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**Front cover:**

Tony and Margaret Trigg having received their 2<sup>nd</sup> Covid-19 Vaccination

by Mark Anderson

Stansted Mountfitchet Village Magazine

# The Link

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

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

If you do not receive your copy please email: [distribution@stanstedlink.org.uk](mailto:distribution@stanstedlink.org.uk) or telephone 813680

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

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## EDITORIAL



Roll up, roll up! This used to encourage people to go to the circus, but now it could be an exhortation for people to go to a vaccination centre and roll up their sleeves. Tony and Margaret Trigg are shown on our front cover this month, after getting their second jab against Covid-19 at Stansted Surgery. It represents such miraculous hope for all of humanity, during these dark days of the third lockdown. Our thanks to Mark and Vicky Anderson for organising this unusual photo shoot, and to the Triggs for posing so cheerfully for us. Ray Smith, in his article below, gives us great encouragement about all the vaccinations which are available now.

The heated debates about Stansted Airport Expansion are continuing, in spite of the pandemic; a public enquiry began on 12<sup>th</sup> January and will continue until the end of March. To read a bit more about this, look at pages 22 and 23 of Stansted Network; if you would like to find out how to express your opinion on this controversial issue, please get in touch with one of the District Councillors for details about online participation; contact information is on p23. We hope to have more on this matter in next month's Link.

You will note that this month's issue is shorter than usual, which is a sign of the times as so few events are taking place. This sad state of affairs will end soon; in the meantime, please do send articles, which may be philosophical, reflective, whimsical or whatever interests you. Any photos would be most welcome, but should be accompanied by an explanatory text. Warmest wishes from The Link team to all of our readers.



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

### SOMETHING BIG IS COMING!

We are delighted to announce that we have been awarded a grant by Tesco to support a community project. Work will now begin to bring our chosen project to life. What project, I hear you say? Well, we are super proud to announce that we will be launching our Little Roots gardening programme in the coming year. The funding will allow us to help a local school to build a mini-allotment on their school grounds, which will enable children to understand the value of growing and harvesting their own vegetables and to become our local eco warriors. They will also learn how to eat healthily at low cost and cook a simple meal using all the vegetables that they have grown. Please check out our website for further details under *little-roots-2*.



Obviously Covid has had an impact on everything that we do, so we will be adjusting our arrangements for this and other projects accordingly, making sure that everything is Covid secure. We will be setting everything up for a positive start to the programme later this year. If you would like to be part of the project, we would really like you to please get in touch with us today. You can sign up from the website. If you would like to sponsor a child's learning on our gardening programme, please check out our donation page at: [www.localgiving.org/charity/HumanRootsCommunity](http://www.localgiving.org/charity/HumanRootsCommunity).



Keiran Olivier  
Tel: 07946 783039

Email: [keiran@humanrootscommunity.org.uk](mailto:keiran@humanrootscommunity.org.uk)

### COVID-19 VACCINATIONS AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE

As an industrial pharmacist since 1965 I have been involved full time in Quality Assurance and Regulation. The UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) was the first regulator outside the USA to establish licensing to ensure the safety, efficacy and quality of medicines and devices and is a world respected British organisation. There is nothing to worry about with regard to these jabs. When you are offered a vaccination against Covid-19 please do not hesitate to accept. Whether from Pfizer, Astra-Zeneca or Moderna matters not because all are properly licensed. I was employed by a Pfizer company for 20 years and am very familiar with the stringent standards applied to the whole industry. Unfortunately, social media sites are spreading a lot of misinformation about the vaccinations from uninformed people. Please do not be misled by ignorance; have the jab, protect yourself and your loved ones ... and me. Live long, live well and happy jabbing!

Ray Smith  
U3A Chairman



## ST CLARE HOSPICE

www.stclarehospice.org.uk

### Winter Walkies

Due to Covid restrictions we have decided to hold our 5k Winter Walkies walk later in the spring. At the moment the date is still to be confirmed, but you can register for updates by visiting:

www.stclarehospice.org.uk/event/winterwalkies.

### Dementia Project

We are launching a new project to support people living with advanced dementia and their carers. The Namaste Care Dementia Support project aims to train and empower unpaid carers and paid staff to deliver high-quality, compassionate care to local people living with advanced dementia. The first training course was delivered in January by St Clare's Namaste Champions, who will also offer ongoing peer support and monthly group sessions.

Community Engagement Manager, Sally Muylers, is leading the project and said: "We are delighted to be launching this new project. Namaste Care is an internationally recognised care programme. *Namaste* is a Hindi greeting that means to 'honour the spirit within,' and is the guiding principle of Namaste Care. The programme teaches how to use simple activities that include sensory stimulation of our five senses (touch, hearing, sight, smell and taste) which have been shown to really help people with dementia to connect and engage with others. Multi-sensory activities include things like music, therapeutic touch and massage, and food and drink." Those attending the course receive a Namaste Care box of resources, to enable them to practice the techniques with the person they care for. One of the items is a 'Twiddlemuff' – a knitted, handheld comforter that offers a special way to engage people with dementia, who often have restless hands.



We are appealing for people to knit and donate twiddle-muffs; you can find more details and download a free knitting pattern from our website, under Namaste care dementia support. If you are caring for someone with advanced dementia, and would like to meet others and learn about Namaste Care together, we would love to hear from you. Please call Sally on 07398 714405 or email:sally.muylers@stclarehospice.org.uk.

Rebecca Day  
Communications Manager  
Email: Rebecca.day@stclarehospice.org.uk



## STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET U3A

www.u3asites.org.uk/stansted/home

The future is looking much more positive now with the vaccine programme going ahead at full steam. Being in lockdown during the winter is very different from how it felt last spring. Look for those first signs of spring (my aconites are already in flower as I write this at the beginning of January) and the days are becoming lighter and brighter.

Our Christmas competitions for the best autumn/winter photograph, short story and home-made ornament were well supported and our judges found it difficult to choose the winners. Jenny Wraith won the autumn photograph section with a beautiful picture taken at Marks Hall (Coggeshall) Arboretum. Diane Gwynne-Smith was runner up with a lovely woodland picture taken in Stansted. Carole Lambert won the Christmas ornament section with a knitted reindeer and Eric Fidell was runner up with his Christmas tree made out of old horseshoes. Linda Sendall won the best short story with Sliding Doors and Big Red Bows and Lavinia Epworth was runner up with The Miracle at Christmas. Very well done to everyone who entered and especially to our winners and Specially Commended category winners too – Christine Nash and John Reeve-Butler and many thanks to our judges.

Our Committee still meet monthly on Zoom and there are many plans afoot for new groups in Science and Technology, Which? Magazine and Alternative Cultures. We are keen to welcome new members with fresh ideas to our group this year with new input. The Committee are planning an open afternoon, where all interested parties will be made very welcome to come and hear about the various different groups, trips, seminars, fitness and arts and crafts classes and monthly pub lunches. Please contact me via our website if you are interested in coming along or joining us. Our regular monthly meetings are held on the third Thursday afternoon of each month in St John's Hall in normal circumstances. We are really hopeful that these will recommence early summer.

Lynda Webb  
Membership Secretary  
Tel: 813102

### UGLEY FARMERS' MARKET

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> February



Ugley Village Hall



10.00am-12 noon

*The Market will be held if Government regulations permit. If you would like to go on our email list to be updated on the current situation, contact Susan Bone on ugleyvillagehall@gmail.com or telephone 01279 814052*

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You need to apply to stay in the UK after **30<sup>th</sup> June** if you are from a country in the EU, European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, or if you are from another country but you are the family member of someone who is from the EU, EEA or Switzerland. This is not the case if you have British Citizenship or indefinite leave to enter or remain or if you have pre-settled or settled status. Getting your status will prove your right to stay in the UK for more than three months, work or study, use the NHS, claim the State Pension or rent a home. You can find more information about applying for settled or pre-settled status, including the types of evidence you need at:

- [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/immigration/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/immigration/)
- [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

Our trained advisers at Uttlesford Citizens Advice can help with immigration issues or offer advice if you are worried about what Brexit might mean for you and your family. The rules are complicated and if you have any doubt about whether you need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme please contact us on 01799 618840 or email: [help@uttlesfordca.org.uk](mailto:help@uttlesfordca.org.uk).

## KEEPING WARM THIS WINTER

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

Over 3,000 households in Uttlesford are estimated to be in fuel poverty; this could be because people are out of work, managing on a low income or living in an energy-inefficient property. With Covid-19 squeezing household finances further and compelling people to spend more time at home, being able to keep warm is more important than ever this year, particularly as some health conditions caused or worsened by cold homes, such as asthma and COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) place people at greater risk from the virus. The good news is that help is available. Energy Specialists at Uttlesford Citizens Advice can offer advice on a range of areas, including winter benefits and cold weather payments, the warm home discount scheme, energy efficiency measures, home improvement grants, switching energy suppliers and the priority services register; they can also help people to manage fuel related debt and access emergency support if needed. Call 01799 618858 or email: [warmhomes@uttlesfordca.org.uk](mailto:warmhomes@uttlesfordca.org.uk).

If you are in receipt of a winter fuel allowance and feel you do not need it, it would be wonderful if you could consider making a donation to support the work of Uttlesford Citizens Advice in this area. Alternatively, if you would like to give direct support to someone else in the community who is having a difficult time, you could donate to Sophie's Fund. This small charity works closely with Uttlesford Citizens Advice, providing small grants to help local people who are struggling. A £20 donation could help someone buy fresh food, pay for prescriptions or school dinners, heat their home or access safe accommodation. You can donate online at [www.sophiesfund.org](http://www.sophiesfund.org).

Jo Hancock  
Tel: 01799 618840  
Email: [help@uttlesfordca.org.uk](mailto:help@uttlesfordca.org.uk)

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

We were very busy during November and December, as we had lots of projects to complete, restoring the gardens and improving them for the coming season. As usual we have our fingers firmly crossed that our snowdrops will be at their spectacular best for our Open Days in February on Sundays 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, and Snowdrop Thursdays on 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. For details of times and entry prices please see our website or call me. Every year they spread a bit more and we give them a helping hand too, breaking up the clumps and replanting them to colonise new areas. We have added more narcissi and tulips for visitors to enjoy in March and April. We have been clearing a new pathway in the lime wood, which will give visitors a fresh perspective on the daffodils there.



In December we put a new path into the woodland next to the walled kitchen garden. Clearing the nettles and undergrowth there should allow other more interesting plants to get established. By the time you read this we hope to have seen completion of the balusters for the restoration of the lily pond balustrade in March. There is so much to look forward to. For details of snowdrop open days, go to our website. It is still not too late to support our balustrade restoration project; details are on the website restoration page.

Jill Goldsmith  
Tel: 07947 183439



## ST MARY'S SCHOOL

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

Early January saw us adapting magnificently to the shock news that schools would be closed to all, apart from critical workers and vulnerable children. With extremely short notice, remote class and teacher-led learning went online following, as closely as possible, our normal school day timetable. Thank you to our staff, parents and pupils for rising to the occasion and bearing with us whilst we all come to grips with various online glitches. Our school office is closed at present and the phone line is being monitored remotely so if you need to get in touch with us, please email first. Stay safe everyone.

Matthew Curzon  
Headteacher  
Email: [office@st-marys-stansted.essex.sch.uk](mailto:office@st-marys-stansted.essex.sch.uk)



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## Nature Notes

At the time of writing snowdrops were already blooming in the garden and no doubt they will now be flowering on the verges at either end of Lime Kiln Lane and wherever else they have been planted or spread from gardens.

In years gone by many trees and shrubs have been planted along our hedgerows and the policy continues today with plans to plant millions of trees across the country to help combat climate change. These will mostly be supplied as saplings and it is big business. There was a recent report from Norfolk of 4000 newly planted saplings being stolen along with their plastic sleeves from a narrow 320 metre stretch of field edge. Planting at this density must assume a survival rate of less than 5%. Under an oak tree along Pennington Lane I brushed aside a few leaves which revealed four acorns, all sending down roots in an area the size of my hand.



Around any village there must be thousands of acorns, chestnut, ash, sycamore and other seedlings which could easily be gathered by hand and planted where wanted. This already happens on a very small scale but the practice could be expanded, thus reducing the huge carbon footprint of growing, transporting and planting the commercial saplings with their plastic sleeves.



Felix

*(Those plastic sleeves cause such nasty pollution in woods; they are still in pieces on the ground long after their usefulness has worn off. Is there no alternative to them? Ed)*

## CLICK IT LOCAL UTTLESFORD

[www.clickitlocal.co.uk/uttlesford](http://www.clickitlocal.co.uk/uttlesford)

In late November, a scheme was initiated to try to encourage shoppers to support shops in the Uttlesford area. Fifty shops across the district have signed up to it, but unfortunately none yet in Stansted. We would strongly encourage businesses from Stansted to join in this initiative. Shoppers can browse and place their orders via the website address shown above.

Melvin Caton  
Email: [cllrcaton@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:cllrcaton@uttlesford.gov.uk)



## RECYCLE INK, STAMPS AND TOOTHBRUSHES



We are still collecting original (not remanufactured or own brand) ink cartridges, postage stamps, toothbrushes, electric toothbrush heads, and toothpaste tubes (please place dental items in a paper or plastic bag). If the churches where our collecting boxes are situated are closed, you can leave items in the box outside the blue main door of the Free Church at the bottom of Chapel Hill. Alternatively please leave items in the porch of 7 Blythwood Gardens. Please note that we do not take laser toner cartridges. Thank you.



Marion and Mike Dyer  
Tel: 814059  
Email: [recycle@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk](mailto:recycle@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk)

## RANDOM JOTTINGS – A TRAIN OF THOUGHT

David Horton's December article about astronomy reminded me of the days when I joined a small astronomical society who met at a Manor House adult education centre. The house itself was of some interest. It was adjacent to the site of a larger house, which had been the home of Sir Cloudsley Shovell, born in 1650 who joined the navy as a cabin boy before his 14<sup>th</sup> birthday. He rose through the ranks and in 1705, at the age of 54, he was promoted to Admiral of the Fleet. He commanded the British fleet in the Mediterranean during the War of the Spanish Succession. Following the siege of Toulon in 1707, the fleet was heading for Plymouth when the Admiral's flagship, the *Association*, hit rocks off the Isles of Scilly and sank rapidly. Sir Cloudsley and the other 800 sailors on board perished. Three other ships of the fleet also sank on the rocks with a total loss of about 2000 men; the worst disaster in British seafaring history.

As ships undertook longer journeys it became paramount that a solution be found to the longitude problem; it was failure to accurately measure longitude that had caused the losses on the Scillies. A method had to be found to determine longitude at sea. To this end the Longitude Act was passed in 1714 which set up a Longitude Board and offered up to £20,000 for an accurate solution: the equivalent of about £3 million today. John Harrison, a clock maker born in Wakefield in 1693, built a number of clocks from wood. Some of these survive to this day, one in the Science Museum. He realised, along with others, that accurate timekeeping held the secret to accurate longitude. With the help of money allocated by the Board of Longitude, Harrison made three sea clocks, with promising performance at sea. These are called H1, H2 and H3, and were quite large instruments. His masterpiece was H4, a sea watch, a bit larger than a large pocket watch; it was inscribed No 1 1759. This proved a great success with Captain Cook on his world travels and demonstrated that the longitude problem had been solved. Harrison eventually received the prize and lived comfortably for his remaining days. He made a number of his watches and we can only speculate that it was one of these that made the Trotters millionaires eventually after so much promise. "This time next year ...".



Cliff Gilbert



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## THE HUNDRED PARISHES SOCIETY

www.hundredparishes.org.uk

The local pub has long been a focal point of the community. Samuel Pepys in his diary described the pub as “the heart of England”. Beer was once much safer to drink than contaminated water. Many of our local pubs are centuries old, built when most of the population were illiterate. They had distinctive names and simple signs to identify them. As early as 1393 Richard II required landlords to erect signs so that ale houses were clearly visible to his inspectors, who judged the quality of the ale. Nowadays, not all have signs but there are many interesting names.

The Saracen’s Head in Great Dunmow, opposite the market place, is a 16th-century coaching inn. A Saracen was an Arab Muslim who in the Middle Ages fought against Christians for control of The Holy Land. The Blind Fiddler in Anstey takes its name from a tale of George the blind fiddler who, for a bet, entered a tunnel said to run from a pit to the castle mound a mile away. He was accompanied by his dog. A scream was heard, the dog reappeared singing from head to tail, but George was never seen again!



In Bartlow, The Three Hills dates from around 1800 AD and is named after the parish’s giant Roman burial mounds which also feature on the village sign. The Sword in Hand in Westmill takes its name from the coat of arms of the



Greg family who once lived in the parish and were generous benefactors. It has an unusual and distinctive new sign.

Let us hope that we can soon all return to fully enjoying the hospitality of our local hostelrys. Each of those mentioned here can be found on one of the walks described on the Society’s website.



Ken McDonald  
Secretary  
Tel: 813226

## THE JOYS OF ONLINE LEARNING

I am not always convinced that our increasing reliance on technology is such a good thing. It does have its uses such as online learning during lockdown; but it is not infallible, as illustrated by the following cautionary tale from a young relative called T. Last year T and his pal were looking forward to a Davis Cup tennis match in Madrid. The event was called off at the last minute due to the pandemic and their week’s holiday in Madrid put on hold. The two friends decided to use lockdown to learn Spanish so that when the tennis event was rescheduled, they would be able to fully embrace all that Madrid has to offer during their stay.

The friends studied hard, practising daily, comparing their problems and triumphs along the way. After almost nine months they had made good progress, could easily understand the online tutor and felt confident enough to converse with a Spanish work colleague during a business meeting, via Zoom in November 2020. Julio was visibly struggling to follow the proceedings being conducted in English. Eager to put him at ease T addressed him in Spanish. His face brightened and he replied with a torrent of words; none of which T understood. T asked him to speak more slowly. It was Julio’s turn to look baffled as he obviously couldn’t understand T’s Spanish. This verbal exchange in mutual lack of comprehension carried on for a few more embarrassing minutes before a mortified T gave up and the meeting continued in English. Despite this major setback, the two friends gamely continued their studies, determined to succeed. A week later T was listening to the world news and understood every word of the Spanish being spoken. T’s friend tuned into the same interview and could also understand. Their euphoria was short-lived. At the end of the programme they discovered the speaker had been conversing in Mexican Spanish. They had apparently spent months learning not the Spanish spoken in Spain but the Mexican version! The two friends decided it would be a shame to waste their months of study. They are planning a trip to Mexico as soon as they are able, to make use of their new linguistic skills.

**Footnote:** On the subject of wearing masks - something it seems we are going to have to do for a while yet – there are at least two advantages:

- 1 They keep your face lovely and warm in the winter, especially when it is really cold and windy
- 2 It is quite difficult to recognise the face behind the mask so it is handy if you want to walk around the village incognito. Maybe you can think of some more advantages?

Loki

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## IN MEMORIAM

### Maureen Childs

26<sup>th</sup> October 1933-13<sup>th</sup> October 2020



Maureen was born in Thaxted and came to live and work at the Mary Macarthur House, which is now known as Hargrave House. She met my dad whilst he was playing football in the neighbouring field. They married in 1952 and spent their early married days with my grandparents in Priory Drive. They moved to Stoney Common and I came along in 1956. Mum liked to keep busy, and enjoyed dress-making and DIY. In 1977 they moved to a bungalow in St John's Crescent. Some of you may remember Mum working at the Co-op in Cambridge Road. She also worked at Walpole Farm. Her final job before retirement was at a toy shop in Hertford. Mum liked being with people and lending a hand. She loved to travel and had many a memorable holiday in the USA visiting 29 states, and taking videos and photos of them all. Mum loved a challenge too, learning to drive aged 55, and getting a computer in her early sixties. When Dad died in 2013 life changed for Mum; sadly in 2017, she was unable to look after herself and spent the remaining three years of her life in Stanley Wilson Care Home in Saffron Walden. Mum is now reunited with dad.

Valerie Clark



### STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET WINDMILL

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

With Christmas now a memory I do hope that you were all able to enjoy something of the festive season. Now that we are all back in lockdown it is very hard not being able to see and meet our close family and friends, but we all know the importance of observing the Government's regulations. With the vaccine now available to many, perhaps we can look forward to a brighter future and an end to Covid-19. With that in mind, fingers crossed, within the next couple of months I hope we can at least start planning for some of our forthcoming events. I will keep you posted.



Molly Clark  
Co-trustee  
Tel: 816768



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

### Stansted Hub keeps going throughout Third Lockdown

As we enter another difficult and challenging period, we are committed to ensuring that we keep our clients, volunteers and staff as safe as possible throughout the resurgence of the Covid-19 pandemic. Over 500 people across Essex access our face-to-face services each month, and many of our clients are considered to be in a vulnerable group identified by the World Health Organisation. Please be reassured that we continue to closely monitor the Public Health Authority's guidance to ensure that we keep our service users, volunteers and staff safe.

We are pleased to say that as an essential healthcare provider, we are able to continue a Covid-safe service for NHS hearing aid help, cleaning and re-tubing for Stansted residents who need our services. Appointments will be held at our temporary location at the Stansted Free Church Hall, Chapel Hill, one Tuesday per month (this may increase depending on demand). For those who are housebound or shielding, a doorstep service will also be available. Due to social distancing measures, all appointments must be booked in advance; please call 01245 496347, text: 07950 406173 or email: [info@hearinghelpessex.org.uk](mailto:info@hearinghelpessex.org.uk). We also provide an information, advice and guidance service to people across Essex living with hearing loss, and this is currently being delivered from our Resource Centre in Chelmsford by telephone, video call, text message or email.

Susan Butler  
Service Coordinator  
Hearing Aid Support



### DAISY MAY'S FARM

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

We had a really great festive season at the end of last year and lots of you lovely people came and saw us and, despite the mud, you thoroughly enjoyed meeting and feeding the animals. You counted all the candy canes in the festive woodland trail, made some beautiful Christmas crafts and listened so nicely to Mother Christmas's story before she handed out your presents and you all had a fine, festive time! We were just getting back on our feet and then lockdown happened and sadly, once again the farm has had to close and of course, that impacts massively on us.

The animals are all fine and we are making sure they are all well fed, snug and comfy, but that comes at a price. If you would like to donate, please go to our page on JustGiving: [www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/alison-thomson-920](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/alison-thomson-920). Anything you can give is very much appreciated. Thank you so much for your support and we look forward to seeing you again soon. Please keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates.

Elaine Terry  
Tel: 07747 787973



  
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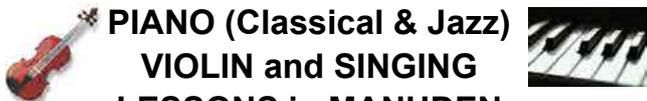
  
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## MEET THE TEAM - PAUL BURT

I am the photographic consultant for The Link and assist the editorial team making imagery look its best, especially the front cover. This takes the form of tweaking and retouching submitted photos, creating specific images desired by the team and being available for advice. My favourite photo that I have captured is the *Thank You NHS* blue lit windmill used for last August's cover. I have been a professional photographer and retoucher for 18 years and a Stansted resident for 17 years; it is very gratifying helping this magazine look its best. From a Biology degree to jobs in IT network support, I discovered photography during a trip round the world. Chatting to a photographer in Hawaii resulted in me being on a shoot at Kelly Slater's beachside home - the 11 times world surfing champion. As a commercial photographer I have met some fascinating people (including prime ministers and celebrities) and visited some amazing places. Lockdown 2 found me photographing concrete road repairs and I have photographed toilet refurbishments more times than I would wish – it is not all glamorous!



An energetic enigmatic 4-year-old, equestrian coach wife and two active dogs are my family and keep life delectable. I enjoy playing tennis, am a qualified coach as well as the treasurer of a local tennis club.



My inner geek is kept active as I help run Herts Nitro Model Club near Ware, where Lewis Hamilton raced Radio Controlled cars. The amazing people at the Club drew me in, from juniors to professionals who travel the world racing toy cars! One such professional even lives in the village. During Lockdown 3 my head is buried in study guides learning about subjects

including meteorology, navigation and airspace operating principles, in preparation for my Drone licence.

I am a positive person and try to inspire those around me while actively avoiding negativity as it acts as an energy vampire. I am therefore attempting to come out of these lockdowns with some new skills and knowledge while looking out for those around me. I hope everyone reading this can take something positive out of this current situation. If you want to learn some photography skills, feel free to email: [mail@paulburtphotography.com](mailto:mail@paulburtphotography.com) if you have something you cannot get your head around.



## SUPPORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

Our objective is to support local businesses. We are a non-profit group, run by local businesses and supported by our local councils. We are operating in a different business world nowadays and it is vital that we support each other through these testing times. We have monthly zoom meetings to share and discuss issues, and at our meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> January two of our members gave us some important updates.

Maria Teer, Business Development Manager for SFB Consulting, a human resources (HR) company, talked to us about the importance of having good HR support in businesses. This includes planning and prioritising business needs and HR matters. Businesses need to keep up to date with changes in employment law and policies, and need to manage all disciplinary, grievance, redundancy, and dismissal matters, without leaving the company open to potential employment tribunal claims and high costs. Maria reminded everyone of the importance of ensuring the wellbeing of staff including mental health and support. SFB Consulting will provide a 15-minute free consultation on HR issues so contact her on [www.sfb-consulting.com](http://www.sfb-consulting.com). John Froggett from The Accountancy Practice gave us updates on working from home. The focus for the company is to ensure that clients save money when working from home but there are no changes to tax dates. John reminded us all that those working from home can claim £6.00 a week or £312 a year from the Inland Revenue. Make sure that you check their website for all updated information to help your business: [www.theaccountingpractice.com](http://www.theaccountingpractice.com). Contact James Garrett on [www.hnmedia.co.uk](http://www.hnmedia.co.uk) if you would like to join our next Zoom meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> February.



Iris Evans  
Treasurer



## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

At the beginning of 2020 many business commentators, motivational speakers and church leaders seized on the fact that '20:20 vision' is synonymous with perfect eyesight. It was an opportunity to talk about clarity of strategy, purpose, and values. Then 2020 happened and all our strategies, plans and values were subjected to the spin-cycle of Covid. The year 2020 was heart-breaking for many people and challenging for most, but arguably there have been some positive aspects to the last year as well. Perhaps our society has learned some humility through recognising our mortality, and the fragility of the things we take for granted and in which we often place our security. Maybe some of the things we built our lives around were not as stable as we thought.

The pandemic has also shown us the value of people and things we took for granted. Isolation from family and friends has taught us the true value of a hug and human interaction. We have also learnt to appreciate the true value of roles such as nursing and the caring professions. It has turned teachers, postmen and binmen into local heroes. It has also caused us to appreciate the beauty of the natural world.

Church attendance (albeit often virtually) has substantially increased since the first lockdown and many have felt the desire to consider questions about the meaning of life (for example through the Alpha course) and about God, whom the Bible describes as a sure foundation, a fortress, and a refuge in times of trouble. In a strange way 2020 may have refocused our vision and values after all. We can only hope that some of these positive changes will continue through 2021 and beyond.



Howard Page  
Stansted Family Church



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**Parish** Rev'd Deacon Des Connors  
**Deacon** Tel: 07748 464101  
Email: [desconnors@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:desconnors@dioceseofbrentwood.org)

We continue to meet on Tuesday evenings and Sundays, offering a combination of modern worship music, Bible-based talks/discussion and prayer, using either in-person or online meetings (or a combination of both), in accordance with Government guidance at the time. As restrictions are subject to both local and national changes, at relatively short notice, please email or ring us for the latest updates on what is running and how best to access it.

**Masses**  
Saturday 5.15pm Confessions 6.00pm Mass  
Sunday 8.30am and 10.00am Mass  
9.15am Confessions  
Monday 9.00am Confessions 9.30am Mass  
Tuesday 7.15pm Confessions  
8.00pm Latin Mass (Extraordinary Form)  
Wednesday 12.00pm Confessions 12.30pm Mass  
Thursday/Friday 9.00am Confessions 9.30am Mass

If you would like more information about how to find recommended online church services which you can access anytime, or the Alpha Course online, please just contact us. We are also happy to receive prayer-requests at any time. If you are looking for Christians with a contemporary outlook, a desire to grow in our faith, and a vision to benefit our community, why not get in touch?

Although we have entered our third lockdown, we are pleased to confirm that we are open for mass as above. See our website and Facebook page for regular updates [www.facebook.com/StTheresaStansted](http://www.facebook.com/StTheresaStansted).

**Please note** we have a new church email address as in the heading above.

Clair Rava  
Parish Administrator  
Email: [stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:stansted@dioceseofbrentwood.org)



Ros and Howard Page





**All enquiries Including Church Hall bookings** The Church Office, St John's Hall, St John's Road, Stansted CM24 8JP  
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**Rector** Vacant  
**Assistant Curate** Rev'd Helen Flack  
 Email: revhelenstn@gmail.com  
**Pastoral Assistant** Kathryn West, Tel: 816293  
 Email: kewest@btinternet.com  
**Director of Music** Anne Brooks  
 Email: annebrooks22@yahoo.co.uk

At the time of writing, St John's Church is closed for congregational worship, although our Sunday 9.30am Holy Communion service will be broadcast from the church through Zoom. Morning Prayer through Zoom is on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday at 9.00am. Please see our website for all login details.

Although the church is not currently open for private prayer on Wednesday mornings, if you would particularly like to pray in St John's please telephone Kathy West on 816293 and this can be arranged in a safe manner.

### From St John's Registers

#### November

##### Funerals

2<sup>nd</sup> Pamela Doris Jackson, age 85 - at Bishop's Stortford Cemetery  
 9<sup>th</sup> Christopher Neil Emerson, age 72 - at Cam Valley Crematorium  
 26<sup>th</sup> Doris Alford, age 80 - at St John's followed by interment at Stansted Cemetery

#### December

##### Funeral

11<sup>th</sup> Barry Michael Francis, age 85 - at Cam Valley Crematorium  
 There were no baptisms or weddings

### ST JOHN'S 300 CLUB

Many congratulations to the winners of recent draws:

#### November

£100 No 262 Dorothy Barker  
 £50 No 184 Sandra Embleton  
 £25 No 234 Majel Elsom

#### December

£200 No 189 Roland Pelly  
 £100 No 124 D Nash  
 £50 No 217 Janet MacFarlane  
 £25 No 248 Delia Joyce

The draw for February will be held on **28<sup>th</sup> February** either in St John's Church or from my home, in the presence of the

online congregation following the 9.30am service. Numbers at £2 each month are still available for anyone who may wish to join the Club and be in with a chance of winning one of the 38 prizes totalling £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



### STANSTED FREE CHURCH

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 www.stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

**Minister** Rev'd Roy Fowler  
 Tel: 814809  
 Email: minister@stanstedfreechurch.org.uk

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

#### Sunday worship in the church

Although not legally required to do so, we have suspended services in the church for the safety of our congregation. We will resume in the church as soon as the situation improves; please see our website for updates. Zoom services will continue on Sundays at 10.30am for the foreseeable future. For details please contact me.

The church hall is available for regular and one-off bookings of permitted activities which fall within the Government's guidelines. Please contact me for further information.



Marion Dyer  
 Tel: 814059

### THE RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

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

**Clerk and Lettings** Jane Mitchell  
 Tel: 503024

Although the Quaker Meeting House will be closed for the foreseeable future, Stansted Quakers are continuing to hold a Meeting for Worship each Sunday, by each being silent at the same time in our own homes. We have a strong sense of all worshipping together by doing this. Afterwards, we have our coffee or tea and a biscuit and email any ministry, thoughts or news to each other.

Jane Mitchell





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Herts Hogline is a not-for-profit organisation which was set up 25 years ago in Bishop's Stortford with the aim of rehabilitating sick, injured and orphaned hedgehogs. Today the volunteers cover an area within a 15 mile radius of the town and work closely with some of the local vets. Sadly, their work is more important than ever because last August the hedgehog was added to the red list: they could become extinct in the UK within the next 20 years.



If you would like to support Stansted's hedgehog population then there are a number of ways you can help. Firstly, install a hedgehog house. A plastic storage box with a CD sized hole cut into the side with a couple of bricks on top make a quick and simple house. If you are good with wood, then make your own using plans from the leaflets section of [www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk](http://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk). Or you could purchase a house ensuring it contains a corridor and sleeping area. Installing a feeding station and providing food and water year-round also helps. Suitable supplementary food includes tinned cat or dog food sprinkled with a few small cat or dog biscuits, without fish or gravy. Alternatively you could purchase specially formulated hedgehog food. Unsuitable foods include bread, milk, dried mealworms, sultanas and peanuts. Lastly, you can create a hedgehog highway. Simply cut a hole in the base of your fence the size of a CD and encourage your neighbour to do the same. That way hedgehogs can easily travel between gardens and not risk their lives on busy roads. For hedgehog-related advice call Herts Hogline on 07568 384209 Monday to Friday 9.00am-6.00pm. If they are unable to answer, do not leave a message but email: [help@hertshogline.com](mailto:help@hertshogline.com) to receive an automatic reply which contains advice. You can keep up to date with their news by following them on Facebook.

Lynne Garner

## THANK YOU

It was New Year's Eve, approximately mid-afternoon; I was walking with my dog on Bentfield Road when I fell and bashed my knee. Not a drop of alcohol had passed my lips (at that time anyway)! Two ladies stopped in their cars to see if I was okay; one offered to take me home in her car, dog as well. I declined although feeling shaken up. A couple out walking also asked how I was and offered to walk home with me to ensure I got home alright. I do not think that I thanked them properly so should they be reading this once again **thank you** so much.

Ken Pell

## 👉 HUGE INCREASE IN ONLINE ALPHA 👈

The world-renowned Alpha Course has seen a huge increase in participants since the first lockdown started last year. Normally delivered in small local groups, many Alpha Courses switched to online groups immediately, as some 10-week courses were mid-way. Since then new online Alphas have started and their increasing popularity means they will continue even after restrictions are lifted.

In normal times, an Alpha Course consists of a meal, a short talk or film and a discussion. It is an opportunity to think about the big questions of life: *Why do some people believe in God? What is the evidence for God's existence? Does my life have a purpose? How can I check things out for myself?* The online version still provides an opportunity to meet up with a small group of other people online, exploring various topics together, watching a short film (20 minutes or so) and sharing opinions afterwards. Attendees typically may be atheists, agnostics or Christians, but all are welcome. Nicky Gumbel, whose church ran the first Alpha Course in 1980, recently admitted he was surprised how well it had worked online. In an interview he revealed that just one course in London, which normally attracts 500 people each term, had been attended by 1600 people, meeting online in groups of 10-12. A dramatic increase was observed by smaller-scale Alpha courses too, from northern cities to rural Norfolk. No one is sure whether the seismic events of the last year have caused people to think more deeply about life in general, or whether people are just taking advantage of more free time to follow up on their long-held curiosity. If you would like to find out more, go to [www.alpha.org](http://www.alpha.org), or to connect to a local Alpha Course, contact me for details.



Ros Page  
Email: [stanstedfamily@gmail.com](mailto:stanstedfamily@gmail.com)



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## RANDOM JOTTINGS - A FEW DOMESTIC BYGONES

The photograph shows a few items relating to lighting, some of which will be familiar to people of my generation. In front on the right is a fragile Veritas gas mantle for the gas light. Behind that is a small brass oil lamp which is weighted at the base so that it is self-righting if it should be knocked over. Next to the mantle is a small porcelain candle snuffer, then a brass boot match holder with two mice creeping round it.



Next to that is a cylindrical brass container which held small candle lucifers. These had a match head which one could strike on the base of the container and, when lit, insert in a hole in the top. The little candle would burn with a small flame for a few minutes and was often called a 'go-to-bed'. At the back is a standard enamelled candlestick holder and on the left is a WWI trench art shell-case spill holder with wooden spills. We lit these from the fire in the winter and then used them to light the gas lamps or candles. Power cuts will not be a problem for us.

Tony Wellings

Email: [tony.wellings@btinternet.com](mailto:tony.wellings@btinternet.com)

## LINK ADVERTISING

Next month sees the start of our new printing year. This usually begins in November, but was deferred due to the non-production of the Link for three months during the first Coronavirus lockdown

**We still have a few spaces available for new advertisers**

Ads on the inside pages start from £160 for eight issues and there are three sizes available

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*We look forward to hearing from you!*

## WHEN?

**When Corona is a beer again  
When Donald is only a duck  
When tiers sit on a cake  
When bubbles only exist in champagne**

Anon – submitted by Sue Hitchmough

## STANSTED EVENING WOMEN'S INSTITUTE



Our Christmas meeting was on Zoom and 26 members participated, which was an increase of nine people from our first venture into Zoom in October. We also met in November when we played Bingo. We had been given instructions for making grids of 25 squares using numbers 1-90. This proved to be quite difficult but our caller Linda Gurr was very good and patient! It was fun to do and made us feel together even though we were not. Prior to the December meeting our Committee members had delivered an envelope to everyone, containing a Christmas card, some chocolate coins, a WI booklet and a paper doily to be used in a craft demo at the meeting. This proved to be a doily-folding demo by Chris Morris designed to turn it into a Christmas tree. Mine resulted in looking like neither a doily nor a tree and was consigned to the bin; but I am sure others were successful! Ann Thompson showed us how to decorate jam jars for tea-lights and Brenda Ryan and Linda read us a Christmas poem each, so many thanks to the Committee members for a festive meeting in our own homes. Our attempt at carol singing was less than harmonious but was enthusiastic.

In January we had a booked speaker, on Zoom of course, whose talk was called *A Turkish Shirley Valentine*. It is a great shame that we cannot ask friends into our homes to share with us, so some members are not able to take part. We have speakers booked up to April. Sadly, it seems that the use of Zoom may well be necessary as this dreadful situation goes on. We hope that you and your families stay safe and well in 2021.



Judy Colliver  
Tel: 812470

## STANSTED FUN RUN

[www.stansted10k.org.uk](http://www.stansted10k.org.uk)

After the disappointment of cancelling last year we are pleased to announce this year's event on **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September**. Registration is now open via our website. It is a great excuse to start getting fit! Thanks to the generosity of runners who donated their 2020 registration fees, we gave each charity £277. We are supporting the same charities this year: St Clare Hospice, Grove Cottage, Huw Johnson Club and St Margaret's Mental Health Unit.

Clair Rava  
Email: [stansted10k@gmail.com](mailto:stansted10k@gmail.com)

# Stansted Network

## NEWS FROM YOUR LOCAL COUNCILS

### CRAFTON GREEN HOUSE

The consultation on the future of this building closed on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and the working group is considering the responses received. The common theme, amongst those wishing it to be retained, was people suggesting that the building should be kept for “community groups/activities”.

Given the layout of the building which was originally a house, with rooms of modest domestic proportions, we would like to know what specific activities people think could be provided at this location that can't be provided in the existing facilities i.e Church Halls, Day Centre. Why are these venues not used more?

Please email any specific comments to [parishcouncil@stansted.net](mailto:parishcouncil@stansted.net). Thank you.

### LIBRARY OPENING HOURS

Essex County Council has announced that our library will remain closed until further notice. Any change to this will be notified on the door and on the Essex County Council and Parish Council websites.

### NEW STAFF MEMBERS

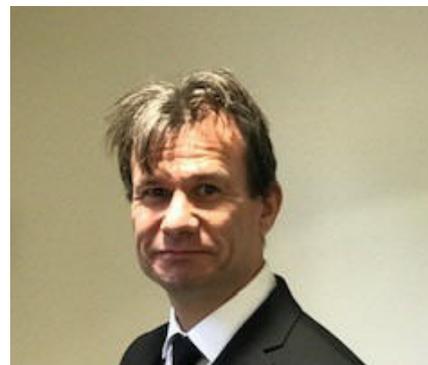
We are delighted to welcome two new staff members to our team; both are part-time and will be based in the Mountfitchet Exchange:

Our Committee Support and Projects Assistant is Laila Azure-Marxen - photographed below. Laila's key role will be to work with both main committees to develop, manage and deliver specific projects and to seek third-party funding where appropriate. She will also assist with minute-taking at some meetings.



During her internships in Denmark, Laila worked with two local councils and helped to develop waste management strategies for public schools. She has worked with, and co-ordinated, volunteer groups. She has good IT skills, is used to working as part of a small team and is particularly interested in sustainability.

Our Communications Assistant is Dan Schlanker. Once we can re-open to the public, Dan will cover our re-



ception area dealing with general enquiries (via telephone and email), together with greeting visitors and the booking of meeting rooms. Until then, and working

with others, Dan will develop a communications strategy for the Council and will manage our social media and website – he has wide experience in both of these areas.

Dan worked for a large UK national retailer for 13 years managing internal communications and running a diary for 90 departments and teams at their Head Office. He dealt with internal emails and took minutes of meetings. He is trained in GDPR, online security and use of IT systems and hardware.

In his earlier working life Dan trained as a journalist and worked abroad. This was followed by a stint as a duty officer at a YMCA in west London where he managed the reception desk, visitors and liaised with a wide range of other authorities. He also managed bookings of facilities available to the public.

### FLOOD WARDENS

**Flood Wardens** - we have added a number of new recruits to our list but if you would like to sign up to assist, please contact the office.

We shall be arranging a meeting, via Zoom, for all registered wardens in the next few weeks.

## FLOOD WATERS

During the Christmas break some councillors were prepared for requests for sand-bags in the event of flooding, but thankfully they were not called upon for this service. However, we were shocked by the condition of the new play area at Walpole Meadows below.



Prior to Christmas we had been trying to make contact with the developers and planners to discuss progress of the areas which are to be handed over to the Parish Council – hopefully this year. To date, our attempts have been in vain but we shall be pushing for the necessary action to ensure that this play area never again resembles a mud bath and dirt track.

## GROVE HILL

A constructive meeting was held with Cllr Kevin Bentley, Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Infrastructure. The meeting was facilitated by County



Councillor Ray Gooding. In addition to Cllr Gooding, Maureen Caton, Ruth Clifford, Geoffrey Sell and four residents attended. The purpose of the meeting was to see how the increasing problem of heavy goods vehicles using Grove Hill could be dealt with. This has resulted in damage to properties and vehicles mounting

pavements. Cllr Bentley and the Highways Officers recognised the severity of the problem. A number of suggestions were put forward:

- a) Subject to government legislation which is expected to be passed in the Spring, camera technology would be introduced to enforce the weight restriction. This would make it illegal for vehicles over 7.5 tonnes to drive up Grove Hill
- b) Officers agreed to investigate the feasibility of introducing raised kerbs and bollards. With the latter Cllr Bentley and his officers were less supportive

- c) The traffic regulation order dating from 1987 will be reviewed.

Overall, it was a good meeting with everyone present agreeing that heavy goods vehicles over 7.5 tonnes should be removed from Grove Hill and ultimately from the centre of Stansted.

## YOUTH WORK

The Youth Centre has had to remain closed since the start of Lockdown 1 in March. However, as soon as it was permitted, staff from Gemini Youth Services started outreach sessions. They have been out and about around the “gathering” hotspots to chat to local youngsters, check on their well-being and to try to ensure that they are complying with all regulations.

Even as we write, with very cold evenings and Lockdown 3 announced, they are encountering quite a number of teenagers who are braving the colder temperatures! Frequent reminders about being outdoors only for exercise are being given.

## YOUTH COUNCIL

We are pleased to report a reasonable response to our appeal for youngsters to join our Youth Council. We have representatives from Foresthall School and Stansted Airport College, as well as a few younger parishioners. The first meeting is imminent and we look forward to reporting progress in the next edition of this magazine.

## STANSTED IN BLOOM

Our colleague Trevor Lloyd retired in April but kindly carried on serving as our Allotments Officer until the end of September. He has now handed all of this administrative work over to Emma!

However, Trevor has not given up altogether. Together with a few others, he is turning some of his leisure time over to helping out the wider community and has established an independent Stansted In Bloom group who are hoping to enter the village into the Anglia in Bloom (AIB) competition later this year. The AIB event looks for floral displays, but goes beyond that to the general appearance of the village including things like signs, bins, benches etc.

Trevor and his fellow volunteers have recently secured funding from a local business, and have applied for other grants, to undertake some improvements at the High Lane/Cambridge Road entrance to the village which will, hopefully, include refurbishment of the Knight sign! Who knows - with any further offers of funding they might be able to do the Knight sign at Blythwood Gardens too!!!

## HELP TO MAKE OUR ROADS SAFER

We regularly see on local social media comments about poor and dangerous driving so were interested to read about this initiative from Essex Police:

**You can help us reduce collisions and casualties and make roads across Essex roads even safer by reporting instances of poor and dangerous driving.**

Most of the people who use the roads across Essex do so responsibly and with care and consideration for others. However, some road users occasionally behave irresponsibly or inconsiderately, and a smaller number behave like this regularly. These are the people most likely to cause a collision and present the highest risk of harm to themselves and others.

We want your help to identify these people.

Essex Police has a range of tools at its disposal, but the help you can provide through your 'Extra Eyes' on the road will be invaluable in helping us identify and deal with offenders. The increasing availability of mass market 'on the go' cameras means more irresponsible, dangerous and illegal road behaviour is being recorded in video form than ever before. Through 'Extra Eyes', this footage can be sent to us for review by an investigator within Road Policing at Essex Police.

In appropriate cases we will have no hesitation in taking positive action against offenders, using the evidence that you supply, providing it meets the criteria. Where appropriate, offenders will be offered a driver improvement course at their expense in order to educate them and ultimately improve their attitude towards driving. Where the criteria for one of these courses is not met, a fixed penalty notice or escalation to court proceedings may follow.

It is important that the points below are followed otherwise the matter cannot be progressed:

- You and any other witness must be willing to attend court to give evidence
- Footage must be **unedited**, clear and in focus
- Vehicles must be identifiable
- Submissions must be made within 48 hours of the event
- Footage must show instances of driving behaviour which amounts to careless driving or leaving a vehicle in a dangerous position
- Where *the alleged driving amounts to an offence* and there is no footage, an independent witness, not within your vehicle, is required.

Further details can be found in their leaflet and downloaded from the SERP website [www.saferessexroads.org/extraeyes/extra-eyes-what-next](http://www.saferessexroads.org/extraeyes/extra-eyes-what-next)

**Our village is lucky enough to have a SpeedWatch team but they are in desperate need of new volunteers to sign up. If you are able to spare a couple of hours every now and then, please contact the office with your details.**

## UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Cllr Alan Dean writes:**

One of the delights – for there are a few – of being locked-down at home on Recreation Ground is the sight and sound of children playing. Over the Christmas period it seemed to be busier than ever. Thankfully, in this latest lockdown, play equipment is not to be barred from use.

For older people like Catherine and me, we will continue with regular local walks, though hope not to repeat the two just before New Year when Stansted Brook was in flood, forcing us to several stretches of paddling.

If you are in need of help during this latest lockdown, please call **03333 408 218**. This is the Community Response Hub. Phone calls should be answered Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm. Their email address is: [communityresponse@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:communityresponse@uttlesford.gov.uk).

Despite Uttlesford having dedicated and willing staff throughout the organisation, my colleagues and I would be misleading you if we said it was a satisfying place to be a councillor at present. Three big issues are dominating our attention, with little respite over the Christmas-New Year period.

The majority party's decision to start from scratch with a Local Plan has brought on a biblical jubilee for opportunist landowners and developers. At the end of December around 450 homes were granted planning permission on appeal in Elsenham because of the absence of a Local Plan. So that will result in yet more traffic congestion and pollution on Grove Hill and through the centre of Stansted. The Pennington Lane application has not yet come to the committee for a decision. Essex Highways are dissatisfied with the proposal.

As I write in early January, the airport's planning appeal hearings were still on track to begin by the middle of the month via video links, despite some community witnesses being precluded from participating by the pandemic.

My colleagues Melvin Caton, Ayub Khan, Geoffrey Sell and I have extremely serious concerns about the line the Council is intending to take at the appeal. We voiced these at an Extraordinary Council Meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> January. We want the Council to work more closely with Stop Stansted Expansion to ensure the appeal is dismissed. Sadly, we are obliged to report that the 5-hour meeting ending at 11 p.m. was only partially successful in helping us understand what approach the Council's legal team will be taking. We hope to be able to report in more detail at a later date. Needless to say, none of us supports raising the permitted passenger cap, especially at a time when passenger numbers have unfortunately slumped owing to the pandemic.

To add to this tale of woe, the police have resumed an investigation associated with the Council's inability to have its last annual accounts signed off because of serious concerns about the way UDC is being run.

I'm really sorry that I can't be more optimistic, but I can't say the sun is shining when it is not. However, despite the cold and damp, the birds are enjoying the remaining fruit on my apple tree and spring should be only two months away. So, let's look forward to that!

**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

Lockdown 3 rules mean that we have to continue to hold our meetings virtually rather than in person. The Full Council and committees meet as and when required to consider such things as planning applications and financial matters. Our next scheduled meeting is on 27 January at 7.30pm when the Full Council will discuss the budget and setting the precept for 2021-22. The meeting will be held via Zoom. Our agendas are published on our website [www.stansted.net](http://www.stansted.net), click on the Meetings tab and then on Agendas.

**PARISH COUNCIL STAFF**

Clerk - Ruth Clifford  
 Administration Asst - Emma Philbrick  
 Committee Support Asst - Laila Azure-Marxen  
 Communications Asst - Dan Schlanker  
 Email: [parishcouncil@stansted.net](mailto:parishcouncil@stansted.net)  
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## RANDOM JOTTINGS – MUD

I am one of many Stansted residents who have very much enjoyed walking in the new permissive paths system and the Aubrey Buxton reserve. For those of us lucky enough to be able to go outdoors this winter, there has been a ubiquitous feature of the landscape which is impossible to avoid: mud. It is sloppy, sticky and slippery and I did manage to slither and fall in it once in early December and would rather not get so close to it again! However, mud is a very useful material, both for human and animal skin.

### Mud for Facials

Mud is held in high esteem by many beauty experts. It draws out impurities, absorbs excess oils, releases minerals essential to skin health and repairs the skin. It is believed that Cleopatra built the first spa in the Dead Sea because of the minerals in its mud.

### Mud Wallowing

In hot countries, temperature regulation is the main reason for animals wallowing in mud, because cool water evaporation through the mud is slower than if they swam in cold water. Wallowing is essential for the health of hippos, elephants and even pigs. Mud



helps to control skin parasites for these animals. In the words of that fabulous duo, Flanders and Swann:

*Mud, mud, glorious mud,  
Nothing quite like it for cooling the blood.  
So follow me, follow me down to the hollow,  
And there let us wallow in glorious mud.*



Editor



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

As this issue goes to press, along with all other tennis clubs, we have unfortunately had to close. Hopefully we will be back up and running soon! Due to the current restrictions, our AGM on **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March** at 8.00pm will go ahead via Zoom. To join the meeting please email Catherine Hodgen (Club Secretary), by filling out the form on the contacts page of our website. We hope to see you there.

Fiona Kelly  
Publicity Officer  
Tel: 07949 623484  
Email: [fiona1.kelly@btinternet.com](mailto:fiona1.kelly@btinternet.com)



## STANSTED BOWLS CLUB

As this is my first attempt at an article for The Link since taking over as Secretary, I read over Peter Beattie's previous copy, but then got slightly depressed! So much of what we would normally have done in the season was cancelled or went ahead in such a different way. The lovely days and evenings spent playing, chatting to fellow bowlers or just enjoying a drink at the bar – all cancelled. However, I can quite honestly say that one of the things that got me through 2020 was the limited bowls I could play. I am not naturally sporty and lack the competitive drive that I know many of our members enjoy. For me, when the sky is blue and the sun shines (or even if it does not), nothing beats a good game of bowls. In 2020 we managed Covid-safe play, first of all just with one other person and then pairs. In some ways it was an ideal time for new bowlers: lots of practice with not too many people looking on.

I hope that by the time the season starts in April, we will be getting back to some sort of normality and we will be able to welcome lots of new members, show them how we bowl and open up the bar once again. The year 2020 taught us the benefit of fresh air, the need for an enjoyable form of exercise and of keeping a connection with our community. The Bowls Club ticks so many of these boxes so why not join us? For 2021 we have a full schedule of league, friendly and club competition matches, as well as our weekly roll up and social events.

Jeanette Mansell  
Secretary  
Tel: 07967 033924  
Email: [jeanette.mansell2016@gmail.com](mailto:jeanette.mansell2016@gmail.com)

## STANSTED FOOTBALL CLUB

[www.essexseniorleague.co.uk/club/stansted-football-club](http://www.essexseniorleague.co.uk/club/stansted-football-club)



With the introduction of a national lockdown to counteract the seriousness of this current pandemic, all football activities at our Club have once again been suspended. The long-term effect on the outcome of this current season has still to be decided by the Football Association, Essex County FA and our respective leagues. Whilst there are no dates for returning to play matches, the window of opportunity to avoid the same scenario as last season (when all non-elite leagues results were declared null and void) is decreasing, despite the possibility of extending the playing season to mid-May.

Whilst our first team sit second in the league after 15 games, we still have a further 19 to schedule in, so any league extension would see us having to play three games per week. For the vets, although their league has fewer teams, they too may have to schedule some midweek games. We will endeavour to keep all our followers aware of any developments through our social media sites but I am afraid that it may be some months before we return to action. Please all stay safe and well and hopefully we will see you all again soon.



Tom Williams  
Secretary  
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Beaver Scouts Age 6-8	Angela Madigan Tel: 01371 513028	Scouts (age 10½ -14)	Mike Byrne Tel: 812780
Bowls Club	Jeanette Mansell, Hon Secretary Tel: 01371 821446	Shotokan Karate Ryu	Donna Ring Tel: 731752 Email: skr@skr.org.uk
Brownies (Tue)	Kathy Shearman Tel: 07724 355533	Spangles Family Hub	Tel: 812348 Email: vcl.essexwest- uttlesfordadminhub@nhs.net
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Rainbows (Wed)	Rachel Foster Tel: 07818 417971		
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### BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES or SPECIAL OCCASIONS

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