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### Front cover

Fox on the Permissive Paths

by James Bashford

Enhanced by Paul Burt Photography

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 May**. 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

What a joy it must have been, coming across such a beautiful fox while out walking, and managing to take such a stunning photo of it! Many thanks to James Bashford for taking this, and to his wife Suzi for sending it to us, which she did very secretively. James had no idea that she had sent it in; the first he would have known about it was seeing it as our cover picture! It makes for an unusual and enchanting front cover. On to a less happy note: we are so sorry to hear that the Mountfitchet Garden Club is to close, after 40 years in existence. Over the years, the Club has hosted many fine and inspirational speakers, and we thank you so much for the service the Club has provided to the garden lovers in the community. On a very important community matter, please see Stansted Airport Watch on p7 and p20 and 21 of the Stansted Network pages; the Manchester Airport Group, which owns the airport, is trying to increase night flights to an insane and hugely intrusive level. Everyone in the community is invited to have their say on the matter.

We welcome two new contributors to the magazine this month: Rob Wakefield has created a vineyard called the Gunyah Vineyard. The name is an indigenous Australian word meaning dome-like shelter made of tree branches. We all wish you the best of luck with this enterprise, Rob; see p27 for his article. The other new writer is Kevin Hancock, who is a bee expert, focusing on natural beekeeping. His article, plus a gorgeous photo, is on p3.

Ed



[www.stanstedbusinessforum.com](http://www.stanstedbusinessforum.com)

We had a good meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> April at the King's Arms, which is our new venue. The millers gave an interesting talk about the windmill which has been part of the Stansted skyline since 1787. It is a Grade II\* listed Tower Mill England which is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It has been restored and can turn by wind. The Stansted Millers are a group of volunteers who look after and look out for the mill. By the early 1940s the mill had become neglected and a campaign was launched to raise funds to preserve it for future generations. It was successful and the members of that first fundraising effort formed the group that has evolved into today's millers. The windmill is funded by a number of sources including the Parish Council, entrance fees, fundraising events and other grants and donations. All businesses are welcome to go to the windmill.



We would also like to congratulate our secretary, James Garrett, who has a video production company HNE media, on winning the marketing champion prize at a celebration and networking event at Saffron Hall. We look forward to seeing you at our next business meeting on **Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May** 7.00am-9.00am at the Kings Arms. Please contact James Garrett, email: [hello@stanstedbusinessforum.com](mailto:hello@stanstedbusinessforum.com) to book your place.



Iris Evans  
Treasurer



## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET u3a

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

In March, Ed Fairey, Essex County Organiser for the National Garden Scheme (NGS) entertained the Garden Group with the history of the scheme. He described how it came into being, why it has always supported nursing charities, and how in its foundation year (1928), it raised over £8,000 for the Queen's Nursing Institute. Since 1980, when it became independent of the institute, it has benefited a wider range of health charities, including Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie, Hospice UK, The Carers' Trust and Parkinson's UK. In May the Garden Group will continue its own support of the NGS with a visit to *The Mount* in Roydon which opens to visitors under the scheme.

Whether birds evolved flight to descend from the trees or to ascend from the ground will be the first question to be tackled at the Saturday Seminar on **11<sup>th</sup> May**. Mike Howgate MSc FLS will discuss two controversies on the Evolution of Flight: *How Birds Fly* and *The Dinosaur Bird Link*. Sometimes known as Dr Dinosaur, Mike is the General Secretary and Chairman of the Amateur Geological Society of North London and is a member of the Linnean Society of London. In the first part of the seminar he will look at the evolution of flight; he will then discuss the prevalent theory amongst paleontologists that birds arose from a group of Theropod dinosaurs.

At the General Meeting on **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May** we look forward to enjoying a performance from singer, songwriter and musician, Saffron Summerfield. Her career has gone from live performance on TV and on John Peel's radio show to tours abroad, playing blues guitar alongside black musicians in the Mississippi cotton fields. Her performance entitled *Milton Keynes to Mississippi* will feature different styles of guitar from classical to blues.

Susan Sedgebeer  
Email: [stanstedu3a@gmail.com](mailto:stanstedu3a@gmail.com)

## u3a CHOIR CONCERT

Our choir is holding a concert on **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May** at 7.00pm in St Theresa's Parish Centre. Tickets priced £5 are available from Suzanne tel 07732 627382. We will be singing songs of *Love, Peace and Gratitude*. The aim of the concert is to raise funds to cover the cost of a new boiler at the church.

Eileen Quinn

## NATURAL BEEKEEPING

In the recent past, there was a regular article on honeybees and pollinators in this publication, which was always relevant to what was happening around us. I would like to pick up the baton and carry on with this. I do natural beekeeping, and as such I not only follow what is happening with conventional farmed honeybees but also wild and feral honeybees – ones that were once kept but have now escaped. My first experience of beekeeping was helping with bees when I was ten years old on a farm in Africa. I then discovered a book and in it was a section on *bee lining*, the old system of hunting bees. So I started hunting bees, not for the kill, but for the adventure of the hunt, and the satisfaction of finding a wild colony. This hobby continued when I came to Stansted over a decade ago. I have kept bees in the conventional way, in framed box hives as well as Kenyan Top Bar hives, which were invented by Canadians for Africans.

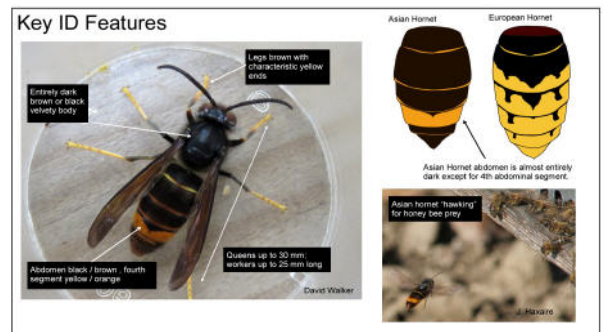


The honeybees here have overwintered well. If you know of a wild hive, you will now see them flying with great enthusiasm as the days get longer and warmer, and plants get more flowers. If you had crocus out earlier this month you would have seen honeybees and bumble bees but few pollenating flies and wasps. That is because they are either eggs or still hibernating. As honeybees cannot hibernate, they need to take advantage as soon as possible to replenish their food supplies as we go into summer. Planting flowers for summer helps all pollinators, but if you can plant early and late flowering plants which are honeybee specific, this is where you can have the biggest impact on their success. If you would like to know which plants, my advice is to have a chat with Ed from Langthorns.

Kevin Hancock  
Email: thebigflyin@gmail.com

### Public are urged to join fight against destructive species

- Local beekeepers are calling on the public to help spot and report yellow-legged Asian hornet sightings
- The destructive insect poses a huge threat to our pollinators, including honeybees
- More UK nests were discovered in 2023 than in the previous six years combined
- The annual estimated losses to the economy in the UK if the Asian hornet becomes established is estimated to be in excess of £30-45 million
- The Non-Native-Species Secretariat calculate that if the UK lost all its pollinators, not just honeybees, it would cost the economy £440 million per year or about 13% of the UK's income from farming.



### A devastating recent history

A single Asian hornet queen imported in a consignment of pottery from China into France in 2004, has quickly spread across Western Europe. The hornet preys on a wide range of insect pollinators, disrupting the significant ecological role they provide. It has altered the biodiversity in France and can be a health risk to those who have allergies to hornet or wasp stings. In 2023, the number of hornets in the UK increased dramatically to 78 nests in 56 different locations, with Kent and the South East most predominantly affected. The Asian hornet is predominantly black with an orange segment on its abdomen and yellow lower legs.

The public are being urged to stay vigilant and encouraged to report any suspected sightings on the Asian Hornet Watch app, which is available to download on iOS and Android, using this QR code.



*Reporting a possible sighting of an Asian hornet is quick, free, and easy and has the potential to make a huge difference in the fight against this invasive species.*

Further information including how to identify Asian hornets, and the latest updates, can be found on these websites: [www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk) and [www.nationalbeeunit.com](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com).

Simon Rice  
Asian Hornet Coordinator  
Bishop's Stortford Beekeepers Association



## BEHIND THE SCENES

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

### The Community Garden

I would like to tell readers about the Touchpoint Community Garden located at the back of the Crafton Green Centre. In the spring of 2021, when many of us had been locked down without access to outdoor space, some of the first Touchpoint volunteers got together with the mission of turning the unloved garden into a safe and welcoming space, which could be enjoyed by everyone in the community. After many bags of brambles were removed, volunteers planted flowers, formed beds, installed pergolas, along with raised planters and lots of seating, so that today the garden is often filled with families enjoying a cuppa from the café or with fitness classes using the space to exercise. Not everyone realises that the garden is meant for everyone, whether you want a place to let children run around after a trip to the library, or somewhere to catch a few rays during your lunch break.



You do not need to be using the Touchpoint café, fitness groups or food share to use the garden. There are bird feeders and a bug hotel, daffodils and tulips in spring; in summer the roses donated by Harkness give a lovely show along with annual bedding, much of which has been grown from seed or overwintered with friends. If you have not yet followed the ramp around the back of the building into the secret garden then you are in for a treat. It is a little sun trap with year-round seating; if you want to join the team of volunteers who look after the garden you would be made very welcome. Please email [info@thetouchpoint.org](mailto:info@thetouchpoint.org) for more details.

Hannah

## STANSTED IS WELL READ

The next meeting of our book club will be on **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May** at 8.00pm in the Dog and Duck, Lower Street where we will be discussing last month's book choice *The Paper Palace* by Miranda Cowley Heller. This is the author's first novel and was a Sunday Times bestseller in the UK. It was also long listed for the Women's Prize. The story unfolds over 24 hours and 50 years, as the protagonist's shocking betrayal leads her to a life-changing decision. 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)



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

For our next concert on **Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May** at 3.00pm in Saffron Hall, the orchestra is delighted to welcome Charlotte Treadaway as soloist in Glazunov's virtuosic but lyrical *Saxophone Concerto*, written in 1934. The concert opens with Brahms' evergreen *Academic Festival Overture* which uses student songs from the time as its melodic material. We close with Saint-Saëns' third symphony. Subtitled *Organ*, it is a dramatic but also intimate work full of melody and colour. A piano duet adds sparkle and brass contribute to the grand sound of the organ, which will be played by local musician Richard Carr. Tickets: adults £18 and £21, 18-25 year olds £11, under 18s £6 are available from [www.saffronhall.com](http://www.saffronhall.com) or tel 0845 548 7650.



Marion Dyer  
Tel: 814059



## RSPB STORT VALLEY

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

For our monthly meeting on **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May** at 7.30pm in Bishop's Park Community Centre CM23 4DA we welcome Conor Jameson, a widely published author who has spent many years researching the extraordinary life of W H Hudson, which culminated in the recent publication of *Finding W H Hudson-The Writer Who Came to Britain to Save the Birds*. Hudson was an Argentinian who had a deep influence on the creation of the Bird Society which became the RSPB. By the end of his life in 1922 he was a household name through his nature writing and work with the Bird Society.

We plan to visit Essex Wildlife Trust, Abberton Reservoir on **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May**. This is one of Europe's top wetland sites and visitors can enjoy walks, whilst taking in stunning panoramic views across the reservoir from the three hides. We are meeting at the reserve, Church Rd, Layer-de-la-Haye CO2 0EU at 10.00am.



Our midweek walk on **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May** switches to an evening start of 6.00pm from The Coach and Horses, Thorley Street CM23 4AS. This walk offers the chance to see the Thorley Wash reserve and the River Stort at a busy time of year. With dusk falling we plan to retire to The Coach and Horses for refreshments.

Peter Allen  
Tel: 07876 295456  
Email: [peter2349@sky.com](mailto:peter2349@sky.com)

## BISHOP'S STORTFORD ART SOCIETY

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

**7.30 pm Thu 2nd May**

*Working Evening*

Bring your own paints, pencils etc

**7.30 pm Thu 16th May**

*Line and Wash* by Ailsa Lyn

Both meetings are at Thorn Grove

School, Bishop's Stortford

**Tel 812768 for more information**



## Stansted Millers

Windmill Open in May

**1.30 - 5.30 pm**

Sun 5th

Bank Holiday Mon 6th

National Mills Weekend Sun 12th

Bank Holiday Mon 27th

**Come and have a look round**

**Entry: adults £2, child 50p**

## STANSTED IS WELL READ

**8 pm Tue 7th May**

Dog and Duck, Lower Street

**The Paper Palace**

by Miranda Cowley Heller

The story unfolds over 24 hours and 50 years, as the protagonist's shocking betrayal leads her to a life-changing decision

All Welcome Tel 813056

## WHAT'S ON IN MAY

2	Thu	Local History Society AGM	Quaker Meeting House 7.30 pm
		Bishop's Stortford Art Soc	Thorn Grove School, B S 7.30 pm
3	Fri	Stansted Business Forum	Kings Arms 7 am
5 Sun/6 Mon		Windmill Open	1.30 - 5.30 pm
7	Tue	Stansted is Well Read	Dog and Duck 8 pm
9	Thu	<b>Link copy due in today</b>	<b>before noon</b>
		W I AGM	Day Centre 7.30 pm
11	Sat	U3A Seminar	Free Church Hall 10 am
11/18/25 Sat		Stansted Sings Together	St John's Hall 3 - 5.30 pm
11	Sat	U3A Singers Concert	St Theresa's Parish Centre 7 pm
12/26	Sun	Green Waste Skips	Lower St Car Park 12.30 - 4.30 pm
12	Sun	Windmill Open	1.30 - 5.30 pm
		S Walden Symphony	Saffron Hall 3 pm
14	Tue	The Arts Society B S	South Mill Arts, B S 10.40 am
		RSPB	Bishop's Park, B S 7.30 pm
15	Wed	Ugley W I AGM	Ugley Village Hall 2 pm
16	Thu	U3A Monthly Meeting	St John's Hall 2 pm
		Bishop's Stortford Art Soc	Thorn Grove School, B S 7.30 pm
18	Sat	Ugley Farmers' Market	Ugley Village Hall 10 am
19	Sun	Open Day	Easton Lodge 11 am - 5 pm
22	Wed	Newport Flower Club	Ugley Village Hall 8 pm
25	Sat	Elsenham Farmers' Market	Elsenham Village Hall 12.30 pm
27	Mon	Windmill Open	1.30 - 5.30 pm

## STANSTED SINGS TOGETHER

*Come and join Stansted's new Community Choir*

**Rehearsals 3 - 5.30 pm Saturdays**

**11th, 18th & 25th May, 1st June**

**St John's Hall**

**All abilities welcome**

To book a place please email Jane on [janievoy@mac.com](mailto:janievoy@mac.com)



## Singers Concert

**7 pm Sat 11th May**

**St Theresa's Parish Centre**

*Songs of Love, Peace and Gratitude*

Tickets £5 tel Suzanne 07732 627382

*Proceeds will go towards the cost of St Theresa's new boiler*



**10 am - noon**

**Sat 18th May**

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

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**

## THE FORGOTTEN GARDENS OF EASTON LODGE OPEN DAY

**11 am - 5 pm Sun 19th May**

(last entry 4 pm)

**Art and Nature in the Garden**

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

*Garden Seekers Exhibition and Historical Documents from the Archives*

All Welcome Tel: 01371 876979



## Green Waste Skip Dates

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

**12th & 26th May**  
**9th & 23rd June**



## Monthly Meeting

**Finding W H Hudson: The Writer who came to Britain to Save the Birds**

by **Conor Jameson**

**7.30 pm Tue 14th May**

Bishop's Park Community Centre CM23 4DA

Visitors welcome, entry £5

Tel: Peter 07876 295456

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

## THE ARTS SOCIETY BISHOP'S STORTFORD

**10.40 am Tue 14th May**

South Mill Arts

**The women who really ran the English Country House**  
by **Tessa Boase**

Guests welcome Entry £7

Coffee served from 10 am

Tel 656065 for more information



## Spring Concert

**3 pm Sun 12th May Saffron Hall, Saffron Walden**

**Brahms Academic Festival Overture**  
**Glazanov Saxophone Concerto**  
**Saint-Saëns Organ Symphony**

Adults £18 and £21, 18-25s £11 under 18s £6 from

Saffron Hall Box Office 0845 548 7650  
[www.saffronhall.com](http://www.saffronhall.com) or on the door



## DAISY MAY'S FARM

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

Life has been so exciting on the farm recently; we have a steady flow of lambs being born and some of our customers have even been lucky enough to see this happening! You can come and see the babies and also feed them their milk by bottle at noon, 2.00pm and 4.00pm. These lambs might look like butter would not melt in their mouths, but come lights out, it is like a scene from Shaun the sheep ... absolutely hilarious! You can also hold the adorable chicks and ducklings and get to know them better.



There are lots of other animals to see and feed, and many activities to enjoy on the farm: exploring the woodland trail, the train ride, playing on the activity equipment, splashing in the stream, seasonal arts and crafts and competitions. We also have food and refreshments, so all you have to do is come and enjoy yourselves. There is no need to pre-book and entry is only £6 each, but please be aware we have no credit card facilities. Most importantly, **wear wellies** if it is wet!

If your child wants a party to remember, then why not book one with us? We can offer a truly individual occasion that they can enjoy with their friends and all our lovely animals. We also welcome school parties and can tailor the visit to suit your needs, so do get in touch to have a chat and find out more. Always keep an eye on our Facebook page for animal updates and other important information. We are open until 4.00pm every day and you can find us in Hall Road, Elsenham, CM22 6DN.

Elaine Terry  
Tel: 07747 787973

and highlights have been making fresh fruit smoothies and watching our plants develop. The topic for Year 1 and 2 is currently *Land Ahoy!* which entails finding out about Captain James Cook, Grace Darling and famous pirates. They will make boats, sink ships and fly a pirate flag. English will concentrate on narratives, information books, poetry and postcards. Maths will involve mass, position, direction and movement.

Lower key stage 2 children are learning about water in all its forms in *Flow*. They will hop on an imaginary boat to travel down the rivers Ganges, Thames, Amazon and Nile. We will be taking a trip to Lee Valley Country Park and becoming part of a local news team to investigate the source of mystery pollution. Poetry, journals, newspaper reports and debate will form our English, and we will use data, volume, capacity and calculate water speed in maths. Years 5 and 6 are learning about the bizarre and eccentric minds of *Gallery Rebels*, looking at the great artists of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Expressionist poetry and surrealist narratives will feature. There will also be a great deal of Sats practice! If you would like to come and look round our happy school, please contact us.

Matthew Curzon  
Headteacher  
Tel: 812212



## SCOUTS

In late March we took 12 eager scouts to Belchamps campsite near Southend. They took part in the Essex backpack competition organised by the Essex County team. Two teams of six had to navigate by map around the countryside to find bases then complete a task. They then plot their next base on a route card; points are awarded for accuracy.



The coveted expedition challenge badge was achieved, which goes towards earning the Chief Scout's Gold Award. We had lovely weather and it was great fun; tired but happy scouts returned home on Sunday. A big thank you to Angela, Charlotte and Niamh for your help enabling our scouts to attend again this year. Sounds like fun? New scouts and leaders are always welcome.

Mark Presland  
Scout Leader  
Email: [stanstedscouts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stanstedscouts@hotmail.co.uk)



## ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

It has been a lovely summer term so far. Here are some of the topics our children have been busy learning about.

Our smallest ones are continuing to learn about gardening; they have been digging, planting, sowing and watering. At foundation stage, we have renamed Fridays *Alfresco Fridays*



## THE FUNKY CHICKEN'S GUIDE TO SOME PRETTY AMAZING GERMAN WORDS

Now on BBC Radio 4, it is twelve minutes to eight, and here is *Word of Mouth* with the Funky Chicken:

**Michael:** Hello, and welcome to the show.

**Funky Chicken:** Thank you for having me.

**Michael:** I have just been scanning through your notes, and a word that has jumped out at me is *Gummi*.

**Funky Chicken:** Yes, well, that means rubber duck. I really like it because it makes the duck sound like a sweet, with *gummi* at the start.

**Michael:** Also, could you explain *Restmüll* to me?

**Funky Chicken:** I saw that at the airport, on a bin, just underneath the German coat of arms. It means rubbish or just bin. A good one, I thought, was *Blitzlicht*. Any ideas?

**Michael:** No.

**Funky Chicken:** Flash photography. An appropriate one for me was *Huhn*, which means chicken.

**Michael:** Well, Funky Chicken, it has been a pleasure to have you on the show, and before you leave, could you explain to me why you have been hesitant to repeat the words?

**Funky Chicken:** It is a nightmare to deal with the red squiggly line that you get under them in Word. Keep them to a minimum, I say.

**Michael:** Very sensible. Ladies and gentlemen, or should I say, *Damen* and *Herren*, this has been the Funky Chicken!

The Funky Chicken  
Aged 10

Email: [cmgpelly@gmail.com](mailto:cmgpelly@gmail.com) (Mother)



### STANSTED AIRPORT WATCH

[www.stanstedairportwatch.com](http://www.stanstedairportwatch.com)

#### Your community needs you!

A very important public consultation about the future of night flights at Stansted Airport is currently underway. Manchester Airports Group (MAG) is pressing hard for the removal of all the restrictions, which have been in force for over 40 years, and currently allow a maximum of 13,700 Stansted night flights a year.

#### Responding to the consultation

The consultation for all the London airports is at [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/night-flight-restrictions-heathrow-gatwick-and-stansted-airports-from-october-2025](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/night-flight-restrictions-heathrow-gatwick-and-stansted-airports-from-october-2025). You can email [night.flights@dft.gov.uk](mailto:night.flights@dft.gov.uk) or respond online. For Stansted, the Government is seeking views on the following three options:

- Remove controls on the number of night flights and permitted night noise level in October 2026
- Remove controls on the number of night flights in October 2025, whilst maintaining the controls on the permitted aggregate night noise level
- Government night controls to remain, as per Heathrow and Gatwick.

The first two options reflect lobbying activity by MAG and would mean more Stansted night flights. The final option is clearly preferable and it is important that local residents make their views known to the Department for Transport.

#### Other points you could make

Phase out night flights altogether; Stansted is currently allowed **13,700** night flights annually between 11.30pm-6.00am. By comparison, Heathrow, which is three times bigger than Stansted, is allowed just **5,800** night flights a year. Night flights are particularly intrusive in a largely rural area, with low background night noise levels. The aim should be to phase out all Stansted night flights, except emergencies, by 2030. Night flights are the biggest single cause of noise complaints by local residents. This consultation is an opportunity to make your voice heard. The closing date is 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

SAW Campaign Office  
Tel: 870558

Email: [info@stanstedairportwatch.com](mailto:info@stanstedairportwatch.com)

*For further details, please see Stansted Network p 20 and 21. This gives the Parish Council's view of the matter. Ed*



#### Spring has sprung at Human Roots

With spring finally upon us we are definitely making the most of it at our Stansted community-based charity allotment. Potatoes and onions have been planted; seed trays and windowsills are bursting with healthy seedlings and a planting schedule is already in place.



We are committed to growing fruit and vegetables which we can enjoy and share with the local community. Working together on the allotment is good fun, great exercise and brilliant for picking up hints and tips from each other, as well as having a tea and a natter! Plus we like to put a bit back into the local community. We are always very happy to welcome new volunteers. If you are interested in joining us, please email Cathy at [cathymizzard@gmail.com](mailto:cathymizzard@gmail.com).

Ashley Huggonson  
Volunteer



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## THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

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

As the hours of daylight increase and the air becomes warmer, plants put out new shoots. Many insects emerge and birds pair up, preparing to breed. Since the 1960s the average minimum winter temperatures have been rising. Snowfall is now a rarity, and frosty days are much less frequent.

The current growing season is almost a month longer than 50 years ago. Primroses and bluebells are opening earlier. Researchers recorded that the first flowering of some 406 plant species has advanced by almost a month since 1986! This has a knock-on effect for the time of emergence of pollinating insects such as bees and butterflies; some are adapting to the warmer climate. Hedgerow, shrubs and trees are leafing and flowering earlier too, providing food for so many hungry caterpillars which are ideal food for nestlings.

Hedgerows are a valuable wildlife habitat, often providing a living framework to the landscape and our rural heritage. Long-established hedges grow in soil that is rich in stored carbon and older trees within the hedgerow also hold large stores of carbon.



A recent planning application to fell an ancient hedgerow oak close to Clavering led to a vigorous and successful campaign by residents to save it. This tree is now registered on the Ancient Tree Inventory, a record similar to the one for listed buildings.

There are more trees in local hedgerows that could be recorded; details of how to do this can be found on <https://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk/how-to-record>. National Hedgerow Week organised by the Tree Council runs from 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> May and is timed to showcase hedgerows resplendent with fresh new growth and full of wildlife. Please enjoy one or more of the many walks listed on the Society's website and consider recording some of our wonderful old trees.

Tricia Moxey  
Trustee  
Tel: 01277 364522



## ELSENHAM COMMUNITY CHOIR

Did you know that singing in a choir is believed to be so good for you that doctors are considering prescribing it? Just 30 minutes of group singing can significantly improve positive emotions and mood. If you like making new friends, achieving new goals, doing things that are good for you whilst having a laugh, eating chocolate, going home with a smile on your face, oh, and singing too, then come and join us at the Elsenham Community Choir, because that is what we do! We meet on the first and third Tuesday of every month 7.00pm-8.30pm in Elsenham Village Hall near the primary school. There are no auditions; everyone is welcome, just come along and sing. Please just turn up or find us on our Elsenham Community Choir Facebook page.

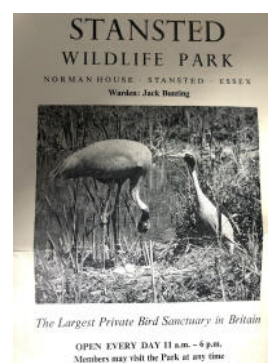
Elaine Terry  
Tel: 07747 787973

## AUBREY BUXTON NATURE RESERVE

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

Spring has arrived and with it comes a host of changes in the nature reserve. We say goodbye to some bird species such as redpolls, siskins and redwings that have spent the winter here, but as they head north to their breeding grounds, we welcome back the summer visitors who join the full-time residents singing to establish territories and find a mate. Chiff chaff and blackcap are two arrivals that you will hear but the loudest bird in the wood is still the song thrush which can be heard singing well before you enter the wood. If you want help identifying birds from their song then I recommend the Merlin Bird ID App for your phone. It is free and generally very good. One species of note that has arrived for the first time in the reserve is the ring-necked parakeet. An introduced species, this has been spreading since the 1970s; I have seen them flying over Stansted recently but this is the first time I have seen a pair in the Reserve.

The car park repairs have been completed; my thanks to the volunteer group and to Essex Highways and Eurovia who supplied the road scrapings. With the amount of recent



rainfall it is unsurprising that all the permanent and temporary ponds are currently full. Much of the Reserve has a wetland feel with water on both sides of the boardwalks. This harks back to the origins of the reserve which was originally a wildlife park focused primarily on wetland birds.

It was advertised as the largest private bird sanctuary in Britain and had over 100 species including flamingos. Entry was five shillings for adults. It would be interesting to hear from any residents who visited the park back then.

John Welham  
Warden  
Email: [communications@essexwt.org.uk](mailto:communications@essexwt.org.uk)



www.mountfitchetgardenclub.uk

At our AGM on 3<sup>rd</sup> April our Chairman, Maralyn Harris, welcomed 19 members and guests with three apologies for absence. Maralyn then gave her report for the 2023-24 year. This was proposed by Chris Tann and seconded by Linda Gurr. Our Treasurer Sheila Bowles then presented the audited accounts which were proposed by Sandra Embleton and seconded by Tony Gurr. It was suggested that a resolution was put to the members that a formal vote should be taken on the closing of the Club. This was carried unanimously. The minutes and other documentation had been lost during a handover so it was not known what the procedure should be. It was then decided that after any bills and debts had been paid, any monies left would be donated to a village charity. The records and assets would be stored or disposed of as felt fit by the former Committee as at closure.

Linda Gurr  
Tel: 07743 549241

The Mountfitchet Garden Club started over 40 years ago and during this time has seen many changes. It is therefore with sadness that this will be the last report. It was formally agreed at the AGM that due to the falling number of members and rising costs, the Club would close. Over the years our speakers have entertained, encouraged and passed on valuable information on all aspects of gardening. During the Covid pandemic gardens became a place of solace for so many people; now many organisations are introducing gardening to youngsters so hopefully their love of gardening will continue to grow over the years.

Maralyn Harris  
Tel: 07919 478144



Our next meeting is on **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May** at 10.40am in South Mill Arts with coffee from 10.00am. Author, campaigner, journalist and social historian Tessa Boase will be our speaker. Her lecture is *The Housekeeper's Tale: The women who really ran the English Country House*. As the most senior of the upper servants, the housekeeper typically carried a family's secrets with her to the grave.



Using old letters and secret diaries, for example, Tessa has produced a series of fascinating stories from 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century domestic service at some of our most prominent households. Come and be entertained, enthralled and amazed. Visitors are very welcome and we invite a donation of £7. For further information, please see our website. Our membership secretary is

Jenny Savage tel: 656065.

Michael Fitch  
Email: info@tasbs.org.uk

## IN THE GARDEN

One of the Royal Horticultural Society's missions is to inspire children and young adults to garden. They state: *Gardening is a healthy and inexpensive way for children to learn and have fun at home, school or the allotment. Research suggests children perform better at school if they are involved with gardening and many will develop a greater interest in healthy eating if they get to grow their own veg.* Last month we wrote about growing potatoes, so why not try beans as well? Both runner beans and French beans are well worth the effort. Choose a spot that has a good amount of daily sunshine where the soil is not acid; an area that has had well-rotted manure or compost added is ideal. Like potatoes, beans can also be grown in large pots in multi-purpose compost.



The easiest method of planting is to wait until late May, or early June when the seeds can be planted directly into the ground or into 50cm pots. Plant each next to a cane which can be erected in a wigwam fashion in a pot or restricted area. Runner beans need canes 240cm long whereas 120cm canes are sufficient for French beans. Gently tie the plants into the canes to encourage them to climb and pinch out the tip when they reach the top of the cane. Water regularly, especially in dry weather and give an occasional feed. Make sure you harvest the beans when they are young; this is when they are at their best. The bonus is that sweet peas can be grown in the same way. Put three seeds around each cane and pinch out the tip of each plant when 15cms high to encourage side shoots. Keep picking the flowers to encourage more to follow.

u3a Garden Group  
Email: stanstedu3a@gmail.com



## HUW JOHNSON CLUB

The Club restarted in April with a sporting angle to our first few sessions of the summer term: trying out *Clock Cricket* for the first time and then a curling competition between members. The Club is gearing up to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday in August. Please do get in touch if you have any connection to the Club and would like to attend the planned party.

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

We managed to open on the last two Thursdays in March, setting us up well for the new season which started in April. It was lovely to see visitors again, after that miserable wet snowdrop season!

May is a lovely month in the gardens, when the cow parsley and foxgloves take over. Other highlights at the beginning of the month are the *Camassia* in the mini orchard in the kitchen garden, the blossom on the ornamental cherries and the fresh leaves of the acers. At the end of the month the laburnum walk bears gold, the handkerchiefs waft on their branches in the breeze and the wild orchids start to bloom on the bank to the glade.

For our **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May** Open Day we are delighted that Jane Frederick is showing her *Garden Seekers exhibition*. Jane's artistic lens was focused on six historic gardens in Essex, including Easton Lodge. We will be displaying the relevant history from our archives and Jane's inspirations as well as her art works. It is also our Nature Day at the Gardens, and we will be joined again by an expert biologist for pond dipping and other nature activities and stalls for all the family.



*Handkerchief tree, Davidia involucrata*

The gardens are also open every Thursday, with our produce stall selling fresh vegetables from the walled kitchen garden: perhaps including rhubarb and asparagus. The gardens are open on Thursdays 11.00am-3.00pm and on Sundays 11.00am-5.00pm, and our volunteers provide refreshments. Tickets can be bought in advance for Sundays. There is no charge for children under 16 years old. Visitors can bring picnics and dogs on leads are welcome. For more information about tickets, times, activities and refreshments please see the What's On section of our website.

Jill Goldsmith  
Tel: 01371 876979  
Email: enquiries@eastonlodge.co.uk

The entertainer at our March meeting was Chris Bishop, former vicar of Berden and Manuden. He now writes songs and sings them in venues all over Essex, accompanying himself on a variety of musical instruments, some of which he brought with him, including an unfamiliar one which he explained was an Appalachian dulcimer. He played two tunes for us on this beautiful instrument including *Lord of the Dance*. Chris explained that he had written no less than 30 songs during lockdown including one entitled *Two Metres apart*; we all joined in with singing it. He had also written a song for the WI: a humorous song featuring seven vegetables. It required the participation of seven of our members holding aloft an artistic image of a vegetable!

To bring our very entertaining afternoon to a close, we were given an Easter egg and enjoyed refreshments; our usual tea and biscuits were enhanced by the addition of coffee cupcakes decorated with mini eggs, made by our Secretary, Betty Francis. Our May meeting, which will be the AGM, will be on **Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May** at 2.00pm in Ugley Village Hall. Visitors will be most welcome.

Andrea Fitt  
Tel: 815922

## NEWPORT AND DISTRICT FLOWER CLUB

We invited the scouts to join us at our March workshop and they all enjoyed making a spring flower posy in a bag. One of our ladies showed us what happens when you put different food colourings into a flower vase full of daffodils, tulips and hyacinths. As the flowers absorb the water their petals turn different shades of colour. The scouts were very interested in this, especially when the yellow petals on the daffodils in blue water turned green. We were shown how to manipulate an aspidistra leaf to make a holder for our flowers; see the photo below of an aspidistra leaf with a pink rose and gypsophila.



Our next meeting is on **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May** at 7.30pm in Ugley Village Hall, with demonstrations by some of our talented members. Please come along and see how they put together an arrangement, which you can then try at home.

Patricia Sanz  
Email: flowersanzp2020@gmail.com

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Chris **01279 817111** [info@mvmcc.manuden.org.uk](mailto:info@mvmcc.manuden.org.uk)



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## STANSTED FIRE STATION

[www.essex-fire.gov.uk/location/station-83-stansted](http://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/location/station-83-stansted)

Welcome to our article on what it is like to be an on-call fire-fighter in this beautiful corner of Essex. All our team are incredibly proud to serve the local community. It has been a busy time for the station with the team responding to a variety of calls throughout March. These included water rescue incidents due to the consistent downpours, road traffic collisions, and the most notable which was the fire at Shire Hill in Saffron Walden. This incident was a large-scale warehouse on fire and at its height eight Essex pumping appliances, one aerial ladder platform and an incident command unit were present with over 40 fire-fighters battling it. The Stansted team attended this fire throughout the day, and after a rotation of fresh crew, returned at night to ensure the job was done and safe for the surrounding homes and public.



The crew have also been training hard and continue to support the development of two trainee fire-fighters who recently joined the team and completed their basic two-week training course. They are now continuing their development with us with subjects like ladder climbs, pumping, casualty care and roadway procedures, before starting a whole host of other subjects. The team have been really busy with visits to the station. We have had three visits: cubs, brownies and a local group, where the team gives a fire safety talk and video, then *show and tell* around the fire appliance. As always, the evening finishes with some target practice with one of our hose reels in the yard which everyone seems to enjoy. If any groups or schools would like to visit feel free to get in touch; 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)



## SOCIAL CLUB

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

The garden refurbishment project is in full swing and we are delighted with the progress; please see the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/StanstedClub>. The snooker night with Jimmy White was a roaring success and he was joined by another snooker legend, John Virgo. Jimmy played 10 frames and won all of them. Some of our snooker team members played against Jimmy including David Rose, Martin Corbishley, Nick Johns, Jack Sawyer and our referee for the evening, Alex Way. There was a signed cue up for grabs and the winner was Gail Searle.

May's entertainment kicks off on **Saturday 4<sup>th</sup>** with a *George Michael* tribute, followed on **Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>** by the return of the fabulous *Tailored Tenors*. On **Friday 9<sup>th</sup>** we have our ever-popular karaoke night hosted by Martin from *Cloud 9*. **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>** sees *Rachel Shenton* knocking out some amazing club anthems. On **Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>** we have the return of our fantastic *Robbie Williams* tribute and we round off the month on **May 25<sup>th</sup>** with *Ellie Golding* performing a mixed covers set. One to get in the diary early for June: a Rod Stewart tribute act on **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup>**. Absolutely one not to be missed! The above entertainment is free for members and £10 entry for non-members. We are conscious that not all members use social media so will be revamping the website over the next few weeks to include the entertainment schedule.



Andrew Sharpe

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



## RECYCLING



### Now recycling old and foreign coins

Until last year, donated stamps were passed on to the Leprosy Mission. However that organisation is no longer collecting them, so the latest batch were sent to the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), who raise money by selling the stamps. They take any stamps, and also old and foreign coins, all of which are sold by weight. Stamp albums are also accepted and are usually sold on the internet.

We are also 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.

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](mailto:sales@cambridge-computer-recycling.co.uk) or Townstech in Harlow tel 898240 [www.townstech.co.uk](http://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](mailto:recycle@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

When I was a child I had some very strange views about God, mainly through a misunderstanding of the creed which we used to recite at school. Jesus I was okay with, as we learnt about the stories of how he welcomed children; but God I pictured as a big right hand ready to point out all my faults: *who sitteth at the right hand of the Father (Mark 16 v 19)*! and as for the Holy Ghost, well I was just plain scared as who wants to meet a ghost? Over the years, my understanding has matured. I now think of God's hands as cradling me as a beloved child of God, and the Holy Spirit, as the third person of the trinity, is the one who guides, comforts and sustains me. We are told in the bible that the Spirit is an advocate who intercedes on our behalf, who gives us words when we do not know what to say, and by whose power, strengthens and upholds us. Indeed some of the gifts of the Spirit are love, joy, and peace, not ones to be afraid of!

Churches will celebrate the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost on 19<sup>th</sup> May. It is often known as the Church's birthday, the time when the disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit. This transformed them from a scared bunch of people, hiding behind locked doors, to the ones we see in Acts chapter 2, willing to speak out publicly and indeed to be imprisoned and to die for the right to witness about the good news of Jesus. The best news about the Holy Spirit? That this transforming strength, peace and comfort is not confined to the 1<sup>st</sup> century but is available here and now. Find out more at a church near you and celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit this Pentecost.

Rev'd Gill Hulme  
Minister  
Stansted Free Church



### ST THERESA OF LISIEUX CATHOLIC CHURCH

High Lane, Stansted CM24 8LQ  
[www.sttheresasstansted.org](http://www.sttheresasstansted.org)

**Parish Priest** Fr Clement Orango  
Tel: 814349  
Email: [frclementorango@brcdt.org](mailto:frclementorango@brcdt.org)

**Parish Administrator** Tel: 816889  
Email: [stansted@brcdt.org](mailto:stansted@brcdt.org)

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

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

**Baptisms:** By appointment



**All enquiries** The Church Office, St John's Hall,  
**Including Church** St John's Road, Stansted CM24 8JP  
**Hall bookings** Tel: 815243 (with answerphone)  
Office hours: 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 Tel: 01371 876145  
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





## STANSTED FREE CHURCH

Methodist / URC  
Chapel Hill  
www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

- Minister** Rev'd Gill Hulme
- Secretary** Catherine Dean  
Tel: 813579  
Email: catherine@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk
- Lettings** Marion and Mike Dyer  
Tel: 814059  
Email: lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

### Preachers for May

- 5<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Arthur Revels  
12<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Rev'd Stuart Veitch - Communion  
19<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Topsy Brice  
26<sup>th</sup> 10.30am Rev'd Gill Hulme - New Directions

### Easter Services

Our Good Friday service was quiet and reflective, telling the events of that day as recorded in John's Gospel.



In contrast, Easter Sunday was a very joyful occasion with lively music and singing. Members of the congregation had been invited to bring brightly coloured flowers to decorate the large wooden cross which had been in the focus of our worship throughout Lent.

### From St John's Registers

#### March

##### Baptism

17<sup>th</sup> Rupert Noah Tonkin

##### Funeral

14<sup>th</sup> James Loveridge, age 73 - at Stansted Cemetery

##### Burial of Ashes

3<sup>rd</sup> Margaret Arnold



## 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.



## FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

The churchyard is looking beautiful with the primroses blooming and the freshly mown grass. When I think back to before we started our project to where we are now, it makes me so very happy. There was lots of very hard work, but it all shows now. It was a busy time over Easter in the church with three different lots of champers. The very first one was visiting from Delhi in India. He was simply thrilled to have the experience of staying overnight in a church and plans to tell all his friends at home and show photographs. A historian came to take photographs of our fine monuments for inclusion in a book that he is writing. He takes photos in many churches, mainly in London where he lives. I have asked him to keep us informed of progress.

Don't forget *Post Floyd Dream*, a Pink Floyd tribute band right here in church, with a laser show and bar. Acoustics are amazing in the church, we are in for a real treat! This will be on **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July**; doors open 7.15pm, performance 8.00pm-11.00pm. Tickets: £25.00 available from www.ticketsource.co.uk/friends-of-st-marys-stansted or tel: 0333 666 3366. Please do support us. We look forward to an enjoyable evening with you all.

### Change to Open Sundays

We are changing to the last Sunday in the month, the next one being 28<sup>th</sup> April. In May it will be Sunday 26<sup>th</sup>.



Lynda Dale  
Tel: 07716 099474

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## GROVE HILL ISSUES

### Reports from two residents

Since July 2023, we have had a blocked and overflowing drain directly outside my house. It is clean water; such a waste. It flows constantly along the road, carrying broken material from the road surface, creating potholes, leaving debris over the pavement and filling the gutters. The traffic passing splashes pedestrians and any large vehicles splash the houses and businesses lining lower Grove Hill and Lower Street. The Cork House is suffering from water ingress which is damaging the structure of the listed building. We have contacted Cllr Tom Cunningham who has now taken over the highways portfolio at Essex County Council. He said he would look into matters. Workers cleaned the drains in the second week of January; they advised us that there was tarmac blocking the drain and this would keep happening until the tarmac was removed. After three dry weeks, it rained again and the drain blocked straight away. I reported this to Cllr Cunningham who advised that clearing the drain of the tarmac was *not a priority*. We are dismayed at this declaration. There is water flowing 24 hours a day from this blocked drain, come rain or shine, and the traffic (especially HGVs) continue to make the situation worse.



Another resident has reached out to Kemi Badenoch for help with the ongoing HGV problem on the village roads. Part of his email to Kemi: *Please can you intervene and help resolve the serious issues that residents of Stansted Mountfitchet have been facing day in day out for years. Over two years ago, a scheme was promised to rid the village of the dangerous HGV problem. This has stalled! You did come to the village yourself to endorse and congratulate the scheme and those involved; we need your intervention again to get this moving again and over the line. Residents are continually chasing for updates from councillors, with no response.*

Grove Hill Residents

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

We held a very successful **Debt Awareness Session Talk** at the Social Club on 26<sup>th</sup> March. Representatives from the Citizens Advice Bureau talked about how they can advise people and support them with debt issues. Saffron Building Society members discussed the money health checks that can be arranged and how to make contact when in mortgage arrears. There was a member of our Committee bravely sharing her own story on how she has come through some tough times but with support has come out the other side. If you would like more information please visit these webpages: [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money) or [www.saffronbs.co.uk/about](http://www.saffronbs.co.uk/about).

Now the clocks have changed, **Muddy Walkers** meet on Wednesdays at 7.30pm outside the Co-op. All are welcome, so feel free to bring any friends along, whether they be human or canine. Mental Health Awareness week is **13<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> May** with the theme of *Movement: Moving more for our mental health*, so watch out for any events that may be taking place. Also a reminder of our AGM on **Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May** at the Social Club. We would love to see you so that you can find out what the Committee have been doing and have planned for the future. As always we are here for you if you need to talk so please email: [info@letstalkstansted.org](mailto:info@letstalkstansted.org).

Vanessa Morgan



## THE PLACE ON THE HILL

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

Spring has come at last, 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](mailto:theplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

## THANK YOU

We would like to thank all the very kind people who came to Jenny's aid when she fell outside the Co-op on Saturday morning 6<sup>th</sup> April, especially those who put our shopping into our car, and the two gentlemen who helped Jenny up onto her feet. Many thanks also to our caring neighbours and friends for all the beautiful flowers.

Jenny and Alan Childs



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## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

www.stanstedwindmill.co.uk

The Easter Egg Hunt at the mill attracted over 100 entries on Easter Sunday and Monday. Climbing to the top floor of the mill is a real challenge for very young children and their adult supervisors; great care must be taken on the hazardous step ladders. Below is a picture of Ava and Olivia who won first prize. Their Mum said they were super happy which is pretty self-evident from the photo!



As part of our efforts to raise funds to repaint the mill's brickwork we have approached several possible sources including the Lottery, Stansted Airport community funds and Heritage England. We have had some rejections but will continue to explore every avenue available to the mill, including those associated with the Rural Land Registry, which supports the stewardship of the countryside in general. From now until October the mill is open 1.30pm-5.30pm on the first Sunday of each month, as well as Bank Holidays. In May this means we are open on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>, Monday 6<sup>th</sup>, Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> (National Mills weekend), and Monday 27<sup>th</sup>.

Trevor Lloyd  
Tel: 07739 428352

Email: info@stanstedwindmill.co.uk



## FUN PLACE ON THE HILL

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 particularly suitable for children. Parents, carers and all age visitors are welcome to drop in and enjoy a relaxing hot drink and chat, while the children enjoy plenty of space to run around, play with the toys and listen to Story Time around 10.30am. The dolls' house is always very popular as well as tractors, fire engines and building bricks. Free squash and healthy snacks are available for children, and tea or coffee and biscuits for the adults. There is limited free parking in the church car park. Looking forward to welcoming you on Friday mornings.

Sue Parker and Fran Richards  
Tel: 657116

Email: funplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk



## MAGNA CARTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

www.magnacartaacademy.org

### World Maths Day

Before the end of the spring term, our pupils celebrated World Maths Day; this is officially on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, however we celebrated it a day earlier to ensure pupils really benefited from rich mathematical learning experiences. It is one of the world's largest global educational events, which aims to connect the global learning community and foster friendships between children of different cultures as they learn to excel in mathematics together.

Our pupils solved *big questions* at the start of the day where they tackled some trickier mathematical problems at their level. This was followed by a whole school bingo activity in the hall, hosted by Leigh Cooper, our maths leader. It was highly contested and very exciting, with prizes for the first lines to be achieved and for the overall winner. Later in the day, pupils completed geometric pattern artwork challenges. They used many different geometric shapes to create fantastic pieces of art, then became even more creative by using art materials such as watercolours, collage, printing and pastels to bring these designs to life. Finally, pupils worked on a whole class statistics task, collecting the data and representing it in different ways including bar charts, line graphs and even human bar charts! Pupils had lots of fun participating and most importantly, realising that mathematics is all around us and is very much a part of our daily lives.

Jen Pearce  
Headteacher  
Tel: 703484

Email: reception@magnacartaacademy.org



## STANSTED SINGS TOGETHER



Join us! It is free. If you love singing in a choir, or have never done so, come and enjoy a warm welcome and help spread the love on these four Saturday afternoons, in St John's Church Hall:

**When: 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> May** 3.00pm-5.30pm (with a short break) and **1<sup>st</sup> June** 3.00pm-5.00pm followed by sharing for friends and family 6.00pm-6.45pm.

**What:** All comers choir for friendship and connection, from 7 to 77 years old and upwards. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult or with parental permission. The sharing event for friends and family will be followed by drinks, snacks and mingling.

**Songs:** A wide range on the theme of sharing the love, including *Lean on Me* by Bill Withers, *All You Need Is Love* by Lennon and McCartney, *Senzeni Na* a powerful anti-apartheid song from South Africa, *One Day* by Bruno Mars, a *Celtic Blessing*, *Dona Nobis Pacem* and a selection of songs from across time, space and origins. Places are limited, so jump in quick! Please email me to save your place.

We are very grateful to Touchpoint and St John's Church who have supported and sponsored this event.

Jane Wheeler  
Email: janievox@mac.com

# Stansted Network

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS



## PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

...with news of a government review of night flights at Stansted, this year's gardening competitions, a stock take of the village's play equipment, and the start of our efforts to create a more biodiverse village

An important public consultation is under way that could see a significant increase in night flights over the village in the near future. We would encourage all residents and community groups to take part in the consultation before it ends on 22nd May 2024.

### Public Consultation: Night Flights at Stansted Airport 2024

There have been controls at Stansted in some shape or form since 1978. Every three and five years the Department for Transport (DfT) decides how restrictions on night flights will work. Before they do so, they conduct a public consultation. Their latest one has now started and seeks your views on their draft Noise Action Plan 2024-2028. Your comments will play a part in how the government will manage night flights at Stansted from October 2025 until October 2028. The consultation lays out three alternative proposals:

**Option 1** Removing restrictions on the number of Stansted night flights and the permitted aggregate night noise level\* in October 2026.

**Option 2** Removing controls on the number of Stansted night flights in October 2025, whilst maintaining the controls on the permitted aggregate night noise level.

**Option 3** Keeping the existing night control regime in place

The night flight regimes are also under review at Heathrow and Gatwick. However, only at Stansted are significant changes to the status quo proposed. Below is a table detailing how many night flights at Stansted are permitted annually now.

Airport	Season	Movement (flight) limit	Noise Quota Count
Stansted	Winter	5,600	3,310
Stansted	Summer	8,100	4,650

\*Quota Count This refers to a defined annual limit on flights deemed to be particularly noise polluting that can take off or land at night time hours. The aggregate noise level refers to a threshold that nightflights cannot that exceed

## NIGHTFLIGHTS

### How to have your say



Respond online:  
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[night.flights@dft.gov.uk](mailto:night.flights@dft.gov.uk)

Write to:  
 Night Flights consultation  
 Airport Policy – 4th Floor  
 Great Minster House  
 33 Horseferry Road  
 London SW1P 4DR

Consultation  
**Wednesday  
 22 May 2024**  
 Deadline

### It is Option 3 for us!

In April our Parish Councillors met to settle on a position on night flights. They voted unanimously for Option 3. Parish Councillors acknowledged the airport brings employment and business to Stansted but also believed it unwise to loosen regulations until proof is in hand night flights are safer than feared. That evidence may come in 2025 when an important study on the health impacts of night flights is to be published. Until then, SMPC's position remains unchanged from when we submitted comments in September 2023 to the Department for Transport. Back then we called for action on night flights:

- ✈ A ban on the noisiest aircraft day or night as proposed by the government in 2021 within five years
- ✈ A clear commitment to reduce each year for the next five years the number of households...adversely affected by aircraft noise
- ✈ To publish quantified measurable noise reduction targets with timescales
- ✈ Engage with the local community to discuss the feasibility of reducing night flights

Search *Noise Action Plan Consultation 2023* on our website to read a full record of our comments.

## Night flights — What's the problem, anyway?

Flying planes over urban areas at night has a long association with negative health outcomes. They can affect sleep patterns, cause hypertension and raise the risk of coronary heart disease, strokes and cancer. The government acknowledges that this is the case. That is why restrictions on night flights exist. They hope a study, the Aviation Night Noise Effects report to be published in 2025, will provide clarity on the link between aviation noise and sleep disturbance.

## How are night flights controlled in the UK?

The airports at Gatwick, Heathrow and Stansted face two sets of restrictions for night flights: movement and noise quota limits. Movement limits are a cap on the total number of flights over the course of a year that airports can schedule from 11.30pm to 5.59am — 13,700 in the case of Stansted. The noise quota means these airports must not exceed limits on the overall noisiness of night flights. Stansted also faces a further restriction following a planning decision made by Uttlesford District Council in 2021. In granting the airport's owners permission to expand passenger capacity, the local authority imposed a night noise limit from 11pm to 7am.

## Why are the government considering changes?

The reasoning behind Option 1 and Option 2 is that Uttlesford's noise limit represents a "material change" to the existing night flight regime, according to the DfT which has responsibility for setting restrictions. The Department takes the view that local authorities, by being closer to communities affected by night flights, are in a better position to set conditions on airport operators. Essentially the government is re-assessing its own position as regulator. Are nationally imposed limits required at Stansted if similar ones have now been set locally? The DfT says a balance must be struck, too, between the commercial interests of the airline industry and the concerns of local communities affected by night flights. Furthermore, they question that if jet engines are now less noise polluting, cannot limits be eased?

## How would an easing of limits affect our village?

It is the Parish Council's position restrictions should remain in place, in the absence of convincing evidence night flights are safer than current evidence suggests. The Manchester Airport Group, which run Stansted Airport, already push the boundaries of the existing regulations. For example, last summer they were granted 1,200 dispensations to exceed night flight limits (by comparison Heathrow, the UK's largest airport, were granted just 462). So if anything MAG need to be reigned in on this front. We don't believe Stansted Airport is the bogeyman. It brings jobs and business to our community and is a generous backer of local organisations. Still, more night flights have the potential to worsen the health of residents. That's why we back a continuing of the existing night flight regime.

## Where can I learn more about the issues involved?

For an overview of the case against nightflights head to [www.stanstedairportwatch.com](http://www.stanstedairportwatch.com)

Stansted Airport has produced a pdf of their own **Draft Noise Action Plan 2024-2028**. A copy is available for download from our website.

For background information on night flight noise restrictions search for Night flight restrictions: Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports from October 2025 at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

## DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS



Liberal  
Democrats

Geoffrey Sell

District Councillor for Stansted North

**B**ingate represents the most serious operational failure in Uttlesford's history. The failure to have the appropriate licence has cost residents dear. Refuse collection is the most visible service that the District Council provides. It is also a universal service. This failure should never have happened.

It was obvious to me and Cllr Alan Dean that all was not well with the refuse service. This was why I asked the head of the service to come before the Scrutiny Committee in November 2023 to present a report. It was clear that the service was under enormous pressure with vehicles regularly breaking down. Several key managers had abruptly left the service. Complacency had ruled the day.

### Bingate: Where are we now?

- Replacement of three new refuse vehicles at a cost of £885k in the next financial year
- An additional round to be established at a cost of £137k
- The green waste charge, which was due to be increased by £10, to be frozen. For those renewing they will get 13 months instead of 12 months. A small gesture in recompense of the problems users have endured.
- The need to use vehicles from Braintree Council and Widdington Waste to collect the rubbish Uttlesford should have been collecting comes at a cost to residents. This is estimated at up to £90k

Despite now having a licence, it is clear that there are still operational problems with areas of the district having uncollected waste. A Task and Finish group has been established by the Scrutiny Committee to find out how things went wrong and what can be done so this is never repeated. I am a member of this group.

### District Councillor Grants

Each year district councillors are awarded £2,000 to spend on good causes in their ward. For 2023/24 I have assisted the following:

- Magna Carta embroidery exhibition at the Stansted Surgery
- Stansted Youth Centre
- Bentfield Green play area (maintenance of play equipment)
- Uttlesford Community Travel
- TouchPoint Christmas Appeal

If your organisation needs financial help for activities in Stansted, why not contact your district councillors?



You can vote from 7am to 10pm at these Polling Stations in our area:

#### STANSTED NORTH

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

#### STANSTED SOUTH & BIRCHANGER

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

## OPEN SPACES UPDATE



➤ **ANGLIA IN BLOOM 2024** Organisers are busy prepping for the village's entry into this prestigious garden competition on 26 May. Anglia in Bloom (AiB) sees communities

from six counties — Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Suffolk and Norfolk — compete for prizes as they are awarded marks for Horticultural Achievement, Environmental Responsibility and Community Participation.

Stansted Mountfitchet is a relative newbie having only participated in the AiB since 2022. One of the attractions of the competition is being able to shout about so many aspects of our amazing community. Brilliant organisations like TouchPoint, Let's Talk Stansted, Human Roots, and the Stansted Mountpickers, to Twinning activities and our historical assets like our Grade II\* listed Windmill all feature in the portfolio put before the competition judges ahead of their visit in July.

SMPC allocates a large slice of their budget to maintain the village's open spaces — £66,800 on gardening and grass cutting alone. Places like the Recreation Ground, the Memorial Gardens and two knight signs all benefit from this investment and are areas cherished by residents. Entering AiB provides a perfect opportunity to display the community's pride in Stansted.

For the past two years we have had Trevor Lloyd (picture below) to thank for overseeing the village's entry. Sharing the burden in 2024 will be Parish Councillor Alan Barnes. The SMPC will again provide design support to create the portfolio. Stansted picked up a silver-gilt award in 2023. We hope to go one better in 2024.



➤ **STANSTED IN BLOOM** Trevor Lloyd was also one of the pillars of the SiB group. Unfortunately, his commitment to Anglia in Bloom has meant he is one of several members who have stepped down from SiB's organising committee. This celebration of local gardening talent enjoyed bloomer years in 2021 and 2022. It took a holiday in 2023 as organisers hoped the break would allow them to recharge their batteries and power up for a summer 2024 relaunch. As it is, SiB is now looking for some new guardians to shape its future. If you feel you have the ideas and energy to revitalise one of the village's favourite summer events, email us at

[info@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk](mailto:info@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk)

➤ **PLAYGROUND REVIEW** A working group has been established to evaluate the condition of play equipment around Stansted. SMPC manages over 9 play areas and has made a significant investment in updating play equipment in recent years. The Mountfitchet Green and Wilkins Crescent are two areas that have benefitted from major refits. The Parish Council commits to mend and replace play kit identified as in need of attention in an independent annual audit of our play areas. Doing so can be a costly business. Something like a swing can cost £2,600 to replace. A larger piece of kit, like the tree house at the Recreation Ground, could put a six-figure dent in the Parish Council budget. The Working Group's review will allow us to prioritise repairs and decide where money is best spent. Would it be better to decommission an under used play area to invest in a popular, but expensive, piece of play equipment? The working group will help Parish Councillors to make an informed decision on choices like these when it reports back to the Open Spaces committee this summer.

➤ **WILDFLOWER SEEDING** The Parish Council will take their first tentative steps into the world of wildflower seeding in May. SMPC gardening contractors will dig up ground around the High Lane knight sign to lay low-growth turf. Meanwhile, on the junctions of Pennington Lane and Rainsford Road a wildflower mix of perennials and annuals will be sown. In time both areas should see a more bio-diverse habitat prosper. A £2,112 grant from Uttlesford District Council's Zero Carbon Communities Fund will contribute towards this project.



## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET PARISH COUNCIL

### STAFF

**Clerk** Ruth Clifford **Deputy Clerk** Emma Philbrick  
**Committee & Projects Officer** Laila Azure-Marxen  
**Communications Officer** Dan Schlanker  
**Email:** info@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk  
**Tel:** 01279 813214  
**Office Hours** Mon-Fri 9am-4pm, Wed 9am-2pm  
**Reception:** Mon-Fri 10am-2pm  
**Website:** www.stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk  
**Facebook:** www.facebook.com/stanstedcouncil  
**Instagram:** stansted@parishcouncil  
**Twitter:** @StanstedMPC

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

**May 1** Full Council  
**May 8** Annual Council  
**May 15** Finance & General Purposes  
**May 22** Full Council

### UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Alan DEAN  
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Geoffrey SELL  
☎ 815925 email: cllrSELL@uttlesford.gov.uk  
Ray GOODING  
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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 9-10.30am **May 3, 31**  
The Co-op, 4-5pm - **May 14, 23**  
Mountfitchet Exchange, 6-7pm - **May 16**

## 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, May 2** from 11am-3pm. Advisors can help with benefits problems, housing issues, access to job training and offer support to overcome addiction.

## TOUCHPOINT, STANSTED

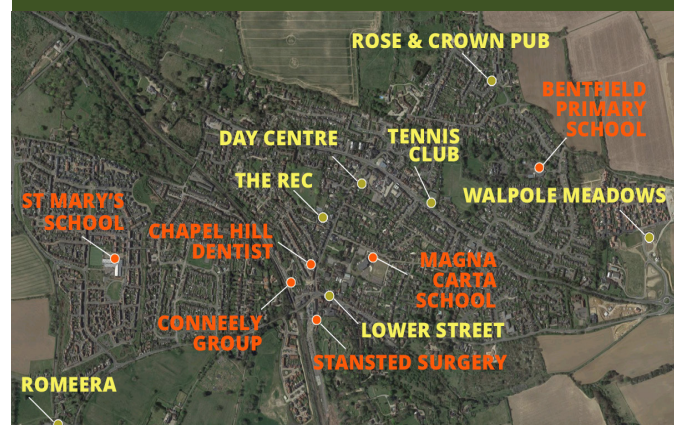
The community wellbeing project runs a variety of clubs, groups and activities from 72 Chapel Hill where you can socialise, get help, access training, and fill up your larder for free! **Foodshares** Stansted Social Club Wed 2.30-3.30pm, Thursdays Crafton Green 10am-noon, Saturdays 1-2pm; **Community 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 **May 12 & 26 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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## SUSTAINABLE STANSTED

### Funding from Uttlesford District Council

Both Sustainable Stansted and Stansted Parish Council have submitted successful bids to Uttlesford's Zero Carbon Communities Fund, enabling us to continue our work together in promoting a greener and more sustainable community. Our grant will be used for two projects:



- Providing residents with tailored information to help them make their homes more energy efficient. This will include the purchase of two thermal imaging cameras which can be used by members of the community who want to see where their homes are losing most heat
- A biodiversity study to map the animals, plants, and habitats we are lucky to enjoy in Stansted. Understanding more about our local area will allow us to know where to focus our efforts to protect and improve our natural environment. We will be working with a local ecologist and encouraging Stansted's residents to be involved in this exciting project.

The Parish Council's grant will be used:

- To plant meadow flowers on the triangle of land where High Lane meets the B1383 and on the verges in Pennington Lane at the entrance to Rainsford Road. Wild flowers provide important support to insects and other pollinators
- For rewilding projects (supporting a return to a more natural state that encourages wildlife), starting with the sustainable drainage area at the rear of Forest Hall Park. Depending on its success and taking into consideration the results of the biodiversity study, this programme will be extended in coming years.

If you want to hear more, or get involved in any of these projects please contact [sustainablestansted@gmail.com](mailto:sustainablestansted@gmail.com) or [stanstedparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:stanstedparishcouncil@gmail.com).

Fiona Neathey  
Sustainable Stansted  
Peter Jones  
Stansted Parish Council



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET

LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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

This month's meeting was well attended, with over 40 members present. I confess I was a little dubious about the subject matter, *Horsehair Tales*, until realising that the speaker was John Boyd; his knowledge on the technical and composition of fabrics is extensive, and his ability to explain and show examples of the work masterful. I had no idea that horsehair was still being used in fabric construction and

assumed that this was from a bygone era, rather like the horse itself.

John started by giving a brief history and said that the hair used in weaving is from the tail of the horse which, over its normal lifetime, will grow six or seven tails of approximately 70cm in length; the hair can be dyed, like human hair. In the early 1830s it was a cottage industry and children as young as eight years old were employed to remove each single hair from the tail and pass it to the weaver. As the years passed, machines were designed to do this laborious job. The original fabrics had many uses: the crinoline under skirts for ladies, horsehair screens, and as seat covers for railway coaches.



Today there is a constant demand for the fabrics in the restoration of antique furniture, curtains and from stately homes and museums. However, they are expensive to produce and you can expect to pay about £150 per metre. John allowed us to examine various examples of the fabrics and some horse tails. The next meeting, which is also our AGM, will be on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May** at 7.30pm in the Quaker Meeting House.

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

## ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Congratulations to the winners of the March draw:

£100	No 240	Margaret Trigg
£50	No 134	Laura Higley
£25	No 235	Peter Wells

The draw for May will be held on **26<sup>th</sup> May** 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 £2,500 given away this year. The Club raises vital money to help cover the heavy maintenance costs and work of St John's Church.

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## STANSTED EVENING WI



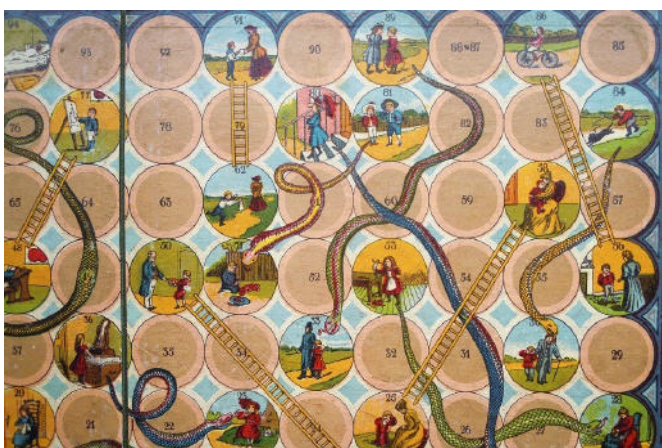
Our March meeting was held at the Bowls Club where we welcomed our speaker, Mary Waterfall who spoke about *Tales of a Jewellery Valuer*. A trip to Brazil first ignited her interest in gemstones, and fate and coincidence led to her entering the jewellery industry in Hatton Garden, progressing to working for Tiffany's and later with David Dickinson's *Real Deal* TV show. She explained how items of jewellery were valued differently for insurance purposes against the much lower second-hand value; this can cause much disappointment! She showed how she valued gems to ascertain whether they were genuine or synthetic and suggested we should check how often our insurance companies require an up-to-date valuation as this can greatly affect any claims.

Our next meeting on **Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May** at 7.30pm is our Annual Meeting. Hopefully we will be back in the Day Centre and we will be having a Bring and Buy stall.

Linda Gurr  
Tel: 07743 549241

## CHILDHOOD REMINISCENCES

When looking through some old toys and games I noticed that many were instructional as well as entertaining. Below is a picture of half of an old Snakes and Ladders board game where the point is made that good behaviour is rewarded with the opportunity to climb a ladder and naughtiness sends one spiralling down a snake.



There is an obvious allegory here and one is reminded of the childhood admonition:

*Naughty little cuss words,  
such as dash and blow,  
often lead to wuss words  
which can send you down below.*

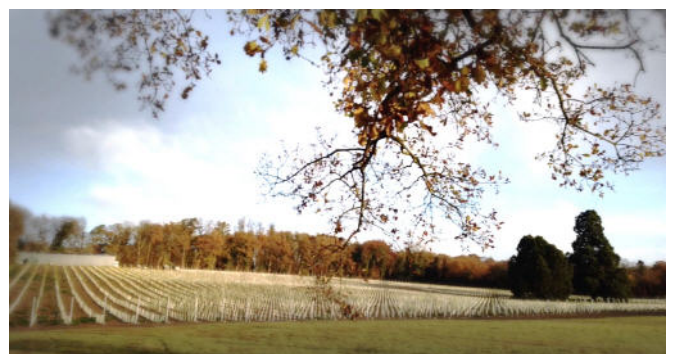


Felix

## THE GUNYAH VINEYARD

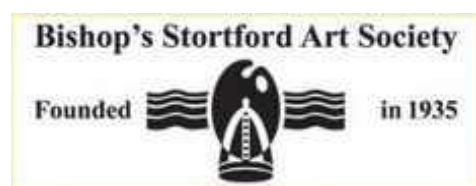
[www.thegunyahvineyard.com](http://www.thegunyahvineyard.com)

The Gunyah Vineyard is a new, independent, family-run vineyard in Stansted. We have been residents in the area for over 35 years and are overjoyed to be able to bring high quality, expertly grown local wines to Stansted and the surrounding area. Now in its fourth season, the vineyard is ready to start producing its first wines, with bottles arriving this summer. We have already had our tasting sessions; everyone is extremely enthusiastic about the taste and quality, and we are so looking forward to sharing it with our local community as soon as possible. We will be reaching out to local businesses, stockists and suppliers, and looking for partners to distribute and re-sell our wine, and we want to work primarily with other local businesses in the area. If you are interested in working with us, please get in touch with us through our social media platforms.



You can follow the vineyard on Instagram, where you can see all the hard work that goes into producing our wine, from planting, to pruning, all the way to harvest and bottling and also send messages to the vineyard team. We will be sharing more news from the vineyard as we get close to *Wine-day* but The Gunyah Vineyard is pleased to say that we will soon be painting the town red, white and rosé.

Rob Wakefield  
Email: [rob@milkcandamber.com](mailto:rob@milkcandamber.com)



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

The Society meets on Thursdays at 7.30pm at Thorn Grove School, Bishop's Stortford CM23 5LD. Come and meet like-minded people. Please bring your own cup for refreshments.

We are holding working evenings on **2<sup>nd</sup> May** and **6<sup>th</sup> June**; bring your own paints, pencils and something to paint on, plus your sketches or photos to work from. Ailsa Lyn will be showing us a landscape in *Line and Wash* on **16<sup>th</sup> May**.

Carole Crosby  
Tel: 812768  
Email: [crosbyca10@aol.com](mailto:crosbyca10@aol.com)

## BRAIN TRAINING

### How your socks will help your shoulders

Shoulders in a muddle cause more problems than just pain, weakness and disappointing sporting performance. Unfortunately, lifestyle encourages shoulders to get into a complete huddle; this leads to constant faulty movement, which compounds the problems. This is where our socks come to our rescue.

Either a pair of chunky socks or hand towels will do the job.

1. Ball up the socks or roll the towels into medium sized sausages; let us call them Pitstops
2. Tuck the socks or sausages high into the back of your armpits
3. Let your shoulders sink and roll slightly backwards, so you are resting your armpits on your Pitstops
4. Allow yourself to lengthen through the spine. Tight shoulders make good posture impossible.



Do this when minimal movement of the upper arm bone is needed, for example working at a desk or knitting. The prime muscles to be engaged are the *serratus anterior* and the lower *trapezius*. Both these flatten the shoulder

blades onto the back and discourage the pesky shoulder elevators from working; the shoulder blades will sink and your armpits widen. The sensation of relaxing the shoulders will become familiar with regular practise and so will have great carry over.

Brain benefits include much better breathing, improving the critical oxygen:carbon dioxide balance, better head position leading to better blood flow to the brain and clearer thinking. Also arms properly connected to the torso means we can be appropriately strong and your core stands a chance of engaging as it should, all from your socks! I do realise this is far from a complete cure, but it is a good squeeze in the right direction.

Clare Harding  
Z-Health Master Practitioner  
Tel: 07802 872919



## STANSTED FOOTBALL CLUB

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

With our inaugural season competing in the Spartan South Midlands League now behind us, we can look back at the decision of the Football Association (FA) to laterally move the Club; this affected both our finances and our squad. Losing several experienced players meant our team management spent a great deal of time searching and watching local players who could meet our standards. At the start of the season, our target was to retain our Step 5 status; however, we spent several weeks languishing in the relegation zone. As a result of hard work during training, the results turned in our favour and we finished the season comfortably in mid-table; our target was achieved. Along with our continued fantastic home support which the players very much appreciate, we feel we will be better prepared for next season if the FA informs us that our request to be returned to the Essex Senior League is refused and we stay in the Spartan League.

For our over-45s the season runs into mid-May as they play catch-up on those games lost to the appalling wet weather. The management team of Gary Cook and Andy Thorpe will continue throughout the close season to look for more players; they need to have a large squad to cover games when players are unavailable. Our youth set-up continues to grow as we add both new teams and players. With the link to the senior Club, our youth teams are able to compete in the Eastern Junior Alliance Leagues and will also be looking to add to their squads in the summer. Both groups will announce details through our social media in the weeks to come. Have a great summer, see you in August.



Tom Williams  
Tel: 07921 403842



## Stansted Cricket Club

[www.stanstedcc.hitscricket.com](http://www.stanstedcc.hitscricket.com)

Get your pads on ... the sun is thinking about coming out and it is once again time to hear the evocative sound of leather on willow. You may have thought you had given up many years ago but think again. The time is now, and you are wanted. Our new season will soon kick off on Star Wars Day which the nerds among you will know is **4<sup>th</sup> May**. It is an enticing Herts and Essex Border Division 1 derby encounter for the 1<sup>st</sup> XI at home (Hargrave Park) against Thaxted. The still unbeaten 2s are away at Hoddesdon and I, for one, fancy this as an away win.



New players should contact Ben Sammons on 07852 510330. Ben is a cracking batsman ... more tank than Ferrari ... and he can pull for England. He will welcome you to the Club and soon have you in amongst it and agreeing to all sorts of Committee duties. Seriously, we need fresh blood so best not to overthink it; do get in touch.

Robin Keck  
Tel: 07717 571791



www.stanstedtennisclub.co.uk

The Club is now in full swing with five teams entering the summer small Essex League fixtures, ladder matches, trophy matches, and the first rounds of the Club Championship being held. There was a fun ladies one day doubles tournament on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April organised by Gail Hogg with 16 ladies playing. Despite extremely challenging windy conditions there was some good tennis played and an enjoyable lunch was had by all. The winners were Catherine Gibby and Chris Bailey who beat Carol Cook and Cathy Brenner 6-5 in a very exciting and close match. Consolation winners were Caroline Crossley and Anthea Thomas who defeated Val Ashwood and Gail Hogg. On the social side about 40 members attended our annual Quiz Evening with Carol Cook asking the questions.



Carol Cook, Cathy Brenner, Gail Hogg, Chris Bailey, Catherine Gibby

Group coaching for adults who are beginners or coming back to tennis after a time away, will be starting on Sunday mornings in May coached by Dan Warwick. If you are interested in joining these sessions, or have any other queries, please email us or see our website.

Debbie Lane

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



## STANSTED HALL & ELSENHAM CRICKET CLUB

www.shcc.hitscricket.com

Juniors are now being coached outdoors ahead of the new season. Our coaches are fully qualified and all relevant paperwork is up to date. The Club continues to look for young players in all age groups, although our squad numbers are limited, which enables everybody to play in matches. We are delighted to confirm that Anya Shrubsole will be visiting the ground during the summer to give our youngsters a training session. Anya played for England from

2008-2022 and was a two-time World Cup winner. Famously she took six wickets in the 2017 final at Lords.

As mentioned before, this year the Club is celebrating 50 years of cricket at Stansted House. On 28<sup>th</sup> April 1974 the first match on our beautiful ground was against a Robin Hobbs XI. Robin played cricket for Essex and England and his team included Keith Fletcher, a young Graham Gooch, and many of the Essex 1<sup>st</sup> XI at that time. Unfortunately, Robin died recently and he will be missed by many as he was a fun character. The Club team that day included Colin Cowdrey. Any new potential players, supporters, or cricket enthusiasts interested in joining our Club please contact me.



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

The season opener is on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April**; the match will feature the Captain's team playing the President's team. Come along from 2.00pm and watch the game. We have a licensed bar for cool refreshments. We have had 125mm of rain in the past few weeks which has severely limited the amount of work that the green team can do. Hopefully we shall get a little respite in the weather which will enable us to get down to work. Off the green we continue to support Touchpoint while the Crafton Green building gets a refurb. The Bowls Club has become their temporary home for the past month and we applaud the work they do for the community.



If you fancy being part of a friendly club which offers a subsidised bar, lots of banter and other activities for you to get involved in, then drop me an email and I will help answer your questions and get you started. Please see our website for further details.

Peter Beattie

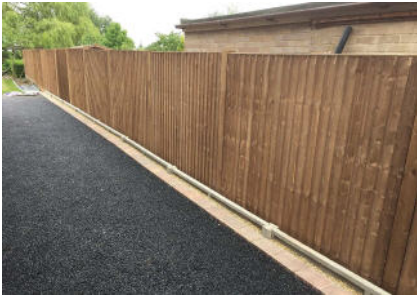
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**WHY NOT COME AND HAVE A GO?**

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Contact: Peter Beattie on 07850 329192 [info@stanstedbowlingclub.co.uk](mailto:info@stanstedbowlingclub.co.uk)



## 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	Peter Beattie Tel: 07850 329192 Email: peterdavidbeattie@gmail.com	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 is Well Read	Diana Griffin Tel: 813056 Email: stanstediswell read@gmail.com
Grove Cottage	Sarah Smith Email: comms@mencapgrovecottage.org	Stansted Social Club	Andrew Sharpe Tel: 812992 Email: stanstedclub@gmail.com
Guides	Jennifer Jarvis Tel: 814434 Tel: 07704 553727	Stansted Sparks Netball	Gemma Snelling Tel: 07894 944242 Email: gemmasnelling@me.com
Helpline	Roger Barrett Tel: 814216 Email: rbarrett54@gmail.com	Stansted Speed Watch	Warren Vickers Tel: 813996 Email: vickersw@aol.com
History Society	Keiran Oliver Tel: 07946 783039 Email: keiran@humanrootscommunity.org.uk	Stansted Tennis Club	Debbie Lane Tel: 07870 971983 Email: debbieglane@gmail.com
Human Roots	Ellen Brooks Tel: 07800 896516 Email: ellenbrooks@hotmail.co.uk	Talking Newspaper (BS and District)	Richard Barnett Tel: 651270 Email: familybarnett24@hotmail.com
Huw Johnson Club	Richard Haywood Tel: 07794 268208 Email: contact@stanstedmentalhealth.org	The Hundred Parishes Society	Ken McDonald Tel: 813226 Email:hundredparishes@btinternet.com
Let's Talk, Stansted Mental Health Support	Andrew Poyser Tel: 07738 591232	TouchPoint	Shirley Johnson Tel: 07572 114882 Email: info@thetouchpoint.org
Little Scrummers Millers (Windmill)	Tudor Owen Tel: 810805 Email: info@stanstedwindmill.co.uk	Town Twinning	Chairman: Geraldine Allars Tel: 07833 089298 Email: twinning@stanstedmountfitchet- pc.gov.uk
music@stansted (Classical concerts)	Sonia Levy Tel: 815282 Email: contactus@musicatstansted.co.uk	u3a	Susan Sedgebeer Email: bertiestar@gmail.com
Neighbourhood Watch	Linzi Shelford Tel: 07427 377118 Email: linzishelford@hotmail.com	WI (Stansted)	Linda Gurr Tel: 07743 549241
Parkinson's UK Uttlesford Support Group	Simon Russell Tel: 01799 524638 Email: simonrussell2@tiscali.co.uk	WI (Ugley)	Dorothy Wallace Tel: 850215
Rainbow Pre-School	Gill Pursglove Tel: 814242/ 07966 506997 Email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net	Youth Centre	Essex Youth Services Tel: 07584 140507
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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