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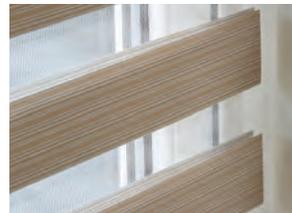
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Front Cover

Sunset over the Tennis Club

by Richard Thomas

Enhanced by Paul Burt Photography

Stansted Mountfitchet Village Magazine

The Link

www.stanstedlink.org.uk

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

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CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE MARCH ISSUE

Please email: editor@stanstedlink.org.uk or post to 7 Blythwood Gardens CM24 8HG by noon on **9th Feb.**
Word attachment or typed into an email, max 300 words; landscape photographs **min 250KB** as a separate jpg.
Articles may subject to editing

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EDITORIAL



We are very lucky to have so many great photographers who are happy to send us pictures of our surroundings, local people and animals. This month I would like to thank Richard Thomas for his glorious sunset over the Tennis Club in Cambridge Road. We have had many stunning sunsets recently and it is great to have one captured on the front of this month's issue. At the Link directors' recent Annual General Meeting, chairman Mike Dyer reported that out of the 11 issues in 2025, there were ten different photographers! I love the feeling that so many of our readers want to participate in the production of our magazine; many thanks to all of you who have done so. You will find a photograph of Richard on page 6, heavily disguised!

This is the first opportunity for descriptions and pictures from festive events to be published, as we do not have a separate January edition of The Link. Pages 6 and 7 show happy Christmas photographs from the Fun Place on the Hill, the Windmill and Churches Together in Stansted's Celebration of Christmas. If your brains are feeling a bit sluggish in this winter weather, perhaps you could try and solve this month's Pot Luck Quiz on page 4, or guess the object from its picture on page 25. Of course, February could be described as the month of romance, and our young artist has drawn a lovely amaryllis lily, which can cheer us up during the cold months and is one of the flowers often included in a Valentine bouquet. See page 25 for the photograph of her drawing. An event which should fill you with nostalgic good cheer is the film music concert in Saffron Walden in early February; see page 3. Finally, there is nothing quite like singing to make you feel great; how about looking on page 11 for an invitation to join a choir?

Ed



UTTLESFORD COMMUNITY TRAVEL

www.uttlesfordcommunitytravel

You may know that Stansted Helpline closed on 31st December, after providing local residents with 41 years' service, helping people travel to and from essential community institutions, such as medical appointments and collecting prescriptions. Uttlesford Community Travel (UCT) will now be plugging the gap left behind by Helpline. You will be happy to know that several Helpline drivers have signed up to volunteer for UCT, so you may well see a familiar face at the wheel. We are dedicated to ensuring that every member of our community has access to safe, reliable and affordable transport services. Whether you are an elderly individual requiring assistance with hospital appointments or a person with disabilities in need of accessible transport, we are here to provide this, tailored to your needs.

Become a member

Simply fill out our online membership form or contact the office. Membership is open to all residents of Uttlesford who are over 60, disabled or rurally isolated, and who find it difficult to access normal public transport. There are two services available: first, the hospital car service, driven by our fabulous volunteers. You can use this service for all medical appointments and our drivers travel outside our area for residents. Secondly, you can book our fully accessible minibuses which can be used for day trips, shopping and anything social that you would like to attend regularly or just as a one off. Our office team would be happy to support you with your requests over the telephone. Our office hours are Monday to Friday 9.00am-1.00pm. Please see our website for more information.

Mick Bott
Tel: 01371 875787



STANSTED MOUNTFITCET u3a

<https://stansted.u3asite.uk>

Scrabble, Book Clubs, Yoga and so much more ...

We hear those words *so much more* rather too often, finding little to justify raising such expectations. In the case of the u3a there is truth in that claim because there are another 37 groups apart from the three named above, not counting the talks and visits also on the menu for this year. You can have a quick read here about two recent group meetings, but be sure to look at the website to see what is on offer. Alternatively call 07847 385541 for more information.

At the last Saturday Seminar of 2025, retired Art History teacher, Joanna Brooks, took her audience on a densely packed tour of Titian's life and work. Supported by detailed and specific visual examples of her points, Joanna demonstrated the achievements of this 16th century artist. His art created great emotional impact as his technique shifted from delicate brushstrokes to a looser style, even using his fingers to apply paint to the canvas, creating a variety of seminal masterpieces. This year's Saturday Seminars promise compelling topics; for example, on **21st February** at 9.30am in St Theresa's Parish Centre, prominent British Historian, Dr Helen Fry, will give a talk on *A Very Secret War: Bugging the Nazis in WWII*. It is sure to be a captivating presentation by a highly experienced author and broadcaster. The Poetry for Pleasure group also ended 2025 on a high note. The last two sessions included poems to do with Christmas food as well as plenty of Christmas food to go with it. Another session focused on reading the poems of Henry Normal, a key writer of the *Royle Family* series. The group would heartily recommend this poet's works.

Julia Cook



In late November, 130 shoe boxes went from Stansted to Eastern Europe via Loughton, the local distribution point. Some were made up in Stansted and some were made up by Manuden Guides. Like last year's, the boxes went to Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Bosnia and Romania, where they were given to children in the most marginalised communities.



As usual this was a team effort with quizzers, donors of items and money, knitters, packers and checkers all playing a part. We are grateful to the Tennis Club for giving us a ball to put in every box. Feridun and Liz Kadir's quiz was very enjoyable; and thanks to the money raised on the night and through donations, there was enough to pay for the shipping of the boxes, give a further donation to Teams4U, and have some money left over to kick-start this year's boxes. To quote from their website: *Teams4U is all about drawing alongside children, showing them someone cares about them and believes in them.* At Christmas, 130 children had the joy of receiving a box from Stansted. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

Helen, Eileen, Catherine and Verity
Tel 813579



HUW JOHNSON CLUB

We are a social club for adults with a learning disability and we meet on the third Thursday of the month 7.00pm-8.45pm, usually in St John's Church Hall, for a range of fun activities to bring people together.

This year started brilliantly for the Club with a trip to see *Sleeping Beauty* at the Cambridge Arts Theatre. The panto was thoroughly enjoyed by all members and helpers and is always a highlight in our calendar. Thank you to all the donors who supported us in 2025 and whose generosity helped make this outing possible. Our usual Thursday evenings will restart on **19th February**. As always, new members are welcome to come along and try the Club out; please get in touch to check the details of the next session. New volunteers to help us put on the activities and help transport members to and from the sessions are always very welcome too.

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

For our December meeting we held our Christmas Quiz *Mulled Wine and Mince Pies*. A host of questions across a range of topics were posed that baffled and bemused the members, but there were plenty of easier questions too. Our thanks to Roger Barrett for drafting and hosting the quiz. There was also a display of artefacts from Christmases of long ago, provided and arranged by Tony Wellings, and which was of interest to many members. A Christmas Raffle was also held at the meeting, and thanks are also extended to all our members who donated prizes, arranged the prize table, and sold and bought the tickets. The raffle raised the excellent sum of £137 to help support the Society's activities.

Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday 5th February** at 7.30pm in Touchpoint, when our guest speaker will be Dr Mike James who will give a presentation on Bishop William *A History of His Times*. Bishop William purchased the manor of Stortford in the 11th century, resulting in the modern name of Bishop's Stortford. New members and guest members just for the evening, are always very welcome.

Keith Parslow
Email: keithparslow0910@gmail.com



www.saffronsymphony.org

Film music concert

Back by popular demand, on **Sunday 8th February** at 3.00pm in Saffron Hall the orchestra presents an afternoon of film music featuring scores from some of your favourite films. There will be plenty of songs to sing on the way home after we have taken you on a tour of some of the greatest films ever made, including *Total Recall*, *South Pacific*, *Carousel* and *Robin Hood*.



Tickets: adults £18 and £21, 18-25yrs £11, under 18s £6 available from www.saffronhall.com or tel 0845 548 7650.



Marion Dyer



Friendship and belonging

One of our themes for the Spring Term has been thinking about how we are inclusive and how we can ensure that everyone feels like they belong to our school community. The children had a wellbeing day focused on play and belonging, where they spent time working and playing together, taking part in activities such as collaborative art and discussing how to take turns and cooperate with one another. They also learnt what it means to be an inclusive school, focusing on our value of belonging and exploring how we can help everyone feel included. Through thoughtful discussions, the children considered how unkind name-calling or leaving others out at playtime can make people feel, and how we can instead ensure everyone experiences life in all its fullness.



The children also worked together to create a whole-school Play Charter as part of our Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) programme, agreeing on how they will treat one another during playtimes and lunchtimes. It was a wonderful way to start the year, setting a positive tone for learning, friendships and happy playtimes across our school community.

Sharon Vessey
Headteacher
Tel: 812362

Email: admin@birchanger.essex.sch.uk

**STANSTED
EVENING WI**



At our December meeting we welcomed back Tony Tutton; his talk *That'll be the Day* took us through the life of the legendary Buddy Holly from his birthplace in Lubbock, Texas in 1939 to his untimely death in 1959. There were stories behind the songs with lots of singing along. It was a visual feast of music and song and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Our next meeting will be on **Thursday 12th February** at 7.30pm in Touchpoint when our speaker Amanda Sutherland will be telling us about her *Creative Journey*. The competition is a handmade item. We welcome visitors and new members, so please come and join us.

Linda Gurr
Tel: 07743 549241

POT LUCK QUIZ 2

- 1 What do you call an 83 year old beetle?
- 2 What nationality is the world record male pole vault champion Armand du Plantis?
- 3 Name the popular Dutch violinist famous for world-wide concerts with his orchestra and singers
- 4 What do the Swiss call Lake Geneva?
- 5 Which Spanish city is named after a pomegranate?
- 6 Under which male name did novelist Ann Evans write?
- 7 In the University Boat Race between Oxford and Cambridge, what are the names of their reserve boats?
- 8 What non-clothing fashion item is not allowed for jockeys?
- 9 What does a pinniped have instead of feet?
- 10 Who was the first ever presenter of BBC's Question Time?

Dave Morson

Answers on page 30

**NEWPORT AND DISTRICT
FLOWER CLUB**

We ended 2025 with a wonderful Christmas demonstration by our much-loved Barbara Collins. In addition to the sparkle in Barbara's displays, guests were welcomed with a glass of bubbling Prosecco and some delicious savoury nibbles. Our sales table offered many festive items to buy which would help us with our own Christmas arrangements. At the end of the evening, Barbara's beautiful floral creations were raffled. Club members also contributed to the Christmas Tree Festival held in Elsenham Church with three fantastic topiary arrangements; not your usual tree but they were much admired!



We begin this year on Wednesday **18th February** when we welcome back the very talented Gill McGregor to demonstrate for us. Gill demonstrates nationally, teaches and is the author of many floral related books, so please come and join us for what will be a fabulous evening. You can also keep up to date with club activities via our Facebook page, Ugley Bunch Flower Club. We meet on the third Wednesday of the month 7.00pm for 7.30pm in Ugley Village Hall.

Sandra Honour
Email: theugleybunch@outlook.com

STANSTED IS WELL READ

8 pm Tue 3rd Feb

Dog and Duck, Lower Street

Unsettled Ground by Claire Fuller

A poignant exploration of resilience and survival which follows the isolated lives of twins Jeanie and Julius, as they navigate the aftermath of their mother's death and the harsh realities of their existence

All Welcome Tel 813056



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

7.30 pm Thu 5th Feb

Touchpoint

Bishop William *A History of His Times* by Mike James

Annual membership £15
New members and guests for the evening welcome Entry £3



FILM MUSIC

3 pm Sun 8th Feb
Saffron Hall, Saffron Walden

Programme includes
Total Recall, South Pacific, Carousel
Star Wars, Robin Hood

Adults £18 and £21, 18-25s £11
under 18s £6 from
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www.saffronhall.com or on the door

WHAT'S ON IN FEBRUARY

5	Thu	Local History Society	Touchpoint 7.30 pm
8	Sun	Saffron Symphony	Saffron Hall 3 pm
9	Mon	Link copy due in today	before noon
10	Tue	The Arts Society BS	Southmill Arts 10.40 am
		RSPB	Bishop's Park Comm Cntr 7.30 pm
12	Thu	W I	Touchpoint 7.30 pm
15 & 22	Sun	Snowdrop Sundays	Easton Lodge 11 am - 4 pm
18	Wed	Ugley W I	Ugley Village Hall 2 pm
		Newport Flower Club	Ugley Village Hall 7 for 7.30 pm
19	Thu	Snowdrop Thursday	Easton Lodge 11 am - 3 pm
		U3A Monthly Meeting	St Theresa's Parish Centre 2 pm
21	Sat	Ugley Farmers' Market	Ugley Village Hall 10 am - noon
		U3A Saturday Seminar	St Theresa's Parish Centre 9.30 am
28	Sat	Elsenham Farmers' Mket	Village Hall 12.30 - 2.30 pm

THE ARTS SOCIETY BISHOP'S STORTFORD

10.40 am Tue 10th Feb

South Mill Arts

*Chris Aslan Magical Protection in
Islamic clothing and jewellery*

*Why do weddings have bridesmaids
and why do brides wear veils?*

Guests welcome Entry £7. Coffee 10 am
Tel 656065 for more information



Monthly Meeting

7.30 pm Tue 10th Feb

Bishop's Park Community Centre CM23 4DA

Ray Murdoch

*Birding the Eastern Seaboard
of the USA*

Visitors welcome, entry £5

Tel: Peter 07876 295456

www.group.rspb.org.uk/stortvalley

To advertise your March event free of charge
on this page in the next issue

Email: editor@stanstedlink.org.uk by 9th February



Saturday Seminar

9.30 am Sat 21st Feb

St Theresa's Parish Centre
High Lane

A Very Secret War:
Bugging the Nazis in WWII
by prominent British Historian
Dr Helen Fry



www.uglevillage.org.uk

10 am - noon

Sat 21st Feb
Ugley Village Hall

Fruit and Veg ~ Eggs ~ Olive Oil
Fish ~ Beef ~ Pork ~ Lamb
Bread ~ Home Baking ~ Jam
Chutney ~ Honey ~ Skincare ~ Plants
Refillable Laundry and Edible Products
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Refreshments and Free Parking
For info and future dates tel 814052



Stansted Evening W I

7.30 pm Thu 12th Feb

Touchpoint

Creative Journey
by Amanda Sutherland

Visitors Welcome Entry £3

NEWPORT FLOWER CLUB

7 pm Wed 18th Feb

Ugley Village Hall

Demonstrator
Gill McGregor

Visitors are always very welcome
Small charge for entry
Plenty of free parking



Ugley W I

2 pm Wed 18th Feb

Ugley Village Hall

The History of the Envelope
by one of our members

Visitors Welcome
Plenty of free parking



SNOWDROP OPEN DAYS

11 am - 4 pm

Sun 15th & Sun 22nd Feb

11 am - 3 pm Thu 19th Feb

Tickets £7.50 on the gate or £6 in
advance from www.trybooking.com

Hot drinks and snacks
Snowdrops and gifts on sale



STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

www.stanstedwindmill.co.uk

Eighty-five children came with parents, carers, grandparents or other relatives to see Santa at the Mill on Saturday 6th December. The weather was kind, which was very lucky. We were very pleased to receive some wonderful comments on the scene we had constructed. We had kept our plans fairly secret in advance but now the secret is out, we can explain the concept to those who have not seen it for themselves. We built a dark magic forest scene with a winding path through loads of borrowed Christmas trees. The moon was shining brightly above and sound effects were the wind, hooting owls and church bells ringing. There was also a real gusty wind blowing in sync with the wind sound effect. Bark chippings on the ground and the smell of a real forest completed the illusion. The path led to Santa's log cabin grotto.



We offered hot mulled wine, squash for children and mince pies. We had a raffle with prizes from Bishop's Stortford Business Improvement Development (BID), Daniel Robinson Funeral Directors, Nolaki Restaurant, Uppers Coffee, Murdoch's Estate Agents and others, all of whom we would like to thank for their support. Our aim for this event is not so much to raise funds but to bring children and their families into the windmill to help build a new generation of local people who will care for our wonderful iconic windmill in future years. We have now dismantled the winter scene and are preparing for our Easter open days in April. More details will be in the next Link.

Trevor Lloyd
Tel: 07739 428352

Email: info@stanstedwindmill.co.uk



ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

www.stmarysstansted.co.uk

We were pleased to welcome the children back from the Christmas holidays, well rested and ready to learn. An added excitement is that our new outside play equipment is ready to use. Thanks so much to our Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA). Year 1 have started swimming lessons at Grange Paddocks; they are all being very well behaved and super organised. Well done guys! Year 5 are especially busy

at the moment, with Bikeability, CPR classes, practising for Young Voices and taking part in an upper key stage 2 Tudor development day. We would encourage all our children to take part in Stansted Library's winter reading challenge which runs until the end of half term on Saturday 22nd February; visit the library at Crafton Green to sign up. If we do need to close due to snow, which is unlikely, the information will be on the website and the school telephone.

Kara Power
Acting Headteacher
Tel: 812212

Email: office@stmarys-stansted.essex.scho.uk



FUN PLACE ON THE HILL

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Our Christmas event was very popular and well attended. The children enjoyed making Christingles, and the mid-morning sing-a-long included Christmas carols and songs. Loud knocking on the door announced the arrival of our special visitor, Father Christmas, with his sack full of presents. The photograph below shows Imogen excitedly waiting for her gift from Father Christmas. When it was time to go home the children delved in the Lucky Dip for a small Christmas-themed present.



The Fun Place continues to be a popular meeting place and is open **every Friday including school holidays** from 9.15am-11.30am in the Free Church Hall, which is warm and comfortable. Now cooler weather is returning, why not come along for a couple of hours and help save on home energy costs? All visitors are welcome at the Fun Place. Parents, grandparents and children drop in and adults relax with a hot drink and chat, while the children enjoy plenty of space to run around and play with the toys. Free squash and healthy snacks are available for children, and tea or coffee and biscuits for the adults. There is free parking in the church car park and we look forward to welcoming you.

Sue Parker and Fran Richards
Tel: 657116



Email: funplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

On Saturday 20th December, about 50 people of all ages gathered on the land adjacent to St Mary's School, Forest Hall Park for Stansted Churches' annual *Celebration of Christmas*. It was a mild day, and unlike the previous year, there was no rain! It was a real community event and it was lovely to see so many families. One couple told us that it was what Christmas was all about, and it was very special for them.



We were fortunate to have some of the players from Bishop's Stortford Brass Band to accompany the well-known carols, which included *Away in a Manger* chosen especially for the children. Readings telling the Christmas story were interspersed between the carols.

As the event progressed it gradually got darker. Torches and lights from mobile phones came on, which, together with the beautiful sounds of the band, created a real Christmas atmosphere.



The main organisers of the event were Dave Morson and Kathy West, and we say a huge thank you to them.



Marion Dyer



Ken McDonald
Secretary
Tel: 813226

Email: hundredparishes@btinternet.com

The walk descriptions downloadable from our website refer to many interesting buildings along each route. Some of the larger and more ancient homes are described as hall houses, having been constructed as a communal hall with one or two wings at the side. The hall would have been heated by a log fire in the centre of the room, its smoke drifting upwards through vents in the roof. The hall house design fell out of favour, mainly between 1550 and 1650, when it became fashionable to install a fireplace against a wall, complete with a flue or chimney which took away the smoke and provided an upward draught to encourage the fire to burn. Where the flue or chimney breached the roofline, it often continued upwards as a chimney pot. In grander houses, these became fashionable accessories and a good number survive today.

During the 19th century, more and more houses had fires and they tended to be fuelled by coal. Chimneys became narrower and their pots were less ornate. Fireplaces were installed in multiple rooms, so houses might have several chimneys. From the mid-20th century, open fires were largely replaced by central heating and chimney pots are not usually required on new houses. Older pots are sometimes removed before they need maintenance.



You are encouraged to look up at our surviving chimney pots, especially those from long ago. Here are some of the wonderful local examples: Stansted Hall, shown in the photograph above; Badyngams, Great Waltham; Tudor House, Newport; Cable Cottage, Puckeridge; and Brook House, North End. Not so easy to find, but on various walk routes: Moyns Park, Steeple Bumpstead; Broadoaks, Wimbish; and Dynes Cottage, Finchingfield.

Happy spotting!




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We are now in our new printing year and there are a few spaces left

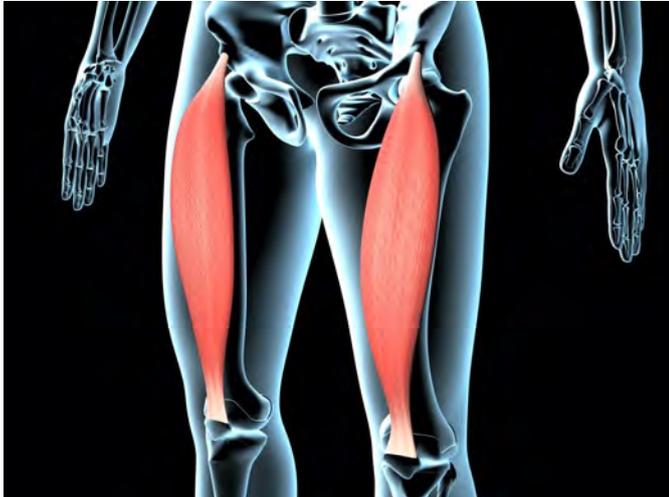
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BRAIN TRAINING

Quad stretching

This helps ease backache and improves walking and running. I think the universally tight muscle is the one running straight down the front of our thighs, called *Rectus Femoris*. Much sitting causes it much tightness, which can be a big factor in causing backache.



The simplest stretch is: stand on one leg, grab the other ankle or foot and pull your heel towards your bottom. To make it fully effective, bring this knee forwards a bit and tighten up your bottom, then start to pull the knee downwards, thus keeping the pelvis level: a most satisfying stretch. However, what if you cannot grab your foot? This is surprisingly common, and even more reason to stretch out that muscle. Here is what to do:

1. Step into a lunge, feet not too narrow, so you are not wobbly
2. Straighten the rear foot, lift up the back heel, so that you are on your rear foot toes. Bend that knee and check your hips are square on
3. Tuck your tail under and lower your front ribs, as if doing a standing ab crunch, so you are stretching out your low back
4. Now tuck in your chin a bit and press the crown of your head straight up towards the ceiling
5. Do 5-10 small bounces up and down. Little zing, zing, zings down the front of the thigh
6. Change legs.

Start by keeping the lunge short, since the pelvis must be square on and firmly tucked. If you take the rear foot wider, this is also an effective inner thigh stretch. In truth, this is actually a nerve glide. Nerves are busy things! In this case, they are firing up the muscle. For best effect, nerves need to be nice and long.

Clare Harding
Tel: 07802 872919
FB Flexible Strength, Manuden



THE PLACE ON THE HILL

www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

As I write this in early January, the weather has turned very cold, but *The Place on the Hill* is always lovely and warm. Come and join us for free coffee, cakes and biscuits. If you would like to get out and meet people, we offer a safe and friendly environment for adults. There is no need to book, just come along to the Free Church at the bottom of Chapel Hill. We are open every **Wednesday 10.00am-noon** and everyone is welcome. We also have a jigsaw you can work on. There is limited parking behind the church. 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



www.tasbs.org.uk

Our next meeting is on **Tuesday 10th February** at 10.40am in South Mill Arts (SMA), with coffee available from 10.00am. Chris Aslan will be giving a lecture on *Magical Protection in Islamic clothing and jewellery*.



Why do most weddings have bridesmaids, and why do brides wear veils? Why do many items of clothing and jewellery contain recurring motifs and how do they offer amuletic protection? In this lecture we explore embroidered sudoku and mirror-work, the symbols of sexual potency used to ward off the evil eye, and the prevalence of belief in the evil eye and jinn, in the Turkic and Persian world. Chris draws on his 15 years living and working in the region, to reveal the hidden magical properties behind decoration and symbolisation. Come and be entertained, amazed and enlightened. Visitors are very welcome for which we invite a donation of £7. If coming by car, please register your car number at SMA reception.

Our Membership Secretary, Sue Chapman, can be contacted by email: info@tasbs.org.uk or tel 508542. Please see our website for details of membership and future meetings. Our Facebook page is Arts Society Bishop's Stortford.

Michael Fitch



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event



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We meet every Sunday morning at 9.00am in St John's Church. The service starts at 9.30am. We practise on alternate Saturday mornings 10.30am-noon, with free hot drinks and biscuits at half time. Come along, have a cuppa, and see what we do. Practices coming up are on 31st January, 14th and 28th February. For more information, please contact me. We look forward to seeing you.

Kathy West
Tel: 07880 602717
Email: kewest@btinternet.com

ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Congratulations to the winners of the November draw:

£100	No 218	Ray Smith
£50	No 104	June Winter
£25	No 115	Edmund Wilkinson

Congratulations to the winners of the December draw:

£200	No 127	Emma Pritchard
£100	No 235	Peter Wells
£50	No 252	Valerie Reavell
£25	No 5	Linda and Tony Gurr

The draw for February will be held on **22nd February** in St John's Church, following the 9.30am service. Numbers at £2 per month for each number are still available to 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 each year. The Club raises vital money to help cover the heavy maintenance costs and work of St John's Church.

Jean Newson
Tel: 819062
Email: jean733@btinternet.com



RSPB

<https://group.rspb.org.uk/stortvalley>

Our programme starts with one of our popular midweek walks on **Wednesday 4th February** starting from Widford at 10.00am (junction B1004 and B180 - SG12 8SJ). The four mile clockwise route heads towards Much Hadham and follows quiet roads and bridle tracks through Nether Street and South End before heading south along a byway to the start.

Our monthly meeting is on **Tuesday 10th February** at 7.30pm in Bishop's Park Community Centre CM23 4DA. Ray Murdoch will be presenting *Birding the Eastern Seaboard of the USA*. In addition to being a knowledgeable naturalist and birder he is an excellent photographer, so we can expect his talk to combine great knowledge with outstanding images. In the second half he will concentrate on American woodpeckers and their conservation; there are many more woodpecker species in the USA than we have.



On **Sunday 15th February** we conclude the month with a visit to RSPB Ouse Fen Reserve at Shelford's Road, Earith PE28 3PS. Meet at the reserve at 10.00am. This is a fantastic reserve located where the River Great Ouse spills into the Cambridgeshire Fens. The reserve is still being created with reedbeds and pools of open water, allowing wildlife to move freely. Once complete, the whole wetland will stretch 700 hectares and include the largest reedbed in the UK, spanning 460 hectares. Ouse Fen has attracted a wealth of wildlife; species that were once common in the Fens are returning here to feed and breed. The reedbeds are home to marsh harriers, bearded tits, and the secretive bittern as well as large numbers of ducks, grebes, swans and wading birds. For further details please visit our website or contact me.

Peter Allen
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ST CLARE HOSPICE

www.stclarehospice.org.uk

We hosted our 2025 Light up a Life remembrance services across West Essex throughout November and December. Leonie Smalling, St Clare Hospice Individual Giving Manager said, *Thanks to the generosity and heartfelt support of our community, we were able to create a truly special space for remembrance and reflection and raise an amazing £29,500. This could cover 14 days of the hospice's Patient and Family Support Service, which helps families access financial support and help talk to children about the life-limiting conditions that their mum, dad, nanny or grandad are facing, in language that they understand. ... A huge thank you to everyone who donated and to those who joined us at any of our services. Your kindness means we can continue providing compassionate care when it is needed most. We would also like to thank the venues which welcomed us into their churches and halls, and the wonderful volunteers and readers who gave their time and voices to make our services so special.*



If you were unable to join one of our remembrance services, there is still time to leave a tribute on our virtual Light up a Life tree; please see www.stclarehospice.org.uk/light-up-a-life-remembrance-services. The Hospice also offers a free GriefLine for anyone struggling with grief and would like someone to talk to; call 945089 Monday to Friday 9.00am-5.00pm.

Ellen Munson
Marketing and Communications Officer
Email: communications@stclarehospice.org.uk

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR EDITOR!

It gives me great pleasure to report that, following her nomination, our esteemed editor has now received an Uttlesford District Council Community Achievement Award. *The Link* has been Stansted Mountfitchet's village magazine since its launch in 1980. Elizabeth Oakley joined the editorial team in September 2017 as assistant editor and quickly made her mark. When the previous editor relocated in 2019, Elizabeth was the natural choice to step up. She has brought a perfect blend of tact and tenacity to the role and has mastered the fine art of saying *the editor's decision is final!*

Each month, Elizabeth devotes many hours to shaping *The Link*, always with the goal of reflecting and supporting village life. Her steady hand and community spirit have helped the magazine remain not just relevant, but indispensable. She very much believes in the importance of strong team work so is reluctant to take sole credit, but says she is very happy to accept the award on behalf of the entire team as each one of them is totally dedicated to the magazine and does a superb job.



Mike Dyer
Chairman
The Link



UGLEY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Our November meeting was a very special one in the history of our WI. We celebrated our 105th birthday! Speaker Jackie Lamberty and her husband John gave us a real treat, one of Jackie's beautifully illustrated talks about her latest exotic holiday to South Africa. In the space of just 45 minutes we were transported there, flying en route over the Victoria Falls. Its spray can rise to 1,300 feet; it was amazing. Jackie's photos were fantastic. We saw some very exotic birds including marabou storks, a tropical boubou and a lilac breasted roller (shown below). The animal section featured an elephant crêche, white rhinos, zebras and springboks. One of the most unusual views was that of a moonbow, the night-time equivalent of a rainbow. Following her beautiful talk, we all enjoyed a piece of our anniversary cake and a good cup of tea.



Our Christmas meeting was held in the beautifully decorated lodge of our President, Dorothy Wallace. Members arrived to be greeted by the warmth of a real fire and tables laden with delicious sandwiches and other nibbles. We enjoyed party games including the inventive handbag bingo. We had a speaker too, Pete Beatty, who entertained us with his daring exploits on the high seas including swimming the Channel, illustrated with very impressive photography. The Secret Santa gifts were then handed out by a representative of the Local Elf Service. So ended another year in the history of our WI. Our next meeting is on **Wednesday 18th February** at 2.00pm in Ugley Village Hall when the speaker will be one of our members. The subject will be *The History of the Envelope*. Why not come along and hear what it is about? You would be most welcome!

Andrea Fitt
Tel: 815922

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Sadly our Priest-in-Charge, Rev'd Colin Fairweather has left St John's to take up a new position in the Parish of St Mary's, Gravesend. In Church of England parlance, that means we are in an *interregnum*: the time in-between two reigns or governments, for example.

February is a month that can feel in-between. The festive decorations are long gone, yet the first true signs of spring often feel just out of reach. However, even in this dormant season, there is vital work happening beneath the soil. Mark 4 verse 27 describes Jesus' *Parable of the Growing Seed*, illustrating the mysterious, gradual, and self-sustaining way the Kingdom of God develops: a farmer scatters seed, then lives his normal life (sleeps, rises), and the seed sprouts and grows on its own, the farmer not knowing how, which shows God's unseen work in spiritual growth. February invites us to trust in that *not knowing*. It is a time to practise patience and to find God in the ordinary, quiet moments; in the frost on a windowpane or the shared warmth of a cup of tea. This month, I suggest we look for the hidden growth in our own lives. What is God preparing in our hearts during this quiet season? Perhaps it is not a time for grand gestures, but for the gentle tilling of the soil through prayer and kindness. May you find peace in the stillness, knowing that the light is returning and that you are held by the one who makes all things new in His perfect time.

Kathryn West
Pastoral Assistant
St John's Church



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Email: revhelenstn@gmail.com

Pastoral Assistant Kathryn West Tel: 816293
Mobile: 07880 602717
Email: kewest@btinternet.com

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

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

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

Parish Administrator Tel: 816889
Email: 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

From St John's Registers

November

Funerals

3rd Eirwen Elizabeth Butcher, age 92 - at Cam Valley
19th Kathleen Clark, age 99 - service at St John's followed by private cremation

There were no Register entries for December.





STANSTED FREE CHURCH

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FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S CHURCH

Many thanks to all who supported our Christmas tree festival and attended the carol concert. Opus strings and the choir led by Anne Brooks performed so beautifully; our sincere thanks to all of them. Just so you are aware, they all



travelled some distance to play and sing for us, which was so lovely of them. On Sunday 7th December, we held a Christingle service for the local Scouts, Cubs and Beavers (see page 27). A fun time was had by all. Many thanks to the Scout leaders and Rev'd Colin Fairweather for organising. Thank you to my committee for manning refreshments, decorating trees, mulling the wine and helping with the raffle.

(Photo by Ken McDonald)

The church is now back to normal again and open for visits. Please do remember to sign in; it is very important to us since we count footfall. I look forward to welcoming you during 2026.



Lynda Dale
Tel: 07716 099474



STANSTED QUAKERS

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

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

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

Sunday worship 10.30am. Visitors are always welcome. We join together in stillness for an hour, followed by coffee and chat. Quakers allow each person to explore their own experience of the divine. We try to live our faith in everyday life, with a dedication to peace, simplicity, truth, equality, and nature.

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



- Minister** Rev'd Gill Hulme
Tel: 504157
Email: gillian.hulme@methodist.org.uk
- Secretary** Catherine Dean
Tel: 813579
Email: catherine@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk
- Lettings** Marion and Mike Dyer
Tel: 814059
Email: lettings@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

Preachers for February

- 1st 10.30am Heather Gale - New Directions
- 8th 10.30am Rev'd Gill Hulme - Communion
- 15th 10.30am Rev'd Stuart Veitch
- 22nd 10.30am Mike Dyer

Rev'd Daniel Davies

We had a visit recently from Welsh siblings, Beth and Hefin, who are descendants of the sister of Rev'd Daniel Davies who had actually overseen the building of the present URC church building (now called Stansted Free Church) in 1840. They made initial contact in the summer through the church website, and Betty Francis had found some old photographs of the church which we showed them. I had recommended Peter Sanders' book *On the Beaten Track* and Beth had managed to buy a second-hand copy online. I had sent them present-day photographs of the outside of the Old Manse and former chapel (now Leisure Plan) in Silver Street which they were going on to look at.



They were very friendly and much appreciated Alan Wheeler and me showing them round the church, where they took lots of photographs, and listened to me playing *Cwm Rhondda* on the organ! Then they visited the *Fun Place* in the hall for refreshments. Alan took this lovely photograph of them standing by Rev'd Davies' gravestone to which they returned later in the day and placed a potted white plant which is still there.

Beth and Hefin are continuing to research their family history. They are particularly curious to find out how someone who came from the valleys of South Wales ended up in Stansted!



Marion Dyer



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IN THE GARDEN

Hedging

We will shortly be at the end of rootball and bare root season. This is the best way to buy your hedging. Bare root hedging plants are what we call whips; they do not have any soil on the roots and are single stems with varying numbers of breaks (side branches) depending on the size you buy. It is a cheap way of starting a hedge but you will need some patience as it takes several years to turn into a decent hedge. Plant in two adjacent rows with the whips approximately 20-30cm apart; this is ideal for doing a native mixed hedge.



Rootball plants have soil around the roots and these are wrapped in hessian, sometimes with a wire net over the top for bigger specimens. You do not need to remove the wire to plant them, the hessian rots away and the roots grow in between the wire. This is the ideal way to buy yew (*Taxus baccata*) which makes a beautiful hedge. Both rootball and bare root are significantly cheaper than pot grown which are available all year round. All hedging is available in a range of sizes to suit your budget and patience level. Some tips: the ubiquitous large leaved cherry laurel (*Prunus Laurocerasus*) is cheap because it grows very quickly but beware in a small garden as it will need trimming at least three times a year. This cannot be done with a hedge trimmer due to the size of the leaves. It will tolerate drastic pruning though. Western red cedar is also a fast grower and needs frequent trims through the year but at least you can use a hedge trimmer; note that you cannot cut into old wood.

Anthea Harrison
Email: anthea@antheaharrison.co.uk



ASSOCIATION OF PAST ROTARIANS

Stansted and District Past Rotarians are a group of former Rotarians and like-minded people who meet for a meal on the 4th Tuesday of each month at the King's Arms in Station Road. We live locally, and have previously been in various Rotary Clubs, or been associated with Rotarians and their projects. We meet and socialise, but do not actively fund-raise. Our partners meet at the same time at the Wood Grill in Cambridge Road. Past Rotarians originated in the Netherlands, where it is a very large organisation, but is relatively small in the United Kingdom. Perhaps you have moved into the area, and were previously in Rotary. Or maybe you

wanted to become a Rotarian but never had the opportunity due to work commitments. If you are interested in joining us, please contact me.

Geoff Lay
Secretary
Tel: 07768 794024
Email: geoff.lay22@gmail.com

THE FORGOTTEN GARDENS OF EASTON LODGE

www.eastonlodge.co.uk

We have had our fingers crossed for weeks now, that we have nice cold weather in January to keep the snowdrops in good shape for our Snowdrop Open Days on **15th, 19th and 22nd February**, and as I write they are still firmly crossed.



Volunteers have worked hard at the gardens over the closed season so that there will be new things to enjoy on our Snowdrop Days. Visitors will see the new hedges, trees and shrubs that we have planted. Children will enjoy finding our new animal trail and learning about how these animals were special to the Countess of Warwick. We will have an even better catering offer than usual, with sausage and burger roll options as well as bacon, from the Giggly Pig and Daisy's kiosk. Our volunteers will provide soup, vegetarian rolls, cakes and drinks. We will have snowdrops in the green for sale as well as some new related merchandise. Tickets can be bought in advance at a discount, through our website or direct through Trybooking. We look forward to welcoming you back into the gardens.

Might we interest you in joining us as a volunteer? We are pleased to welcome new volunteers throughout the year, for gardening and garden maintenance work or for front of house roles and catering on our Open Days. March is a good time to start, with the air warming up and the plants putting on lots of lovely fresh growth. If you are interested, please take a look at our volunteer arrangements on our website and contact us, preferably by email.

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



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AUBREY BUXTON NATURE RESERVE

At the time of writing in early January there is snow on the ground, and we have the lowest temperatures of the winter so far. In the reserve our native birds are joined by winter visitors. The survival of many avian species hinges on the availability of high-energy berries.

While resident birds like blackbirds and mistle thrushes are year-round foragers, winter brings charismatic visitors from the north, most notably the redwing and the fieldfare. These members of the thrush family arrive in flocks from Scandinavia, searching for the hedgerow harvest.



The hawthorn is perhaps the most critical winter larder. Its deep red haws are rich in antioxidants and are a primary target for newly arrived redwings. While elder berries are often the first to be stripped in late autumn due to their high juice content, any remaining clusters provide an essential sugary boost before the deepest freeze sets in.

Bright red holly berries are not only iconic for the festive season but are a vital, calorie-dense food source. Interestingly, birds often leave holly berries until they have softened through several frost cycles, ensuring a food supply that lasts well into the New Year.

Perhaps the most underrated plant in the winter garden is ivy. Unlike other species, ivy berries ripen very late, often not until January or February. When hawthorn and holly have been exhausted, the fat-rich black berries of the ivy provide a bridge to spring. For a fieldfare or redwing facing a late-season cold snap, these berries are quite literally a lifesaver.

By preserving these four plants: ivy, holly, elder and hawthorn, we ensure that our winter visitors find the sanctuary and sustenance they need to survive the coldest months.

John Welham
Warden

Email: communications@essexwt.org.uk



HATFIELD FOREST

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hatfield-forest

Keeping warm in Winter

Hatfield Forest venison is now available to purchase from the Estate Office. We manage deer numbers in the forest so that the damage they cause to the woodland is insignificant and the wide variety of flora and fauna can continue to thrive here. Cuts include haunch steaks, tenderloin, minced and diced venison which is great for making a hearty venison casserole. Please call 870678 or email hatfieldforest@nationaltrust.org.uk or to make an enquiry or place your order.

Hatfield is still very much a working forest, and the 100 loads of cut logs that we sell each winter are a direct product of our conservation woodland management. This is achieved through coppicing and scrub management work, and is a mixture of thorn, hazel, and ash. All firewood is sold fully seasoned up to two years, meets moisture content guidelines and has a good reputation locally for its quality. Our rangers have been delivering to regular customers for over 25 years, and we have many new customers this year which is excellent. Logs cost £120 per large bag including delivery; please call 870678 to place an order. Payment is by card only, on delivery.



Nestled between the café and the Shell House, you can find our second-hand bookshop with page-turners from many book genres, all kindly donated by our supporters. Our bookshop helps promote sustainability by giving pre-loved books a new life, and every penny raised goes towards looking after Hatfield Forest.

Hannah Underwood

Tel: 870678

Email: hannah.underwood@nationaltrust.org.uk

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Stansted Network

NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS



Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council (SMPC)

Our first pages of 2026 cover consultation results on wildflower projects and play equipment, a call to fill Parish Council vacancies, our response to City & Country's green belt housing plans, plus our views on local government restructuring

Consultation Updates

Wildflower at Forest Hall Park and play equipment at the Rec



Wildflower Planting on Forest Hall Road At the beginning of November, a two-week consultation was launched to gather residents' views on a proposed biodiversity site along the verge of Forest Hall Road. Feedback was invited through letter drops, social media, and Parish Council communications, and responses were reviewed by the Open Spaces Committee.

While the majority of respondents supported the creation of additional biodiversity sites, the Committee concluded it could not justify proceeding with this project due to limited grant funding and the significant ongoing maintenance costs quoted by contractors.

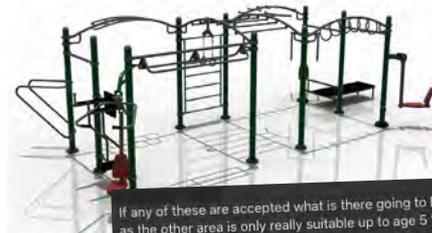
Instead, the Committee agreed it would be more effective to focus on delivering a larger biodiversity site at Elms Farm, where land will come under Parish Council control and investment can be better justified.

Consultation on a replacement for the Tree House: Also in November, a consultation began to gather residents' views on options for replacing the Tree House, which was taken out of service last summer at the Recreation Ground. The first stage took place via the Parish Council's Facebook page and in the previous edition of *The Link*.

Many respondents felt the options were better suited to older users and asked whether equipment for younger age groups would be considered. On this point, the next stage will involve Parish Council members visiting Stansted's schools and the Youth Club to hear directly from young

people about what they would like to see added to the play areas.

Replacing the Tree House with equipment of a similar size and quality will require significant investment, and it may be challenging to install a replacement in time for this summer. The Parish Council thanks everyone who has shared their views and will provide updates on progress as these projects develop.



The views of village school children and youth club members will be sought before a decision is taken

If any of these are accepted what is there going to be for 6 years olds and upwards as the other area is only really suitable up to age 5 ? Can it not be looked at 2 smaller units, one for 5-10 and then 11+ ?

Not seeing a fun factor on either of these options... the final option looks more for adults which is fine but can't see many kids using it I'm afraid. Perhaps a climbing wall/walls would interest the over 5's and older.



PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCIES

In December, we accepted the resignation of Allan Love. Allan served as Parish Councillor for a little under two years and proved a committed and active participant in Council life. We would like to thank him for his service to the community in that time. His departure means there are now three vacancies on the Parish Council. If you are interested in making decisions that help shape the village's future, we would love to hear from you! You can find out more about what being a Parish Councillor involves on our website where you can also download a co-option application pack:

<https://stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk/joinsmpc>



No to Stanhanger!

SMPC response to City & Country's outline applications

Last December, Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council submitted its formal response to proposals for nearly 500 new homes to be built on land between Stansted Mountfitchet and Birchanger.

The developer, City & Country, has submitted two outline planning applications to Uttlesford District Council. One application seeks permission for 180 homes and a primary school on land near Birchanger. The second proposes up to 300 homes with land allocated for community buildings. SMPC has been working closely with Birchanger Parish Council to coordinate responses to the outline applications

Barrister appointed

Our latest step taken at a Full Council meeting in December saw councillors agree to appoint a planning barrister to prepare a detailed response on the Council's behalf. The resulting 29-page submission is now with Uttlesford District Council's planning department. You can read it at the District Council's planning portal and the Parish Council's website. SMPC's letter sets out a wide range of planning objections and shows how "the proposals are unacceptable both individually and collectively, conflict with existing and emerging planning policy, and are not supported by material considerations that would justify approval." Key criticisms of the plans are shown on the illustration below.

Planning development and the Parish Council

Although Parish Councils do not have the power to approve or refuse planning applications, they are statutory consultees in the planning process. Submitting detailed consultation responses is therefore the main way in which Parish Councils can challenge proposals they consider inappropriate. Given the significant harm to our community posed by City & Country's plans, Parish Councillors agreed that instructing a specialist planning barrister was the most effective way to ensure the Council's objections were robust, well-focused and carried appropriate weight.

PLANNING REF UTT/25/3011/OP
LOCATION Land West of Birchanger Lane Birchanger
Outline application for up to 180 dwellings and safeguarded land for primary school use with access, landscaping and associated infrastructure.

Key concerns

The construction of up to 500 homes on Green Belt land would cause lasting harm to the communities of Stansted and Birchanger, as well as to the surrounding countryside. Development on this scale also raises the risk of Stansted, Birchanger and Bishop's Stortford merging into a single urban area. This in planning speak is known as coalescence and is precisely what the Metropolitan Green Belt is intended to prevent.

Communities united in opposition

By the consultation deadline, Stansted and Birchanger residents had submitted several hundred letters objecting to City & Country's outline planning applications to the District Council's planning portal. This is reassuring to see. Speculative planning applications to the north of Stansted have been successfully challenged in recent years. A significant factor in these victories has been the mobilising power of Save Stansted Village, a pressure group led by former Parish Councillor, Jamie Hogg. Concern about City & Country's proposals has already seen a community campaign set up. We would encourage residents who worry about applications UTT/25/3011/OP and UTT/25/3012/OP to follow and support the work of the Save Our Villages if they have not already done so.

Decision time

A decision on City & Country's schemes is expected to take several months. We will keep you updated on this matter in the meantime

Further Information

- saveourvillages.co.uk/stansted.html
- uttlesford.gov.uk/planning-application
- stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk/document-category/consults
- cityandcountry-stanstedbirchangervisioin.co.uk/proposals

PLANNING REF: UTT/25/3012/OP
LOCATION South West of Mountfitchet High School Forest Hall Road Stansted Essex
Outline application for up to 300 dwellings, up to 2000sqm of Class E uses (offices, shop, cafe) early years nursery, private gym, up to 60 bed care home, and safeguarded land for secondary school use and village hall with access, landscaping, and associated infrastructure.

SMPC'S CRITICISMS

The sites were previously rejected as unsuitable by Uttlesford District Council during its Call for Sites process for their Local Plan.

The development would take place on Green Belt land, not Grey Belt as claimed by the developer.

The proposals would result in the loss of agricultural land and cause harm to the local landscape.

The assessment of traffic impacts is unrealistic and understates likely traffic congestion.

The plans fail to adequately address the pressure that new housing would place on local infrastructure, including GP surgeries, hospitals and schools.



Local Government Reorganisation

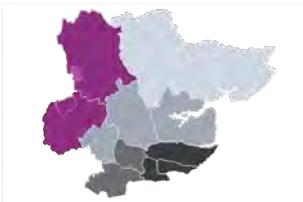
Last year the government announced plans to simplify local government in Essex, aiming to reduce the number of councils and combine services currently shared between different tiers. The government believes this reorganisation will cut costs, improve accountability and deliver better services for communities.

Essex currently has 15 district councils, which were asked to submit proposals by last September on how they could be merged into a smaller number of unitary authorities. A two-month public consultation began in November to gather views on four options. Earlier this year, Stansted Mountfichet Parish Council submitted its formal response to the consultation. A summary is set out here.

The Parish Council considered several factors when assessing each proposed option, including

- Burden of social care – adult and children and SEND
- Economy within the M11 corridor
- Commonality with more rural districts
- Debt levels both now and post-reorganisation
- Impact on local democracy
- How the proposed/possible Neighbourhood Area Groups would be constituted and whether representatives would be elected or appointed

Option 1



5 unitary authorities:
Uttleford merged with Harlow & Epping Forest

Option 2



3 unitary authorities:
Uttleford merged with Braintree, Colchester & Tendring



In the absence of sufficient evidenced-based information on any of the options to give any single proposal significant weight over the others, this Parish Council has concluded that either Option 1 or Option 3 would be preferable to the other two put forward.

SMPC PREFERENCES

Option 1 focuses on the M11 corridor towards London, but high debt is a concern. With around 92% of Epping Forest in the Green Belt, new housing would fall to the north. Growth is expected to be managed by the Strategic Mayoral Authority rather than the unitary, though public transport links between the three areas are strong.

Option 3 would link us with rural Braintree and Chelmsford, which may be more financially viable than Option 1. It would also build on existing partnerships, especially in planning and employment around Stansted Airport.

Option 3



4 unitary authorities:
Uttleford merged with Chelmsford & Braintree

Option 4



4 unitary authorities:
Uttleford merged with Harlow & Epping Forest

Celebrating Business Success

Can Stansted prosper at this year's ceremony?

On Thursday, 26 February Saffron Hall will once again host the annual Uttlesford Business Awards. Established in 2023, the awards celebrate the small businesses that help our district thrive. Stansted businesses have featured among previous winners, notably HNE Media and A2B Contract Cars. However, the village has yet to secure a win in the People's Choice category. While nominations in other categories closed in January, residents can still vote in the People's Choice award until the ceremony. This category recognises a business that consistently goes the extra mile to deliver excellent customer service. The shortlist of nominees for this category will be published on the district council's website from Thursday, 5 February. You can also vote on there. Why not take a few minutes to view the nominees and, if any have links to Stansted, give them a vote?



<https://business.uttlesford.gov.uk/awards>

Postal Voting

Don't miss the end-of-month deadline

Link distributors should have this copy safely through your letter box with days to spare before **Saturday, 31 January**. Since the 2022 Elections Act, you now need to reapply for your postal vote every three years.

People who made their current application before 31 October 2023 have until the end of the month to reapply. If you miss the deadline you will have to vote in a polling station with a photographic ID, while you wait until you have re-applied for a postal vote (or if a proxy is appointed).

As always nowadays, going online is the quickest way to register for a postal vote (see below). You will need to provide your date of birth, National Insurance Number, and upload a photo or scanned copy of your signature.

Alternatively you can contact the Electoral Services team at Uttlesford District Council (Tel 01799 510510).

Once you have re-applied, you will not have long to wait before using your postal vote. Just around the corner are Essex County Elections on **Thursday, 7 May 2026!**

www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote

Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council

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

An answer phone service takes messages after 2pm Monday to Friday and during the weekends

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

Reception: Mon-Fri 10am-2pm

Website: www.stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

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Instagram: [stanstedparishcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/stanstedparishcouncil)

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ryanackerman@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

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John O'BRIEN | ☎ 816772

johnobrien@stanstedmountfitchet-pc.gov.uk

Geoffrey SELL | ☎ 815925

cllrSELL@uttlesford.gov.uk

Parish Council Meetings

Meetings are on Wednesdays from 7.30pm at the Mountfitchet Exchange. A link to join virtually using Zoom (log on details are published with the agendas on our website):

4th February Full Council

11th February Highways

18th February Finance & General Purposes

25th February Full Council

Uttlesford District Councillors

Alan DEAN

☎ 813579 email: cllrdean@uttlesford.gov.uk

Geoffrey SELL

☎ 815925 email: cllrSELL@uttlesford.gov.uk

Ray GOODING

☎ 813103 email: cllrGOODING@uttlesford.gov.uk

Nick CHURCH

email: cllrchurch@uttlesford.gov.uk

Essex County Councillor

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

Member Of Parliament

Kemi BADENOCH MP

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA ☎ 0207 219 1943 email:

kemi.badenoch.mp@parliament.uk

Police

PCSO 81764 Alex STEWART

email: alexander.stewart@essex.police.uk

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

2nd February — 11am-noon TouchPoint (Memory Lane Cafe)

9th February — 11am-noon TouchPoint

12th February — 5-6pm Co-op, Lower Street

12th February — 6-7pm Mountfitchet Exchange Library

Library

The library at Mountfitchet Exchange opens:

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

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

Advice Sessions

Uttlesford Citizens Advice run a FREE drop-in service at the Mountfitchet Exchange every Thursday from 9.30am-3pm, except when Peabody operate advice sessions. You can also ask to speak to an advisor during SMPC reception hours via computer hook-up on Monday, Wednesday & Friday. Ask at our reception for details. **Peabody Trust's** drop-in service is on **Thursday, February 12** from 11am-3pm. Advisors can help with problems with benefits housing, and addictions. This is also at held at the Mountfitchet Exchange

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. **Food shares** Stansted Social Club Wed 2.30-3.15pm; Cra on Green Thursdays 10am-5pm, Fridays 1-2pm and Saturdays 10-11am **Community Cafe** Thursdays 10am-5pm, Fridays 8.30am-noon **Free hot meals** on Thursdays 12.30-2.30pm **Breakfast Club** every Friday 9am-10am Contact info@thetouchpoint.org ☎ 07572 114882

Garden Waste Skip Service

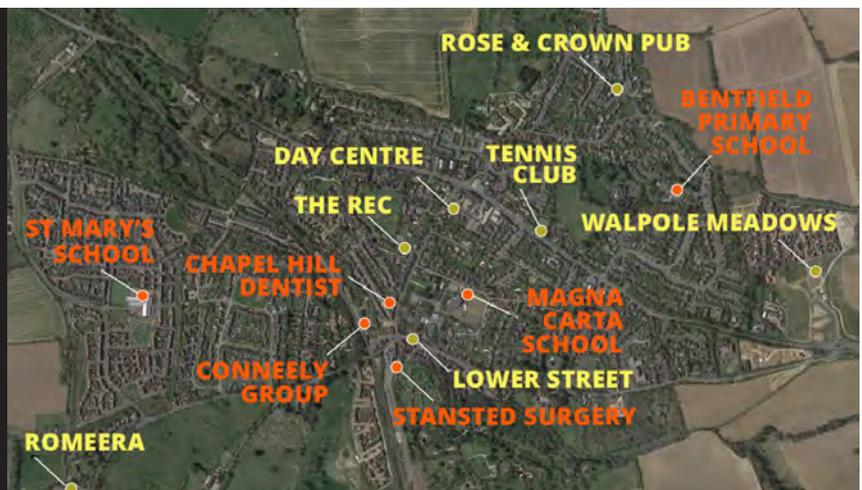
The refuse truck will return to the Lower Street car park in the spring of 2026.

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AMARYLLIS LILY

We are honoured to receive another lovely drawing by our young local artist, who likes to be known as Duck Doodles. Lilies are a beautiful reminder of Spring, and they are often used in Valentine's bouquets. As you all know, Valentine's Day, is celebrated annually on 14th February.



The name came from a martyr called Valentine, but since the 14th century it has been associated with celebrations of love throughout the world. In 18th century England, it grew into an occasion for couples to express their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering confectionery, and sending greeting cards.

Ed

GUESS THE OBJECT 5

Do any readers know what these objects are called and what they were used for?



We would be pleased to hear your suggestions. Please email: photos@stanstedlink.org.uk. All will be revealed in a future edition of The Link!

BEEKEEPING

Over winter not a great deal appears to happen with honey bees, so I thought I would give a brief overview of what is actually going on inside a hive at this time of year. First, a small clarification: honey bees live in *hives*, not nests. Wasps live in nests. A beehive is a carefully organised structure that the bees maintain year-round.

I have also been asked to explain a little about my own beehive and what I do with honey bees. My main interest is not conventional honey production, but the research and behaviour of bees, particularly wild bees. Because of this, my perspective differs somewhat from that of a traditional beekeeper.

As part of my research, I needed a comparative, neutral hive to observe natural bee preferences. Over the past 50 years, I have studied which conditions bees consistently favour and used those findings to create what I call a *wild hive nest*. This type of hive is designed for the benefit of the bees themselves, rather than for honey harvesting. Through this work, I have developed a very distinctive approach to beekeeping.



So, what is happening in a hive now? Honey bees do not hibernate. Instead, they survive winter by consuming the honey they produced during the warmer months. By now, they will usually have eaten most of the honey stored in what is known as the *transitional zone*. This is the comb area used for brood rearing in summer and food storage in winter. In eco-style beehives, this is also where honey boxes are positioned when honey is harvested. Even in winter, the hive remains a living, active system, just a quieter one.

Kevin Hancock
Email: theflyin@gmail.com





SUSTAINABLE STANSTED

STANSTED IS WELL READ

Precious Stansted species

During 2025, several of our members supported a local professional ecologist to conduct a biodiversity study of our parish. Here are just a few of the wonderful creatures living alongside us here in Stansted.

Otters

Otters are hard to spot because they are nocturnal and have a large territory; a male otter can cover up to 30km of river. However, the ecologist found otter spraint (poop!) beside Stansted Brook which means these beautiful mammals are present in our waterways. Otters have made a comeback in the UK from being almost extinct in the 1960s; they are still legally protected and incredibly special.



Bats

At least 10 of the UK's 17 native bat species can be found in Essex, all of which are protected species. The ancient woodland sites remaining in or around Stansted such as Durrel's, Houghtey and Alsa Woods, are small but incredibly important for bats and many other species. Bats are currently hibernating, but it is easy to spot them in summer feeding just after sunset.

Great crested newts

There are only around 400,000 great crested newts in the UK, but they have been found in Stansted ponds. They spend most of their lives (up to 15 years) on land and will walk up to a kilometre for food or to find the right pond in which to breed. Log piles and a pond (without fish) in your garden could be a great help for this highly endangered species.



We are really excited about turning the findings of the biodiversity study into more action to support nature this year. If you would like to know more or get involved, please contact us; we would love to have more members and volunteers.

Vicki Anderson
Email: sustainablestansted@gmail.com

The next meeting of our book club will be on **Tuesday 3rd February** at 8.00pm in the Dog and Duck, where we will be discussing *Unsettled Ground* by Claire Fuller. Winter is the perfect season to curl up with a good book and we are looking forward to reading this one, which is a Costa Novel Award winner. It is a poignant exploration of resilience and survival which follows the isolated lives of twins Jeanie and Julius as they navigate the aftermath of their mother's death and the harsh realities of their existence. Please do get in touch if you would like to join us; a warm welcome awaits.



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



The Human Roots team got together on the allotment, mainly to give a final push in readiness for overwintering, but also to congratulate ourselves on achieving the RHS *Grow Your Own* award! Overwintering helps plants survive the winter months and the hot brew together with chocolate biscuits certainly helped us survive the cold afternoon.



We use the winter months to reflect on our successes and how we can improve things for next year. We put our heads together and discuss what we would like to grow. We start with the exciting stuff, sketching out a planting plan of what to grow and where to plant it. This is a bit like solving a giant puzzle, fitting all the plants in the rows of beds. The new impressive fruit cage is now raring to go and full of fruit bushes; we cannot wait to see how they perform come the summer. It is early days, but the first signs of heated propagators on windowsills, and potatoes chitting will soon be upon us. Growing from seed is where the magic happens and the volunteers gain real ownership on the start of the planting journey. Our aim is to put a bit back into the local community. If you are interested in joining the team, please email: humanrootscommunity@gmail.com.

Ashley Huggonson
Volunteer

Scout camp

Our last camp of the year was at Priory Wood. On a dark cold Friday evening 29 Scouts and five adults set up our camp site. We then had a session on camp layout and hygiene, followed by a lovely hot baked potato and beans. A popcorn session around the fire went well as it was now a crisp cold night at -1°C. Surprisingly everyone settled down by midnight.

After a cooked breakfast, our Saturday morning activities were catapults, cooking camp doughnuts, cord making and a pioneering project, which was a monkey bridge. Lunch was meant to be a BBQ with the Scouts cooking chicken kebabs. It did not work out so it was cake and biscuits for lunch, enjoyed by all! Another two leaders arrived with 16 Cubs and three young leaders taking us to a total of 48 young people. Activities continued with a scavenger hunt and tracking signs, all the time with an eye on the rain which duly arrived at 3.00pm and did not stop. Luckily the evening activities of origami and card games, combined with some lively chat, took place in the warm dry building.



A damp Sunday dawned so we had a leisurely cooked breakfast followed by an early call to strike camp; we left for home at 11.00am just as the sun came out! On camp we learnt how to work in teams, make our own entertainment and take tents down in the wet. We also had to cope with water as the supply was off due to the temperature. Thanks everyone who came; see you on the next camp.

Mike Byrne
Team Leader
Tel: 812780

Celebration of Advent

On Sunday 7th December we held our Advent, Carol and Christingle service in St Mary's Church. This is always a lovely event which marks the start of our Christmas celebrations. Rev'd Dr Colin Fairweather opened the service by explaining the meaning of Advent and we lit the first two Advent candles. The church was full, with around 90 Beavers, Cubs and Scouts, and their parents and grandparents. We sang Christmas carols and our Christingle oranges were assembled. The lights were turned off and

the Christingle candles lit, which is always a magical sight; this was accompanied by the sound of everyone singing the Christingle song. Afterwards we had mince pies, mulled wine, squash and biscuits.



We would like to thank Rev'd Colin for leading the service and Lynda Dale and the team for serving the refreshments. Tesco deserve a big thank you too as they were kind enough to supply 100 mince pies for the occasion, which were greatly appreciated.

Judy Brand
Chair of Trustees



RECYCLING



There is still time to recycle the stamps from the Christmas cards you received. If you can spare a few minutes to cut out the stamps we would be delighted to relieve you of them! They will help to raise funds for the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) along with foreign and old UK coins. Please place them in the box outside the main blue door of the Free Church at the bottom of Chapel Hill along with the other items for recycling: original ink cartridges, mobile phones, iPads and tablets. Maybe you received a new one for Christmas? There is also a collecting box in the porch of St John's church, which is open on Sunday and most Tuesday mornings and some Saturday mornings. Please make sure all personal data on mobile devices has been erased; the easiest way to do this is by a *factory reset*. It would be helpful if items could be placed in a paper or plastic bag or envelope, especially ink cartridges; please use a separate one for each category and do not mix items. You can also leave items for recycling in the porch of 7 Blythwood Gardens.

Other items

Please do not leave other items, as they only end up in the dustbin and we only have one small one at the church. We no longer collect spectacles, blister packs or any dental products. Thank you.



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

NEIGHBOUR FROM HELLING

Joe parked the van in his usual spot and with a weary sigh switched off the engine. He sat for a moment gazing at the tranquil view across the handful of cottages to the gently flowing river beyond. The postman takes a deep breath of the fresh, damp air before setting off to deliver the last bits of mail with renewed energy. The peace and quiet of Broad End has worked its magic once again.



Due to a recent round of cost-cutting and reorganisation, Joe was threatened with being taken off his normal round of the small villages and hamlets bordering the Norfolk Broads. But thanks to the lovely, mostly elderly residents, and the surprise protest they staged outside the main post office, the local MP got involved.

Questions were asked in the House, and the powers that be were forced to have a re-think. Eventually a compromise was reached and Joe's been reassigned a new round in nearby Helling, but has also kept part of his old round including Broad End and Broad Bottom. It means a longer, exhausting day for Joe but it's worth it to see his old regulars, who he's become quite fond of. Stopping at the gate of the corner cottage, home of the baker of his favourite ginger cake, Joe sniffs to see if Gladys has been baking.

The sudden roar of a powerful Harley Davidson speeding past close behind him and the resulting whoosh of air startled the postman. He stumbled against the half-opened gate, dropping his bag and scattering the remaining pile of mail across the path. Cursing, Joe started to pick up the post. The front door of the cottage flew open, to reveal two very worried looking elderly ladies.

'You all right Joe?' asked Gladys adding, 'you've met our new neighbour then. Blasted motor bike'll kill somebody one of these days.'

'Something needs to be done about it,' boomed her friend and long-time neighbour Daphne, who'd forgotten to put her hearing aids in again.

'I'm OK thanks,' assured Joe putting the last of the letters back in his bag. 'Feel even better after a bit of cake if there's any going,' he said to Gladys with a hopeful grin.

'So when did the biker move in?' asked Joe later, tucking into a generous slice of cake. 'I assume they're in Edna's old house?'

'Must be but don't know how long they've been there. Nobody's seen them,' Gladys replied.

'First we knew they were there was when that noisy machine roared down the road,' shouted Daphne. 'I reckon he's one of they muggers who rides up to people in the street, making off with their mobile phones.'

Joe smiled and shouted back, 'I don't think so Daphne. Muggers are usually on mopeds. Much quieter and niftier.'

'Well that maybe so, but mark my words; they're up to no good. Sure as eggs is eggs. Especially if they're from Helling. You know what they're like,' was Daphne's parting shot as she marched out, completely unaware of her friend's dark look and disapproving sniff. Gladys was a bit touchy about people criticising the inhabitants of Helling. Her eldest granddaughter, Scarlett has recently moved there.

'So any news on poor Edna?' asked Joe. He eyed the remaining cake on the table wondering if he had room for one more slice. Seeing his look, Gladys cut him another piece before replying.



Photo courtesy of Bears Bakery Ltd

'According to her niece, Edna's even more confused than she was before. Keeps trying to escape from the Care Home. It's a shame she had to go into a home, but she wasn't safe to live here on her own. We all tried to keep an eye on her but lately the dementia had got really bad. When she's more settled, me and Daph'll go and visit.'

'So has her house been sold to these new people?'

'Don't think so. The niece was talking about renting it out to help pay for the Care Home fees.' Gladys then started to quiz Joe about Scarlett who he's currently, in the elderly lady's words 'walking out with', which the postman found quite tricky. After an uncomfortable few minutes he was able to go and finish his round. Turning to wave to Gladys who was standing at the window, Joe came within a hair's breadth of being run over by the Harley Davidson as it whizzed past him again. On the wrong side of the road this time. Infuriated the normally quiet, placid postman strode over to Edna's house. By the time he got there, the biker was standing at the front door.



'Oi you', spat Joe angrily. 'What do you think you're playing at driving that thing like that? You've nearly run me down twice. Next time it could be one of the elderly residents who could quite literally be frightened to death.' The biker turned to face a red-faced Joe, crash helmet in hand. Scared, blue/grey eyes stared at him between a curtain of chestnut curls.

The surprised postman stood open-mouthed. He'd assumed it would be a man on such a powerful machine and had half-expected a torrent of abuse; not a rather attractive woman with quivering lips and moist eyes. Suddenly, bursting into tears she stammered, 's-s-s-sorry.'

Joe's at a loss as to what he should do. He's been completely wrong-footed. The woman is now sobbing quietly with hands over her face.

Shuffling awkwardly, thinking he should say something, the postman scratched his head before finally muttering, 's'okay. No harm done this time. Perhaps you'll be a bit more careful in future?' The woman nodded wordlessly before letting herself into the house and closing the door behind her.

A bewildered Joe walked slowly away, not knowing what to make of Broad End's newest resident. One thing he was sure of. The young lady was definitely not one of the roughest from Helling; they never apologise for anything. Daphne will be pleased about that.

To be continued ...

Yvonne Ayres
u3a Creative Writing Group



Stansted Tennis Club
Founded 1889

www.stanstedtennisclub.co.uk

Coaching

Junior and adult group coaching has paused over winter and will resume in February. Private lessons are still available; contact Dan email danw.tennis@gmail.com for more details.

Please see our website for information on tournaments, league matches, social events and lots more happening in 2026. New members are always welcome.

Fiona Kelly
Club Secretary
Email: contact@stanstedtennisclub.co.uk



www.mencapgrovecottage.org

Volunteer of the Year

Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do; we simply could not provide the clubs and services we offer without them. Every year, we recognise one volunteer who has gone above and beyond, surprising them with the title of Volunteer of the Year. This year, we are delighted to say thank you and congratulations to Louise McGran, who is shown third from left in the photograph below.



Louise has been volunteering with us since November 2022, and from the moment she joined, she has been an invaluable part of the Grove Cottage family. She is easy-going, kind, and full of enthusiasm and brings a calm, positive presence to every club she supports, such as the Music Man Project on Mondays and South Mill Arts on Wednesdays. She is happy to step in wherever she is needed. Louise treats every member with genuine respect, always assuming capacity and engaging confidently with people of all abilities. She uses her initiative, handles challenges with thoughtful problem-solving, and is someone we can always depend on. Staff, members, and fellow volunteers all adore Louise and her bright, happy persona. We are hugely grateful for the time, energy and heart which she gives to Grove Cottage.

Sarah Smith
Communications Officer
Tel: 656085



STANSTED HALL AND ELSENHAM CRICKET CLUB

www.stanstedhallelsenhamcricket.club

Unfortunately *The Ashes* have not been regained. It took Australia just 11 days of cricket to go 3-0 up in the series! Is *bazball* dead? Do you remember what a thrilling summer of test cricket we all had in 2025? No time to think about that as we move quickly on to 2026, with the World Cup T20s, One Day Internationals and Test Matches against New Zealand and Pakistan; so there is a full year of international cricket to look forward to.

Meanwhile we have been busy at the Hall. Our annual general knowledge quiz was a success with 160 attending. We must thank the Manuden Village Hall Committee for allowing us the use of that venue. Indoor nets have already begun for both senior and junior sections at The Bishop's Stortford Boys High School. We are looking for new members of all age groups. Our seniors will be playing in Divisions 1 and 3 of the Herts and Essex Border League. Local cricket will be played on nice grounds especially on our home ground at Stansted House, which is one of the best in the area; naturally I am biased! The England and Wales Cricket Board *All Stars* programme, the 5-8 years age group, will once again be headed up by Paul Walton; we will also be running *Dynamo Cricket*, the 8-11 years age group. Numerous matches will be organised for all junior age groups in the local West Essex league, so there will be no motorway driving.



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

STANSTED BOWLS CLUB

www.stanstedbowlingclub.co.uk



We are planning monthly social events for the whole community, the next one being a quiz night on **Friday 20th February** 7.00pm for 7.30pm in the club house. Teams should comprise a maximum of six people, at £3 per head. It would be lovely to see some new faces at these events; who knows what it may lead to? During the winter months we are still very active, with social afternoons on Wednesdays 2.00pm-4.00pm, and social nights on Fridays at 7.00pm. The bar is open and prices are subsidised. Our aim as a club this year is to increase our standing within the community, and we encourage you to pop in if the door is open. For information of upcoming events and news please follow us on our Facebook page or see our website which has further information regarding other events, the game of bowls and contact details. For further information please contact me.

David Danby
Secretary
Tel: 07799 722940
Email: daviddanby30@gmail.com



STANSTED FOOTBALL CLUB

www.essexseniorleague.co.uk

The wet weather in January caused a number of postponements for all our teams. This means that the first team will now have more midweek fixtures and our veterans and youth sides could see their season extended. For the first team, the games that were played have given us great confidence as we start the second half of the season. A run of wins prior to Christmas has moved us into the end of season play off positions. However, a glance at the league table shows that we are one of nine teams that are all in with a chance of promotion at the end of April. Should be exciting stuff over the coming months.



More good news is that our pitch has held up well with what has been thrown at it in recent weeks. This is due to the seeding and topsoil programme completed in the summer which was fully funded by the Sports Association. The quality of the pitch has been successfully maintained by verti-draining in the autumn. Our clubhouse has had an upgrade to its lighting with new LEDs fitted; this came after a Business Initiative Grant on energy usage was secured from Uttlesford Council.

Away from football, our three Darts Teams have recommenced their winter season, recording some great wins in their respective leagues. They look set for another successful season. The scheduled fixture at Hargrave Park in February is below, although others could be added at a later date so please keep up to date with any news of additional matches.

February Fixture

7th v Brimsdown Thurlow Nunn South KO 3.00pm



Tom Williams
Secretary
Tel: 07921 403842

POT LUCK QUIZ 2 ANSWERS

- 1 Paul McCartney
- 2 Swedish
- 3 Andre Rieu
- 4 Lac Leman
- 5 Granada
- 6 George Elliot
- 7 Goldie and Isis
- 8 Beards
- 9 Flippers
- 10 Robin Day

DIRECTORY OF LOCAL CLUBS

Beaver Scouts Age 6-8	Angela Madigan Tel: 01371 513028	RSPB	Peter Allen Tel: 07876 295456 Email: peter2349@sky.com
BS Beekeepers	Kate Walker Tel: 07399 197756 Email: secretary@stortfordbees.org.uk	St Clare Hospice	Rebecca Day Email: info@stclarehospice.org.uk
Bowls Club	David Danby Tel: 07799 722948 Email: daviddanby30@gmail.com	St John's Road and Area Association	Secretary: David Marchant Email: david@marchant.com
Brownies (Tue)	Kathy Shearman Tel: 07724 355533	Scouts (age 10½ -14)	Mike Byrne Tel: 812780
Brownies (Wed)	Susan Scott Tel: 810955	Sparks Netball	Gemma Snelling Tel: 07368 809138 Email: gemmasnelling@me.com
CAB	Tel: 01799 618840	Stansted and District Past Rotarians Club	Geoff Lay Email: geofflay.22@gmail.com
Corkers Netball	Lizzie Read Tel: 07770 594848	Stansted Badminton	Vince Tel: 07793 000107
Cub Scouts (Tue) Age 8-10½	Huskies Charlotte Graham char.huskies1ststansted@yahoo.com	Stansted Business Forum	Iris Evans Email: iris.evans9@gmail.com
(Thu)	Bulldogs Hazel Crundwell 1ststanstedcubsbulldogs@gmail.com	Stansted Cricket Club (Adults)	Ben Sammons Tel: 07852 510330 Email: bensammons3178@gmail.com
Explorer Scouts	Roger Pettett Tel: 07715 740715	(Juniors)	Keith Ayres Tel: 814471
Friends of St Mary's Church	Lynda Dale Tel: 07716 099474 Email: lynnydale@hotmail.com	Stansted Football Club	Tom Williams Tel: 07921 403842
Fun Place on the Hill	Sue Parker Tel: Tel: 657116 Email: funplace@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk	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	Stansted Speed Watch	Warren Vickers Tel: 813996 Email: vickersw@aol.com
Helpline	Tel: 07704 553727	Stansted Tennis Club	Fiona Kelly Tel: 07949 623484 Email: contact@stanstedtennisclub.co.uk
History Society	Roger Barrett Tel: 814216 Email: rmbarrrett54@gmail.com	Talking Newspaper (BS and District)	Richard Barnett Tel: 651270 Email: familybarnett24@hotmail.com
Human Roots	Keiran Oliver Tel: 07946 783039 Email: keiran@humanrootscommunity.org.uk	The Hundred Parishes Society	Ken McDonald Tel: 813226 Email: hundredparishes@btinternet.com
Huw Johnson Club	Ellen Brooks Tel: 07800 896516 Email: ellenbrooks@hotmail.co.uk	TouchPoint	Shirley Johnson Tel: 07572 114882 Email: info@thetouchpoint.org
Let's Talk, Stansted Mental Health Support	Richard Haywood Tel: 07794 268208 Email: contact@stanstedmentalhealth.org	Town Twinning	Chairman: Geraldine Allars Tel: 07833 089298 Email: twinning@stanstedmountfitchetpc.gov.uk
Little Scrummers	Andrew Poyser Tel: 07738 591232	u3a	Susan Sedgebeer Email: stanstedu3a@gmail.com
Millers (Windmill)	Tudor Owen Tel: 810805 Email: info@stanstedwindmill.co.uk	WI (Stansted)	Linda Gurr Tel: 07743 549241
music@stansted	Sonia Levy Tel: 815282	WI (Ugley)	Andrea Fitt Tel: 815922
Classical concerts	Email: contactus@musicatstansted.co.uk	Youth Centre	Essex Youth Services Tel: 07584 140507
Neighbourhood Watch	Linzi Shelford Tel: 07427 377118 Email: linzishelford@hotmail.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 by emailing editor@stanstedlink.org.uk.	
Parkinson's UK	Simon Russell		
Uttlesford Support Group	Tel: 01799 524638 Email: simonrussell2@tiscali.co.uk		
Rainbow Pre-School	Lorraine Hayes Tel: 814242 Email: admin@rainbowpreschool.net		
Rainbows (Wed)	Abbie Scott Tel: 07754 768764 Email: abbierose12a@icloud.com		
Rotary Club	Peter Latham Tel: 881607 Email: stortvalleyrotary@gmail.com		

BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES or SPECIAL OCCASIONS

If you would like to mark any occasion that is special to you or someone you know, by announcing it in the Link, please email a short message together with your name address and telephone number to: announcements@stanstedlink.org.uk or send the details to 7 Blythwood Gardens, Stansted CM24 8HG. Details must be submitted by the 8th of the month for publication the following month.

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