags, the procedure is the same but roll the side of the bag down to begin with and roll it up in stages as you cover the emerging growth; this will maximise light to the plants. If necessary, cover plants to protect from frost. Most of all - have fun!



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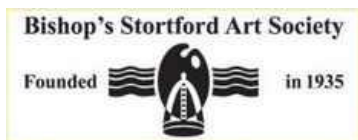
The team has been busy recently responding to and training for emergency events. Early in March they took part in various training drills including a large-scale breathing apparatus training session organised by our Crew Manager, Billy Parr. After consultation with Essex County Council, he managed to get access to a building in Stansted that would allow the team to practise its response to large scale incidents whilst it is currently vacant. Billy commented: *It is a good venue in which to undertake training as it is quite large, being a former school, with an unfamiliar layout for crews. During the exercise using breathing apparatus we were able to test our skills and great effort was shown by the crews. This is a good example of Essex County Fire and Rescue service working with other organisations for the benefit of Essex residents and businesses.*



This month has also seen the station itself currently undergoing a refit with the installation of a new and improved bay floor; this was after a lot of wear and tear was highlighted during one of our quarterly inspections. The service, along with its partners, started the fit-out at the end of February and work is going really well. The station personnel have continued to maintain the operational effectiveness of all three machines around the works and have worked extremely hard to manage this change. Lastly, if any other groups or schools would like to visit, feel free to get in touch, and if you are interested in joining the team please pop down on a Thursday training night.

Steven Perry  
Tel: 01376 575830

Email: [stansted.oc@essex-fire.gov.uk](mailto:stansted.oc@essex-fire.gov.uk)



[www.stortfordartsociety.co.uk](http://www.stortfordartsociety.co.uk)

At our next meeting on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm in Thorn Grove Primary School, Paul Berryman will be doing a portrait demonstration using acrylic paint.

We are holding an Exhibition and Sale of Paintings by Society members from **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup>-Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April** 10.00am-4.00pm in the Community Space in Jackson Square, Bishop's Stortford. For further details, please contact me.

Carole Crosby  
Tel: 812768

Email: [crosbyca10@aol.com](mailto:crosbyca10@aol.com)



### Invitation to Lunch

When? **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> April** noon-2.00pm

Where? Stansted Free Church Hall, Chapel Hill

Who can come? Everyone!

What is on the menu? Delicious home-made soup of many varieties and bread rolls

What does it cost? Well, it is a free lunch but, as there is proverbially no such thing, we will be asking for a donation for Christian Aid.

If possible, please let me know that you are coming, but if you forget, just turn up. There will be plenty of soup for everyone. See you there.



Catherine Dean  
Tel: 07803 299683

Email: [catherinemarydean@btinternet.com](mailto:catherinemarydean@btinternet.com)



## HATFIELD FOREST

[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hatfield-forest](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hatfield-forest)

April has arrived and spring is finally here! The forest is beginning to show signs of waking up after a tough and very wet winter. Leaves are unfolding and the beautiful blossoms on the trees are opening out to bring some welcome colour to the forest. Our opening hours have changed and the entrance gate car park is open Monday to Sunday 9.00am-4.00pm. We have also opened our grass car park to accommodate additional visitors.



At the time of writing, the ground conditions are still poor, causing erosion of the historic woodland rides; so if you come across a diversion, please follow it and discover a new route around the forest. The café will be serving a seasonal takeaway menu and offering a wide range of cold snacks as well as cold and hot beverages. You can admire the Shell House which has been restored to its former glory and walk around the boardwalk to enjoy the view across the lake and the multitude of wildlife awakening after the winter slumber.

Hannah Underwood  
Assistant Business Services Coordinator  
Tel: 870678

Email: [hannah.underwood@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:hannah.underwood@nationaltrust.org.uk)

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

### Let us spread the news of the historical Passion and Resurrection of Jesus

A friend of mine has recently travelled to live in Jerusalem for a few months in order to undertake his biblical studies at Ecole Biblique Library. Thinking of the current security situation from the news we are being given, I tried to dissuade my friend against taking such a move. However, he sent me a number of photos showing that Jerusalem was totally calm and peaceful as he and his colleagues were busy visiting some archaeological sites. I felt a sense of hope, in spite of the overwhelming current news of doom and gloom. I thought that surely the majority of ordinary people on the ground in the Holy Land want to live in peace and harmony. It is possible to find peace and to live in peace. Even though we are aware that currently life is dealing the people of the Holy Land some heavy blows, our eternal life with Christ remains certain and secure because we are united with him in his powerful victory over death, sin, and shame.

Doom and gloom await us all if we ignore the past, taking no lessons from it and despising the wisdom of our ancestors and disciples of faith in the risen Lord. God would like us to know the past so that we can appreciate and treasure more deeply the journey of our salvation. He wants us to spread the news of the historical Passion and Resurrection of Jesus and to know that he is always on our side in just the same way he was with our ancestors. The world-wide Easter celebrations allow us to trace our own spiritual heritage by thanking God for our spiritual ancestors, and recommitting ourselves to passing on God's truth to the next generation. I wish you all a happy and blessed Easter time, as I pray for your welfare.

Fr Clement Orango  
St Theresa's Catholic Church



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**Saturday** 5.15pm-5.45pm Confessions 6.00pm Mass  
**Sunday** 8.30am 10.00am  
**Wednesday** 12.30pm

**Baptisms** By appointment

Our Mass times can be subject to change so please refer to our website and newsletter for updated information, including weekday Masses. Confessions are at 5.15pm every Saturday before the Vigil Mass and by appointment.



**All enquiries: including Church Hall bookings** The Church Office, St John's Hall, St John's Road, Stansted CM24 8JP  
Tel: 815243 (with answerphone)  
Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10.00am-12 noon  
Email: [stansted.church.office@gmail.com](mailto:stansted.church.office@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.thefivechurches.org.uk](http://www.thefivechurches.org.uk)

**Priest in Charge** Rev'd Dr Colin Fairweather  
Tel: 816721  
Email: [revdrcolinfairweather@gmail.com](mailto:revdrcolinfairweather@gmail.com)

**Associate Priest** Rev'd Helen Flack  
Email: [revhelenstn@gmail.com](mailto:revhelenstn@gmail.com)

**Pastoral Assistant:** Kathryn West  
Tel: 816293  
Mobile: 07880 602717  
Email: [kewest@btinternet.com](mailto:kewest@btinternet.com)

**Director of Music** Anne Brooks  
Email: [anne.brooks22@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:anne.brooks22@yahoo.co.uk)

**Services** Family Communion (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday) 9.30am  
Holy Communion (2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Sundays) 9.30am





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Email: catherine@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

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

### Preachers for April

7<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Mike Dyer  
14<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Elizabeth Stockdale  
21<sup>st</sup> 10.30am Babs and Len Ward  
28<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Karen Quelch

We extend a warm welcome to anyone who would like to join us for worship, which is followed by a social time with coffee.



## 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 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month.



### From St John's Registers

#### February

##### Baptism

4<sup>th</sup> Eadee Rose Keighly-Farrell

##### Funeral

9<sup>th</sup> Grace Houghton, age 89 - at St Mary's



## FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

In my March article I mentioned the tree damage and branches down during recent storms; however that was not the only damage. I am pleased to say that it has all been



rectified now by the wonderful team at Lodges who are employed by The Churches Conservation Trust to undertake any maintenance needed. Scaffolding went up on the morning of 1<sup>st</sup> February and the men came that afternoon and the following morning to replace tiles on the roof. The scaffolding was gone by Friday afternoon. A few other little jobs inside were also on the list. We have a

quarterly inspection to check for any problems and I also keep a keen eye out.

Champing season resumed on 22<sup>nd</sup> March and we are now in our seventh year. Where does the time go? Many thanks to Sandra who responded to my request for plants for the churchyard and for helping me to plant them too, all 100 of them! We have a couple of visiting bell-ringing groups coming in April, so please listen out for them. There are lots of events planned for this year including Post Floyd Dream (a Pink Floyd tribute band), Nancy May, thisismytheatre performing *Five Children and It*, That Other Band and much more. I will advertise in plenty of time and tell you how to get tickets. It will be wonderful to see you all.



Lynda Dale  
Tel: 07716 099474

## ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Many congratulations to the winners of the February draw:

£100	No 154	Kathy West
£ 50	No 42	Anthony Minshull
£ 25	No 281	Elizabeth Jennings

The draw for April will be held on **28<sup>th</sup> April** in St John's Church, following the 9.30am service. 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 £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  
Email: jean733@btinternet.com

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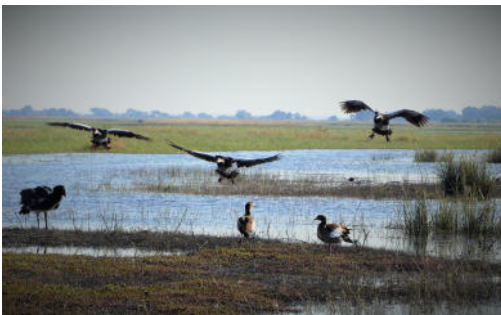
## BOTSWANA

This wonderful country is in Southern Africa, north of South Africa and south of Zimbabwe. It is sparsely populated in terms of humans, with 2.5 million in an area just over that of France. It has the world's largest population of elephants, 130,000. The Botswana government has been very clever with regard to managing its resources, especially its wildlife.

I have been there twice, as I had to return early from my trip in 2022 after contracting Covid (perhaps from Johannesburg airport). So I missed the place of greatest interest to me: the Okavango Delta. I eventually got there in 2023, and it was well worth the wait; the wilderness there is lush and teeming with wildlife. I stayed in a beautiful lodge overlooking the water. The sunny outdoor shower was located on an outside balcony, shielded by a bamboo fence, and was out of this world. We were warned not to leave our clothes outside on the balcony as monkeys steal them; they especially like wearing women's undergarments on their heads!



The guides are incredible: Chris, Lepps and Edwin are shown in the photo below. They are so knowledgeable, able to see the tiniest bird 100 m away hidden in a bush, and identify it, all the while hurtling along the dodgy trails in a jeep, trying to find the elusive cheetahs. As for the lions, we felt bad as we interrupted a very affectionate flirtation.



It is a truly fantastic country; every single Botswanan person I met was so very warm and friendly, nothing was too much trouble; and the wildlife is stunning.



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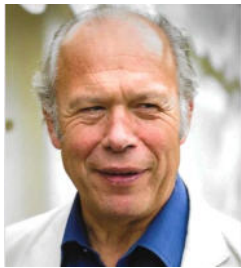


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Our next meeting is on **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April** at 10.40am in South Mill Arts, with coffee available from 10.00am. Donald Skeggs, lecturer, artist and author, will be speaking about



*Velazquez: The Great Magician of Art.* Although now not always acknowledged, this 17<sup>th</sup> Century Spanish artist is one of the most influential painters in the history of art. His portraiture was so successful that by the age of 24 he was the only artist permitted to paint the King of Spain. After his death, his skill was widely admired by generations of

artists from Whistler to Picasso, who famously described him as *The Great Magician of Art*. Guests are very welcome and we invite a donation of £7. Come and be entertained and enlightened. Please see our website for details. Our Membership Secretary is Jenny Savage, tel 656065 or email: info@tasbs.org.uk.

Mick Fitch  
Tel: 07885 484274  
Email: mick.fitch@btconnect.com

## WILLIAM RUFUS

I read the *End of the Saxons* article in the March issue of *The Link* with amusement and interest. I was born in Stansted, but have lived in the West Country now in Weymouth for 56 years and until Covid, I made fairly regular visits to see family in your area – hence my reading *The Link*, to which I still subscribe. I have some further information which *The Funky Chicken* might like in the next issue of the magazine.

On our regular drives along the A31 and M27 we often noticed a sign to Rufus Stone and one day out of curiosity made a detour. It is about two miles from the western end of the M27 and is situated at the edge of the New Forest. Amongst the trees is a substantial stone memorial to William Rufus who was killed in a hunting accident by an arrow in his eye. This struck us as rather a strange coincidence that he should have died in the same manner in

which his father despatched King Harold; after all the human eye is not exactly a large target. Not much is known about William Rufus. He was one of ten siblings, brought up in Normandy, and the third son so it was not expected that he would inherit a kingdom. However, the second son died after riding into a tree branch in a forest and when William the Conqueror died, so bad was his relationship with his eldest son that he gave England to his red-headed third son, William Rufus. During his reign, William Rufus designated ever-increasing areas of England as Royal Hunting Forests, and by 1088 that included the **whole** of the county of Essex.

Keith Eagleton  
Email: eaglesclan22@hotmail.com

The Bishop's Stortford Gospel Choir performed for the Club in early March with members enjoying the singing and joining in a few of the pieces. After our two-week Easter break we will restart on **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April** with a game of Clock Cricket, which is a new activity and one we are all looking forward to trying. 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



## RSPB

www.group.rspb.org.uk/stortvalley

This month our activities feature the wonderful Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) reserve at Welney near Wisbech. This takes in 1,000 acres of the northernmost part of the Ouse Washes and is Britain's largest area of seasonally-flooded land. With the changing seasons and water levels, the reserve always offers visitors something different to experience. For our monthly meeting on **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April** at 7.30pm, we welcome Tony Winchester to present *Welney Through the Seasons*. He is an excellent presenter who will give us a real insight into the four seasons at Welney and how the reserve changes through the year. We meet at Bishop's Park Community Centre, Lancaster Way, Bishop's Stortford CM23 4DA.

To complement the meeting, we plan to visit Welney on **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April**. This is a great place to visit with a main observatory, several hides and a visitor centre with café. With spring well under way and the reserve emerging from winter there should be plenty to see and enjoy. We are meeting at the WWT reserve at Hundred Foot Bank, Welney, Wisbech, PE14 9TN at 10.00 am. Please note an admission charge is payable.



Our midweek walk will bring April to a close. We meet on **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April** at 10.00 am near St John the Baptist, Ware Road, Widford, SG12 8RL. We plan to follow a circular route which incorporates the beautiful Ash Valley, excellent views of the countryside and the potential of seeing kestrels, red kites and kingfishers.

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

# Stansted Network

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS



## PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

*...with news of a potential boundary shift with significant implications for the parish, an update on election rules, fees at the village car parks and the fallout from "Bingate"*

The Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council has written to the Local Government Boundary Commission of England to outline their opposition to plans to redraw Stansted's electoral division at the county level.

The Commission carries out periodic reviews for local authorities into how best they can ensure the number of electors per councillor is as even as possible in their area. In 2023 they began a review for Essex County Council. Draft proposals to achieve "electoral equality" across the county have been published. They include increasing the number of county councillors by 3 to 78. This in turn requires the creation of eight new electoral divisions and the reshaping of electoral boundaries in all but five of the existing 70 divisions.

### Boundary changes could spell trouble

Currently Stansted Mountfitchet's county electoral division sees the village sectioned with parishes it has strong ties with, namely Henham and Elsenham. The Commission's draft proposals would change that. They recommend Stansted be separated divisionally from Elsenham and Henham. Instead, Stansted risks being joined with the likes of Chrishall and Langley, parishes in northwest Essex we have few shared interests with.

### If it's not broken...

We depend on our neighbours to manage issues that impact on our community. Take the issue of HGV traffic in Stansted. Essex Highways have mulled re-routing of trucks, away from the village to Elsenham's roads. If this were to happen, it would only do so by the two parishes' agreement and co-operation. Being divided into separate wards with different elected representatives at the county level will not help in this regard.

The set up of the current electoral division serves us well. Historically Stansted has worked effectively with Henham and Elsenham. Together we have fought for better libraries and fended off speculative developments. Each year our communities are ever more closely intertwined. We use one another's services, shops, and sports facilities. Just this month Elsenham's GP practice has merged with the Stansted Surgery.

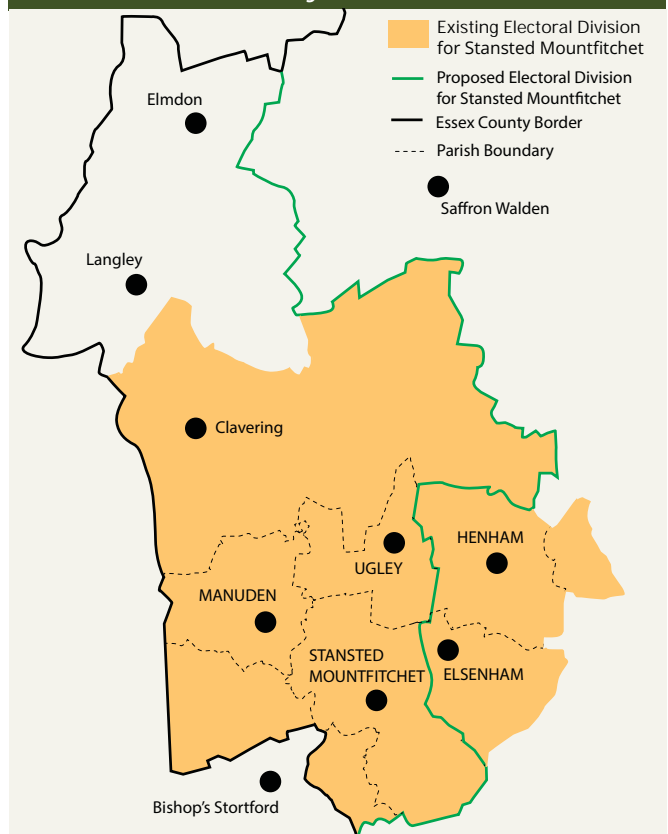
As we said in our letter to the Commission: "Removing

Stansted from Elsenham and Henham will dilute the influence we currently have to address mutual issues... The proposals will damage the existing and strong partnership between the three parish councils, and seriously impede the effectiveness of the governance at this local level in this part of the Uttlesford district."

### Decision in June

The Boundary Commission is currently considering our reply along with the comments submitted to them by the public and other local authorities as part of their consultation which ended in February. Their recommendations will be announced on 4 June.

## Draft Proposals for Electoral Division: Stansted Mountfitchet - 2024



## POSTAL VOTING in 2024

With a general election getting closer—one must be held before 28 January 2025—the Election Commission have issued new rules governing the handling of postal votes in an effort to limit the potential for voter fraud. Election campaigners are now banned from handling postal votes on behalf of others. Exceptions include handling their own postal votes, those of close family members, or someone they provide regular care for.

### Rules & Restrictions

- Anyone taking postal votes to a polling station can hand in no more than FIVE. If you exceed the limit all postal votes you handle will be rejected.
- A 'return of postal voting documents' form needs to be filled in by anyone handing in a postal vote, along with a declaration they are not a campaigner
- Postal votes 'left behind' at a polling station will not be accepted
- Postal votes will only be accepted if handed in personally at Uttlesford District Council, London Road, Saffron Walden CB11 4ER. Postal votes left in the council's mailbox will be rejected.
- Trying to find out how someone voted when completing their postal vote is also now an offence. Communicating how a postal voter voted is also one too.

### Penalties

Mishandling postal votes could see you fined and/or imprisoned for up to two years. On an upbeat note, if you miss the post, you can still have a postal vote handed in at a polling station (or at the UDC office) before 10pm on a polling day. You can read more about the rules governing Postal Voting on our website.

## ELECTION OF PFCC

Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex Roger Hirst was elected to the role in May 2016 on a platform promising to "crack down on anti-social behaviour, protect children and vulnerable people, deal with gangs and serious violence, as well as improve road safety." You will be able to decide whether Mr Hirst has been as good as his word, or whether it is best to put someone else in his place, on May 2. Polling stations are as follows and your polling card tells you which one you must go to:

### STANSTED NORTH

- St John's Church Hall, St John's Road, Stansted
- The Mountfitchet Exchange, Crafton Green, Chapel Hill, Stansted

### STANSTED SOUTH & BIRCHANGER

- St Mary's Church Hall, Birchanger Lane, Birchanger
- St Mary's CofE Foundation Primary School, Hampton Road, Stansted

Doors open at 7am and close at 10pm. For details about the election and the candidates vying for the £90,000-a-year post, head to [essex.pfcc.police.uk](https://essex.pfcc.police.uk)

Lastly on the election front (for now!), if you are interested in assisting with this election or future polls find out more about paid casual election staff positions for our area, such as being a Poll Clerk or Counting Assistant at <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6232/Casual-election-staff>



- ### HIGHWAYS UPDATE
- **PARKING FEES** At a Highways sub-committee meeting in February the Parish Council were updated on Uttlesford District Council plans for their two car parks in Stansted. Disappointingly, parking fees are to nearly double to £1.20 for 1hr, while the cost of an annual season ticket will rise to £450, up from £250.
  - **LONG-STAY PARKING** The Economic & Business Development Group (which is made up of the Parish Council Chair, members of the local business community, and Uttlesford's Business Support team) along with district councillors have got UDC to reverse their decision to cull long-stay spaces at the Crafton Green Car Park, a move that would have impacted on businesses along Cambridge Road.
  - **LOWER STREET CAR PARK SMPC** has written to Cllr Neil Hargreaves of UDC requesting a configuration and capacity survey for the Lower Street car park as more cars are using it since the opening of the Peacock Pharmacy.
  - **VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS** A request has gone into the district council for charging points to be located in the Lower Street Car park and the JET petrol station. UDC had invited the Parish Council for its views on the matter.
  - **POTHLES** Essex County Cllr Ray Gooding has been asked for a list of potholes that ECC are aware of, and to provide a list on a monthly basis of the ones they have attended to so residents can be kept informed of progress on this front.
  - **CHICANES** Essex County Cllr Gooding has formally requested Essex Highways remove the chicanes on Church Road. For this to happen an Essex Highways' safety review will need to be undertaken. This could take time.

## DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS



Reporting to the Full Council at the end of February, District Councillor Geoffrey Sell noted that the fallout from “Bingate” at Uttlesford District Council rumbles on. An interim transport operator’s licence has now been issued to the local authority. This has allowed them to resume running a waste service. For now.

### Bingate

It was also reported Uttlesford has had to invest in three new refuse trucks at a cost of £885,000 to get the service back on track. They have also committed to an additional bin round (£137,000) and frozen green waste charges in light of their waste collection woes. Uttlesford has, in addition, revealed that it has paid £90,000 to Braintree Council and Widdington Waste for collecting rubbish on their behalf while the service was disrupted.

### Green Grants for Stansted

Thousands of pounds in green investment is coming the village’s way in 2024. UDC have announced the names of three local recipients of their Zero Carbon Communities Grants. Sustainable Stansted is to receive £3,910. The environmental group is to use the money to fund a biodiversity study and pay for energy saving leaflets to be handed out to Stansted residents. Meanwhile, the Parish Council is to receive £2,112 in funding. This will help pay for wildflower seeding projects due to start over summer. The third beneficiary is Stansted Tennis Club who are to invest £17,760 of grant money into LED floodlighting.

### Business Support

The Uttlesford Business Support Team continues to run free advice sessions from the Mountfitchet Exchange on the second Friday of the month (10am-1pm). The team can point you in the direction of several funding opportunities such as the Low Carbon Workplace Grant (£500 to £5000 in match funding to help you cut your carbon footprint). They are also keen to highlight opportunities to get your business the advice and help it needs to scale and grow. For example, there’s the West Essex Business support programme.

## Council Tax Rate 2024/5

### Stansted Mountfitchet

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For a Band D property



ECC: Essex County Council, Police & Fire Service funding is under the responsibility of the Police Fire & Crime Commissioner, UDC: Uttlesford District Council, SMPC: Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council

This programme provides access to expert one-to-one advice specifically tailored to your business, workshops aimed at opening new opportunities for business development, and offers networking and engagement opportunities within the West Essex business community. Contact the business support team via the district council’s website: <https://business.uttlesford.gov.uk>. Alternatively call the West Essex Business Support Programme directly on 01279 311465.

## COUNTY COUNCIL NEWS

Essex County Cllr Ray Gooding recently reported a booking system for waste and recycling centres across the county is to become permanent. Bookings were trialled in 2023 and a consultation was held to assess support for the system. It had been noted booking a time slot ahead of using a recycling centre had been unpopular with residents in Saffron Walden, and Stansted residents were likely to use Hertfordshire Council’s Bishop’s Stortford site, where online registration is not required.

## Parish Litter Pick 2024



We will be giving the village a spring clean this month for the Parish Council’s Annual Litter Pick. We say ‘annual’ but pandemics and local elections blotted it from our calendar for a couple of years. However, we are glad to be back at it in 2024. If you would like to join us in tidying the village, meet us outside the Day Centre/Library on Saturday, April 27th at 10am where you will be greeted by participating councillors who will be issuing you with refuse bags and pickers, before heading out with you across the village to bag litter. The pick will end at noon, after which you are welcome to join us in the library at the Mountfitchet Exchange for a warm cuppa and biscuits.



## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET PARISH COUNCIL

### STAFF

Clerk Ruth Clifford Deputy Clerk Emma Philbrick  
**Committee & Projects Officer** Laila Azure-Marxen  
**Communications Officer** Dan Schlanker  
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### PARISH COUNCILLORS

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alanbarnes@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk  
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cllrSELL@uttlesford.gov.uk  
**Tom van de BILT** ☎ 07710426850  
tomvandebilt@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

### PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings begin at 7.30pm at the Mountfitchet Exchange at on the days shown. If you wish to attend virtually, look for Zoom details in the agenda documents on our website:

**April 3** Windmill Sub-committee

**April 10** Full Council

**April 17** Open Spaces

**April 24** Highways Sub-committee

### UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

**Alan DEAN**  
☎ 813579 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 **April 25, 11am-12pm**, The Co-op, **April 26 5-6pm**

### 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 our reception for details.

**Peabody Trust** run a drop-in service on **Thursday, April 4** 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

The district council's garden waste recycling services will see a waste truck in the Lower Street Car Park on Sundays **April 14 & 28 from 12.30pm to 4.30pm**.

### 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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## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

www.stanstedwindmill.co.uk

Hopefully you are reading this before the Easter weekend so still have time to plan a visit to the mill on **Easter Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March** or **Easter Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April** 1.30pm-5.30pm, with the last entry at 5.00pm There will be an Easter Egg Hunt for the youngsters which is a fun way for them to explore the mill. There is a small chocolate treat for each child and all the completed entries are entered in a draw to win the Golden Egg. Entry: adults £2.00, children 50p. We will also be open on **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April** at the same times.



The number of people who sign up for membership of the Millers is a tiny proportion of the population of Stansted. They recognise that the mill is an iconic landmark in the village for which they have a genuine fondness and want to ensure that it is properly conserved for future generations to enjoy. We are demonstrating our love of the mill by displaying a window sticker which has been produced for us by Absolute UK Signs. All members receive a free sticker or you can buy one from the mill on open days for £1. We also have a range of mill goods including tea towels, fridge magnets, mugs and sweatshirts. All proceeds go towards our conservation projects.



Our race night will be on **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April** at 7.30pm in the Day Centre. Tickets are £5 and numbers are limited to 50. Call Richard on 813871 to book your place before they are all taken. Please bring your own refreshments.

Trevor Lloyd  
Tel: 07739 428352

Email: info@stanstedwindmill.co.uk



## RECYCLING



### We are still collecting spectacles

Yes, we are still collecting spectacles with or without cases, along with ink cartridges (**not** toners), stamps, mobile phones, ipads and tablets (**not** laptops). Please make sure all personal data has been erased; 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. There is also a collecting box inside St John's church. Alternatively, please leave items in the porch of 7 Blythwood Gardens. *Sadly we can no longer recycle blister packs or dental products so please do not leave these at the church.*

A reminder that there are two organisations which refurbish laptops or printers and donate to schools and charities; both will collect from you free of charge. Contact Cambridge Recycling Centre on 01223 473875 email: sales@cambridge-computer-recycling.co.uk or Townstech in Harlow tel 898240 www.townstech.co.uk.

### Aldi and Co-op Packaging

A reminder that Aldi in Bishop's Stortford will accept the following: crisp packets, pet food pouches, plastic film, sweet wrappers, plastic bags, biscuit wrappers and bread bags. Stansted Co-op also has a collection point near the entrance for vegetable, fruit and bread bags, crisp packets and biscuit wrappers. Please note *that we are not collecting on behalf of Aldi or the Co-op so please do not bring these items to the church.*



Marion and Mike Dyer  
Tel: 814059

Email: recycle@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

## BRAIN TRAINING

### How your Socks can help your Sore Throat

The sock needs to be very soft to the touch. You simply wrap it around your sore throat and shortly the pain will subside. No extra expense and much better for you than any pain killer. Why on earth would this work? No, it is not an April Fools' joke!



Sensations from the skin run up to the brain; there are different types of sensations, some nice and some nasty. They each have their own lines of communication with the brain, and travel there at different speeds. Nasty sensations – posh name: *nociception* – travel more slowly than the nice ones. So

the sensation arising from something lovely and soft around the throat will beat the sensations coming from the irritated tissues in the throat. An example of this is when swimming in the sea and you feel your leg brush against something firm. When you get out of the water, you see a much bigger scrape on your poor leg than you felt whilst swimming, the sensation of the water travelling faster to the brain than that of banging your leg against the rock. Of course, if we are going to work, the sock will need to co-ordinate with our clothes, or else we would look silly.

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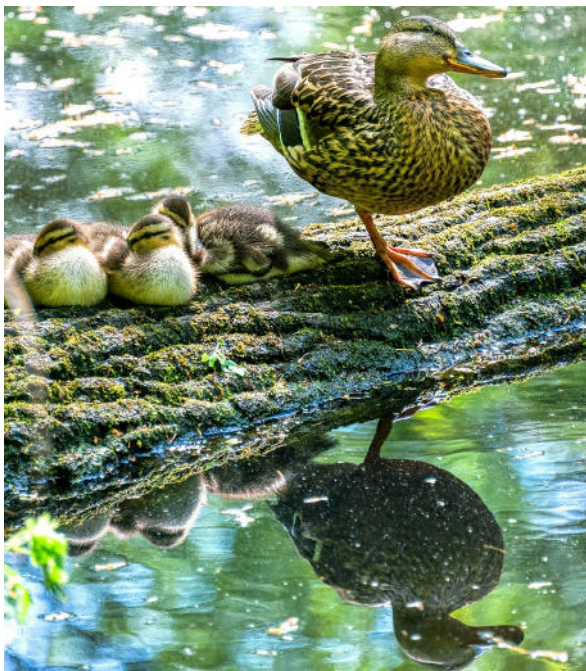
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## LOCAL WALKS

From where I live in Stansted, there are two beautiful walks within five minutes of my house. One is the Aubrey Buxton Nature Reserve, featured on our front cover this month. We are very grateful to John Welham, who is the reserve's warden, for his recent articles. He is not sending one this month, so I am writing this to thank him and his team for the hard work they do to keep the reserve in good shape. Last month, John described how they tackled a large tree which had grown across a pond. There is very little litter within the reserve; litter is the scourge of our times and is to be seen far too often in local woods and fields, so it is very pleasant to see a litter-free area, thanks to John and his team. They are also the only people who actually remove those hideous and ubiquitous grey cylinders around new tree twigs. It seems that once in place, they stay; no-one ever comes to clear them away once they have done their job; they come loose and cause massive plastic pollution. So, thank you to John and his team for being so responsible and sensible about the dreadful plastic cylinders. The picture below, taken by Mick Fitch, shows some adorable young mallard ducklings and their proud mum in Aubrey Buxton.



The other very enjoyable walk close by is the Permissive Paths area. Photos of it graced our cover in February and March. Thanks so much to whoever made these paths available. They are surrounded by lovely trees and small lakes, and are getting more and more beautiful as the trees grow into maturity.

Ed

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### Walking Challenges

This is the year of walking challenges for Grove Cottage. Whether it is taking on the Yorkshire Three Peaks, walking backwards or achieving a set distance with friends, we have been lucky enough to have people take on these challenges for us, raising much needed funds.

**Yorkshire Three Peaks 4<sup>th</sup> May** We are delighted that Lee Cranmer and his Dad, Keith, are taking part. They have already smashed their original fundraising target of £600 and are now aiming to raise £1,000.



**Helping Hands** A huge thank you to five friends, Hannah, Lisa, Nat, Sara and Su, who walked 12 miles as part of the Helping Herts match-funded challenge. They completed it in just under four hours, raising almost £550!

**Walking Backwards** Recently you might have seen 12 people, walking through Bishop's Stortford backwards. A huge thank you to the businesses and individuals who raised £400: Jim Tatchell, Genmar IT trio James, Ellis and Oliver, Rita from Chaldean Estate, Graeme Smith, Jackie Amos-Smith, Mike Beatty, Sally Booth, Stort Group MD Richard Gilkes, Maggie Jarman, Carys, Dominic Tatchell, Bill and Carole Macdonald, Clare Burgess and her sister, Susie Murat.

**May Walk** Jim and Gordon from *Helping Herts* are challenging themselves to walk six marathons over two weeks, and Grove Cottage will be joining them on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May**. If you would like to join us, please email Alison on [fundraising@mencapgrovecottage.org](mailto:fundraising@mencapgrovecottage.org).

Sarah Smith  
Tel: 651908

Email: [comms@mencapgrovecottage.org](mailto:comms@mencapgrovecottage.org)

## STANSTED IS WELL READ

The next meeting of our book club will be on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> April** at 8.00pm in the Dog and Duck, Lower Street where we will be discussing last month's book choice *The Starless Sea* by Erin Morgenstern who also wrote *The Night Circus*. Described as speculative fiction, this is the story of Zachary Rawlins who stumbles upon a mysterious book containing details from his own life among its pages. It leads him on an underground quest unlike any other. The book is almost 500 pages with very tiny print, and will be a challenge for our members! Please do get in touch if you would like to join us. A warm welcome awaits.



Diana Griffin  
Tel: 813056

Email: [stanstediswellread@gmail.com](mailto:stanstediswellread@gmail.com)

It has been another action-packed term at our school. We held a rock band assembly and workshops for all year groups, where pupils were given the chance to experience playing in a rock band, using a range of different instruments. Year 5 pupils took part in an Ancient Greek day, where they donned appropriate costumes and were visited by *Penaelaus* who shared lots of interesting information about battles of those times, including armour and weapons that would have been used. The pupils also completed activities including a quiz, an Archimedes puzzle and Petteia, a strategy game involving stones.

Year 4 pupils took part in a public speaking event organised by schools in our local collaborative challenge cluster. The theme was *Environmental Issues*, and our four representatives, Esther, Isaac, Noah and Ryver, created and shared their presentation about the pink river dolphin. This links to the current classroom theme of learning which is *Exploring the Amazon*. This particular, lesser-known creature is the second most endangered animal in the Amazon Rainforest. They all presented with great maturity and were a credit to our school.



*World Book Day*

We also held our annual enterprise event, where all classes made and sold products based on the theme of *space*. There was a range of merchandise, such as nebula jars, pop up aliens, Frisbee flying saucers, rockets and space bookmarks, with all money raised donated to charities chosen by the pupils. We held *Mothers' Day lunches*, where during the course of two weeks more than a hundred mums came and joined their child for a school lunch and some lunchtime play on the playground. Finally, the whole school took part in *World Book Day*, which once again involved lots of reading activities and some amazing book character costumes from the pupils.

David Rogers  
Headteacher  
Tel: 813626

## QUIZ ANSWERS

1 Melbourne 2 Crash 3 Mercury 4 AB+ 5 Number 13  
6 Rotterdam 7 64 8 Wembley 9 Aubergine 10 UA  
11 Mercury 12 Blue whale 13 Gluten  
14 Wolf 15 Debbie Harry



## THE PLACE ON THE HILL

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Winter is on the way out, but we are still the go-to place if you are in need of company or just want to get out of the house. Join us for free coffee, cakes and biscuits in friendly company on **Wednesdays 10.00am-noon** and save on your home's energy bills. We also 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. There is limited parking behind the church. Adults of all ages are welcome. 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

Email: theplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk



## STANSTED FOOTBALL CLUB

www.spartansouthmidlandsleague.co.uk

Our First Team play the final month of the current season confident that we have achieved our goal, to retain our Step 5 status in the National League structure. This in spite of the ridiculous decision to relocate the Club to the Spartan South Midlands League. Travelling time and expense for the players were issues that the Club Committee and Team Management faced on a weekly basis. Full credit goes to all our volunteers and loyal players who have worked tirelessly to ensure that the village still has a football club to be proud of. However, we now face a close season while we will await the Football Association (FA) Leagues Committee decision on whether we remain in the Spartan League or go back to the Essex Senior League. It is very frustrating as it delays our planning for next season.

On a more positive note, the Club's Youth Section continues to grow; we now have three age groups playing Eastern Junior Alliance football and our first new mini soccer team at under 9s. Our youth team coaches will always be looking out for new players and trials will be arranged during the close season.

Finally, you will recall I mentioned that the Club was planning a special reunion of our FA Vase winning team who 40 years ago brought home this national trophy after winning the final at Wembley. **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April** is the date and we extend an open invitation to come along to our Clubhouse and share your memories of that great day. Please look out on our social media websites for more details.

### Fixtures at Hargrave Park in April

4 <sup>th</sup> v Shefford Town & Compton	Kick Off 7.45pm
6 <sup>th</sup> v Baldock Town	Kick Off 3.00pm
13 <sup>th</sup> v Leverstock Green	Kick Off 3.00pm
20 <sup>th</sup> v Crawley Green	Kick Off 3.00pm



Tom Williams  
Tel: 07921 403842

In February Louise Chalk, one of our Committee members, organised a Remembrance Evening at the Club for Ollie Toms, our much-missed tennis coach who sadly passed away aged 35 last September. A Red Robin tree was planted in the gardens behind the courts together with a plaque in memory of Ollie. The main purpose of the evening was to give the young players coached by Ollie an opportunity to express how they felt about him; many of them wrote personal messages for a remembrance book. Ollie's parents and wife also attended the event.



The plaque reads:

*In loving memory of our wonderful coach and good friend.  
You were taken too soon, but will stay in our hearts forever.  
Ollie Toms 2 June 1988 to 6 October 2023*

The AGM was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Fiona O'Brien, Caroline Mott and Debbie Lane stepped down from the Committee and were replaced by three new Committee members, David Murfitt, Fiona Kelly and Louise Chalk. All other Committee members remained in place. It was confirmed that junior tennis coaching was re-commencing for various age groups. The coaches will be Dan Warwick and Phil Dillon, assisted when required by Martyn Taplin and James Thorpe. In addition, Phil will be running adult coaching sessions on Thursday evenings. All details can be found on our website. Dan will run blocks of six-week taster sessions on Sundays 8.30am-9.30am alternately for adults and juniors. This will be part of the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) Park Volunteer scheme and will be free of charge. At the same meeting, Chairman Jamie Hogg announced that the Club has been granted funding from central Government as part of the wider levelling up agenda through the Rural England Prosperity Fund for conversion of court flood-lighting to LED. This will reduce carbon footprint and also reduce energy consumption. More on this in next month's edition.

Debbie Lane  
Email: [contact@stanstedtennisclub.co.uk](mailto:contact@stanstedtennisclub.co.uk)

Alisha Maxin will be the activator for our *All Stars* cricket for children aged 5-8 which begins on **Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May 5.30pm** at our Stansted House ground. Alisha was a junior at the Club for a few years and now works at Essex County Cricket Club as a community coach. If you are interested in getting your youngster into these sessions you need to register on the [www.ecb.co.uk](http://www.ecb.co.uk) website. Juniors have been netting indoors since just after Christmas and will move outside in mid to late April. Funding has been secured for the junior section during the winter months.

The senior teams will begin league cricket on **Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May** with the 1<sup>st</sup> XI at Hockerill, the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI at home to Hockerill II, and the newly formed 3<sup>rd</sup> XI away against Takeley II. Weather permitting friendly matches will take place before the league begins.

We will be holding a Club v Legends match on **Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> June** to celebrate 50 years at our Stansted House ground. The match will be followed by a hog roast and drinks. We are hoping that up to 150 Club members, old members, friends of the Club and Vice Presidents will attend. As ever new members are very welcome; please contact me as below. To finish with a nursery rhyme; *Rain, rain, go away, come again some other day, we want to go outside to play, come again some other day.* Roll on summer!



David Brown  
Tel: 831011 Mob: 07788 999663  
Email: [david1.r.brown@gmail.com](mailto:david1.r.brown@gmail.com)

**STANSTED BOWLS CLUB**

[www.stanstedbowlingclub.co.uk](http://www.stanstedbowlingclub.co.uk)



North-West Essex Bowls Association have released the matches for singles, pairs and triples and we are proud to say that many of our players have entered into these. All are played on a knock-out basis which makes it exciting to watch. As the matches are arranged, I will post the details so that you can come along and see the fun. We will also be playing in the North-West Essex Division 2 league on a Wednesday evening, with senior matches usually on Thursday afternoons. The ladies' league games are on Thursdays and Fridays, plus there are the usual friendly games at the weekends. We have a covered veranda and a subsidised members' bar so you can sit outside and enjoy the match banter as well as the competitions with glass in hand. If you fancy being part of a friendly club which offers all of the above plus other activities for you to get involved in, then contact me and I will answer your questions and get you started. Please see our website for further details.

Peter Beattie  
Hon Secretary  
Tel: 07850 329192  
Email: [peterdavidbeattie@gmail.com](mailto:peterdavidbeattie@gmail.com)

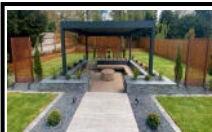


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## DIRECTORY OF LOCAL CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS

Beaver Scouts Age 6-8	Angela Madigan Tel: 01371 513028	St Clare Hospice	Rebecca Day Email: info@stclarehospice.org.uk
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
Brownies (Wed)	Susan Scott Tel: 810955	Stansted Badminton Club	Vince Tel: 07793 000107
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)	Ben Sammons Tel: 07852 510330 Email: bensammons3178@gmail.com
Cub Scouts Age 8-10½	Emma Croutcher Email: croutchere@gmail.com	(Juniors)	Keith Ayres Tel: 814471
Explorer Scouts	Paul Thorneycroft Tel: 01371 876784	Stansted Football Club	Tom Williams Tel: 07921 403842
Friends of St Mary's Church	Lynda Dale Tel: 07716 099474 Email: lynnydale@hotmail.com	Stansted Hall and Elsenham Cricket Club	David Brown Tel: 831011/07788 999663 Email: david1.r.brown@gmail.com
Garden Club	Maralyn Harris Tel: 07919 478144	Stansted Social Club	Andrew Sharpe Tel: 812992 Email: stanstedclub@gmail.com
Grove Cottage	Sarah Smith Email: comms@mencapgrovecottage.org	Stansted Sparks Netball	Gemma Snelling Tel: 07894 944242 Email: gemmasnelling@me.com
Guides	Jennifer Jarvis Tel: 814434	Stansted Speed Watch	Warren Vickers Tel: 813996 Email: vickersw@aol.com
Helpline	Tel: 07704 553727	Stansted Tennis Club	Debbie Lane Tel: 07870 971983 Email: debbieglane@gmail.com
History Society	Roger Barrett Tel: 814216 Email: rmbarrrett54@gmail.com	Talking Newspaper (BS and District)	Richard Barnett Tel: 651270 Email: familybarnett24@hotmail.com
Human Roots	Keiran Oliver Tel: 07946 783039 Email: keiran@humanrootscommunity.org.uk	The Hundred Parishes Society	Ken McDonald Tel: 813226 Email:hundredparishes@btinternet.com
Huw Johnson Club	Ellen Brooks Tel: 07800 896516 Email: ellenbrooks@hotmail.co.uk	TouchPoint	Shirley Johnson Tel: 07572 114882 Email: info@thetouchpoint.org
Let's Talk, Stansted Mental Health Support	Richard Haywood Tel: 07794 268208 Email: contact@stanstedmentalhealth.org	Town Twinning	Chairman: Geraldine Allars Tel: 07833 089298 Email: twinning@stansted.net
Little Scrummers	Andrew Poyser Tel: 07738 591232	u3a	Susan Sedgbeer Email: bertiestar@gmail.com
Millers (Windmill)	Tudor Owen Tel: 810805 Email: info@stanstedwindmill.co.uk	WI (Stansted)	Linda Gurr Tel: 07743 549241
music@stansted (Classical concerts)	Sonia Levy Tel: 815282 Email: contactus@musicatstansted.co.uk	WI (Ugley)	Dorothy Wallace Tel: 850215
Neighbourhood Watch	Linzi Shelford Tel: 07427 377118 Email: linzishelford@hotmail.com	Youth Centre	Essex Youth Services Tel: 07584 140507
Parkinson's UK Uttlesford Support Group	Simon Russell Tel: 01799 524638 Email: simonrussell2@tiscali.co.uk		
Rainbow Pre-School	Gill Pursglove Tel: 814242/ 07966 506997 Email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net		
Rainbows (Fri)	Sue Pollard Tel: 813734		
Rotary Club	Peter Latham Tel: 881607 Email: stortvalleyrotary@gmail.com		

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](mailto: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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